

Evangelicals and Society: The Story of an On-Off Relationship

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Abstract: The article explores the relationship between British Evangelical Christianity and socio-political action. It proposes that the roots of the movement are to be found in a Reformation understanding of religion as a prophetic force intended to bring about the transformation of the social world. However, this original world-transformative impulse was eclipsed in the nineteenth century as new forms of Evangelicalism emerged which were socio-politically conformist and developed an increasingly dualistic theology. Examples of Evangelicals on both sides of this divide are discussed and the article concludes by suggesting that, in a globalised world today, this movement needs to recover the socially transformative vision of its founders.

Close to where these words are being written, near the heart of the old city of Glasgow, there is an extraordinary burial ground known as the Necropolis. It rises up behind the ancient cathedral and contains hundreds of impressive monuments in stone to the great and the good who, one hopes, contributed to Glasgow's growth and well-being over the past centuries. At the highest point on this hill stands an impressive statue of John Knox, erected by the city burghers in 1812 as Irish Catholic immigrants were pouring into the West of Scotland. Knox holds the Bible aloft, extending it toward the city below as though reminding people caught in the throes of the industrial revolution that (to quote Glasgow's traditional motto), prosperity comes through 'the preaching of God's word and the praising of his name'.

A century later, when industrialisation and urbanisation had done their work, the city modified this motto to become less a prayer, more a wish: 'Let Glasgow Prosper'. The understanding of human well-being was thus severed from its religious roots, so abandoning people to unconstrained materialism. In the run up to Christmas, 2006, the huge and still expanding shopping mall in the centre of Glasgow ran a high profile publicity campaign, in which the seven deadly sins were turned into virtues 'because Glasgow loves shopping'. The social consequences of this idolatry are sadly evident in the streets below the Necropolis by both day and night.

Meantime, while those who came to exercise political power disowned the religiously inspired social vision of John Knox, many who claimed spiritual

descent from the reformer continued to stress the vital importance of preaching and worship while detaching these activities from the well-being of the city as a whole. That is to say, a once unified vision of what constitutes human and societal flourishing in a modern, urban world was lost as the Reformation dream of a 'holy commonwealth' was carved into separate and isolated segments. Concerns about 'prosperity' were delegated to the politicians who inhabited the vast, cathedral-like city chambers, while believers turned their attention to acts of piety and devotion, effectively sealed off from the wider culture. This 'great divorce', which continues to affect attitudes toward worship, preaching and mission, constitutes one of the central issues requiring ongoing historical, biblical and theological reflection.

THE REFORMED VISION

The concern of this paper is with Evangelicalism and socio-political responsibility but, as the previous paragraphs remind us, this movement developed historically from the Protestant tradition. This being the case, it is worth recalling the kind of social vision which animated a man like John Calvin, whose influence on Knox was immense. Calvin has been described as a 'constructive revolutionary' and a detailed study of his sermons in Geneva suggests that they dealt little with 'another world and happiness there', but rather focused on the necessity of glorifying God in the here and now: 'They cry scorn against all injustice, whether it be ecclesiastical, bureaucratic, legal, or in the market place'.¹ W. Fred Graham asks us to reflect on the likely reaction of Genevan merchants in the reformer's congregation who might be tempted to divorce their economic activities from the ethics of the Bible to a passage like this:

*There would be those who would rather that the wheat spoil in the granary so that it will be eaten by vermin, so that it can be sold when there is want (for they only wish to starve the poor people)... See the wheat collected; how well our Lord has poured out his grace and his benediction so that the poor world would be nourished. But the speculator will gather it in granaries and lock it up securely, till finally the cry of famine is heard and that's no longer possible. What will happen? It will be spoiled and rotten. How true it is that our Lord is mocked by those who want to have much profit.... These people entomb the grace of God, as if they warred against his bounty and against the paternal love which he displays toward everyone.*²

¹ W. Fred Graham, *The Constructive Revolutionary: John Calvin and His Socio-Economic Impact* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1978), 19.

² *Ibid.*, 56

This is clearly radical preaching with a prophetic concern for social justice and it serves to illustrate the thesis of Nicholas Wolterstorff that the Reformation, especially in its Calvinist expression, introduced a fresh vision of Christianity in its relationship to the social world in which the fundamental structures of that world were ‘held up to judgement’ and ‘sentenced to be reformed’.³ Wolterstorff identifies this Reformed vision as *world-transformative* Christianity in contrast to what he calls *avertive* forms of religion, the latter involving the attempt to escape from what are perceived to be the inferior realms of the social and political worlds, in order to cultivate spiritual purity and ‘attain closer contact with a reality outside oneself which is higher, better, more real’.⁴

The world-transformative impulse of the Calvinist vision of a whole world renewed by the preaching of the gospel can be traced across time and space wherever the Genevan reformer’s teaching took hold. This is especially true of Scotland where, according to John McNeill, the Reformation put down deeper roots among ordinary people than anywhere else in Europe, excluding Switzerland.⁵ Having caught sight of Calvin’s utopian vision of the transformation that the gospel might bring in a world facing rapid and far-reaching social and cultural changes, Knox and his colleagues set about reforming the whole life of the Scottish people, designing a system of education that included placing a schoolmaster in every town, radically transforming the universities, and introducing legislation which curbed the power of oppressive landlords and proposed practical measures to relieve poverty.

Of course, there were many streams within the movement we identify as the Reformation and it is often overlooked that, quite apart from the social experiments of the Radical Reformation,⁶ Protestant Christianity took shape in central Europe in ways that moved beyond the top-down social and political reforms which Calvin attempted in Geneva. For example, among the Czech people the Reformation was preceded in the fourteenth century by a series of remarkable social experiments under the leadership of Jan Milic (1325-1375), including the establishment of a foundation in the centre of Prague named ‘New Jerusalem’ as a haven for converted prostitutes. In the next generation Jan Hus challenged the fundamental assumptions of Christendom, contrasting Jesus, whom he called ‘the poor king of the poor’, with the wealth and glory of the

³ Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Until Justice and peace Embrace* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 3.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁵ John T. McNeill, *The History and Character of Calvinism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), 307.

