A STRATEGY TO ENHANCE THE GOSPEL MINISTRY OF THE PCA TO THOSE OUTSIDE THE NON-HISPANIC WHITE MAJORITY IN NORTH AMERICA

By

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation explores the growing non-Anglo cultures in North America and examines ways in which the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) can effectively enhance the Gospel ministry to them. The research presents an overview of Peter and Paul's ministry to the Gentile communities of their day, paying careful attention to both their life and calling with the goal of better understanding how each of these men overcame unique challenges in reaching cultures radically different from their own.

Through giving an overview of the major immigrant groups that have come to North America the research develops the struggles that each people group had in integrating into the existing culture. Attention is given to the conditions each immigrant group faced and how they adapted to this new life. In addition the study reveals that America is a land of immigrants and that each generation brings a new ethnic and cultural mix.

An analysis of the Presbyterian church during this same time period revealed the churches strengths and weaknesses. This analysis examined the effects of populism on the church, and the attitude of the Southern Presbyterians towards African Americans before and after the Civil War. This provided a viable assessment to the PCA's present condition.

A strategy to reach the non-Anglo cultures of North America is then presented. This is rooted in a renewed vision based on the PCA's constitution. Essential to this strategy is a new call to missions that is based on the need to look at North America from a missional perspective rather than a ministerial one. The study shows that the prerequisites to this missionary endeavor include understanding the Gospel, paying attention to culture, and then bringing the Gospel and culture together without compromising Scripture or doctrine.

The study concludes with a summary of the research conducted for this project, the established conclusions, and relevant findings. Recommendations are made for those considering future research in this area.

320 words

To my father

James Rueben Orner

who in giving his life for the people of Africa

modeled much of what I write about in this paper

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The preparation of a paper of this nature comes through years of research and invaluable input from many people. I am most grateful for my mentor and father, James R. Orner, who for many hours sat and discussed with me the ideas contained in this paper. In addition I am obliged to both he and my mother, Gloria Zehr Orner, who modeled a missional mindset for over forty years. I am also grateful for the privilege and opportunity of growing up in East Africa and for the countless Africans who helped shaped my life.

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I want to especially thank my wife Chris and my son Taylor for their belief in me and their constant encouragement. Above all, I want to thank the God of all grace who brought me into His Kingdom and is taking me on this wondrous journey.

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BBREVIATIONS

BCO	Book of Church Order
NIV	New International Version
MNA	Mission to North America
PCA	Presbyterian Church in America
WCF	Westminster Confession of Faith
WSC	Westminster Shorter Catechism

CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM

The Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) is in many ways a vigorous and growing denomination. In recent years, the PCA has seen a steady growth in new churches planted, new members added and professions of faith.[1] Though these numbers reveal a positive outlook, it does not present an adequate depiction of the overall health of the denomination. Few would argue that an increase in new churches is not a positive sign, yet these immediate accomplishments may distort an accurate analysis of her overall health and prognosis for the future. Though the PCA is faced with constant threats of schisms from within, the larger and more serious threat will be her effectiveness in reaching the rapidly growing cultural mix in North America.

The predicament the PCA faces has become the focus of a great deal of discussion and analysis. Much of the discussion and debate has surrounded doctrinal issues and adherence to the Westminster Standards. Yet as the PCA struggles with her internal strife, the world around her continues to change.[2] This is potentially more catastrophic to the PCA than it is to other broadly evangelical groups as internal tensions have led to a

[1] The 2003 statistical report for all presbyteries shows that the PCA had 1,248 churches and 258 mission works, 303,638 members with an increase of 9,169 members.

[2] The PCA is presently in the midst of developing a strategic plan. Though this plan addresses many appropriate concerns, it fails to address the changing racial makeup of North America. The three initiatives on which the committee has chosen to focus are "engaging ruling elders, preparing the next generation, and organizing resources. The next generation focus is primarily internal and to the non-Hispanic white population.

tighter grasp on her majority Anglo culture[3] that simply leads to increased isolation and greater ineffectiveness.

Unquestionably, North America is changing rapidly. Stanley J. Grenz in his text, A Primer on Postmodernism, writes, "Our society is in the throes of monumental transition, moving from modernity to post modernity . . . The transition from the modern era to the postmodern era poses a grave challenge to the church in its mission to its own next generation"(1996:10). Dr. Timothy Keller, Pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in Manhattan, NY in a *By Faith* article entitled, "Post-everything,"[4],[5] defines this generation as "Post-everything people" (2003:29). He claims:

> These people are post-secular. They are much more open to the super-natural, to spirituality, and to religion but not necessarily to Christianity. They are also post-ideological. . . . The emerging culture is also post-modern. Our society increasingly is opposed to purely rationalistic explanations for experience, and does not accept the hardnosed, scientific secularism of the past (2003:29).

While this change has been occurring for quite some time, inertia is building and the time to respond is upon us. We do indeed live in a postmodern world and we must carefully study both the Gospel and culture. A plethora of materials are available and should be diligently studied so as to not only get a grasp on the change, but to understand how the church should function in light of this new reality.[6]

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[3] However, not a full or complete description, "Majority Anglo" primarily refers to non-Hispanic whites.

[4] In this article Keller attempts to show how Reformed theology engages this emerging culture and challenges the PCA to do so.

[5] In this article Keller attempts to show how Reformed Theology engages this emerging culture and challenges the PCA to do so.

[6] For further study on post Postodernity as it pertains to the church, see Van Gelder, "Postmodernism as an Emerging Worldview," *Calvin Theological Journal 26* (November 1991). Other suggested authors

Yet as thorough and accurate as these studies on post modernity are, they are missing a key ingredient in understanding our changing culture. Most studies focus on the change that has occurred in majority Anglo thought and written without taking into account the effects of changing patterns of immigration. The change is not simply a paradigm shift, but a rather a new international North America that is forming from a highly significant non-majority Anglo population shift.

Studies have estimated that by the year 2050 majority Anglos will barely be the majority in the United States. A March 18, 2004 article in the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, written by Shweta Govindarajan of the Cox Washington Bureau, quoted one study that notes in particular the phenomenal African American and Hispanic population growth that is occurring at a faster rate then earlier predicted.

> The growth of the U.S. population is speeding up, and so is the change in its racial and ethnic makeup, the U.S. Census says. In a new set of projections released today, the Census Bureau estimates the U.S. population will reach 420 million in 2050, nearly 50 percent more than the current figure. It also says that because of a declining birthrate and Baby Boomers reaching the end of their life spans, the non-Hispanic white majority will decline to 50.1 percent of the total by mid-century.

Not only is the African American and Hispanic population exploding but the Asian and Euro-Asian populations are increasing steadily.[7]

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include David Dockery, Robert Greer, Douglas Groothuis, Millard J. Erickson, Alister McGrath and James Sire.

[7] The latest United States census figures support this study's finding. Projections by the Census estimate that the white alone, not Hispanic population, in 2050 will be 210,283 million representing 50.1 percent of the population of the United States. Hispanics of any race will number 102,560 million, while Blacks alone will number 61,361 million.

> Meanwhile, it says, both the Hispanic and African-American populations will grow faster than previously projected. The projections represent an updating of figures released in 2000, which projected the 2050 population at 404 million, with 53 percent of the total non-Hispanic whites. Currently, that group accounts for a little more than 75 percent of the population. The fastest increase is expected to be among Asians, whose population is projected to grow by 213 percent to 33.4 million in 2050, representing 8 percent of the total population. That is a slight decrease from the earlier projection of 37.6 million (Govindarajan 2004).

Though North America has been an ethnic and cultural melting pot, this internationalization of North America represents a drastic shift away from Western European immigration and therefore the prominence of Western European thought is rapidly waning. As this change takes place, the PCA finds herself facing a daunting challenge.

The PCA is a "Western European" church whose ancestry runs deep in post-Reformation history. Her fathers migrated from Western Europe largely representing Scottish and Dutch heritages. Because early migration in the eastern regions of the North American continent was heavily from Western Europe, she has been able to prosper within that population. She has only marginally impacted significantly different cultures and thus faces a serious challenge in attempting to accomplish the Great Commission in the future.

The question the PCA must ask herself is how can a church with such a strong western European heritage and bias not only reach a culturally diverse world, but also do so without compromising doctrinal distinctives?

THESIS QUESTION

How can the Presbyterian Church in America have effective Gospel ministry to those outside the non-Hispanic white majority in North America?

DEFINITIONS

The following terms will be used in this study:

1. Contextualization: "Adapting my communication of the gospel without changing its essential character" (Keller 2004:1).
2. Church Growth: "Church growth is the balanced increase in quantity, quality, and organizational complexity of a local church" (Jenson 1981:10).
3. Culture: "Culture is an integrated system of beliefs, values, customs, and institutions which bind a society together and gives it a sense of identity, dignity, security and continuity" (The Lausanne Committee on World Evangelization, 1990: C-162).
4. Gospel: The good news that the eternal Son of God took on humanity, lived a sinless life, and died a sinner's death in our place for our sin. He is now raised and seated in heaven as Lord and Savior, advancing God's kingdom over every sphere of life and promising freedom from sin's penalty and power to all who will repent of their sin and trust in Him.
5. Ethnic group: A group of people who share a common and distinctive racial, national, religious, linguistic, or cultural heritage and are distinguished as a more or less distinct group by genetically transmitted physical characteristics.
6. Missional church: A missional church focuses all of its activities around its participation in God's mission in the world. That means, it trains people for

discipleship and witness; it worships and practices mutual support before the watching world. A church with a mission sends others to witness on its behalf. A missional church understands that the congregation itself is sent by God to proclaim and to be a sign of the reign of God. Just as God sent Jesus, now Jesus sends the church (Jn 20:21).

7. North America: In the context of this paper, North America will refer primarily to the United States of America, and will also include Canada, but exclude Mexico based on the ethnic identity of the majority population in Mexico.

SIGNIFICANCE

This study is highly significant because the North American culture is in the midst of a radical shift away from Western European cultural patterns. If the Presbyterian Church in America is not enlightened to this shift and given tools to engage it, the church will quickly lose her power and effectiveness.

This study will expand the missiological and educational resources in the Master of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry programs at Reformed Theological Seminary in Orlando, Florida. This study will also contribute to the training and coaching of church planters in the New Church Network of the North Georgia Presbytery and will be a tool for churches that desire to effectively expand the Kingdom of Christ.

This study will enable me to clarify my understanding of being a missionary in my own country. In so doing, this study will enable me to reach the lost more effectively and better equip Christian leaders.

GOALS

In this study I seek to prove that North America has moved from being an international melting pot to a pluralistic society better represented by the metaphor of a vegetable stew.[8] For the Presbyterian Church in America to be faithful to the Great Commission, and preserve her doctrinal heritage, she must understand the present cultural context and respond with a biblical, Reformed, and missional approach.

As I present a possible approach to this problem, I will seek to fulfill four primary goals:

1. Biblical Goal (Chapter 2 Goal). A description of the Apostle Peter and Apostle Paul's response to conflicting Gentile cultures from both a biblical and theological perspective.
2. Historical Review Goal (Chapter 3 Goal). A description of how North America moved from being a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural melting pot to a pluralistic cultural vegetable stew.
3. Analysis Goal (Chapter 4 Goal). An evaluation of the problem in light of 1) the biblical findings (Chapter 2) and 2) the historical findings (Chapter 3).
4. Synthesis Goal (Chapter 5 Goal). A suggestion for how these descriptions and evaluations can be used as a paradigm for equipping church leaders in the PCA to effectively reach those outside the non-Hispanic white majority.

[8] Because minorities are now a much larger percentage of the overall population, the dominant culture has been weakened. Therefore, the minorities no longer melt into the dominant culture, but become a segment of the broader culture. It is the author's opinion that the melting pot context in North America is how the PCA has been able to thrive. I owe the word picture of vegetable stew to Richard Pratt.

ASSUMPTIONS

The following assumptions have been made prior to beginning the research:

1. The Authority of Scripture. This study assumes that the Bible is the final authority in faith and life. Though cultures will change, the authority of Scripture does not.
2. The power of the gospel. This study assumes that the gospel is the ultimate solution to every problem, both social and personal. The key to personal, church and cultural transformation is to be found in recovering the transforming power of the gospel. There cannot be personal or social transformation without it.
3. The missional role of the church. This study assumes that the church is God's primary means for advancing the Kingdom. Though the church is to be a place of worship, her worshippers are to be about claiming the lost.
4. The validity of the Presbyterian Church in America. This study assumes that the Presbyterian Church in America is a valid representation of the visible church and that God will continue to use her in the advancement of His Kingdom.
5. The equality of all races. This study assumes that God favors no ethnic, cultural group or gender (Gal 3:28) and that He is building His Kingdom from peoples of every ethnic and cultural group (Rev 7:9).

6. The Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms. This study assumes that the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms contain the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures.

The research conducted for this dissertation will determine the validity of these assumptions.

RESEARCH METHODOLODY

The methodology for this study will be a combination of exegetical, theological and historical research. Data was collected from primary documents and secondary resources. The resources for review are written materials. The literature encompasses three basic areas: 1) the advance of the gospel in the early church 2) selected historical writings and 3) a contemporary analysis of the Presbyterian Church in America.

Special attention is given to sections of Scripture where the early church grappled with Gentile cultures. Historical research methodologies was utilized for the study of the Reformed and Presbyterian Church in North America. The historical research is limited to the underlying development of the Presbyterian Church in America.

Chapter Summary

We have seen in this chapter that North America is changing. As she continues to grow, that growth will not primarily occur in the majority Anglo population, but rather be in all other races. This growth comes through both immigration and high birth rates. At the same time, the PCA is a denomination that is made up primarily of those with a

western European lineage. In addition, we are a highly historic denomination whose theological roots are also deeply engrained in western European thought.

We also understand that the PCA is committed to the Great Commission (Mt 28:19-20) and is actively involved in missions around the world. The home missions' committee, Mission to North America, is actively planting churches and has ambitious goals for the future. There is little doubt that, at face value, the PCA is committed to reaching the world for Christ, but quite possibly unaware of both her weaknesses and the difficulty of the task.

Yet, a vision to reach the lost is insignificant if we are unaware of our own liabilities. Therefore, in an effort to better understand the liabilities we are going to examine the person, call and ministry of Peter and Paul. Both of these apostles were highly effective in evangelism to Jews and Gentiles alike. These two men came from drastically different backgrounds and had very different levels of education, yet God called both to step out of their own culture and into cultures that were strikingly different from their own. In addition, their ministry forced them to evaluate their theological traditions and adapt them for the sake of the Gospel.

CHAPTER 2

PETER AND PAUL'S GENTILE MINISTRY

As the PCA looks to the challenge of living in a multi-cultured nation it is crucial to proceed with proper understanding. Because we believe the Scriptures to be our infallible guide for faith and life, it is of utmost importance that we look at our response to such a world through the eyes of Scripture.[9] Therefore, as we grapple with how to have effective outreach to cultures that are strikingly different from the majority Anglo culture, and which are at times threatening, it is essential that our response be rooted in Scripture.

It is here that we find a picture of the hope of all believers. In Revelation 7:9, John gives us a glimpse at that final multitude: "After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb." Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, came down to earth to redeem for Himself the people John describes. The world that He was born into was multi-cultural Palestine and it was in this context that He trained the disciples.

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[9] The WCF I:VI states, "The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deducted from Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by the new revelations of the Spirit or traditions of men"

Peter

One of those men was Simon Peter. We first encounter Peter as Jesus is walking by the Sea of Galilee.[10] It is here that He encounters Peter, as he and his brother Andrew are busy in their profession of fishing. Not much is given in regards to this meeting other than Jesus giving the men the challenge, "Come follow me and I will make you fishers of men" (Mt 4:19). From this point on, Peter is one of the Twelve.

Peter, the pretentious and outspoken disciple, was one who blundered often and, in the midst of the Christ's passion, was the one who denied his Christ distinctly and decisively three times. Yet as John closes out his gospel, we find the account of Peter's reinstatement to the calling given to him on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. Here in John 21, Jesus looks directly at Peter and asks three times if he loves Him. With each positive response by Peter, Jesus reminds him of his commission to "feed His sheep."