⁶ Nearly half a century ago Leonard Verduin alerted us to the significance of the witness of those whom he described as the ‘stepchildren’ of the Reformation and, reflecting on their social radicalism, concluded: ‘It is not too much to say that if the Western world had listened to these Radicals.... then Karl Marx would have had little with which to sustain his economic theories, would have had little to write about. And that would have made a vast difference in the course of world history’. *The Reformers and Their Stepchildren* (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1964), 241.

papacy and laying the foundation for the socially radical movement that was later to bear his name. A modern Czech theologian sums up the distinctive legacy of this stream of the Reformation as consisting in its 'emphatic insistence that a true and serious reform of the church must have its social-ethical and social-critical dimensions'. He adds that the *semper reformanda* 'must never be applied only to the realm of doctrine and ecclesiastical theory, but also to the life-style and practical engagement of the church, the personal life of the Christian as well as the institutional life of church and society'.⁷

In seventeenth century England this same socially transformative form of Christianity can be seen at work in the English Puritan movement. Wolsterstorff illustrates this by quoting a sermon preached by Thomas Case before the House of Commons in 1641:

*Reformation must be universal ... reform all places, all persons and callings; reform the benches of judgement, the inferior magistrates... Reform the universities, reform the cities, reform the countries, reform inferior schools of learning, reform the Sabbath, reform the ordinances, the worship of God... You have more work to do than I can speak Every plant which my heavenly father hath not planted shall be rooted up.*⁸

Clearly, we have entered a different world from that of the middle ages in which social structures were treated as fixed and immovable. By contrast, the Puritan treats social arrangements as human constructions, created in time by fallen people and so requiring modification and reform in the light of the revelation of the will of God given through the gospel of Jesus Christ. This is indeed a revolutionary change in which the structures of human society, and not merely the 'persons who exist within these structures', must be changed to be brought in line with the will of a just, holy and gracious God.⁹

This was the soil from which the movement we know as Evangelicalism emerged in the eighteenth century and our task in the remainder of this paper will be to reflect on what happened to the world-transformative impulse bequeathed to the movement by the Reformation.

EVANGELICALISM AS WORLD-TRANSFORMATIVE RELIGION

I have argued elsewhere that the Evangelical movement which emerged from the Great Awakening in the eighteenth century was a form of world-transformative Christianity and that it constituted 'a remarkable example of religion as a powerful agent for political and social change'.¹⁰ This claim can be demonstrated

⁷ Jan Milic Lochman, *Christ and Prometheus?* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1988), 11.

⁸ Quoted by Wolsterstorff, *Op Cit*, 8-9.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ David W. Smith, *Transforming the World? The Social Impact of British Evangelicalism* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1998 [Digital edition, 2005]), 2.

in all kinds of ways, but consider the poetry of the hymn writer, William Cowper, friend and colleague of John Newton. In a long, and once extremely popular poem called 'The Task', published in 1785, Cowper comments on the growth of urban centres with the same sense of horror and anxiety which we might today experience in the slums of Nairobi, Rio de Janeiro or Mumbai. He turns his attention specifically to 'opulent, enlarged and still increasing' London and, after a devastating analysis of the evils of the city, pens the well known anti-urban line: 'God made the country, and man made the town'. However, this critique of London is based on a profound insight into the *sources* of the wealth being flaunted within the metropolis and the price being paid for this development on the other side of the globe. Cowper writes of the city:

*It is not seemly, nor of good report,
That she is slack in discipline; more prompt
To avenge than to prevent the breach of the law;
That she is rigid in denouncing death
On petty robbers, and indulges life
And liberty, and ofttimes honour too,
To peculators of the public gold;
That thieves at home must hang, but he that puts
Into his overgorged and bloated purse
The wealth of Indian provinces, escapes.*¹¹

Within the space of a few lines Cowper has managed to critique the bias of the criminal justice system, defend the rights of the poor and oppressed, and expose the hypocrisy and rapacious greed of capitalists who had begun the plunder of lands and peoples on the other side of the globe.

Clearly, we are still dealing with world-transformative religion here. Indeed, it can be argued that the Calvinist concern with the reformation of human society was reinforced in early Evangelicalism by the appearance of a particular eschatology which fostered the strong hope that the triumph of the gospel was about to bring far-reaching social transformation. Such hopefulness can be traced back to Calvin himself who exhorted Christians to 'hope boldly' in the confidence that, despite all opposition, Christ would one day 'surpass our opinion and our hope'.¹² Such confidence in the power of the gospel increased during the seventeenth century, so that a Puritan like Thomas Brooks could anticipate a time when 'in this world holiness shall be more general, and more eminent, than ever it hath been since Adam fell in Paradise'.¹³ What Iain Murray called the 'Puritan Hope' was developed in the writings of the American theologian Jonathan

¹¹ William Cowper, 'The Task' in *The Poetical Works of William Cowper* (London: Frederick Warne, n.d.), 235.

¹² Quoted in Iain Murray, *The Puritan Hope: A Study in Revival and the Interpretation of Prophecy* (London: Banner of Truth, 1971), xii.

¹³ *Ibid.*, xiii.

Edwards into an eschatological system which enabled the early Evangelicals to interpret the immense changes taking place in an industrializing society as signs of the times, pointing unerringly toward the dawn of the long-promised millennial golden age. Edwards anticipated that what he called the 'latter-day glory' would be 'unspeakably great' and would result in the renewal of the whole of human society. It is worth quoting him at some length:

A time shall come wherein religion and true Christianity shall in every respect be uppermost in the world; wherein God will cause his church to arise and "shake herself from the dust, and put on her beautiful garments, and sit down on a throne; and the poor shall be raised from the dust, and the beggar from the dunghill, and shall be set among princes, and made to inherit the throne of God's glory; a time wherein vital piety shall take possession of thrones and palaces, and those that are in the most exalted stations shall be eminent in holiness (Isa.xlix.23.).... A time of wonderful union and the most universal peace, love, and sweet harmony; wherein the nations shall "beat their swords into plowshares" &c. and God will "cause wars to cease to the ends of the earth..." A time wherein the earth shall be abundantly fruitful;.... A time wherein the world shall be delivered from that multitude of sore calamities which before prevailed (Ezek.xlvii.20.) and there shall be an universal blessing of God upon mankind, in soul and body, and in all their concerns, and all manner of tokens of God's presence and favour.....¹⁴

It is significant that Edwards' work was published in Britain in 1789, edited by the Baptist pastor, John Sutcliff in the village of Olney in Bedfordshire, the very place in which Cowper had written the lines quoted above but four years earlier. The hope that *this* world would witness a moral, social and political transformation as the outcome of the mission of the people of God was common among early Evangelicals and it appeared to them to be the clear implication of the teaching of the prophetic scriptures. As the nonconformist leader William Jay put it, nothing had yet taken place in human history to suggest that the 'many and express assurances in the Scriptures' of a time universal blessings had yet been fulfilled. This led him to conclude: 'Better days are before us, notwithstanding the forebodings of many'.¹⁵

¹⁴ Jonathan Edwards, *An Humble Attempt to Promote Explicit Agreement in Extraordinary Prayer, for the Revival of Religion and the Advancement of God's Kingdom on Earth* [1748] in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, volume II (London: Westley and Davis, 1834), 287-288.