This intimate moment was significant in the life of Peter. When we find him in the book of Acts, he is a passionate preacher of the Gospel and leader in the early church. It was he who proposed a replacement of Judas Iscariot and it was he would preach to the crowds in Jerusalem resulting in the salvation of "about three thousand" (Acts 2:41). Repeatedly throughout the early chapters of Acts, we find Peter busy in the work of his ministry to the Jewish community.

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[10] Galilee or Galilee of the Gentiles, was one of the largest Roman districts of Palestine; the primary region of Jesus' ministry (Luk 3:1; 23:6) was a multi-cultural setting itself for quite some time.

A Call from Cornelius

In Acts 10 Peter is called to take a new direction in his ministry, as he is divinely led into the life of a Gentile centurion by the name of Cornelius.[11] F.F. Bruce writes the following:

> The range of the apostolic message has been steadily broadened. Already it has begun to cross the barrier that separated the Jews and Gentiles; now the time has come for that barrier to be crossed authoritatively by an apostle….The apostle who crossed it was Peter, the leader of the twelve, the place he crossed it was the largely Gentile city of Caesarea. The Gentiles who first heard the gospel from his lips were the family and friends of Cornelius (1988:201).

Chapter 10 opens with a brief description of Cornelius, a centurion in the Roman army who was from Caesarea. Luke interestingly adds that he was Italian.[12] This is in contrast to Luke's normal characterization of Gentile. This was because Luke, who was himself was a Gentile, describes Cornelius as a religious man whose entire household worshiped God.[13] In addition, he was a good Gentile who, despite his exclusion from the Jewish community, was very generous to them.

Luke's appreciation for the significance of this account is evidenced by not only the details and focus given to Cornelius and Peter's vision, but by Peter restating that experience in 11:4-7. Underlying the significance of this event, Bruce goes on to add:

> Peter and Cornelius were each prepared by a visionary experience for their encounter. The whole narrative… is of great importance not only

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[11] Longenecker adds, "With the range of Christian mission steadily broadening, the time had come for the gospel to cross the barrier that separated Jews and Gentiles and to be presented directly to Gentiles. Luke next takes up the story of the conversion of Cornelius, the importance of which in his eyes can be judged in part by the space he devotes to it – sixty-six verses in all" (1981:383).

[12] Commentators have speculated that the Italian cohort mentioned here was probably "the *Cohors II Miliara Ilalica Civium Romanoum.* This consisted of archers who were freedmen originally from Italy upon whom citizenship had been conferred" (Longenecker 198:385).

[13] However, *phobuoumenos to theon* could mean that Cornelius was a near-proselyte or proselyte of the gate, it more than likely means "a religious man."

> because it tells how Peter used the keys of the kingdom to open "a door of faith" to the Gentiles, but also because it introduces the questions of social intercourse between Jewish believers and Gentiles and of the admission of Gentile believers to the church without circumcision (1988:203, 204).

As the text continues to unfold, we find God orchestrating this significant event. First, we find God speaking through an angel in a vision to Cornelius. Not only does the angel tell Cornelius that his prayers and acts of charity were not unnoticed, but that he was to send his servants to go and get Peter. Though Luke does not specifically tell us this, God was going to give Cornelius what He had been seeking for quite some time. Immediately Cornelius carries out the instructions and dispatches two of his servants and a devoted God-fearing soldier to Joppa.

Peter's Vision

The next day, as the servants of Cornelius were almost to Joppa, Peter goes to the roof top to pray at the sixth hour, about noon. While he was there on the roof top, Peter became hungry. As he waited for the food he, like Cornelius, received a vision from the Lord.[14] In his vision, Peter saw heaven opened up and something that looked like a large sheet lowered to the earth by its four corners. In the sheet were "four footed animals, reptiles and birds" (Acts 10:12). God, in Genesis 6, uses these three categories to describe the animal world, as two of every kind in each of these categories are to be put

[14] "Though Peter was not by training or inclination an overly scrupulous Jew, and though as a Christian his inherited prejudices were gradually wearing thin, he was not prepared to go as far as to minister directly to Gentiles. A special revelation was necessary for that, and Luke now tells how God took the initiative in overcoming Peter's reluctance" (Longenecker 1981:387)

on the ark. These animals included those classified both as clean and unclean according to Jewish law and custom.

In Leviticus 11, the animals that were considered clean and unclean are given to Moses. With the exception of the camel, coney, rabbit, and pig, four-legged animals that both chewed the cud and had a split hoof were fit to eat. In great detail, God specified what in the animal kingdom could and could not be eaten and concludes with these words: "These are the regulations concerning animals, birds, every living thing that moves in the water, and every creature that moves about on the ground. You must distinguish between the unclean and the clean, between living creatures that may be eaten and those that may not be eaten" (Lev 11:46, 47).

As the plethora of wildlife writhed in the sheet before Peter, a voice from heaven commanded him to get up, kill the unclean animals, and then eat them. This vision had become a nightmare and Peter replies, "Surely not, Lord! . . . I have never eaten anything impure or unclean" (Acts 10:14).[15] Yet the heavenly voice replies, "Do not call anything impure that God has made clean." Once again we find the triplicate pattern so common to Peteras this interchange occurred three times before the sheet is lifted up to heaven.[16]

Though the vision was over, Peter remained on the roof reflecting on what had just happened. Peter's hunger is no longer an issue, as he is overwhelmed with what God had just commanded him to do. The command in triplicate possibly took him back to his

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[15] While not overly scrupulous, Peter had undoubtedly always observed the basic Levitical dietary restrictions.

[16] Though there is little scholarly opinion on the triplicate pattern, it is my opinion that it has ties to Peter's triplicate denial and Jesus' triplicate call to Peter in John 19.

denial of and reinstatement by his Master. While in the midst of this deep reflection, the Holy Spirit gave him the first step in the answer to questions he was pondering: "Simon, three men are looking for you. So get up and go downstairs. Do not hesitate to go with them, for I have sent them" (Acts 10:19b-20).

Little did Peter know that he was soon to have the opportunity to apply what he had just been taught for while Peter was still grappling with what he had seen, Cornelius' men arrived asking for Peter. The Holy Spirit told him that there were three men downstairs waiting for him and that he should not hesitate to go with them. Before heading off with the men to Caesara, Peter not only invited these men "as his guests" (Acts 10:23), but it is at this moment that Peter responds to the vision and eats with these Gentile men, as well.[17]

The Purpose of the Food Laws

Central to Peter's vision was the abrogation of long-standing food or dietary laws given to the people of Israel by God. The basic purpose of the food laws was to keep Israel pure of pagan influence. Therefore, the law prohibited eating with Gentiles and eating their food. To do so would result in a Jew being ceremonially unclean.[18]

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[17] Thought the text does not explicitly mention food or a meal, it is implied when Peter welcomes them into his house as guests.

[18] It was largely because of the lack of scruples in food matters that the Gentiles were ritually unsafe people for a pious Jew to meet socially. Intercourse with Gentiles was not categorically forbidden; but it was liable to render a Jew ceremonially unclean, as was even entering of a Gentile building or the handling of articles belonging to Gentiles. The most ordinary kinds of food, such as bread, milk, or olive oil, coming from Gentiles, might not be eaten by strict Jews, not to mention flesh, which might have come from a forbidden animal or from one that had been sacrificed to a pagan divinity and which in any case contained blood. Hence, of all forms of intercourse with Gentiles, to accept their hospitality and sit at table with them was the most intolerable" (Bruce 1969: 21).

Vern Poythress in his text entitled, The Shadow of Christ in the Law of Moses, correctly points out that,

> God is the source of both order and life. In creation God not only brings order out of chaos but life out of nonlife. The world is created not only to express the order and the beauty of God, but to serve as a suitable arena of human life. . . . The fall exhibits the stark contrast between life and death. God is the source of life, and disobedience fittingly results in death (Genesis 2:17). On the day when Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, they died in a real and spiritual sense. But physical death is a fitting concomitant to the deeper spiritual death. Because human beings have renounced and destroyed the true life with God, their own physical life is in turn destroyed. Physical death is thus simultaneously a punishment and a symbol of deeper spiritual loss (1991:84).

Israel's exodus from Egypt, then, was not merely a deliverance from the physical abuse of Egyptians, but a deliverance from the influence of Egyptian worship of false gods.[19] Therefore, the giving of the law was the means to life and fellowship with God.

> If the Israelites obey the commandments, they will live (Leviticus 18:5; Deuteronomy 28:1-14), and if they disobey they will die (Exodus 19:21-22; 32:9-10; Deuteronomy 6:15; 28:15-68). The Ten Commandments embody the core of life. . . . The laws concerning clean and unclean also embody the themes of life and death, often on an indirect, symbolic plane. . . All things described in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14 are unclean for Israel. But Deuteronomy 14:21 explicitly allows Israelites to sell carcasses to aliens and foreigners. What is prohibited by Israel is not prohibited to others. Rather, the prohibition rests on the fact that "you (Israelites) are a holy people to the LORD your God" (Deuteronomy 14:21). The world has been contaminated with curse and uncleanness originating in the fall. The Gentile nations participate in this unclearness through their contact with unclean animals. But such uncleanness is not in itself sin. It is merely symbolic of sin. And uncleanness accompanies symbolic holiness. Israel alone is required to observe ceremonial cleanness, because they are the holy people. Their special access to God makes it necessary for them to maintain special distance from the fall and the curse (Poythress 1991:84-85).

[19] "They are not redeemed from the physical oppression of Egyptian slavery, but from the spiritual bondage and deceit involved in worship of Egyptian god" (Poythress 1991:84).

It is understandable then, why removal of the food laws was shocking, for they were not only a way of life, but for centuries a requirement of God for fellowship.

Peter's Response

It is easy to miss the significance of what is occurring here. Peter was told by God to go to a people that were not only outside of his cultural context, but to a people religiously forbidden. Not only was there little compassion for those outside the Jewish culture group but there was also a disdain for their way of life. Though the physical distance was inconsequential, Peter traveled to a drastically different world, contextually. In a matter of days, God called, equipped, and sent Peter to an alien mission field.

Not surprisingly, Peter responds to his new call, and the Gospel of Jesus Christ affected not only the life of Cornelius, but his household, as well. In contrast to the ministry of Paul, Peter's action at this time was a half step in the right direction as Cornelius and his family were already God-fearers. It would not be until a later date that Peter went to true pagans.

Yet it is significant to take note that as Cornelius and his family received the Gospel, it continued to do a work in the heart and attitude of Peter. Two significant events occurred during Peter's journey to Caesarea that revealed his changing view toward the Gentiles.

First, we see Peter's response to Cornelius' homage as the two met in the courtyard of Cornelius' Caesarean home. As Peter enters, Cornelius comes out to meet him and falls prostrate at the apostle's feet as an act of reverence and respect for this

messenger of God. More than likely, this had never happened to Peter, a commoner in his Jewish culture. Here was the opportunity to grasp what had never been given him, as this Gentile centurion lay in the dust at his feet. Yet Peter, having tasted utter humiliation in his denial of Christ and firmly understanding the heart of the Gospel, looks down at this man and says, "Stand up, I am only a man myself."[20]

The second significant event occurred when Peter entered the house full of Cornelius' relatives and close friends. As Peter entered the room full of ceremonially unclean people the impact of what he was doing hit him. Just two or three days previously, Peter would never have considered entering into such company. In fact, Peter voiced this concern when he said, "You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with a Gentile or visit him, but God has shown me that I should not call any man impure or unclean.[21] So when I was sent for, I came with raising objection. May I ask why you sent for me" (Acts 10:28, 29)?

The Gentile Response

Once in the home, Cornelius asked Peter to tell all who were present "everything the Lord has commanded you to tells us" (Act 10:33). When Peter began his message, he did so with a powerful declaration to which Longenecker comments: "In Luke's eyes

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[20] Longenecker comments that Cornelius' action was not only an action that Peter was not accustomed to, but that Peter was brought up to consider such an action blasphemous (1981:390).

[21] "Ideally this was an ideal representation of the Jewish position (as so often happens in Tal.), for Jewish ethical law contains a number of provisions for Jewish-Gentile business partnerships (e.g., b *Shabbath* 150a) and even for Jews' bathing with Gentiles (ibid. 151a). But such contacts made with a Jew ceremonially unclean, as did entering Gentiles' buildings or touching their possession (cf. *M Abodah Zarah,* passim). Above all, it was forbidden to accept the hospitality of Gentiles and eat with them, particularly because Gentiles did not tithe. Scrupulous Jews were not even permitted to be guests of a Jewish commoner (cf M *Demai* 2:2-3), much less of a Gentile (ibid. 3:4) (Longenecker 1981:390).

what Peter was about to say was indeed momentous in sweeping away centuries of racial prejudice" (1981:393). [22] Indeed Peter's opening statement was significant as he stated: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism" (Acts 10:34). Luke, a Gentile himself, understood the significance of Peter's words and therefore seems to draw special attention to them as Peter begins sharing the good news of Jesus Christ to these Gentiles.

Peter's sermon outline had the basic ingredients used on many occasions throughout the book of Acts. C. K. Barrett in, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles writes; "The work, death, and resurrection of Jesus had been recounted; prophetic testimony had been claimed; the offer of forgiveness has been made. There was nothing else to say" (1994:528,529). And in fact Peter had not yet finished speaking when the Holy Spirit manifested itself in what some have termed the "Pentecost of the Gentile world.".[23]

The coming of the Holy Spirit on these Gentiles was visually similar to what occurred to the disciples at Pentecost. Longenecker comments,

> With the promise of forgiveness offered "through his name" and to "everyone who believes in him," they were given a reason of hoping beyond their fondest hopes. And with their reception of that inclusive message, the Holy Spirit came upon the Gentile congregation gathered there just as he had come upon the disciples at Pentecost" (1981:395).

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[22] "Literally, 'Peter opened his mouth' is one that is used to introduce some weighty utterance. The first words that Peter spoke were words of the weightiest import, sweeping way the racial and religious prejudices of centuries. The world of Cornelius confirmed the lesson that Peter himself had learned in Joppa: God has no favorites as between one nation and another, but anyone, from whatever nation, who fears him and acts rightly is accepted to by him" (Bruce 1988: 211, 212).

[23] F.H. Chase in his, *The Acts of the Apostles* (London: Macmillan, 1902:79), who called this "the Pentecost of the Gentile world."

These new Gentile converts spoke with tongues and praised God. This surprised the Jewish believers who were there with Peter, and it was these external manifestations that convinced the Jewish believers, and quite possibly Peter himself, that the Gentiles' conversions were legitimate.. "From first to last in this story it is God who takes the first initiative. . . The new access to divine life that Christians identified with the promised gift of the Holy Spirit was experienced by all who were listening to Peter's address (the word – of God, or of the Lord)" (Barrett 1994:529). The Jewish believers who had accompanied Peter from Joppa were astonished by what they saw and heard; Gentiles, the lesser breed without the law, had actually received the same Holy Spirit as they themselves had received on believing the same message.

In response, Peter said, "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Spirit just as we have." Baptism, the sign and seal of God's covenant with His people, was applied. Peter is therefore recognizing these Gentiles as one with the Christian Jews.

The Criticism of the Circumcised

The word spread quickly of what had occurred in the household of Cornelius in Caesarea and Peter goes to Jerusalem to meet with leaders of the church. Not surprisingly, Peters' flagrant breaking of the law over shadowed by the joy of the Gospel coming to the Gentiles. As a result, "the circumcised believers criticized him and said, 'You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them'" (Acts 11:2b, 3). As

Peter had not simply broken with tradition, but had transgressed the law, he was forced to defend his actions.

Who were those that were upset by Peter's actions? They were Jewish believers who were specifically passionate for the law and this was exhibited by their insistence that Jewish believers should have no social interaction with the uncircumcised. In their opinion, Peter had been negligent and now needed to defend his breaking of the law.