¹⁵ Quoted in Iain Murray, *Puritan Hope* (1971), xiv.

PARTING OF THE WAYS

At some point in the nineteenth century the world-transformative impulse of Evangelical Christianity which we have briefly described above, went into decline and was eventually eclipsed through the emergence of a new form of Evangelicalism which, I wish to argue, returned to the *avertive* type of religion which had been rejected within the Reformed tradition. The story of how this change came about is a complex one, but we may identify a number of factors which contributed to the creation of an other-worldly, dualistic type of Evangelicalism.

On the one hand, there were *external* influences, most notably the impact of the French Revolution, which gave birth to a new social conservatism and a growing sense of fear, sometimes of sheer terror, so that even the discussion of social changes became suspect since it came to be believed that such debates could be the first step toward chaos and anarchy. Many Nonconformists, especially Baptists, initially welcomed the news of radical social changes from across the English Channel, even hailing the Revolution in France as yet another indication that the ‘latter-day glory’ was indeed breaking into human history. In Scotland, for example, Robert Haldane could write that he ‘rejoiced in the experiment that was making in France’ and prayed that it might result in a new age characterised by ‘the universal abolition of slavery, of war, and of many other miseries that mankind were exposed to’¹⁶ Haldane’s biographer, writing in the middle of the nineteenth century, recalls his subject’s social radicalism with evident embarrassment, commenting that he was ‘for a time somewhat dazzled with the delusive prospect of a new order of things’, and noting that the ‘adherents of the Established Churches, both in England and Scotland, and a great majority of the landed aristocracy, were united with the holders of office *in deprecating all political discussion*’.¹⁷

What we witness here is the opening of a division within the broad stream of Evangelical Christianity concerning the legitimacy of demands for social and political change, or what Hugh McLeod has called the beginning of ‘Europe’s age of religious polarisation’.¹⁸ Such tensions had been present at an earlier stage in British Christian history, as is evident from the description John Bunyan reports as being applied to his congregation by the guardians of state and religious power; they were viewed as ‘a turbulent, seditious, and factious people’. Bunyan of course paid a great price for preaching the gospel in a manner that appeared to be socially subversive, being arrested in 1660 for holding ‘unlawful

¹⁶ Alexander Haldane, *The Lives of Robert Haldane of Airthrey, and of his brother, James Alexander Haldane* (London: Hamilton Adams, 1852), 86-87.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 83. Italics added.

¹⁸ Hugh McLeod, *Religion and the People of Western Europe, 1789-1970* (Oxford: University Press, 1981), 15.

meetings' and spending the next twelve years of his life in prison.¹⁹ A century-and-a-half later the upheaval in France revived memories of those earlier turbulent times and, as positions hardened across growing social divides, both the early pan-Evangelical unity, and the radiant sense of hope, to which reference has been made above, became distant memories.

A second cause of the decline of world-transformative Evangelicalism therefore, relates to the increase of class divisions and social tensions within an industrializing, modernizing society. As the statement of Haldane's biographer quoted above suggests, Christians within the established churches, many of whom had experienced Evangelical conversion, came to understand their faith in terms of personal transformation, while refusing even to entertain debate concerning the possibility of socio-political change. William Wilberforce's immensely influential book, *A Practical View of the Prevailing Religious System of Professed Christians in the Higher and Middle Classes of This Country, Contrasted with Real Christianity* (1797) was designed to appeal to privileged and powerful people by presenting Evangelical religion in a form that challenged ostentatious displays of wealth, while justifying the continuance of a hierarchical social system. Hugh McLeod describes this book as the 'manifesto of the new evangelicalism' and comments that it defended a highly stratified social order and summoned both rich and poor to accept the given-ness of the British constitution 'and the consolations of a highly dogmatic form of Christianity'.²⁰ Wilberforce appealed to professing Christians in the privileged classes to 'accept the duty to serve, if not actually to save, their country... not by political interference, but by that sure and radical benefit of restoring the influence of true religion and raising the standard of morality'. In other words, Britain might be preserved from revolutionary changes if only the upper classes would seek and find the spiritual power capable of enabling them to change their patterns of behaviour, using their wealth in 'moderation' and withdrawing from 'the competition of vanity'.²¹ As the US senator Mark Hatfield observes in his appreciative introduction to an American edition of Wilberforce's book, there is an area of the great anti-slavery campaigner's life and theology that demands critical examination: 'In his view, the end of a society of classes would come only with the second coming of Christ, not with a manifestation of the kingdom on earth'. Hatfield adds that large swathes of the biblical teaching on justice 'were

¹⁹ The description of Bunyan's congregation is derived from the Bedford preacher himself and it forms the title of Christopher Hill's study of Bunyan: *A Turbulent, Seditious, and Factious People: John Bunyan and His Church* (Oxford: University Press, 1988). See especially pp 90-110.

²⁰ Hugh MacLeod, *Religion and the People of Western Europe, 1789-1970* (Oxford: University Press, 1981), 108.