Peter defends himself by a giving a detailed and forthright account of his experience to the questioning brothers. In response to the criticism, Peter explains his actions by recounting the sequence of events (Act 11:4-17). Peter emphasizes the vision (11:4-7); his reluctance to do what he was commanded (11:8); and of the Holy Spirit leading him to go with the three men to Caesarea (11:12). Peter concludes by telling the concerned brothers of the Holy Spirit coming upon the Gentiles. He then adds: "Then I remembered what the Lord had said 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' So if God gave them the same gift as he gave us, who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could oppose God" (Acts 11:16-17)?

At the conclusion of Peter's defense we find a remarkable change of heart as the accusers "had no further objections."[24] There was nothing that could be said to counter Peter's argument. The accusers were satisfied. God had given these brothers a change of mind and heart and their accusations turned into praise.[25]

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[24] Barrett points out "The general sense is clear: God had made plain his intention; who was I to act in a contrary fashion" (1994:543)

[25] "The practical problems which were to become so acute when the large-scale Gentile evangelism began did not arise at this stage. Even so, it may be surmised that the endorsement of Peter's action was more wholehearted on the part of his fellow-apostles than on the part of the zealous rank and file of the Jerusalem church… the apostles had at least admitted the principle of evangelizing the Gentiles and had

The controversy brought on by Peter's vision quieted for a time. However, the work of Spirit in the Gentile world was just beginning. As the church scattered, her members shared the message of the risen Messiah. In Antioch, their message was well received as "the Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord" (Acts 11:21). The power of God was manifested there and it was here that Luke tells us, "The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch" (Acts 11:26b).

The Counsel in Jerusalem

The council in Jerusalem is another significant occasion to Luke. Like the coming of the Gospel to Cornelius and the conversion of Paul, this was a significant event in the life of the New Testament church as she continued to grow into the Gentile world. With the rapid growth of the church in the Gentile community, the belief system of the more conservative Jewish Christians was threatened. The entrance of Gentiles into the church was not a concern as the Old Testament clearly pointed to the promises of Israel being shared with the Gentiles.[26] Proselytizing was well understood and so were the requirements for it.

> But the correlative conviction of Judaism was that Israel was God's appointed for the application of these blessings – that only through the nation and its institutions could Gentiles have a part in God's redemption and share in his favor. And there seems to have been no expectation on the part of the Christians in Jerusalem that this program would be materially altered, though they did insist that in these "last days" God was

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done so in time to recognize the same principle being worked out farther north on a scale previously unimagined" (Bruce 1988: 223).

[26] Gen 22:18; 26:4; 28:14; Isa 49:6:55:5-7; Zec 8:22.

> at work in and through the Jewish Christians as the faithful remnant within the nation (Longenecker 1981:440).

It had been the norm within the Church that a belief in Jesus Christ would correspond with the requirements of becoming a proselyte and up to this point Cornelius was the exception.

Though concern over the food laws had been addressed, the larger question in regard to the necessity of circumcision had not been. It came to a head when "some men" (Acts 15:1) came down from Judea to Antioch and began to teach the Gentile brothers that circumcision was necessary for salvation. This action forced the discussion which became the central issue of debate at the Councils meeting

It is unknown just who these men were. The Western text adds that they were "of the party of the Pharisees, who were believers" (cf.v.5), but this is far from certain. They may have been those men Paul mentions in Galatians 2:12 as "from James." It is also possible that they were the "false brothers who infiltrated our ranks to spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus" (Gal 2:4). Antioch would have been a likely location for this espionage escapade as the Gentile believer population was large and the enthusiasm was high. Because of the dispute between these teachers and Paul and Barnabas, the church in Antioch selected them to go to up to Jerusalem and see the other apostles and elders.

As Paul and Barnabas arrived in Jerusalem they were welcomed by the church, the apostles and the elders, who listened with great interest to their report of "everything that God had done through them" (Acts 15:4). This interest did not mean approval then, as Luke writes, but "some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees

stood up and said, 'The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to obey the law of Moses'" (Acts 15:5).

The Purpose of Circumcision

Circumcision, like the food laws, was ordained by God and had great significance to people of Israel. In fact, circumcision had been in place for a much longer time than the food laws, having been given to Abraham in Genesis 17. There we read,

> When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and said, "I am God Almighty; walk before me and be blameless. I will confirm my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers." Abram fell facedown, and God said to him, "As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations. No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations. I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you. I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. The whole land of Canaan, where you are now an alien, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God" (17:1-7).

Circumcision was the "sign" (17:11) of the great and everlasting covenant of promise given to Abraham and his offspring. Scripture explicitly commands that circumcision should continue beyond Abraham and his household.

> This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised. You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and you. For the generations to come every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised, including those born in your household or bought with money from a foreigner-- those who are not your offspring. Whether born in your household or bought with your money, they must be circumcised. My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant. Any uncircumcised male, who has not been

> circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant (17:10-14)

Circumcision, like clean and unclean food distinctions, were important to the separation motif[27] and served as a physical reminder of God's covenant and the peoples' need of separation from the Gentile nations around them. As with the food laws, it was a prerequisite for rights in the community and fellowship with God. [28]

> Circumcision was a ritual of cleansing, for the uncircumcised are unclean. It is a cleansing dedication, for it marks acknowledgement of God's lordship. In the context of covenant-making, the bloody rite performed on the male organ also included the sign of judgment against the covenant-breaker with reference to his descendents. The threat of the sanction is expressed: any uncircumcised male will be *cut off,* because "he has broken my covenant (Gn. 17:14). The 'cutting' of the covenant, with the cutting off of foreskin, symbolizes that curse (Clowney 1995:279).

The Problem with the Gentile Converts

The tension here is significant and far deeper than a theological disparity between the legalistic Christian Pharisees and the Apostles. [29] The debate over circumcision and obedience of the law was not a matter of expediency, but principally a debate over the revealed will of God.

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[27] The Westminster Confession of Faith.(7.5) This covenant was differently administered in the time of the law, and in the time of the gospel; under the law it was administered by promises, prophecies, sacrifices, circumcision, the paschal lamb, and other types and ordinances delivered to the people of the Jews, allfore signifying Christ to come, which were for that time sufficient and efficacious, through the operation of the Spirit, to instruct and build up the elect in faith in the promised Messiah, by whom they had full remission of sins, and eternal salvation; and is called the Old Testament

[28] Exodus 12:48 required circumcision for "an alien living among you who wants to celebrate the Lord's Passover must have all the males in his household circumcised."

[29] The vast majority, including a Hellenized Jew as Philo of Alexandria, insisted on circumcision as indispensable for all males in the commonwealth of Israel, whether they entered it by birth or proselytization. This was probably the attitude of the rank and file in the Jerusalem church – "zealots of the law," as they are called on a later occasion, 21:20 (Bruce 1988: 287).

> Indeed the prophets spoke of the salvation of the Gentiles as an event of the last days (cf. Isa 2:2; 11:20; 25 8-9; Zech 8:23) through the witness restored to Israel (cf. Isa 2:3; 60:2-3; Zech 8:23). Thus a believer could hardly oppose reaching Gentiles through the ministry of the church. But for these over scrupulous Christians in Jerusalem, the outreach was to come from within their group and follow a proselyte model, not to come from outside the group and be apart from the law (Longenecker 1985:444).

The Israelite community had gone through much tribulation and to these conservative Christian Jews the church was the hope of Israel. It was "the righteous remnant of Judaism, embodying the ancestral hope which all Israel ought to have welcomed, preparing itself for the impending day of the Lord" (Bruce 1988:287). To relax any of the requirements of the Abrahamic Covenant, sealed in the flesh of circumcision, would be to "forfeit all claims to remnant righteousness, all title to salvation on the last day" (Bruce 1988: 287). To the Christian Pharisees,[30] there was much at stake.

Though these men were Christian, they came with a legalistic view of the law, and from a group who were legalists using the law as tool for both power and control.

> The Pharisees were a religious party, dating from the time of John Hyrcanus and Alexander Janneus. They seem always to have represented the ordinary people as against aristocracy and pure religion over against the ecclesiastical politics so characterized by the Sadducces. They made a great deal of the study of the Law. But they tended to surround it with a mass of their own interpretations. In practice this meant that the keeping of their traditions loomed larger than the Law. On occasion, as Jesus pointed out, the traditions hindered men from living in accordance

[30] Pharisees, as believers in the doctrine of the resurrection, could become Christians without relinquishing their distinctive beliefs: to what they already believed, they could add the belief that Jesus had been raised from the dead and was thus divinely proclaimed to be the Lord and Messiah. But if their Christianity did not amount to more than this, they remained legalists at heart – unlike their illustrious fellow Pharisee Paul, whose outlook was totally reoriented by his Damascus-road experience: not only was Jesus revealed to him as the risen Lord but he was called to preach a law-free gospel in His name (1988: 288).

> with the spirit of the Law (Mark 7:6ff). Some Pharisees were men of noble spirit, but all too often their multitudinous regulations led to an emphasis on the outward and this in turn to spiritual pride. This was accentuated by the fact that ordinary men did not have the time (nor the inclination!) to learn, let alone practice, the host of traditions that the Pharisees valued so highly (Morris 1971:139)

Not only did the Pharisees have a tendency to misuse the law, but also as legalists, there was a tendency toward exclusivism. "The name 'Pharisee' is usually said to derive from a root which means 'separate,' so that the name basically means those who have separated themselves from all loose religious practices and live in strict accordance with the Law" (Morris 1971:139). With the inflow of Gentile converts, this exclusivity would be lost.

It then comes as no surprise that the greatest dissatisfaction came from those members of the Jerusalem church who were associated with the Pharisees. They were the ones insisting that Gentile converts should submit to circumcision and, in general, keep the Mosaic Law.

Peter's Appeal

There was much at stake as the apostles and elders came together to settle this matter. The intensity of the dispute is evidenced by the lengthy debate or questioning that occurred at the onset of the meeting. In due time we find four men stand and address the counsel. They were Peter, Paul, Barnabas, and then James.

Peter, as the leader of the apostles[31] and the instigator of the problem, stood first. His address is powerful, to the point, and in Spirit.[32] His appeal is surprisingly simple. He does not go into elaborate detail of his rooftop vision and subsequent visit to the home of Cornelius, but rather appeals to God's sovereign hand. It was God that chose him as the mouthpiece to communicate the Gospel to the Gentiles. It was as if he said, "Out of all of us, God chose me, you know my reluctance, you know my bigotry and pride, but God chose me to be the one to go into the house of Cornelius so that he, his family, and other Gentiles could hear the Gospel from my own lips."

Peter not only points to God's sovereign choice, but to the Holy Spirit's authentication of the faith of these Gentiles. In verse 8 we find, "God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us." So not only did God choose Peter as his mouthpiece, but the evidencing of the Holy Spirit occurred just as it had to them in Jerusalem. This not only proves that the Gentile converts' faith was genuine but as verse nine states, "He made no distinction between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith." The legitimacy of this work was evidenced in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on these Gentiles.

The working of the Holy Spirit played heavily in convincing the council of the legitimacy of the Gentiles' faith, therefore replacing the laws for proselytes. Just as in his earlier defense in chapter 11, the visible manifestation of the Holy Spirit is significant to Peter. Notice what he said: "Then I remembered what the Lord had said: 'John baptized

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[31] "Peter was no longer the chief figure of the Jerusalem church, as James had earlier assumed that role. But Peter was dominant in the Jewish Christian mission and responsible to the Jerusalem church" (Longenecker 1985:444-445).

[32] The Western text reads, "he rose up in the spirit."

with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' So if God gave them the same gift as he gave us, who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could oppose God" (11:16-17)? This once again is what settles the issue.

Paul and Barnabas followed Peter's speech[33] and relayed their experience of the miraculous signs that God had done through them among the Gentiles. They spoke as witnesses to what they had seen, and spoke in support of Peter. When they had finished speaking, it was as if all eyes turned to James, the brother of Jesus, who enjoyed widespread respect and trust. He was a recognized leader and when he said, "Brothers, listen to me," they did (Acts 11:13).

James's Summation

James's summation is both interesting and powerful. He begins by summarizing Peter's speech, referring to him in Hebrew or Aramaic as Simeon. He not only accepts what Peter has said, but clearly sees the hand of God gathering His chosen people. James purposefully uses terminology that has exclusively referred to the people of Israel when he refers to these Gentile converts

James argues that God's initiative in "visiting the Gentiles" was shown when His Spirit came upon Cornelius and his family as they listened to Peters' preaching. However, this should not come as a surprise because the prophet Amos, whom James quoted, had foretold this.[34]

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[33] The Western text starts verse 12 with "And when the elders had consented to the words spoken by Peter," before addressing the assembly's silence. This seems to emphasize Peter's authority.

[34] "The Gentile mission, then, is the work of God: he has made it known in advance 'from of old' and now has brought it to pass" (Bruce 1988: 294).

The quotation from Amos powerfully argues God's hand in reaching the Gentiles, but the problem of circumcision is not settled. The inclusion of the Gentiles never was the pivotal issue. After all, there had always been provision for proselytes who would be welcomed once they had met the requirements of the Law. Nevertheless, this was not James's conviction. In fact he does not mention circumcision, but when he rules that Jewish believers should "stop troubling" Gentile converts he echoes the plea of Peter to stop placing an intolerable yoke around the necks of the new converts. The demand of circumcision was such a troubling yoke.

In addition to observing baptism, James's conclusion was that the Gentile Christians should be advised to avoid food that had idolatrous association as well as the flesh of animals where the blood had not been completely drained. They should likewise conform to the Jewish code concerning sexual relations instead of remaining content with the pagan standards to which they had previously lived.[35] In other words, James is instructing the Gentiles to observe certain Jewish customs out of deference to the ecclesiastically dominant culture.

The Counsel's Letter

James's recommendations were acceptable to the council and a letter was drafted and men chosen to accompany the letter. The problem of circumcision had been dealt with once and for all in the church.

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[35] There remained, however, a practical problem. In most cities, Gentile believers had to live alongside Jewish believers, who had been brought up to observe the Levitical food restrictions and to avoid contact with Gentiles as far as possible. If there was to be free association between these two groups, certain guidelines must be laid down, especially with regard to table fellowship (Bruce 1988: 295).

The accomplishments at the Council of Jerusalem are highly significant. The council clearly solidified the validity of Gentile conversions and their equality with the Jews as people of God. They too had become members of God's chosen and beloved of Him. This removed the old dividing wall between Jew and Gentile. Both the circumcised and the uncircumcised came through faith alone.

The restrictions given to the Gentile converts were not requirements for salvation, but rather advisements for peaceful fellowship and holy living. The brevity of the list of abstentions is also significant. It was James's intention that coming to faith would not be difficult or confusing. The simplicity of the list had to be startling to Jewish believers. The problem of food offered to idols would continue to be a point of contention for some time, a controversy with which Peter and Paul would both have to deal.

Paul: Missionary to the Gentiles

As the story of the New Testament continues to unfold, the Council of Jerusalem proves to be a pivotal event, for from this time forward we see the church explode. This explosive growth occurs primarily among the Gentiles and through the ministry of the Apostle to the Gentiles, Paul. Though Peters' ministry was a significant step toward ministry to the Gentiles, it was a half step compared to Paul, the self described "least of the Apostles" (1 Cor 15:9). Paul, like Peter, was thrust into a ministry to the Gentiles when he least expected it, but Paul's transition was far more radical as he was not only not one of the twelve, he was an even more a hater and persecutor of the church.

Paul's Call

In Acts 9, we find the account of an angry Paul radically transformed by the Gospel that he would one day proclaim. He was at this time, a serious and zealous Jew who was an active member of its "strictest sect" (Acts 26:5), the Pharisees. He was an active leader in the furious persecution of Christians with a goal to exterminate Christianity altogether. He was granted permission, by the Jewish leaders, to round up Christians and imprison them. On his way to Damascus, he was blinded by the glory of Jesus Christ, stopping him dead in his tracks, leaving him blind as he waited for the new direction that was to befall him.

Paul's call from the beginning was to be a ministry to the Gentile world. Though his love for his own people was evident and he would have some secondary impact, his call and his force would be a far-reaching thrust into the Gentile world.

Paul's Preparation

Though we see God's clear and concise call of Paul and his subsequent change of heart on the road to Damascus, God had been preparing him for this calling throughout his life.

First Paul was born in the city of Tarsus, the capital of Cicilia, a Roman province in the southeast region of Asia Minor. D.A. Carson, Douglas J, Moo, and Leon Morris in, An Introduction to the New Testament, write that Tarsus "was prosperous, privileged (it was exempt from Roman taxation), and cultured, being famous for its schools. Not

only was Paul born in Tarsus, he was a citizen of this 'no ordinary city' (Acts 21:39)" (192:216).

Though there is considerable debate as to if this city was Tarsus or Jerusalem, [36] it is the authors' opinion that Paul was born and brought up in Tarsus moving to Jerusalem when it was time to start formal education.[37] As Tarsus was a secular city, many aspects of education and early life were in a mixed setting. Raised as a dispersed Jew rather than in a segregated city like Jerusalem, molded not only Paul's ability to know and understand the Gentile cultures, but provide him with a comfort level to interact with them.

> Paul's native town may also have led him into his trade. A local product, *cilicim* was used to make tents, and Luke tells us that Paul was himself a "tentmaker" (Acts 18:3). This is presumably the trade that Paul pursued during his missionary work in order not to burden the churches with his support (e.g., I Thess. 2:9) (Moo et al. 1992:216).

Second, and more important than his Tarsus birth and childhood, was Paul's citizenship to Rome:

> The Romans did not confer citizenship on just anyone; only a small percentage of people who lived within the Roman Empire possessed this privilege. Paul's Roman citizenship was inherited from his family (Paul claims, "I was born a citizen" [Acts 22:28], perhaps because of some deed or service performed by his father or grandfather for the Romans. However achieved, Paul's Roman citizenship was an important and providential qualification for his role as missionary to the Roman Empire (Moo, et al, 1992:216).

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[36] The debate surrounds Paul's speech on the temple steps in Acts 22:3 when he says, "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city. . . ." This issue has attracted so much attention because it figures into the debate about Paul's thought world: was he indebted more to the Greek world or to the Jewish world for his teaching" (Moo et al. 1992:216).

[37] Longenecker 1981:525. For further discussion see Richard N. Longenecker, Paul Apostle of Liberty (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1976., pp. 25-27).

A third way that God providentially prepared Paul for his ministry to the Gentiles was his Jewish education. Upon completion of his preliminary education, it is the author's opinion that Paul went to Jerusalem around the age of thirteen. His study would be under the celebrated Gamaliel (Acts 26:3), "a Pharisee of the school of Hillel. Hillel and his followers were generally known for their liberality, an attitude revealed in Gamaliel's advice to the Sanhedrin about the early church (Acts 5:34-39)" (Moo, et al, 1992:218.).[38] The course of study, which took many years, would include both religion and law and was a detailed analysis of the Scriptures interspersed with a Socratic method of questioning delivered by the rabbis. Charles Hodge writes:

> As Luther was educated in the Roman Catholic seminary and thoroughly instructed in the scholastic theology of which he was a great oppressor, so the apostle Paul was initiated into all the doctrines and modes of reasoning of the Jews, with whom his principle controversy was to be carried on. The early adversaries of the gospel were all Jews. Even in the heathen cities, they were so numerous, that it was through them and their proselytes that the church in such places was founded. We find, therefore, that in almost all his epistles, the apostles contend with Jewish errorists, the corrupters of the gospel by means of Jewish doctrine. Paul, the most extensively useful of all the apostles, was thus a thoroughly educated man; a man educated with a special view to the work which he was called to perform. We find, therefore, in this, as in most similar cases, that God affects his purposes by those instruments which He has, in ordinary course of his providence, specially fitted for their accomplishment (1835: 4).

In summary, Paul was a man of both great gifts and privilege. In his epistle to the church in Philippi Paul writes, "though I myself have reasons for such confidence. If

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[38] "Paul seems to have differed from his teacher at this point. By his own admission, Paul's zeal for Judaism led him to persecute the early Christian movement (e.g. Acts 22L4a; 26:9-11; Gal 1:13; Phil 3:6). However, Paul may not, after all, have differed much from his teacher. Gamaliel's advice is given before the Stephen incident revealed the extent to which at least some of the Christians were willing to do without the law and temple. It may very well have been this development that turned Paul, and perhaps other Pharisees, against the fledgling Christian movement (Moo et al. 1992:218).

anyone else thinks he has reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee" (Phil 3:4-5).

Paul's credentials and pedigree gave him a unique position as the apostle to the Gentiles. Unlike Peter, an uneducated commoner, Paul carried a respect that gave credence to his argument in defense of the Gentile believers. Though Paul saw himself as called by God rather than man, he was received and recognized by the other apostles and elders in Jerusalem.

The Cultures to Whom Paul Ministered

Paul's ministry took him to numerous regions, cities, and towns. In order to better understand Paul's missionary methodology to the Gentiles, it is necessary to examine more closely three key cities that can be defined as cosmopolitan by modern standards, as they were each ethnically, culturally, and religiously pluralistic.

Antioch of Syria, differentiated from Pisidian Antioch, was the business capital of Syria and capital of the Roman province in Asia.

> During the first Christian century, it was, after Rome and Alexandria the third largest city in the empire, having a population of more than 500,000. . . . First century Antioch was a melting pot of Western and Eastern cultures, where Greek and Roman traditions mingled with Semitic, Arab and Persian influences. . . . The city was not only known for its sophistication and culture, but also for its vices. The beautiful pleasure park of Daphne was a center for moral depravity of every kind (Longenecker 1981:399)

As with many cosmopolitan centers today there was both wealth and great cultural diversity.[39] Michael Green adds, it had "it's own games, a tremendous building programme financed jointly by Augustus and Herod, a large and influential but very lax Jewish population and a reputation for immorality…" (1970: 113).

Corinth, a Grecian city, and "a great seaport on the isthmus of Corinth with harbors on Saronic and Corinthian Gulfs, to the east and west respectively, situated at the junction of land-routes north and south, had been a maritime and commercial rival to Athens in earlier days, but was destroyed by Rome in 146bc" (Bruce 1969: 314). Because of its strategic location, Corinth was a prosperous city.

> The population of Corinth in NT times was probably over two hundred thousand (at least twenty times that of Athens), and was made up of local Greeks, freedman from Italy, Roman army veterans, businessman and governmental officials, and Orientals form the Levant – including a large number of Jews. Thanks to its commercial advantages at the convergence of land and sea trade routes, the city greatly prospered. But along with its wealth and luxury, there was immorality of every kind. Beginning with the fifth century B.C., the verb "to Corinthianize" meant to be sexually immoral, and a reputation that continued to be well-deserved in Paul's day (Longenecker 1981:480).

The temple of Aphrodite, with its thousand sacred prostitutes, was a key institute which propagated this promiscuity. Located in Corinth, it was devoted to a Hellenized form of the Syrian cult of Astarte. "The city became a favorite of the Roman emperors. Every two years the pan-Hellenistic Isthmian Games were held in the city" (Longenecker 1981:480).

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[39] "From earliest days its population included Greeks and Macedonians on the one hand and Syrians on the other…. Its cosmopolitan population and material wealth provided an apt setting for cultural exchange and religious syncretism" (Bruce 1969: 265).

Ephesus, the Roman capital of Asia, was at one time "the greatest commercial city of Asia Minor…standing on one of the main routes from Rome to the eastern imperial frontier" (Bruce 1969: 319). The two most significant assets that Ephesus relied on for wealth and vitality were its position as a trade center and the worship of Artemis, who had her chief shrine located there. [40] In its theatre, which was the largest in the world, capable of containing 50,000 spectators, were exhibited the fights of wild beasts and of men with beasts. It was here that Paul spoke against Artemis

In many ways, Ephesus was a city in decay as "excessive lumbering, charcoal burning and overgrazing"[41] caused erosion to fill the harbor:

> In Paul's day, the zenith of Ephesus's commercial power was long since past. Deepening economic decline had cast a shadow over the city. … With the decline of its commerce, the prosperity of Ephesus became more and more dependent on the tourist and pilgrim trade associated with the temple and cult of Artemis (Longenecker 1981:492-493).

It was here in Ephesus where Paul caused such a disturbance because so many were coming to faith that it was having an economic impact on Ephesus' largest grossing business (Acts 19).

In summary, the cities that Paul visited were in many ways typical of major cities today and were typified by Pisidian Antioch which was the

> meeting point of the Orient and Greek Civilization [and] contained not only the Hellenic cults of Zeus and Apollo and the rest of the pantheon, but Syrian worship of Baal and the Mother of Goddess, only partly assimilated to Zeus and Artemis, as well as the mystery religions with their message of death and resurrection, initiation and salvation (Green 1970: 114).

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[40] The Lat. Diana
[41] Longenecker 1981:492

This diversity had a significant impact on the early church each with its own cultural preferences and norms. The similarity of these cities to the context of the modern day church is significant and offers much insight to the church today as well.

Paul's Ministry

In a paper of this scope it would be impossible to fully assess the ministry of the Apostle Paul.

> Paul is so significant of a figure in the New Testament and the church's history that he has been called the second founder of Christianity. This of course is not true, for it ignores continuity between Jesus and Paul and diminishes unfairly the contributions of men such as Peter, John, and Luke. But there is no question that Paul played a vital role in the growth and establishment of the church and in the interpretation and application of God's grace in Christ. And Paul continues to minister to us today through the thirteen epistles of his that have become part of the canon of the New Testament, putting Paul just behind Luke in the percentage of the New Testament written by a single individual. And if one adds the sixteen chapters of Acts (13-28) that is almost entirely devoted to Paul, Paul figures in almost one-third of the New Testament (Carson, et al., 1992:215).

Therefore, in the remaining pages of this chapter, we give a brief overview of Paul's ministry in Gentile cultures.

What is somewhat surprising as we look at Paul's ministry is the lack of information in regards to significant ethnic and cultural diversity. Paul clearly encountered it, but due to his ministry focus, it was not an obstacle. Though considerable time had passed between Paul and Justin Martyr, notice what Martyr writes:

> We who formerly delighted in fornication now embrace chastity alone; we who formerly used magical arts, dedicate ourselves to the good and begotten God; we who valued above all things acquisition of wealth and possessions, now bring what we have into a common stock and share

> with everyone who is in need; we who hated and destroyed one another and on account of their different customs would not live with men of different race, now, since the coming of Christ, live on excellent terms with them and pray for our enemies and endeavor to persuade those who hate us unjustly to live comfortably to the good of precepts of Christ to the end that they may become partakers with us in the same joyful hope of a reward from God the ruler of all (as cited in Green 1970: 46).

The Gospel had worked such a radical change in the life and values of the people that most ethnic and cultural barriers were gone. This was undoubtedly due to Paul's approach in preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles.

In Green's assessment of Paul's ministry, he notes that in each case there was "an attack on idolatry, a proclamation of the one true God and the moral implications that flow from this" (1970: 125). In other words, Paul was able to set aside his cultural preferences in order to have an effective Gospel ministry to a diverse set of cultures.

In each setting, Paul came into direct conflict with a pagan culture and all that it encompasses. Just to list a few, in Athens Paul "was greatly distressed to see the city full of idols" (Acts 17:16).[42] In Ephesus it was sorcery, and idolatry – the worship of Artemis (Acts 19:19), and in Corinth, immorality.[43] In addition, we have already seen that many of the cities to which Paul ministered, the pagan cultures exhibited themselves fully. In none of these cases do we find Paul resorting to open culturalism, but rather addressing the issue of sin from a strictly scriptural perspective.

The question that we are seeking to address is how Paul dealt with the Jew/Gentile tensions as the church grew and the Gentile Christian population exploded.

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[42] Paul dealt with idolatry in I Cor. 10:14; Gal 5:20; Col 3:5

[43] Paul dealt with immorality in 1 Cor 5:9-11; 6:13-18; 7:2; 10:8; Gal 5:19; Eph 5:3-5; Col 3:5; 1 Thes 4:3

It seems once again that the majority of Paul's attention in this area is focused upon the tension caused by food law[44] and circumcision concerns.[45]

This ongoing struggle was rooted in the tension between one culture – the Jews, and all others – the Gentiles. Though the Council in Jerusalem addressed the problem and a solution was determined, the tension between these groups continued to exist. Though requiring circumcision should not have been an issue of debate among the leaders of the church, there were those on the peripheral who sought to advocate it. The food law tension continued in the church and became a significant point of conflict.

It is the author's opinion that some of the food law struggles that existed in the church had to do with a wrong application of the Jerusalem Council's conclusion. As well as giving instruction to the Jewish Christian community, the council had also instructed the Gentiles to observe certain Jewish customs out of deference to the ecclesiastically dominant culture. This became a point of contention between the Jewish believers and the Gentile believers as each fought for their own right: the Jew for tradition and the Gentile for liberty. Since the food laws were not necessary for salvation and therefore not binding, they moved from law to cultural tradition for the Jewish converts. For both the Jew and the Gentile, the only concern was the peace of the church.

Nevertheless, the cultural traditions of the pre-existing group, in this case the Jews, become dogma and therefore became a litmus test for spirituality. Those who adhere, in this case to the food laws, are in the right, while those who are eating freely have become an offense, or scandalous. This tension is evident in almost every cultural

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[44] Romans.14; 1 Corinthians. 8 -10; Galatians. 2, 3, 5; Colossians. 2.
[45] Romans 2-4; 1 Cor inthiansatians7; Gal 2, 5, 6; Ephesians 2; Philippians 3: Colossians 2; Tit 1.

point of controversy and is at the heart of what Paul is addressing in his concerns to both the church in Rome and the church in Corinth.

Though he speaks to a variety of issues, Harvey Conn's comments on Paul's usage of *"skandalon"* is helpful:

> Paul structures his sensitivity to that twofold relationship of the church to the world around the biblical idea of "offence" (*skandalon*). Though this word is used in various ways in the New Testament, the core definition of "offence" is not "hurt feelings" or even individual sensitivity. It is always a matter of some hindrance to one's faith in Jesus Christ. It is the conflict over anything that hinders the free and open expression of our faith in Christ – whether a right hand, a left eye, Greek wisdom or a Roman cross. It may concern meat offered to idols or not offered – or even receiving of little children (1984: 237).

In both the first epistle to the Corinthians (8:1ff, 10:23ff) and the epistle to the Romans (14:1ff), Paul addresses this dietary concern as it pertains to the weaker and stronger brother. In both churches, the issue has become an offence. The problem in the Corinthian church is whether it is permissible to eat meat offered to idols. To the church in Corinth, Paul answers the question: "What about eating food offered in pagan sacrifices to idols?"[46] W. Harold Mare writes in his commentary on 1 Corinthians:

> Paul's answer leads to a discussion of the larger question of how a believer should use his Christian liberty. Paul lays down the principle that love for one's brother in Christ should be the motivating factor in contemplating one's Christian liberty (8:1-13). . . . So Paul's conclusion is this: Live your testimony with loving concern for your brother, but do not make an issue of meat sold in the market. Eat it as a gift from God. Do this, except when the point is explicitly made that the meat was offered in sacrifice to an idol. For you would in such a case seem to be participating in the religious heathen practice. Refrain then, for your weaker brother's

[46] Calvin refers to this as a tension over "intermediate things." He goes on to write, "By intermediate things, I mean things that are neither good nor bad in themselves, but indifferent, which God has put in our power, but in the use of which we ought to observe moderation, that there may be difference between liberty and license" (Calvin 1993:272).

> sake and for your own peace of mind. Above all, do everything for the Glory of God (10:23-11:1) (Mare 1976:237-238).

Leon Morris separates the question into two when he writes, "Notice that there are two separate questions: the taking part in idol feasts, and the eating of meat bought in shops, but previously part of a sacrifice" (Morris 1975:24).

In comparison to the problem in Corinth, the friction in Rome was over a broader dietary concern. Everett F. Harrison adds:

> His [Paul's] treatment in Romans is briefer and couched in more general terms, though there are obvious similarities, such as the danger that by his conduct the strong will cause the weak to stumble or fall, and the corresponding danger that the weak will sit in judgment on the strong. The differences are numerous: there is no mention in Romans of idols or food offered to idols; the word "conscience' does not appear; the strong are not described as those who have knowledge. On the other hand, we read in Romans of vegetarians and of those who insist on observing a certain day in contrast to others who look on all days as being alike (Harrison 1976:144).