²¹ William Wilberforce, *Real Christianity* [Revised American edition of *A Practical View*] (Basingstoke: Pickering & Inglis, 1982), 130.

left largely untouched by the Clapham Society... that God is a God who exercises his justice on earth (Jeremiah 9:24)'.²²

While Wilberforce interpreted Evangelical conversion in ways that might result in a transformation of the 'manners' of people in possession of wealth and privilege, aristocratic philanthropists like Hannah More applied this new, *avertive* form of Evangelicalism to rural peasants suffering from extreme poverty, and even starvation, by stressing the sanctity of the class system and the comforts of heaven. William Dale Morris cites the following exhortations of Hannah More, offered to poor women in the Mendip villages at the start of the nineteenth century, as evidence that this period witnessed what he calls the most blatant use of Christianity 'as an antidote to social unrest':

Let me remind you that probably that very scarcity has been permitted by an all-wise and gracious Providence to unite all ranks of people together, to show the poor how immediately they are dependent upon the rich, and to show both rich and poor that they are all dependent upon Himself. It has also enabled you to see more clearly the advantages you derive from the government and constitution of this country – to observe the benefits flowing from the distinction of rank and fortune, which has enabled the high so liberally to assist the low: for I leave you to judge what would have been the state of the poor of this country in this long distressing scarcity had it not been for your superiors'.²³

While the British upper classes, described by Wilberforce as 'those who matter', were turning toward an *avertive* form of Evangelicalism, the rising middle class embraced Christianity but interpreted the religion in a manner that provided them with theological and ethical foundations for their demands for cultural change and far-reaching social reforms. McLeod observes that the first half of the nineteenth century was 'a formative period in the development of the identity and values both of the working class and the middle class' and that the latter were in the process of 'busily distancing themselves from everything that seemed rough, uncultured and vulgar'.²⁴ This 'distancing' found expression in physical space in the rapidly expanding urban centres, leaving its mark even today on cities like London, Sheffield, Manchester and Edinburgh. In Glasgow, where we began this paper, the growth of a prosperous middle class wedded to Evangelical Christianity, led to demands for new church buildings characterised by the elegance and comfort felt to be appropriate to the status and dignity of this

²² *Ibid.*, Mark Hatfield 'Introduction', xxvii

²³ William Dale Morris, *The Christian Origins of Social Revolt* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1949), 156-157. On another occasion Hannah More offered the wretched victims of slow starvation the comfort 'of knowing the advantage you have had over many villages in your having suffered no scarcity of religious instruction'.

²⁴ Hugh McLeod, *Religion and the Working Class in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (London: MacMillan, 1984), 59.

segment of society. Callum Brown observes that middle class Evangelicalism appeared to complement economic individualism and he notes that church extension into Glasgow's new West End 'permitted social segregation and the self-elevation of middle-class groups'.²⁵ One may still survey the extraordinary profusion of spectacular nineteenth century church buildings which remain in Glasgow's West End today, even though most of them are now converted into luxury accommodation, or trendy restaurants and night clubs. It is easy to lament their plight as evidence of spiritual decline, but a knowledge of the origin of such churches may cause us to wonder whether the seeds of secularisation were not sown here from the very beginning? As McLeod observes, in the early years of the nineteenth century, 'poorer members of affluent congregations were being priced out, frozen out, or goaded into leaving by sermons extolling the British constitution'.²⁶

PROPHETIC VOICES

As we have noted, the *world-transformative* tradition of Christianity stemming from the Calvinist Reformation was eclipsed by the rise of *avertive* Evangelicalism as large numbers of the aristocracy experienced a form of religious conversion that brought about personal, ethical renewal, while buttressing the social status quo. However, the older tradition remained alive and throughout the nineteenth century considerable numbers of preachers and a growing army of urban missionaries understood their faith as providing the inspiration and dynamic to bring into existence a new kind of society, one that would be characterised by social justice and far greater economic equality. This counter-cultural movement was fed from two sources: an awareness of the traditions of social theology flowing from the Reformed and Puritan traditions, on the one hand, and the actual experience of the downside of the industrial revolution on the part of Evangelicals whose compassion compelled them to work with the urban poor and oppressed, on the other.

In many cases these two factors were combined in the same person, as Ian Shaw has shown in his important study of high Calvinist preachers in this period. Indeed, it is significant that even as the 'new Evangelicals' were modifying Calvinist traditions in theology, perhaps aware of the revolutionary implications of Genevan doctrine, many Nonconformist ministers working in contexts of extreme urban deprivation and poverty, based their social criticisms on an explicitly Calvinist theological foundation. The most obvious and familiar example is found in the extraordinary ministry of Charles Haddon Spurgeon, who saw himself as following in the tradition of the Reformers and Puritans and retained both a post-millennial hope which underpinned his expectation of radical

²⁵ Callum Brown, 'Religion and the Development of an Urban Society: Glasgow 1780-1914'. Unpublished Ph.D Thesis: University of Glasgow, 1981, volume II, 336.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 59.

social changes, and a prophetic approach to preaching and ministry which led him to denounce both domestic evils and imperialist wars. However, Shaw notes that scores of lesser known ministers worked tirelessly in the cities of industrial Britain and raised their voices on behalf of the poor and oppressed. For example, William Gadsby of Manchester, strikes a completely different note from that which we have heard from Hannah More in a similar context: 'It is extreme distress that makes the poor people cry for redress of their grievances, and I believe that in time the Lord will hear their cries, whether anyone else will or not'.²⁷

Sometimes the radical reaction could sound far more angry and threatening than this. For example, Joseph Rayner Stephens, a Wesleyan minister who, in the aftermath of the passing of the infamous Poor Law of 1834, became an active Chartist, warned an audience in Glasgow that such humiliating legislation would be liable to result in the very revolution that the upper classes so much feared:

*If they will not learn to act as law prescribes and God ordains, so that every man shall by his labour find comfortable food and clothing – not only for himself, but for his wife and babes - then we swear by the love of our brothers, by our God who made us all for happiness, by the earth He gave us for our support, by the Heaven He designs for those who love each other here, and by the hell which is the portion of those who, violating His book, have consigned their fellowmen... to hunger, nakedness and death.... we shall wrap in one awful sheet of devouring flame, which no arm can resist, the manufactories of the cotton tyrants, and the places of those who raised them by rapine and murder.*²⁸

While few Evangelicals were willing to use language as inflammatory as this, very many felt and expressed a righteous anger concerning the structural injustices that condemned millions of people to destitution in a society that continued to trumpet its Christian character. In Edinburgh, for example, Thomas Guthrie (whose statue graces the famous Princes Street and identifies him as 'The friend of the poor and oppressed') claimed that the urban poor were doubly deprived of justice since the squalor in which they lived compelled them to seek for survival by any means possible, and they were then convicted of crimes which were traceable to the heartlessness and greed of respectable society. Where, Guthrie asked in exasperation, is the justice in that? The Scottish Calvinist's language is more restrained than that of Stephens quoted above, but his warnings of the possibility of insurrection and revolution are no less clear and urgent: the upper classes should realise that their interests are inextricably intertwined with

²⁷ Ian Shaw, *High Calvinists in Action – 1810-1860* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 135.