The conflicts in both churches were on religious grounds and pitted Jewish Believers over and against Gentile Believers.[47]

> [In] both churches the collision of divergent views causes a "*skandalon*" for those whom Paul designates "the weak." In Corinth the *skandalon* can lead to division in, or to separation of the weak from the community (1 Cor. 8:10-11). In Rome the *skandalon* is that the weak will act with wavering faith and against their culturally framed conscience (Rom. 14:20, 23) (Conn 1984: 238

In both instances, Paul's priority is in line with the intent of the council of Jerusalem: that there would be unity in the body. Paul does not disregard the liberty, but

[47] "Possibly the weaker brethren in Rome should be identified with the Jewish element in the church, because believing Jews might easily carry over their avoidance of certain foods from their former observance of dietary laws in the OT" (Harrison 1976:144).

places it secondarily to Christian love. His primary objective then, is to put liberty under the discipline of Christian love for the sake of the Gospel.

> In none of his discussions does Paul accede to religious neutrality with regard to the significance of cultural practices. To him or her who lives by faith in Christ, no food or gift is wrong in itself. But neither is it neutral with respect to religious roots. The Colossian heresy, which seems to have been associated with a legalistic-ascetic list of prohibitions and slavish prescriptions, leads to "worldly" scrupulousness and timidity with regard to foods. The church has not been redeemed from this religious bondage to handle-not-and-taste-not levels of meaning. Our bondage is to Christ (Col. 2:18-230). Eating and drinking and marriage are rituals with religious meaning in this context. But "what in faith and with thanksgiving is received from the hand of God is not rejected. It gets its holiness through the Word of God that speaks redemption of the whole of life and through prayer what is received believingly (1 Tim 4:16ff) (Conn 1984: 238).

Interestingly, Paul does not appeal to the Law, but to love and the conscience. Hermann Ridderbos adds, "Paul clearly distinguishes between the requirement of God and the verdict of conscience. He who acts against his conscience sins, because in his action he lets go of Christ" (1975: 292). Paul is not placing conscience over law, and giving it liberty morally to sanction the actions of others, but rather respects the "weak conscience" and acts accordingly. Ridderbos goes on to write:

> It is a question of respecting the weak conscience in a pastoral-religious sense, not legitimating the conscience in an ethical sense… The conscience is thus not the instance that enables the believer to know the will of God in his moral decisions, but which in those decisions reminds him of the judgment of God and of the necessity in them of preserving inviolate before the judgment of God the liberty wrought by Christ (1975: 292).

Conclusions from Paul's Ministry

As Justo Gonzalez aptly writes:

> Paul's significance for the early spread of Christianity ought not be exaggerated . . . Paul's greatest and unique contribution to the shaping of early Christianity was not so much in the actual founding of churches. Rather, it was in the epistles that he wrote in connection with that activity (1984: 24).

Diverse cultures were not difficult for Paul as he was quick to contextualize his life and his message. His goal was not to protect a tradition, but to "win as many as possible."[48] Notice what he writes in I Cor 9:19ff:

> Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some.

This passage gives a balanced approach to ministry in a culturally diverse world. Morris notes, "A foundational theme to this passage is 'the extent of Paul's abandonment of his rights in the interest of the gospel'" (Morris 1975:137). Therefore, as we examine it, we first need to take note of the extremes to which Paul was willing to go for the Gospel In addition, we will note that he distinguished cultural/religious groups and that he had limits to his flexibility and the drive of evangelism

Paul's willingness to relinquish his freedom[49] is notable and is no small sacrifice. Paul's freedom as a Roman citizen and a Christian were important to him. In discussing

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[48] Mare writes, "He [Paul] argues that though he was under obligation to no man, he showed his self-restraint and love by placing himself on the cultural and social level of all men so that he might reach some for Christ" (1976:238).

his self-sacrificing concern, Paul "mentions three groups – the Jews, the Gentiles and those whose consciences are weak" (Mare 1976: 245), yet Paul made himself a slave to each. This is over and against simply calling himself a servant. "He constantly acted upon the principle of abstaining in things indifferent, from insisting on his rights" (Hodge 1835:163).[50]

To the Jews he became like a Jew (9:20). That is, when necessary and regarding indifferent matters, he conformed to the practice of Jewish custom. "The sort of thing that is in mind is his conduct in circumcising Timothy.[51] He would not needlessly antagonize his own nation. He respected Jewish scruples" (Morris 1975:138). Paul, quite possibly could have simply been following Jewish etiquette for Barrett comments, "Jewish missionary practice was aware of the place of accommodation, service and humility in its methods, though naturally not in such a radical form as Paul displays" (1968:211).

> There are two things, therefore, to be carefully observed in all cases of concession to the opinions and practices of others: first, that the point conceded be of indifference; for Paul never yielded in the smallest measure to anything that was in itself wrong. In this his conduct was directly the opposite to that of those who accommodate themselves to the sins of men, or to the superstitious observances of false religions. And secondly, that the concession does not involve any admission that what is in fact indifferent is a matter of moral obligation. The extent to which Paul went to conciliate the Jews may be learnt from what is recorded in Acts 21:18-27 (Hodge 1835:164).

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[49] Barrett comments, "perhaps he is free because, having been made free as a Christian, he cannot become the slave of men" (1968:210).

[50] Hodge goes on to write, "No one was more yielding in matters of indifference, no one was more unyielding in matters of principles than this apostle. So long as things indifferent were regarded as such, he was ready to accommodate himself to the most unreasonable prejudices; but when they were insisted upon as matters of necessity, he would not give place, no not for an hour" 1835:164).

[51] Barrett agrees with Morris on Timothy being in mind when Paul writes this (168:211).

Paul goes beyond the cultural to the religious as he expresses his willingness to become like those under the law (9:20). Here Paul is still addressing the Jews, but is specifically dealing with the law. Grosheide adds, "Paul is free from the ceremonial law through the work of Christ but he does not consider it a sin to observe the law, provided this was not done to acquire righteousness" (1955:212). Though Paul was no longer under the law this was a matter of "voluntary concession" (Hodge 1835:165).

> Just as his "Judaism was no longer of his being . . . This was not a matter of indifference to the law, or impatience with the inconvenience which life under the Torah must have involved. It rested on the conviction that in Jesus Christ Judaism had been fulfilled and the law brought to its intended goal . . . If Paul is no longer a Jew, neither is he a Gentile, though he is related to the Gentile in terms of the Gospel" (Barrett 1968:211-212).

It was the Gentiles or "those not having the law," (10:21)

> Who did not have any written revelation for God (Rom 2:12), Paul says he became like one not having the law and took his place in their culture in order to reach them (cf. Gal2:11-21). But he hastens to correct any misunderstanding: he counts himself still under God's law, and even more, under Christ's law (Mare 1976:246).

Paul did not come among the Gentles bound with all the Jewish regulations. He met them on their own ground.

> When he says that he was without law, he does not wish to give the impression that he was under no restraint. So he adds that he is not without law to God, and that he is under the law to Christ. Both impressions indicate that he was no free agent, but a servant of God. But as far as this service would allow he conformed to Gentile practice, that he might gain them that are without the law (Morris 1975:139).

"The weak" are those who Paul has just mentioned in 1 Corinthians 8:9-12 who are weak in conscious. Barrett describes them, as "Christians not yet fully emancipated from legalism" (1968:215). "By referring to the weak Paul approaches the actual

situation in Corinth. In that city there were some who could not eat sacrificial meat without burdening their consciences . . . Paul did therefore what the stronger brethren at Corinth refused to do" (Grosheide 1955:213).

To reach the weak, he becomes weak – "that is, he refrains from exercising his Christian freedom, and acts as they do respecting those indifferent things" (Mare 1976:246). Throughout this chapter, we see that Paul has a genuine concern for the weak. This concern "helps us to see how he respected their scruples, and conformed his behavior to theirs" (Morris 1975:139).

Paul concludes these thoughts with "I have become all things[52] to all men so that by all possible means I might save some" (9:22). As we have already seen, this does not mean that his conducted was unprincipled. On occasion Paul could be very stubborn in following this course of action in the teeth of strong opposition. Nevertheless, where no principle was at stake he was prepared to go to extreme lengths to meet people. Personal considerations are totally submerged in the great aim of by all means saving some. "Paul's whole conduct was determined by the gospel so that he might be a co-sharer (*synkoinonos* "communion," "fellowship") with the gospel, sharing in its blessing personally and in seeing others come to Christ" (Mare 1976:246).

Paul does not hold to a liberty that is unrestricted. "It is clear that Paul is not a legalist. He does not try to substitute a new code of Christian ethics to replace the Old Testament Law. On the other hand, he has strong convictions about correct Christian conduct" (Ladd 1974: 514).

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[52] The better MSS read "all things."

Chapter Summary:

We have seen in this chapter the biblical and theological foundation for understanding the church's challenge of operating in a multi-cultural setting. We examined the ministries of Peter and Paul, both called by God to step out of their own Jewish culture and into the Gentile cultures. Peter, the uneducated fisherman, was called to go and eat with a Gentile and share the Gospel with him. Paul, an educated Pharisee, was the primary missionary, church planter, and advocate for the Gentiles believers. He not only brought the foundational teaching to these new churches, but it is through his ministry that we learn of church life.

Surprisingly we found that though there was significant cultural diversity, it caused relatively few problems. This is not to say that sin is not addressed, as Paul clearly called people of all cultures to repentance and to "not conform to the pattern of this world" (Rom 12:2). Dr. Richard Pratt in, He Gave Us Stories, writes,

> God has established cultural legislation for the Christian community wherever it exists. These patterns of life are not as extensive as Old Testament regulations, but Christians must observe them in every nation and age . . . Followers of Christ are to adopt a new culture for themselves, a way of life ordained by divine revelation (1990:372).

Paul considered himself as neither fully Jew nor a Gentile, [53] as he related to both in terms of the Gospel. It was through the Gospel that he called sinners to repentance and adherence to a pattern of life laid out in Scripture.

We found that Peter and Paul's greatest challenge was not reaching the multi-cultural communities, but once they came to faith, providing a healthy and peaceful environment where both Jewish and Gentile believers could have healthy community.

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[53] See quote by Barrett on page 47.

> Christ broke down the wall dividing Jews and Gentiles by "abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations" (Ephesians 2:14-15). Now there is "neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female" (Galatians 3:28). Consequently many of the extensive regulations designed to separate Israel from other nations no longer serve to separate the people of God . . . Many of these norms were reduced to the status of natural cultural diversities. They became matters regulated by the general principles of Scripture instead of specific legislations (Pratt 1990:374).

This change was enormous to the Jewish believer, as it not only affected their religious life, but many areas of their cultural life. Therefore, the Jewish believer first had to accept the change in the law, and then adapt culturally.

Both Paul and the Council in Jerusalem were sensitive to this and put restrictions on the Gentiles out of regard for their fellow Jewish believers. "The apostles recognized that the Gentile converts were free from the theocratic policies designed to separate Jews from Gentiles before Christ. So they only required that the Gentiles restrain themselves out of regard for their Jewish brothers (Acts 15:24-29)" (Pratt 1990:374).

In addition, we saw that Peter and Paul, both Jewish believers, had to make this shift. Through studying their life and calling, we saw that they too had to make the same religious and cultural shift as the Jewish believer. For Peter, this was more difficult and at times, he wavered. Paul on the other hand adapted well, being able to mix with both Jewish and Gentile believers despite each ones' scruples.

As we proceed in our study, it is necessary to take a closer look at how America became culturally what she is today. We will study the major immigrant groups, how and why they immigrated, and how they assimilated into the broader culture. In addition, we will examine the Native American and the African American cultures, and their unique place in American culture. Through a better understanding of the making of

America, we will then be able to assess more accurately the position of the PCA as we look to the future.

CHAPTER 3

THE MAKING OF A MULTI-ETHNIC AND MULTI-CULTURED NATION

Who is America? For many years, people have seen America as "Mayberry," the fictitious town of the Andy Griffith show. Mayberry, a small North Carolina town, was made up of a relatively homogeneous group of people whose differences ranged from a simplistic yet opinionated barber to the town "wino" that locked himself in prison when intoxicated. The security of Mayberry was exhibited in the one-bullet blundering deputy. Mayberry was safe, and that is why so many people long for a "Mayberry," or even more catastrophically, have come to believe that America used to be like Mayberry.

However, nothing could be further from the truth for the United States of America is an epic story on diversity. From her earliest recorded history, she is a land that has encountered wave after wave of diverse peoples coming to her shores. They came from every corner of the earth, speaking every language and representing every nationality, race and religion. Thomas Sowell gives this perspective:

> Today, there are more people of Irish ancestry in the United States than in Ireland, more Jews than in Israel, more blacks than in most African countries. There are more people of Polish ancestry in Detroit than in most leading cities in Poland, and more than twice as many people of Italian ancestry in New York than Venice (1981: 3).

The American Mosaic

There is no single ethnic or cultural face for America, but rather a mosaic of many faces of every shade and color. The latest U.S. Census Bureau information [54] claims a "White" population of 238 million, followed by a "Black" population of 39 million, a "Hispanic" population of 38 million, and an "Asian' population of 14 million. Though the statistics show that "Whites" are the majority, skin color alone does not paint a true picture of culture nor ethnicity.

From analysis of the census bureau information it appears that in the non-Hispanic white community alone there are identifiable ethnic strains from numerous European countries. There are those of British ancestry who for many years were the majority, if you did not break out the Scottish and Irish. They were followed by the German Americans etc. Millions of Americans can no longer identify themselves at all ethnically, due to ethnic mixing over the generations.

The same can be said of the Black population. Though the largest group has descended from slaves, there is a growing immigrant population from Africa and the Islands.[55] In this immigrant group, though ethnically similar, there are great cultural differences.

[54] United State Census Bureau, 2004.

[55] U.S. Census information shows a growing number of Blacks coming from various parts of Africa as well as the Caribbean.

Both the "Hispanic"[56] and "Asian"[57] populations are also made of a diverse group of people who may be classified as the same ethnically yet are radically different culturally. For example, Brazilian immigrants are classified by the U.S. Census Bureau as "Hispanic" though they speak Portuguese. There are clear cultural distinctions between Brazilian immigrants and Mexican immigrants and even fewer cultural similarities to their former colonial masters, the Portuguese. In addition, we have Portuguese-speaking African immigrants.

The Largest Cultural-linguistic Unit in History

This ethnic and cultural mix that makes up North America is also unique; Sowell gives this interesting perspective:,

> The setting in which the history of all these peoples unfolded is no less impressive than the numbers and varieties of peoples themselves. The United States is one of the largest cultural-linguistic units in the history of the world. From San Francisco to Boston is the same distance as Madrid to Moscow. Yet there is one language, one set of laws, and one economy in area that, in Europe, is fragmented into a multitude of nations, languages and competing military and political blocks. The size and the cohesion of American society are all the more remarkable because of the diverse origins of the people who make it up…. The United States as a whole is larger than the Roman Empire at its greatest expansion (1981:4).

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[56] U.S. Census Bureau Publication entitled, The Hispanic Population in the United States: 2002, shows the Hispanic population place of origin, by percentage, made up of 66.9 percent from Mexico; Central and South America 14:3; Puerto Rico 8.6; Cuba 3.7 and Other Hispanic 6.5.

[57] U.S. Census Bureau Publication entitled, The Asian and Pacific Islander Population in the United States: March 2002, defines Asian as referring to those having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam. "Pacific Islander" refers to those having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands. The Asian and Pacific Islander population is not a homogeneous group; rather, it comprises many groups who differ in language, culture, and length of residence in the United States. Some of the Asian groups, such as the Chinese and Japanese, have been in the United States for several generations. Others, such as the Hmong, Vietnamese, Laotians, and Cambodians, are comparatively recent immigrants. Relatively few of the Pacific Islanders are foreign born.

Since the publication of his book, the European Union has made great strides in the unification of Europe. In addition, China's population has continued to explode, but assuming Sowell is correct, the United States remains the largest multi-cultural-linguistic unit in history.