²⁸ Quoted in Morris, *Op Cit*, 170.

those of the poor and that God has decreed that ‘those who neglect the interests of others shall themselves suffer in the end’.²⁹

I have elsewhere drawn attention to the witness of Edward Miall, whose ministry I believe to have been perhaps the outstanding example of *world-transformative* Evangelicalism in the nineteenth century.³⁰ Certainly, few books written in this period can match his 1849 work *The British Churches in Relation to the British People* in terms of sharp critical analysis and prophetic courage, and this radical critique of a bourgeois Christianity co-opted to serve the narrow class interests of the privileged and powerful remains relevant today. Miall lamented the tragedy of churches which, instead of offering a challenge to the structures and divisions that polarised the wider society, had allowed themselves to become split along precisely the social fault lines created by modernisation and capitalism, thus achieving numerical success by ignoring the precepts of Christ.³¹ Here is a purple passage from Miall’s analysis of Victorian Christianity in which, without using the terms, he exposes the apostasy that awaits *avertive* Evangelicalism:

*Religion as embodied in the written word of God, and in that more emphatic living Word which was “made flesh and dwelt among us”, uniformly champions the cause of the weak, the friendless, the oppressed – religion, embodied in modern organisations, preaches up the rights of the powerful and dwells mainly upon the obligations of the powerless... Once her favourite occupation was to move as an angel of love among outcasts, to breathe hope into the spirits of the desponding, to wipe away tears as they rolled down the cheeks of the neglected – and when among the great, her theme of discourse was the vanity of perishable honours and possessions.. In our day, she is more at home with the comfortable than with the wretched.*³²

It should be noted at this point that the kind of searching, prophetic critiques which we have cited above did not apply to all middle- or upper-class Christians in this period. Indeed, as the nineteenth century wore on and awareness of the extent of the social and economic divisions in British cities increased, there were numerous examples of Evangelicals who determined that their faith should dictate

²⁹ Thomas Guthrie, *The City: Its Sins and its Sorrows* (Edinburgh: Adam & Charles Black, 1851), 118.

³⁰ David W. Smith, ‘A Victorian Prophet Without Honour: Edward Miall and the Critique of nineteenth-century British Christianity’ in Stephen Clark, ed. *Tales of Two Cities: Christianity and Politics* (Leicester: Inter Varsity Press, 2005), 152-83.

³¹ I owe this phrase to H. Richard Niebuhr who opens his study of denominationalism with these memorable words: ‘Christendom has often achieved apparent success by ignoring the precepts of its founder’. *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* (New York: Meridian Books, 1929), 3.

³² Edward Miall, *The British Churches in Relation to the British People* (London: Arthur Hall, Virtue, 1849), 203-204.

the practice of business ethics in relation to issues such as the level of wages paid to workers, as well as the conditions in which employees lived and laboured. George Cadbury, for example, escaped from a dualistic theology which confined religion to the spiritual realm, to develop a model of social responsibility in the industrial and commercial sphere which still strikes us as important. Cadbury, remarkably for his time, supported the concept of a legally enforceable minimum wage and built the famous Bourneville Village on the outskirts of Birmingham to provide his workforce with ideal working conditions and pleasant housing (including the all-important gardens). Bourneville contained libraries, recreation areas, swimming pools, medical and dental facilities, convalescent homes, and offered programmes for the continuing education of the workforce. George Cadbury condemned extremes of wealth and poverty, saw gambling as a curse, and even donated £50 a week to support engineering workers during a lock-out in 1897. He understood his Quaker Evangelicalism as ‘something really practical that brought joy and peace with it’ and he delighted in witnessing previously sad and depressed people being given fresh opportunities in life through which they found dignity and ‘were filled with all peace and joy in believing’. His remarkable industrial experiment challenged the reigning theories of market economics and ‘showed how wages might be raised in a modern industry and how something like Jerusalem might be builded not *among* dark Satanic mills, but *in* mills that were no longer dark or Satanic’.³³

Less Than Conquerors

In the year 1849 two men arrived separately in London, both of whom were to encounter at first hand the immense social problems caused by extreme poverty, and both of whom were to devote the rest of their lives to addressing such issues. Karl Marx and William Booth were moved and scandalised by what they discovered in the East End, where the thousands of people who lived in indescribable squalor came to be known as the ‘submerged tenth’, or the ‘residuum’. Commenting on the matchmaking industry, Marx observed that Dante would have found the worst horrors of his inferno surpassed by the sights and sounds in these factories, and then set about developing his revolutionary social theory. Interestingly, William Booth made a similar reference to Dante but then announced his intention to establish an alternative match factory in which workers’ health would be safeguarded and they would be paid a living wage. Ann Woodhall comments that the reaction of the two men underlines the contrasts between them: ‘Marx eruditely detailing conditions... as part of his overall attack on capitalism and Booth rushing to produce a practical solution to a specific problem’.³⁴

³³ H.G.Wood, ‘George Cadbury (1839-1922), in Hugh Martin, ed. *Christian Social Reformers of the Nineteenth Century* (London: SCM Press, 1927), 186.

³⁴ Ann M.Woodhall, *What Price the Poor? William Booth, Karl Marx and the London Residuum* (Aldershot: Ashgate Press, 2005), 2.

William Booth provides an interesting example of an Evangelical who may be said to have made a transition from the *avertive* form of this tradition, to a *world-transformative* position as the result of his experiences in attempting to evangelise the urban poor. Booth never lost his passion for evangelism and continued to employ language which suggested that the ‘salvation of souls’ remained a high priority in urban mission. But, like so many other urban evangelists, both in Europe and the United States, he came to realise that there were physical, social and cultural factors that militated against a positive reception of the good news which he proclaimed to the poor. In a moving passage, Booth asks what hope there can be for the ‘bastard of a harlot, born in a brothel, suckled on gin, and familiar from earliest infancy with all the bestialities of debauch, violated before she is twelve, and driven onto the streets by her mother’?³⁵ His conclusion is that such a poor woman has little chance in this life, never mind the next! Encounters like these led Booth and his companions to recognise that evangelism simply could not be divorced from social action, as Norris Magnuson explains:

*Entering the slums in pursuit of the evangelism that remained their chief concern, they gained there an almost unparalleled knowledge of the conditions in which the poor had to live. Encountering that kind of need, they responded with energy and growing sympathy and indignation. The extensive first-hand experience of rescue workers in the slums taught them both the worth of the poor and the heaviness of the environmental pressures that weighed upon them. It taught them also that society bulwarked the prosperous and oppressed the helpless.*³⁶

This last claim is demonstrated dramatically in William Booth’s famous 1890 book, *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, which together with the works by Miall and Guthrie mentioned earlier, seem to me to constitute key texts in Evangelical social theology in this period. Booth wrote with a prophetic passion which at times results in language not far removed from the angry denunciations of Joseph Stephens we have encountered earlier. He confesses that the sight of helpless and vulnerable people being trampled by ‘beasts of prey in human shape’ has led him to doubt the existence of God. In an extraordinary passage he indicts the owners of firms which ‘reduce sweating to a fine art’, defraud workers of their wages, rob widows and orphans, and then deflect criticism of their actions by making professions ‘of public spirit and philanthropy’. Booth’s verdict is devastating:

³⁵ General Booth, *In Darkest England and the Way Out* (London: Salvation Army,[1890]), 47

³⁶ Norris Magnuson, *Salvation in the Slums: Evangelical Social Work, 1865-1920* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1977), 178.

*... these men are nowadays sent to parliament to make laws for the people. The old prophets sent them to hell – but we have changed all that. They send their victims to hell, and are rewarded by all that wealth can do to make their lives comfortable’.*³⁷

While the members of the Salvation Army were immersing themselves in urban mission, many middle class Evangelicals were moving in a direction that consolidated the *avertive*, dualistic form of Evangelicalism that became so significant in the nineteenth century. Whereas, as we have seen, it had earlier been assumed that a class-based, hierarchical society was divinely sanctioned, and so represented a Christian civilization, by the end of the century it was becoming impossible to retain such views, both because of the growth of ‘modern thought’ and because the demands of a developing capitalist culture increasingly seemed to overwhelm Christian ethical principles. Consequently, as Douglas Frank has shown, middle class Evangelicals became increasingly uneasy and disoriented. Those who attended the proliferating conventions which offered to provide a way to discover a ‘victorious life’ confessed to sins such as ‘an ugly temper’, ‘giving way to grudges against others’, and being unloving ‘toward people who are very trying’. Franks notes that in the late nineteenth century the old Protestant ethical values were increasingly displaced by ‘consumptive virtues’ such as impulsive buying, ostentatious display, and a much freer use of money:

*The economy increasingly demanded that people buy the goods it was so fruitfully producing, and the message “live it up while you can” began to compete with the image of a sober, virtuous life represented by a former generation of Calvinist faithful. This dissonance.... added its strain to the lives of conscientious Christian people. In addition, increasingly frenetic competition made for a blurring of the lines between honest and dishonest business dealings’.*³⁸

In this atmosphere the teaching of a number of North American visitors, such as Robert and Hannah Pearsall Smith, offering release from worry and constant spiritual defeat, and the promise of a ‘victorious and happy life’ was eagerly embraced. The social background of the majority of those who attended the early Keswick Conventions is clear from the ‘besetting sins’ which were confessed there: ‘a tattling tongue, angry looks, viciousness on the croquet lawn, impatience

³⁷ General Booth, *In Darkest England and the Way Out* (London: Salvation Army, 1890), 14.

³⁸ Thomas Frank, *Less Than Conquerors: How Evangelicals Entered the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 139-140.

with servants'. Women found strength on those days when they 'felt poorly' and men were able to stop worrying about 'the next bank failure'.³⁹

What this meant was that at a point of major change within the wider culture, middle class Evangelicals increasingly turned *inward*, seeking an experience of individual peace and well being which enabled them to rediscover happiness, while bypassing the crucial issues of discipleship in a modernising, capitalist society and leaving the questions raised by the prophetic voices we have listened to unanswered. Not surprisingly, there were tensions between these groups, illustrated by Catherine Booth's response to a gentleman who, in reaction to her critique of middle class Christianity, claimed that there was great love for Jesus in his church: 'Yes', she replied, 'for their idealistic Saviour, but suppose Jesus was to come to your chapel as He went about Palestine, with a carpenter's coat on ... all over perspiration and dust..., where would your chapel steward put him to sit?'

One man who knew the answer to that question from personal experience was the Scottish social activist and founder of the Independent Labour Party, Keir Hardie. His childhood was blighted by extreme poverty and the desperate struggle of his mother to feed and clothe the family. As a young man Hardie was employed by a local baker noted for religious zeal, but when he arrived a few minutes late for work one winter's morning, he was summoned upstairs where the family were seated for a sumptuous breakfast and was read a lecture on the sin of sloth and warned that any repetition would lead to instant dismissal. A few weeks later, while caring for his ailing, famished brother, Hardie again arrived moments late and was discharged on the spot with two weeks' wages with-held as a punishment. Such experiences fired a burning passion for justice, while also leading him to explore the life and teachings of Jesus for himself. He joined a small, sectarian group known as the Evangelical Union and, according to Fenner Brockway, came appreciate 'the truths of the teaching of Christianity', revering above all the life and example of Jesus.⁴⁰ At the end of a truly remarkable life, during which he was tireless in challenging injustice, became a key figure in founding the Independent Labour Party, entered Parliament himself and campaigned against a host of social evils, Hardie confessed that if he could begin again he would devote all his energies 'to the advocacy of the Gospel of Christ'.⁴¹

Keir Hardie died in 1915, broken in spirit by the violence and suffering that now engulfed Europe, and so did not live to see the day in 1922 when the city of Glasgow returned ten Independent Labour members to Westminster. Thousands of well-wishers thronged the Central Station and sang both the Red Flag and the

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 142. On the shape of holiness in the Evangelical tradition see my *Against The Stream: Christianity and Mission in an Age of Globalization* (Leicester: Inter Varsity Press, 2003), 27-43.