Who, When and Where

There has been a tendency for many immigration patterns to take place at different times and locales. Each culture represented has arrived at different times and locales. Typically, each group had its own era of concentrated immigration. For instance, the Irish immigration peaked in 1850, the Chinese in 1880, while the Japanese and Jewish immigration peaked around 1900. The Mexican-American immigration peaked fifty years after that, while the Asian has remained ongoing.

In addition to "when" each group immigrated, is "where" each group immigrated, too. Studies by Sowell and Dinnerstein et al., suggest that there was a tendency for each group to settle in their own areas. Scandinavians settled in the Midwest, Asians along the West Coast, Cubans in South Florida, Mexican Americans in the Southwest and the Scotch-Irish?-Irish along the Appalachian region form Pennsylvania down through the Carolinas. Many Irish, Italians and Jews came in utter poverty and settled right in at their port of arrival, which was primarily the Northeast coast. Blacks were concentrated in the Deep South. With each new migration came ethnic and cultural tensions. To fully understand the multi-ethnic and multi-culture that is the United States, and to better

grapple with the continuing shift that is taking place today, it is necessary to examine closer the major groups in America and attempt to learn from mistakes the of the past.

This study relies heavily on three texts. These texts are Thomas Sowell's, Ethnic America, and The Immigrant Experience in America, edited by Frank Coppa and Thomas Curran, and Natives and Strangers: Ethnic Groups and the Building of America, edited by Leonard Dinnerstein, Roger L. Nicols, and David Reimers. The immigrant groups were selected primarily by size and significance. We realized that many groups were not selected, but due to limits on this project, not all were able to be included.

Native American

The Native Americans [58] played a significant role in the history of North America and are an essential ingredient in dealing with the future as they neither migrated, nor were brought to the North American continent. Because of their unique place in the making of America, we will examine them first.

Invaded not Invited

With the discovery of the New World at the end of the fifteenth century came the first economic and social currents that created and shaped the United States. In their text Natives and Strangers, Leonard Dinnerstien, Roger Nicols and David Reimers write:

> Within a few generations of the early explorations knowledgeable Europeans realized the potential of North and South America. Moreover, the continents of the Western Hemisphere fit nicely into the evolving Mercantilist economic theory of the day. According to this view each

[58] Native American is a broad term that encompasses all Native American groups. The author understands that most Native Americans do not see themselves as either diverse nor monolithic.

> country tried to organize and regulate its national economic activities to strengthen itself. Thus, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Spain, Portugal, France, Sweden, Russia, the Netherlands, and Great Britain established trading posts and colonies around the world (1979:3).

Though both Spain and France laid claim to parts of the North American continent, it was the British who eventually gained control over the United States. When the first Virginian settlers came ashore in 1607 they not only came with a mandate to settle and build a colony that would strengthen England in her competition with other European leaders, but they came with culture. It was their ideas and practices that deeply characterized the future American society.

Cultural Differences

As evidenced in all colonial powers, there was a clear racial and cultural superiority exhibited by the British. "Many would have agreed with the cleric who in 1858 told his flock, 'God is English'" (Dinnerstein et.al 1979:4). Though primitive by modern standards, the early settlers saw themselves as cultured and saw the Indians as savages. It was common for the English, as well as others, to view those who were different as inferior.

> Toward the Native American Indians they held two contradictory views. On the one hand Englishmen hoped to meet friendly tribesmen who would be eager to help, guide and trade with them. At the same time they feared these "savage and backward" people. Black Africans, because of their skin color and customs, were both feared and scorned. Toward Europeans from the continent, whose ways varied only slightly from their own, Englishmen, felt a certain kinship, but regarded their own practices as superior. In the New World, these attitudes would prevail and leave their own mark on the development of American society (Dinnerstein et.al.1979:5).

In addition to the colonist's consideration of the indigenous North American as backward and primitive, was the difference of social and economic values. The average indigenous North American farmed, fished, gathered, and traded for what they needed to live. This trading was generally done with neighboring tribes and for goods that were necessary for survival. The Europeans arrived with an expansionist mindset and were eager to do whatever it took in order to make a profit. Therefore, rather than treat the land with respect as the Indians, they were quick to exploit it for the sake of profit. In the end the Indians became part of this exploitation.

Exclusion over Inclusion

As settlers continued to pour into the New World, more and more of the land previously inhabited by the Indians was taken. Due to the attitudes of the settlers toward the Indians, little or no effort was made toward peace cohabitation. The Indians were viewed as a threat and time after time were either killed or relocated forcefully. Though much is made of John Rolfe's 1614 marriage to Pocahontas and the temporary peace that it brought, the norm was conflict, with the settlers pushing back the Indians.

Interestingly, though many of the settlers came for religious reasons, few took opportunity to evangelize the Indian's land that they were taking. History finds it difficult to see a clear distinction in how the Christian settlers treated the Indians any differently than those who came simply to profit off the New World.

> Despite frequent help from individual Indians, friction between tribesmen and colonists soon developed. The Puritans brought thousands of settlers to the Massachusetts Bay Colony during its first decade, and most of these pioneers feared the Indians while expecting to use their land and

> resources. Despite an early small trade for foodstuffs and later fur trade, the majority of New Englanders were farmers. This brought them into direct competition with the tribesmen of the land (Dinnerstein et al. 1979:9).

In fact, in 1637, it was the Puritans who launched a surprise attack against the Pequot tribe and survivors were sold into slavery in the West Indies and scattered the rest of the tribes in the region (1979:9).

Clearly, the cultural superiority on behalf of the Christian settlers influenced their interaction with Indians. It is difficult to determine if the primary goal was to bring the Indian to faith or to civilize him. "The Puritans segregated individuals who became Christians into so-called Praying Towns" (1979:9). These converts were not seen as equals and barely survived efforts to have them destroyed during the Metacom's or King Philip's War in the mid 1670's. In the end the Indians realized there would be no conciliation and negotiation with the whites "and for the Puritans this desperate struggle proved the need to remove or destroy the tribesmen whenever they thwarted English economic development or territorial expansion" (1979:9).

This attitude of the Puritans would be the attitude of the church in North America for many years to come. Repeatedly the church either endorsed or encouraged both the massacre and/or relocation of many Indian tribes. With the exception of Jonathan Edwards, David Brainerd, the Mayhew family who evangelized the Indians on Martha's Vineyard for five generations, very little significant missionary activity was pursued (Gonzalez 1985:223). Cultural arrogance often shrouded in religious terminology would have its effect on not just the Indian, but also many of North America's new comers.

The European Americans

Though Columbus has traditionally been the one credited for the discovery of North America, recent historians are convinced that the Vikings landed on the continent some time before him. As has already been noted, after the Indians, the Europeans were the first major settlers. America, then becoming the land of opportunity, drew thousands seeking both freedom and a new start. Though welcomed because of their wealth or potential labor, many Europeans felt the negative effect of English domination. The first significant mass ethnic immigration in America was the Irish.

The Irish

William Shannon in his book entitled, The American Irish, writes the following: "The famine of 1845-1847 was the Nadir of Irish history, which in the preceding two thousand years had known few sunlit peaks" (1966:2). This great famine was the result of a potato blight that reached Ireland in 1845, which destroyed most of the crop not only that year, but for years to come. The potato was the primary food source for the Irish, and up to one fourth of their arable land was used for farming this vegetable. The effect of the blight on the Irish was unfathomable – especially for the poor. "A million people died of starvation or starvation related disease and epidemics" (Sowell 1981:21). The

result of the famine caused by death and migration resulted in halving Ireland's population in 1914 from what it was prior to 1840.

Assuming Sowell is correct, the struggles of the Irish people were not alleviated in their migration to North America. The majority of the immigrants came in holds of ships that were not built with needs or comforts of the passengers in mind. "There were no toilet facilities, for example, so the filth, odor, and disease were common…. Inadequate food, water, and sanitation made the ocean crossing dangerous to health and life. In the most disastrous year of all, 1947, about 20 percent of the huge famine immigration died in route to America or upon land. That was about 40,000 dead – mostly young and in the prime of life" (1981:22).

"The history of the Irish in America is founded on a paradox. The Irish were a rural people in Ireland and became city people in the United States" (Shannon 1966:27). Some would say that four-fifths of the immigrants were from rural settings and even those who came from "urban" areas were from tiny villages. This, along with the cost of the ship fare, resulted in the Irish being destitute and thus they settled in the worst parts of Boston and New York. They typically lacked any skill for use in an urban economy and struggled with city life. Their knowledge of English and the Anglo-Saxon institutions, however, allowed them to adapt somewhat faster than some later immigrant groups (1966:28).

It is important to pause and note that the first immigrants came before the famines. These immigrants were predominantly Protestants of Scottish heritage. The

"Scotch-Irish" as they called themselves in America. This immigration was smaller and included many skilled workers, small businessmen and educated people.

The Scotch-Irish settled in a long band running from central Pennsylvania through the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia into the Piedmont region of the Carolinas. Much of this land was still frontier when the Scotch-Irish settled it and they became famous frontiersmen and Indian fighters (Sowell 1981:24).

"For all their fame as fighters and drinkers, the Scotch-Irish were also builders of churches and schools wherever they went" (1981:24). As time passed, the Scotch-Irish was absorbed into the general North American population. One would assume that the Scotch-Irish presence would have made the future migration of the Irish easier. These earlier settlers took on the title "Scotch-Irish" to distinguish themselves from the later Celtic migration (1981:23). The bitter hostility that they brought with them from the Old World forced the Irish immigrants to tough it out on their own.

Eventually, the very term "Irish" or "Irish American" came to mean only those people with indigenous or Celtic Irish ancestry, not the Scotch-Irish (1981:25). Most of the Irish were concentrated in Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, and Illinois and the total population of Irish Americans passed the population of their native land. As the Irish crowded into the northeastern cities, large homes built for one family was subdivided into small apartments where many large families crowded in together. Cellars and attics were turned into places of lodging and shanties popped up in allies. Cleanliness was not a cultural norm, nor a likely possibility due to dirty jobs and a lack of indoor running water.

> Sewage piled up in backyard privies until the municipal authorities chose to collect it, or else it ran off in open trenches, fouling the air and providing breeding grounds for dangerous diseases…. None paid a higher price than the Irish during the period of adjustment. Cholera, which had been unknown before, swept through Boston in 1849, concentrated almost exclusively in Irish neighborhoods (1981:26).

Patterns of alcohol abuse and fighting brought from the homeland continued. "Over half the people arrested in New York in the 1850's were Irish – usually for drunken or disorderly behavior rather than serious crimes. Police vans became known as "Paddy wagons" because the prisoners in them were so often Irish" (1981:26). Irish neighborhoods were tough. "The Irish Sixth Ward in New York was known as "the bloody old South." Other neighborhoods in New York got names like "Hell's Kitchen" and "San Juan Hill" because of the battles fought there. The largest riot in American history was made up of primarily Irish who were protesting the Civil War military draft. The riot lasted several days and killed a thousand people, many of whom were black.

To the degree, that Sowell's characterization of the situation is correct the sheer numbers of Irish, their lack of education, their poverty, religion, and lifestyle the Irish were not well received in North America. In the mid-nineteenth century the majority of North America was Protestant and thus viewed Catholicism with suspicion. Coppa, et al., claim that this dislike and distrust led to the Irish being called "Paddies" as a Paddy was a supporter of popery. This grew into a negative stereotype that showed the Irish to be rather "pig-faced, dirty, stubborn and of course very very poor" (1976: 99).

Just who were these people that rejected the Irish? It was all who had already settled in North America and particularly the cities where the Irish immigrants came. Their dislike rested on the "poverty and popery of the Paddy and on certain traits that the

Irishman brought with him" (1976:99). As the Iindustrial Revolution was taking shape, value and worth increasingly became based on wealth. The Irish were, as a whole, the unskilled immigrants, left to do the dirty work. In addition, the Irish were the first non-Protestant group to arrive in such great numbers and in such a short time period. Their Catholicism, which was at the core of their culture, came in direct conflict with Protestants (1976:99).

It took time for the Irish to be accepted in North America, but eventually it did happen. A significant event was the election of John F. Kennedy, who was both Irish and Catholic. In a little more than a century, the Irish American moved from being despised, to the point where they represented one of the most popular presidents. As Sowell explains, "The Irish have in fact become so Americanized that some lament that they have lost their distinctive qualities" (1981:42). As with most other European immigrants time, multi-ethnic marriages, and new immigrants have indeed blurred the distinctiveness of the Irish.

The Germans

The German immigrants have had a very significant impact on North America. More than twenty-five million North Americans have German ancestry and this is second only to those who trace their roots to the British Isles.

> None of the immigrant groups outnumbered the Germans, equaled their scope of influence, or settled in a larger and more varied number of locations. They went to both urban and rural areas and to every section of the country, working as farmers and laborers, skilled craftsmen and professionals. By 1900 they constituted the largest single foreign element in Wisconsin, California, Kansas, Missouri, New Jersey, New York and

> twenty other states and were the prominent ethnic group in eight of the nation's ten largest cities. Only in Philadelphia and Boston were the Irish more numerous (Dinnerstien et al., 1979:91).

The first German migration to America came when individual Germans among the Dutch came to settle New Amsterdam in 1620. Later in the seventeenth century, William Penn recruited Germans to his Pennsylvania colony. These settlers came primarily from the Rhineland and were drawn by the religious freedom in the new land. Germantown was settled in 1683 by thirteen Mennonite families. They were followed by many other groups, including the Amish and the Calvinists. In 1742, Heinrich Muhlenberg arrived and organized the Lutheran church. "Thus began the 'Pennsylvania Dutch' – Dutch being in this case an American mispronunciation of the world *Deutsch* for German" (Sowell 1981:47).

By 1745, there were an estimated 45,000 Germans in Pennsylvania. Many of these early Germans came as indentured servants who were bound by contract to work from three to seven years as an exchange for their fare to America. By some estimates, at least half of the white population in colonial America came this way (1981:48). The system of indentured servitude was first used with the German and Swiss and later spread to the Scotch, Irish and others. The typical procedure was designed to help people who could never afford to come to get passage. Most historians would agree that it was ethically sound, though not an ideal system. Unfortunately it was the poor, the desperate, and the newcomer where often take advantage of.

As most other immigrant groups the Germans came to North America in search of a better life. Though they came with a greater skill set and higher lever of education,

their assimilation was not easy. The earliest German immigrants settled in Pennsylvania and faced a negative bias against the Germans, as exhibited here by Benjamin Franklyn:

> He tended to overlook their many positive attributes, harping on their political immaturity, social incivility and questionable business practices. In 1750, Franklyn wrote to one of his correspondents that "Because of the disagreeableness of the dissonant manors of the German their English speaking neighbors would have preferred to move away." Again in 1753, Franklyn presented American stereotypes of Germans: "Those (Germans) who come hither are generally stupid of their own nation… not being used to liberty they know not how to make modest use of it. And as Holbein says of the Hottentots, they are not esteemed as men until they have shown their manhood by beating their mothers, so these seem not to think themselves free, till they can feel their liberty in abusing and insulting their teachers (as quoted in Coppa et. al. 1976:52).

Coppa goes on to point out that Franklyn's Anglo bias shows up once again in his Observations Concerning the Increase of Mankind (1751), where Franklyn asked, "Why should the Palatine Boors be suffered to swarm into our settlements and, by herding together, establish their language and manners to the exclusion of ours? Why should Pennsylvania, founded by the English, become a colony of aliens who will shortly be so numerous as to Germanize us instead of us Anglifying them?" These pre-Revolutionary War migrants were primarily not trusted because of their language and reliance on German clergy.

The largest and most significant German migration started in the early 1820s, the poverty and famine that hit the British Isle's also impacted Germany. Between 1830 and 1840 some 152,000 Germans migrated. But with the famine and other economic woes, almost a half a million people migrated to the United States between 1840 and 1850. In 1847 alone, more than 100,000 migrated to the United States (1976:51). This migration continued in large numbers until 1895 when it slowed to a trickle.

With the decline of immigration from 1776 until 1820, discrimination against the Germans was insignificant, but with new waves of immigration in the mid 1800s came a new struggle. The stereotype of the Germans that developed was based in part on religious practices. Even though most Americans were not consistent churchgoers, the Puritans view of the Sabbath was foundational to society. "The Germans, especially the Lutherans, on the other hand had their picnics and their beer gardens" (1976:54) and were thought to be desecrating this holy day. Many of the Germans who migrated to escape the potato blight (1845-1847) were Catholic and, much like the Irish, were condemned for their Catholicism. Other stereotypes of a German were that he or she was atheist, and "solid beer drinker, heavy of girth and dull of mind" (1976:54).

Though the Germans faced their challenges in settling in America, next to the English, they have probably been the most successful in assimilating. Germans have had marked contributions to most areas of American life. They not only benefited our educational system, but it is primarily through them that we celebrate Christmas and Easter. In both scientific invention and the music and arts they have changed the landscape of North America.

The Jews

The Jewish migration to North America is unique because they did not come from one region or country, but were bound together as a people with no home and often expelled from the country in which they were living.

The first group of Jews to migrate to North America was relatively small. The twenty-four Sephardic[59] Jews who first settled on Manhattan Island were originally from Spain and Portugal, but came from Brazil, having been expelled from the former. The first synagogue in North America was established by the Sephardim (Coppa et al.1976: 148) in New York in 1695. Although the financial resources of the Sephardic Jews was often exhausted or confiscated by the time they reached North America, their skills and work ethic allowed them to prosper once again. By the Revolutionary War there were approximately 2,000 to 5,000 Jews in the colonies.

Though there was a trickle of constant migration, a large wave of Jewish migration occurred from 1830 to 1880 when the population of Jews grew 500 percent. This increase was made up primarily of Ashkenazi Germans and Central European Jews. The German Jews generally migrated for the same reason that caused the mass exodus of non-Jewish Germans during that same time, that is, the economic struggles during the 1830s and 1840s that had its greatest impact on the rural communities. In addition, German states such as Bavaria had imposed restrictions on Jewish marriages and limited their number of residences in its towns (1976: 149).

The third and massive of wave of migration came in the years following 1880 when more than two million migrated, for the most part from Eastern Europe. Their story is far more tragic. Though Polish royalty had encouraged Jews to settle in their

[59] When the Roman Legions overran the Jewish nation, much of the Jewish population was sent into exile throughout the Roman Empire. Many were sent to the IBERIAN peninsula. The area became known by the Hebrew word Sephard meaning "far away". The Jews in Spain and Portugal became known as Sephardim or Sephardi, and those things associated with the Sephardim including names, customs, genealogy and religious rites, became known as Sephardiic (Sephardim.com) In contrast Ashkenazi Jews, also called Ashkenazim are Jew who are descendants of Jews from Germany, Poland, Austria, and Eastern Europe. In historical times, Ashkenazi Jews usually spoke Yiddish or Slavic languages such as Knaanic. (Wikipedia.com)

country in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and even imposed laws to protect them, times had changed when Russia took over much of Eastern Europe in the eighteenth century. The Russians confined the Jews to specific areas. "Catherine the Great in 1791 established an area called the Jewish Pale of Settlement. Few Jews were permitted to move 'beyond the Pale'" (Sowell 1981:79).

Many of the rights the Jews enjoyed in Poland were taken away and successive czars made life more regressive. Following Sowell's assessment of these matters, by the nineteenth century attempts were made to "Russify" the Jews – taking away their boys at age twelve or younger for training in Greek Orthodox schools (1981:79). In addition, there were widespread massacres of Jews throughout the region of Pal. "Mobs rampaged through Jewish areas – destroying, looting, raping, and murdering. Even children and infants were not spared" (1981:79).

The Eastern European migration swamped the existing Jewish community that was made up primarily of Germanic Jews. New York City, specifically the Lower East side, was the epicenter of this mass migration.

> Life in these areas of primary settlement was, as one writer put it, "a panorama of hardship misery, poverty, crowding, filth, uncertainty, alienation, joy, love and devotion." New York's East Side was symbolic. In 1917, 500,000 Jews were crowded into a few square miles. As early as 1893, the Tenth Ward had 70,000 Jews or 700 per acre (Coppa et al. 1976:153).

Despite the acute congestion, disease was not a serious problem as in the Irish sections of the city. The Jews had a lower death rate – often lower than those living in more prosperous areas. Traditional values of cleanliness played heavily into this.

The new Jewish immigrants were poor, uneducated, less civilized, and held tightly to orthodoxy. Initially they were an embarrassment to the established Jews and much early persecution came from that community. As a result the German-Jews made great efforts to aid and "especially to Americanize" the new immigrants (Sowell 1981:81). The Eastern immigrants resented this and in time developed a strong enough financial base to help their own new immigrants as they arrived.

The Jews were industrious and the majority were wage earners. Very few went into major industry. Many were peddlers, small businessmen, skilled craftsman and clerks. Between 1880 and 1905, the number of peddlers in New York City increased by seventy-five percent, largely due to Jewish immigrants. In time they would have great impact on the garment industry, for they been concentrated in clothing production in Eastern Europe. By 1885, there were 241 garment factories in New York City, of which 234 were owned by Jews (1981:84).

A key ingredient in the success was their attitude toward education. Though very few of the Eastern European Jews were educated – about half were literate upon arrival – their tradition placed great value on learning. The free schools and libraries in New York City were embraced by children and adults alike. Though many of the early children had significant struggles, there was a desire for learning and a great number went on to schools such as Harvard. This occurred only as the first generation of immigrant Jews freed themselves from the slums. By the early twentieth century, a greater percentage of Jewish children went off to college than any other cultural group (1981:91).

As a whole, America was a safe haven for the Jewish community compared to what many had experienced elsewhere. Some give the United States credit for saving the Jewish people and this may have some validity due to the volume of those who made her their home. Thus, comparatively speaking, the Jews have faced little serious persecution.

Yet, persecution still did occur. The first significant open anti-Semitism occurred during the Civil War when General Ulysses S. Grant issued an order expelling Jews from the military area under his command. President Lincoln quickly took care of the problem, but this was clearly a case of the Jews taking the blame for the chaos of war (Coppa et al.1976:16).

Social discrimination against the Jews coincided with the mass Jewish migration of the late 1800s, fueled by racist ideologies and nationalism. Men like Henry Adams and Ignatius Donnelly both saw the Jew as a symbol and cause of their personal discontent. The image of the Jew, fairly benign up to this point, progressively altered to the arch-conspirator in the hated and feared city, who was attempting to impose the gold standard on suffering workers and farmers. This chorus was picked up by other leading politicians, and in time there was an immigration restriction movement which resulted in the immigration acts of 1921 and 1924.

Though the 1913 lynching of Leo Frank in Atlanta, Georgia was a rare instance of violent anti-Semitism, more significant was

> The wave of nativist nationalism and religious fundamentalism which swept through the country in the post-World War I decade…. The charges of the *Protocols of Elders of Zion*, that international Jewry was engaged in a conspiracy to dominate and rule the Christian world received wide dissemination in a seven-year campaign sponsored by Henry Ford's magazine the *Dearborn Independent* (1976:162).

Though Ford later apologized under threat of lawsuit, the damage was done. "The banker-Bolshevik, international Jew stereotype had been grafted on the older anti-Christ, Shylock image" (1976:162).

Though the Ku Klux Klan had, at its height in glory, four million members and an anti-Semitic component, it has little impact as the main targets were African Americans and Catholics. Through World War II there was regular discrimination toward the Jews and quotas, though publicly denied, were present in Ivy League schools such as Harvard. The Jews were the easy target for much of the country's struggles. "In 1944, a public opinion poll showed 24 percent regarded Jews as a menace to America" (1976:163).

The Italians

The story of Italian migration is somewhat different than the other groups we have studied as the Italians also migrated to many parts of Europe and both North and South America. In the nineteenth century, more Italians migrated to South America than North America, yet this pattern changed in the twentieth century. Following Sowell's assessment, from 1820 to 1850, less then 5000 Italians moved to the United States. That number grew to around 9000 in the next decade, followed by 12,000 in the 1870s (Sowell 1981:108). These first immigrants were primarily from Northern Italy, they scattered around the country, and the numbers were too small to make much of an impact in light of all the other groups migrating at that time.

In Sowell's estimation, the twentieth century brought some four million Italians to North America. A majority of these were from Southern Italy, a more economically deprived part or the country. As seen time and time again in other groups, the early immigrants from the North did not welcome the influx of Southern Italians – "perhaps more forcefully than any other American ethnic group" (1981:108) as they preferred to be passed off as American while the Southern immigrants clung tightly to the traditions of the homeland.

Sowell goes on to propose that along with the Southern Italian migration came a new pattern, for they were the first people to migrate back to their homeland in large numbers. Although this was unique to North America it was not uncommon in the rest of the world. "About 90 percent of the Italians who immigrated to other parts of Europe in that era returned home" (1981:109). It was far more difficult to return from North America, but the steamship brought faster and safer means of travel. Sowell estimates that the proportion of Italians returning back to Italy from the United States fluctuated between eleven and seventy-three percent (1981:109). Most who returned did so within the first five years.

It is Sowell's conclusion that the primary cause of the reverse migration was that most Southern Italians came for work, not to settle. Often only men would come and leave families behind. Some estimate that nearly ninety percent of the immigrants were male (1981:110). When economic conditions changed in the homeland or conditions in the United States became worse, they returned. Many returned with ample money to buy land or be "substantial citizens" (1981:110) back in Italy.

Like many of the immigrants before them, the Italians settled in the major cities, but different from their predecessors was that the Italians rarely made up the majority of any one large-sized neighborhood (1981:111). This did not mean that they were not segregated in a statistical sense, for between 1880 and 1910 the Italians were more segregated than any other immigrants, including the African Americans in the same time period. Their clusters were small but distinct and were concentrated around particular streets. "The closeness of family and even Italian village ties limited meaningful social contacts of Italian immigrants. Conversely, the absence of a strong group-wide identity muted inter-group friction. Italian Americans peacefully coexisted with highly diverse groups 1981:111).

This coexistence did not mean assimilation as the Italian family culture was very tight and the value of home country tradition high. A majority of the Italian Americans were reluctant to leave their rural cultural institutions behind them. "The most important prop they brought with them was the one that had served them best at home, the family, which included blood relatives. Before it all other groups paled in importance" (Coppa et al. 1976:126).

Sowell believes that the primary reason for the Italian settlements in major urban areas is that in cities like New York they replaced Irish and Poles on the work gangs that were busy repairing streets, building skyscrapers and digging the subways. It is estimated that half of all Italians who came to the United States in the late nineteenth century were laborers. In comparison to 1/7 of the Germans and 1/3 of the Irish at the

same time period, less than one-half of one percent of Italians were in professional occupations (1981:112).

Interestingly, in 1910 "Italian males earned less annually than either native whites or black males" (Sowell 1981:113).

> The teeming conditions of the Italian communities disturbed native Americans and older immigrants who did not understand or appreciate the reason for such over crowding. The density of population in those quarters was high because of the large number of families which took in borders. Contributing to, if not creating the congestion, was the attitude of the older American population. They declared many sections of the city off limits for the Italians, creating a ghetto situation. The little Italy's seemed even more crowded than they were, because the poor had little incentive to stay indoors and because they were accustomed to carrying on all sorts of activities in the streets and they had in the old country (Coppa et al. 1976:130).

Because the Italians lived in slum housing, they were associated with the slums and often accused of creating them. Their friendliness and street life puzzled and alarmed natives and the use of their native tongue generated fear as a result of the abuse of Italians which was both physical and verbal. "Irish toughs often waited as they returned from work and assaulted the smaller Italians" (Coppa et al. 1976:131).

Of all the ethnic groups, the Italians found themselves in conflict with the Irish the most. This was primarily for three reasons. First the Italians took many of the unskilled labor positions formerly filled by the Irish. Second, the neighborhoods into which the massive migrations moved had been Irish and finally, both the Irish and the Italians were traditionally Catholic and were forced to share the same churches.

There was an intense prejudice within the Irish Catholic church toward the Italians. In part, this was due to the role that Italy had played in "depriving the Pope of

his temporal power" (1976:132). Some "called the Italians 'dagoes' and made them sit in the back of the church with the Negroes" (Sowell 1981:116).

The Asian Americans

Asians came to the United States for the same reasons as the earliest European settlers; they were pursuing the American dream of a better life. Like other immigrants they too came in waves, largely from China and Japan. The discovery of gold in California in 1948 was the initial catalyst for their migration.

The Chinese

As has been common for the vast majority of immigrants, the Chinese immigrants to America were from the impoverished classes and most came to the United States with the plan of returning to their homeland after a few years of hard work. "Stories of the discovery of gold were so widespread that California became known to the Chinese as the 'Mountain of Gold'" (Coppa, et al 1976:192).

Most Chinese came from farming villages in the southern coastal province of Kwangtung and were not strangers to hardship. "By 1851 there were 25,000 Chinese in California. From 1851 to 1860, 41,000 Chinese migrated to the United States, while an additional 64,000 arrived in the 1860s" (1976:192). The trip from China to California was expensive and long, taking one to two months. Because of the length of the journey

and the intent to return, most men came to the new country by themselves. Thus from the earliest days the men vastly outnumbered women.

Upon arrival, the Chinese found various means of employment. The first immigrants worked in the gold mines while others opened stores and served as mechanics. In 1863 the construction of the Trans-Continental Railroad was begun. Due to a shortage of Anglo workers, the Chinese were hired. Eventually the Chinese were the major labor force in completing the railroad, with thousands participating. Upon completion of the railroad, the Chinese found work wherever possible. Though some worked in mines, a growing number became farm labor. By 1870, the Chinese made up one tenth of farm labor in California. By 1880, they made up a third of the force and one-half by 1884 (1976:193).

The high point of immigration came in the 1870s when more than 100,000 made their way to the United States. Though most left their homeland with grandiose dreams, upon arrival they faced great disappointment. Unfortunately, this influx came at the same time as an economic depression in the United States and the Chinese were made the scapegoats for many of the nation's difficulties. They were accused of taking jobs away from white men and of lowering the standard of living because they were willing to work for less (1976:193).

Beneath persecution was a deep prejudice toward the Chinese. They were neither white nor "Christian"[60] at a time when either trait alone was a hindrance. They looked and dressed differently than the Anglo. Many of the Chinese men still wore their hair in a queue which became a point of much contempt and ridicule. Many other customs that

[60] In this case, the term "Christian" is used in the broadest sense of the term.

were important to them were also ridiculed. Because of this rejection, their need for safety and desire to hang on to custom, they lived in their own communities which became known as Chinatowns. In addition, because very few of these men brought their wives they "lived in bachelor quarters, several men sharing a room" (1976:193).

An Irish immigrant by the name of Dennis Kearney instigated many of the anti-Chinese attitudes. He and his disciples started the Workingmen's party. Kearney ended each harangue with the words: "The Chinese must go!" These words became imprinted on the nation's consciousness. In 1879, for example, *Harper's Weekly*, which described itself as a "journal of civilization," printed on its front cover a picture of a Negro and a Chinese with the words, "The Nigger Must Go" and "The Chinese Must Go" under the pictures. The caption said, "The poor barbarians can't understand our civilized republican form of government" (as quoted in Coppa et al. 1976:193).

It is no surprise then that the Chinese became victims of a great deal of abuse. They were stoned, assaulted and robbed with little recourse, for they were not permitted to testify against an Anglo. A law was in place from 1854 to 1874 that prevented Chinese from testifying against a white man (Sowell 1981:136). This in effect made it open season on Chinese who had no legal recourse for any crime committed against them (1981:136). "It was during this time that the phrase "having a Chinaman's chance" came into vogue (Coppa, et. al. 1976:194). After the mid-1870s violence against the Chinese continued to grow as farmers were killed, homes and business destroyed and "entire Chinese communities were massacred or driven out of town" (1976:194). "In Los

Angeles in 1871, a mob of whites shot, hanged, and otherwise killed about twenty Chinese in one night." (Sowell 1981:137).