⁴⁰ Fenner Brockway, 'James Keir Hardie (1865-1915)' in Hugh Martin, ed. *Christian Social Reformers of the Nineteenth Century* (London: SCM Press, 1927), 231. Brockway was himself a Labour Member of Parliament who had known Hardie personally.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 239.

124th Psalm (a text that had great resonance in Scotland since the time of the Covenanters). Hardie's brand of Christian socialism is clearly discernible in the remarkable manifesto to which these new Members of Parliament pledged themselves, and we might think that this document still offers a valuable model of what a Christian politics might look like:

The Labour Members of Parliament for the City of Glasgow and the West of Scotland, inspired by zeal for the welfare of humanity and the prosperity of all peoples and strengthened by the trust reposed on them by their fellow citizens, have resolved to dedicate themselves to the reconciliation and unity of the nations of the world and the development and happiness of the people of these islands.

They will not forget those who suffered in the War, and will see that widows and orphans shall be cherished by the nation.

They will urge without ceasing the need for houses suitable to enshrine the spirit of home.

They will bear in their hearts the sorrows of the aged, the widowed mother, and the poor, that their lives shall not be without comfort.

They will endeavour to purge industry of the curse of unhealthy workshops, restore wages to the level of adequate maintenance, and eradicate the corrupting effects of monopoly and avarice.

They will press for the provision of useful employment or reasonable maintenance.

They will have regard for the weak and those stricken by disease, for those who have fallen in the struggle of life and those who are in prison.

To this end they will endeavour to adjust the finances of the nation that the burden of public debt may be relieved and the maintenance of national administration be borne by those best able to bear it.

In all things they will abjure vanity and self-aggrandizement, recognizing that they are the honoured servants of the people, and that their only righteous purpose is to promote the welfare of their fellow-citizens and the well-being of mankind.⁴²

⁴² See Sean Damer, *Glasgow – Going for a Song* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), 134-5.

EVANGELICAL SOCIAL THEOLOGY IN A GLOBALISED WORLD

The story of the loss and recovery of the Evangelical social conscience during the twentieth century has been told elsewhere and cannot be dealt with here.⁴³ During the first half of that century large segments of the Evangelical movement in Britain and North America appeared to lose contact with the historic roots of the tradition and turned in a direction that resulted in the redefinition of their faith as an almost wholly *avertive* form of religion. The older, Reformed traditions survived, most notably in Holland, where Abraham Kuyper confronted the challenge of emergent socialism, confessing that European Christians had utterly failed to respond appropriately in Christ's name to the 'agonizing distress of these times'. Kuyper's understanding of Calvinism enabled him to frame the gospel in terms that offered hope beyond the sphere of the individual soul, so that he could speak of the *Christus Consolator* 'who assuredly addresses our violently disturbed century with the persistent call of his divine compassion: "Come to me, wealthiest century in history, which is so deathly weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest"'.⁴⁴

Meantime, Evangelicals in Britain and North America came to suspect precisely this kind of social vision as being the Trojan Horse of liberalism and turned toward forms of mission that concentrated solely on individual salvation and the planting of churches. In the mercy and wisdom of God these efforts were to bear considerable fruit and played a significant part in the growth of Christianity across the southern hemisphere, but the absence of anything remotely like an adequate social theology often left new Christians voiceless in contexts in which violence and injustice needed to be challenged. In time this would result in accusations that the entire missionary enterprise was 'a religious counterpart of the capitalist movement' and the suspicion grew that there was a 'secret alliance

⁴³ See, for example, my *Transforming the World? The Social Impact of British Evangelicalism* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1998), especially 73-102. Timothy Chester has described the recovery of social concern in detail in *Awakening to a World of Need: The Recovery of Evangelical Social Concern* (Leicester: Inter Varsity Press, 1993).

⁴⁴ Abraham Kuyper, *The Problem of Poverty* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991), 28. This is a translation of Kuyper's opening address to the First Christian Social Congress in the Netherlands in November, 1891. It is unlikely that this perspective was known to many British Evangelicals since the speech was not translated into English until 1950 when it appeared under the title, *Christianity and the Class Struggle*. Kuyper quotes with approval the following passage from the philosopher, Johann Fichte: 'Christianity hides in its womb a much greater treasure of rejuvenation than you suspect. Until now it has exerted its power only on individual people and only indirectly on the state. But.... Christianity can also exert a wonderful organizing power on society; and not till this power bursts through will the religion of the cross shine before the whole world in all the depths of its conception and in all the wealth of the blessings which it brings' *Ibid.*, 27-28.

between the world missionary movement and the internationalist capitalist enterprise'.⁴⁵

After the mid-point of the twentieth century the tide began to turn against *avertive* Evangelicalism as a new generation of leaders came to recognise the tragic consequences of the betrayal of a tradition that had once possessed such a prophetic cutting edge and a radiant hope of social transformation. At the Berlin Congress on Evangelism in 1966 the reduced understanding of mission as consisting almost exclusively in evangelistic proclamation prevailed, but a few voices recalled earlier, *world-transformative* perspectives. One of these belonged to Paul Rees, Vice-President of World Vision, who bravely cited examples of situations in which failure to *practice* the faith had fatally undermined the credibility of its proclamation. He argued that when deeds contradict the message then the 'victims of our discriminations' become frustrated and cynical about the claims we make for the gospel. Rees asserted that the message of Christ is never preached in a social vacuum, because witness is related, whether we recognise it or not, 'to the whole of life and the total fabric of society'.⁴⁶

From this small, largely unnoticed beginning, the turning tide rose rapidly, fed by new streams flowing into discussions of these matters from Christians in the emerging heartlands of the Christian religion across the southern hemisphere. From their perspective, the almost exclusive focus on individual salvation looked like a truncated gospel shaped less by the teaching of the Bible than by modern, Western culture with its dualistic separation of religion from politics, and its concentration on the individual over against the community. The Lausanne Congress of 1974, with its declaration that Christians must share God's concern 'for the liberation of men from every kind of oppression' and its affirmation that 'evangelism and socio-political involvement are both part of our Christian duty', was a watershed which moved the tradition back toward its *world-transformative* beginnings. As Rene Padilla was to say after the Congress:

In the final analysis, the greatest accomplishment of the Congress was to clarify the meaning and nature of the Christian mission. Over against an unbiblical isolation of the proclamation of the Gospel from the total mission of the Church, there emerged a concept of evangelism in which the proclamation was seen as inextricably connected with social responsibility, discipleship, and church renewal....[T]he Lausanne meeting turned out to be an updating of the evangelical agenda, made

⁴⁵ These are the words of Orlando Costas in *Christ Outside the Gate: Mission Beyond Christendom* (New York: Orbis Books, 1984), 58, 69. Costas's later work, *Liberating News: A Theology of Contextual Evangelization* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989) uses rather more measured language and offers a thoughtful, creative and significant contribution toward the development of a biblical theology of integral mission.

⁴⁶ Paul Rees, 'Evangelism and Social Concern', in Carl F. H. Henry & W. Stanley Moonyham, eds. *One Race, One Gospel, One Task. Volume 1, World Congress on Evangelism, Berlin, 1966* (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1967), 307-308.

*possible by a renunciation of fierce pragmatism and a return to biblical theology. Evangelism remained intact, but was no longer understood as ecclesiocentric activism, but rather as God's means of placing the totality of life under the lordship of Jesus Christ.*⁴⁷

Padilla's confident statement probably overestimated the achievements of the Lausanne Congress since the new perspective he so well describes (and to which he made a significant contribution) was to remain contested territory. In the light of our survey of the debates that took place between Christians throughout the nineteenth century, this ongoing discussion should not surprise us. When religious faith becomes ideological and is used (often without the knowledge of those who profess it) as a justification of vested social and economic interests, its defences are not easily or speedily broken down. As a result, there have been continuing battles over the relationship between evangelism and social responsibility and the apparent gains achieved at the Lausanne Congress have needed to be defended, and sometimes even recovered.

CONCLUSION

The situation faced by Evangelical Christianity at the start of the third millennium is, I wish to suggest, significantly different from that which confronted the Victorian churches, or even that which existed at the time of the Lausanne Congress. There are multiple factors that have created a new context in which discussion of Evangelical socio-political responsibility simply cannot be an optional extra for the Christian community, but actually takes us to the very heart of what it means to confess and follow Jesus Christ in the world today.

Among these factors we might mention the rise of political Islam and the considerable challenge which aspects of its social ethics offer to contemporary Christians. The late Lesslie Newbigin, whose work contributed massively to the renewed search for a faithful social theology, made the following significant claim in his final public address:

I have said that this so-called Western, modern, scientific, free market culture is the most powerful in the world at the present time. There is one serious challenger at the present time – Islam. Islam, with a courage that should put us Christians to shame, is openly challenging the claim that the free market and all its ideology is what rules the world, claiming as we do that God is in control.

Newbigin went on to say that the twenty first century would witness *three* worldviews competing for the allegiance of the human family: 'the gospel, the

⁴⁷ Rene Padilla, ed. 'Introduction', *The new face of Evangelicalism* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1976), 14.

free market, and Islam'.⁴⁸ May it not be the case that as Christians awaken to the missiological challenge posed by the free market, they may discover previously unrecognised common ground with Muslims and, in that process, find a basis on which missionary dialogue can be initiated?

Which brings us to the second major factor shaping our world demanding a missionary response based on adequate theological foundations, namely, the peculiar form that modern capitalism is taking at the present time. There is not space to discuss this development here, but the cancerous growth of the ideology of the market might suggest that Christians are today facing the biggest challenge to faithfulness and obedience that our world has seen since John of Patmos caught sight of the Christ who rules over death and Hades (Revelation 1:18).⁴⁹ The social and economic polarisations which occurred in an industrialized society in nineteenth century Britain are now writ large on a global scale with consequences in the lives of billions of people which almost defy analysis and comprehension. The world's dismal shanty towns now house (if that word is adequate) a billion people and a staggering 78.2 per cent of the urban populations in the cities of the Global South live in such contexts.⁵⁰ Statistics like these serve to highlight the conclusions on Jane Collier and Rafael Esteban that the economic system that now rules the world has become a form of *ideology*, even a *culture* in its own right, that that must be challenged by the gospel which names Christ as Lord.⁵¹

There is a final factor shaping our world today which has a direct bearing on the quest for a social theology, and this is the growth and character of Christianity across its new heartlands in the Southern hemisphere. Much of what has been written in this paper, and much of the debate concerning the relationship between the gospel and social action, is in truth a local, even rather *parochial* discussion, shaped by the experience of rich Christians in what is called the 'developed' world. However, the future shape of theology and mission will be determined elsewhere, precisely in the contexts of poverty and human suffering we have alluded to above, because this is where the vast majority of Christians will be found living in the coming century. The implications of this are simply enormous, but one of these relates directly to the theme of this article because in contexts characterised by oppression and poverty, believers are simply unable to afford the kind of theoretical debates about justice and oppression to which reference has been made above. We catch a glimpse of what this future may be like in Philip

⁴⁸ Lesslie Newbigin, *Signs Amid the Rubble: The Purposes of God in Human History* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 118-119.

⁴⁹ See for example, Thomas Frank, *One Market Under God: Extreme Capitalism, Market Populism and the End of Economic Democracy* (London: Secker & Warburg, 2001); Zygmunt Bauman, *Wasted Lives: Modernity and its Outcasts* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004).

⁵⁰ See Mike Davis, *Planet of Slums* (London: Verso, 2006), 23.

⁵¹ Jane Collier And Rafael Esteban, *From Complicity to Encounter: The Church and the Culture of Economism* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1998).

Jenkins' stimulating study of the use of the Bible in the churches of the Global South:

Only when we see global South Christianity on its own terms – as opposed to asking how it can contribute to our own debates – can we see how the emerging churches are formulating their own responses to social or religious questions, and how these issues are often viewed through a biblical lens. And often, these responses do not fit well into our conventional ideological packages.⁵²

What exactly this will mean in regard to the mission of the people of God in the age of globalisation remains to be seen. But it looks likely that, one way or another, Evangelical Christianity is likely to take a *world-transformative* shape in world ruled by an ideology that runs counter to the gospel of the risen Lord.

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⁵² Philip Jenkins, *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 13.