During this same time, as anti-Chinese passion was aflame, legislation was passed by both the Federal and State Governments. The 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act passed by the United States Congress made Chinese immigration to the United States illegal. The Chinese were the first immigrant group declared as undesirable by Congress. This meant that those who had already migrated could not bring their wives and children to the United States and those men who went back to China to get a wife were not allowed to return. In addition to curtailing immigration, the Exclusion Act also made citizenship a requirement for owning land and entering certain professions (Coppa et al. 1976:194).

It is important to remember that at the same time the Chinese were prohibited from immigrating, hundreds of thousands from other ethnic origins were pouring in from Europe. "In the same year the Exclusion Act was passed, 100,000 immigrants entered from the country of Britain, while a quarter of a million came from Germany" (1976:194).

The increased discrimination in the western states forced many Chinese to head East where they found employment in jobs few else were willing to do. These jobs were primarily in the laundry and restaurant business. Rather than face discrimination, many simply returned to their native land. This grew to the point that "In the 1880's, the number of Chinese leaving the United States was greater than the number coming in" (Sowell 1981:136).

Despite the severe hardships and being limited to the two occupations of laundry and restaurateur, the Chinese prospered by living in enclaves in major cities. "The Chinese hand laundry became an institution. So did the food created in Chinese restaurants for Americans – chop suey, chow mein, and fried rice, none of which were authentic dishes from China" (1981:139).

Unlike other groups of immigrants, the Chinese population in the United States decreased over time. "There were 107,000 Chinese in 1890 but only 61,000 in 1920" (1981:146). There were more males than females, and thus more Chinese died and or left the country than there were births and new immigrants. In time, as there were more women and thus more children born, the trend changed course and by 1950 the Chinese population had passed its high, attained in 1890.

The Japanese

In Sowell's opinion, the story of Japanese migration to the United States was greatly affected by that of the Chinese. Because their migration did not start until a decade and half after the Chinese, they immediately faced the bigotry already occurring. A trickle of migration began in the 1860s with over two hundred migrating in that decade. The following decade there were even fewer. The 1880s brought approximately two thousand with the numbers increasing rapidly. Over one hundred thousand Japanese migrated the first decade of the twentieth century. The Restriction Act brought Japanese migration to a stand still in the 1920s (1981:160)

Like the Chinese before them, the Japanese migration was predominantly male and by 1900 there were twenty-four males for every female. This pattern pointed to the immigrants' desire to return once again to their homeland. Despite intents by the Japanese government for the immigration to be temporary and the United States' governments making all Asians ineligible for citizenship, once here many chose to stay.

Unique in Japanese migration is their social class. Most Japanese were not the lower class typical of the Chinese and most other immigrant groups. The Japanese did not send America "it's tired its poor and its huddled masses" but a highly selected sampling of Japan. "The Japanese who migrated to Hawaii or to the United States were the ambitious young men of limited means, from farming backgrounds, who could get family and notables to vouch for them and to agree to be responsible for their passage expenses" (1981:161).

Because they were healthy, young and ambitious young men, who spoke English, initially they were well received upon their arrival.

> About 40 percent began as agricultural laborers, and the rest worked in a variety of other strenuous laboring tasks on railroads and in mines, lumber mill, canaries, meat-packing plants, and similar arduous occupations. Some became personal servants to affluent Americans. In all these occupations, the Japanese accepted low pay, long hours, and difficult working conditions without complaint. One indication of their diligence is that, when they were paid on a piecework basis in agriculture, they earned up to twice as much as other laborers (1981:162).

The positive qualities of the Japanese work ethic became a point of consternation to the rest of the American work force. At one point, "AFL President Samuel Gompers denounced Asian workers and refused to let them into unions, even segregated locals" (1981:162). Their hard work, thrift, and ambition caused them to move up in the labor

force and became small farmers and businessmen. Unfortunately, their success was seen as a threat and hostility against them grew. As with the Chinese, legislation was passed to restrict them. One such law was the Alien Land Law of 1913, made it impossible for a non-citizen to own land. Their ineligibility to become citizens prohibited the Japanese from owning land.

Anti-Japanese sentiment continued to grow to the point that in 1905 the California state legislature passed legislation asking the United States congress to "limit and diminish the further immigration of Japanese" (Coppa et al. 1976:196). During the same time the press fanned the flame of fear and hatred.

> In 1905 the *San Francisco Chronicle* printed anti-Japanese articles under such inflammatory headlines as "Japanese invasion the problem of the hour: more than 100,000 of the little brown men are now in the United States." Other headlines included, "Japanese a menace to American women;" and "Brown men and evil in public schools. (Coppa et al. 1976:196)

In 1906 the San Francisco Board of Education issued an order to exclude all Chinese, Japanese and Korean children from the public schools and move them to "Oriental" schools. This significantly stirred the fire of prejudice in California, but to the mortification of the United States, this action also brought an official protest from the Japanese government (1976:197).

Because Japan had become a world power, dealing with the Japanese immigration could not be done in the same way as it was to the Chinese a generation earlier. The Gentlemen's Agreement of 1908 was worked out between the two governments and Japan was to take an active role in restricting immigration. The United States agreed to allow wives and children of those already migrated to join their husbands and fathers.

Because of this action the sex imbalance was not as severe as it had been in the Chinese immigrant community. Yet, it was unmarried women who were not permitted to immigrate because it was feared that if the Japanese would form a family in the United States, they would be far less likely to return to Japan.

Despite heavy prejudice, the Japanese continued to find success in farming, groceries, and various other fields. This forward progress was once again interrupted by the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. The shock surprise felt by the American population was compounded by two factors.

> (1) The sneak attack was launched in the midst of a peace mission by Japanese diplomats in Washington and that (2) a simultaneous military offence launched by Japan in the western Pacific inflicted a series of devastating defeats on the United States…. Fears were rampant that the West Coast of the United States would be the next target of military attack or even invasion (Sowell 1981:171).

The fears and apprehensions of the American people turned against the Japanese Americans who often faced both verbal and physical attacks. The FBI rounded up some 1,500 Japanese whom they thought may be a threat to national defense. In February of 1942 President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed an Executive Order giving the Army authority to relocate anyone they saw as a threat to national security. In the end, between March and November of 1942, more than 100,000 men, women, and children were shipped off to internment camps in remote parts of California and Arkansas.

Sowell argues that this internment was devastating to the Japanese Americans. Not only were they forced to live in desolate places, but they lost their homes, personal belongings and businesses. "The financial losses of the Japanese Americans were estimated by the government itself at about $400,000,000 – at 1942 price levels"

(1981:172). Despite ruinous emotional and physical loss, the Japanese took the internment well, as they had before made the best of their situation.

In the end, 300,000 Japanese Americans fought in World War II and fought with valor in some of the deadliest battles. Others were needed for the labor shortage and were released to serve their country in that way. By the end of 1944, the United States Supreme Court declared the internment of Japanese Americans unconstitutional and not a single Japanese American was convicted of even one act of espionage – this could not be said of other immigrant Americans (1981:173).

In 1965 the immigration laws were fundamentally revised during the administration of Lyndon Johnson. The new legislation finally abolished the nationality origin quota system originated some sixty years prior. As a result, large numbers of Asians from many countries of origin have been able to immigrate to the United States (1981:172).

The African American

The African American and the American Indian are both unique to the make up of the United States. The African American arrived much later and was the only ethnic group that did not come to North America through their own aspiration. They came from a vast continent, three times the size of the continental United States, and made up of thousands of tribes and peoples each with their own language and custom. Yet, with the harshness of times and the indiscriminate and purposeful breaking apart of tribal groups, they are now uniquely American.

African Americans are among the oldest North Americans and their heritage has been deeply influenced by their struggle here. Yet in another sense the African American is one of the newest people groups who have entered the free society with the abolition of slavery in 1863. "Their massive internal migrations, came even later, so that many (perhaps most) blacks today are only second generation in the urban world in which they live. In that sense, blacks are about where the Irish were one hundred years earlier. (1981:183). In other words, a direct comparison to the advancement of other immigrants is almost impossible due to the dynamics of the African American's history.

As in most ancient cultures, slavery has long been part of life in Africa as victorious warring tribes would take home slaves as bounty. Yet the harshest slavery came at the hands of the Arabs as they moved southward into the heart of Africa. The famous missionary and explorer, David Livingstone, was haunted by the cruelties the Arabs inflicted on the slaves. In time, the Europeans became involved in this business opportunity, resulting in the selling and transporting of an estimated ten million African Slaves in the Western Hemisphere, with about 400,000 arriving in the United States. In addition, at least a million died in route and "this does not take into account the Africans killed by European diseases for which they lacked biological immunity" (1981:186).

At the same time that the white man was taking the African into slavery, he was developing a deep prejudice. Whites "regarded them with suspicion, fear and contempt… Even before the European exploration of Africa, Europeans, especially the English, believed that black connoted evil, and white purity. Before the sixteenth

century, the *Oxford English Dictionary* indicated that black meant 'soil, dirty, foul…atrocious, horrible, and wicked'" (Dinnerstein et al. 1979:17).

Both Europeans and North Americans saw the blacks much as they did the Indian. Because they were not Christian they were considered savage and uncivilized.

> They started describing Africans as beasts and were fascinated by the resemblances they saw between them and the chimpanzees discovered in African explorations. White men also viewed blacks as lustful, sexual beings. These ideas eventually led to the ethnocentric conclusion that their dark pigmentation symbolized the innate inferiority of blacks (1979:17).

As the need for cheaper labor grew, so did the slave trade and the United States played significant role. The first slaves were brought to the United States in the early 1600s and by 1825, the United States possessed the largest number of slaves of any country in the Western Hemisphere – more than one third. By 1860 more the four million slaves lived in the South alone (1979:47)

Though urban slaves had better shelter, those living in plantations lived in run-down cabins that were usually "crowded, drafty, dirty and lacked adequate furniture…in the most decayed and deplorable condition, built of logs, with no windows – not opening at all, except the doorway, with a chimney of sticks and mud" (1979:53). Some would argue that though deplorable for today's standards – their situation was comparable to that of contemporary European peasants or workers (Sowell 1981:186)

Slaves were valuable property to the slave owner and an important part of the slavery system was preventing the slaves from escaping. In the antebellum South, this was not done with fences or guards, "but by keeping the slave ignorant, dependent, and in

fear" (1981:187). Most slaves were not literate and in most southern states it was a crime to teach them.

> The slaves were kept dependent on the slave owners for rations of food or clothing and for the organization of their daily lives and living conditions. A leading slave owner advised, "create in him a habit of perfect dependence on you.…" This philosophy in practice was observed during the celebrated travels of Fredrick Law Olmstead through the South. Olmstead concluded that the southern strategy was to try to train the slave to work and yet "prevent him from learning to take care of himself" (1981:187).

Slaves were indeed valuable to the slave owner, but not as human beings. Slaves were commonly bought and sold as livestock. The interstate selling of these human beings was "one the most repulsive aspects of slavery" (Dinnerstein et al. 1979:46). Since they not were viewed as human, but as savages or beasts to be tamed, an attempt was made to destroy every element of the African's culture.

> No other system did so much to deny the personality of the slaves or to ruthlessly sell family members away from each other. The American slave system operated almost like the American brokerage system. If a person bought twenty slaves at the beginning or the week, and found himself short of cash at the end of the week, he might, if the price was right, sell ten. Those ten might be resold within a few days. The family, the most meaningful entity in African life, was systematically destroyed (Coppa et al. 1976:179).

The church as a whole did not condemn slavery and it was only the Friends, who had little presence in the South, who firmly condemned it. Methodist and Baptists actively sought to attract slaveholders by moderating their opposition to slavery. "By 1843, over a thousand Methodist ministers and preachers owned slaves" (Gonzalez 1985:251). The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church was inconsistent in it stance when in 1818 it declared slavery to be against the will of God and then went on

record as opposing its abolition and "deposed a minister for advocating abolition" (1985:251).

The Civil War was a watershed event in the history of African Americans primarily because it was the kiss of death for slavery in general however this change would take some time. Initially slaves in the South often faced more severe days as defeated Confederates came home to their ravage-torn homes and took out their frustration on helpless African Americans. "Slave owners sometimes took revenge against the women and children of black men who escaped from slavery to join the Union Army" (Sowell 1981:197). The war legally freed the slaves but did not free them from a society that continued to hate and despise them.[61]

Churches that had previously let the African American at least attend in their designated section of the church, now no longer let them attend. The church in many instances became the place to vent frustration through racist teachings and practices (Gonzalez 1985:253). This gave rise to new African American denominations such as the National Baptist Convention and the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church, which later became the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. "Meanwhile, northern churches – particularly Presbyterians and Methodist – began work among blacks in the south" (1985:252).

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[61] Dr. E.M. Coulter writes, "The problem of the Negro was one of the greatest produced by the war, yet the North in dealing with it increased rather than diminished the difficulty. By assuming the Negro to be entirely different from what he actually was, the North acted as if there really was no problem at all . . . Instead of helping the Negro the Radical leaders praised him. They sought to capture his sympathy and support, not by providing him with an education and land at national expense, but by telling him how civilized he already was and how well prepared he was to take over the ruler ship of the country he occupied" (The South During Reconstruction. Baton Rouge, La: State University Press, 1947 pp.55-56)

The North was not exempt from prejudice and segregation as even before the Civil War such attitudes forced the formation of two black denominations that would later play a significant role in serving the freed blacks in the South. These denominations were the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.

After the Civil War most African Americans continued to work in the same fields that they had before the war. As late as 1890, half worked in agriculture and a third in domestic work. In the South, the percentage in agriculture was even higher. Life in the South was particularly difficult as they had neither finances nor education and were often take advantage of. "In the immediate aftermath of the war, the newly freed Negroes were so inexperienced and vulnerable that some whites even continued to hold them as slaves, by keeping the Emancipation Proclamation secret from them" (Sowell 1981:200).

Like many other immigrants who came to the large northern cities of the United States for work, the African American also left the South in large numbers for the same destinations and their numbers were equally significant. As the end of the nineteenth century came about the migration north continued to grow steadily. By the late 1920's three-quarters of a million left the South - which is more people than migrated from Ireland during the great potato famine. "Almost half of all black males from fifteen to thirty four years of age in Georgia left Georgia during the 1920's" (Sowell 1981:209).

If Sowell's conclusion is correct, this mass migration had significant impact on both the destination and the places they left. "The masses of unacculturated, ill-educated, rural southern Negroes who flooded the Northern cities were bitterly resented by blacks

and whites alike" (1981:211). The southern blacks soon became the majority in the African American communities and settled in places such as Harlem, which had been predominantly white until 1910. When blacks continued to move into white sections tensions continued to grow and in 1911 Baltimore passed the first residential segregation law, later copied by other cities. Employment, residential and social barriers came into place that would last for many years to follow.

A hiatus in migration occurred during the Great Depression of the 1930s when unemployment figures were astronomical. By 1940 "a new and even larger migration from the South resumed. Well over one million blacks moved out of the South in the decade of the 1940s and again in the 1950s. More than four million migrated from the South between 1940 and 1970 – "a number comparable to the great international migrations in all of history" (1981:211).

A noteworthy impetus to the Northern migration was the triumph of the Jim Crow laws. The voices against bigotry were few and by 1877 Reconstruction was coming to an end. By the 1890s a torrent of racism engulfed the Southern blacks. Almost every area of human contact became subject to state and municipal legislation segregating the races. "Collectively know as 'Jim Crow' laws, this legislation proliferated throughout the region" (Dinnerstein et al. 1979:224). Through these laws African American were denied the right to participate in the electoral process. One such law required that a man could only vote if his grandfather had been allowed to vote. In addition railroads, streetcars, schools, restrooms and even drinking fountains were segregated.

Lynching was far from uncommon and the threat of it ever present.

> Whites and Orientals were also left dangling from trees but overwhelmingly more blacks than others were victimized. By the late nineteenth century, Southern lynchings averaged more than two per week… In 1893, a few men gouged out the eyes of a black man with a hot poker before setting him on fire; in 1921; after a particularly vicious group burned a black male, the onlookers waited for the fire to subside before scrambling for the man's bones, which they took as souvenirs (Dinnerstein et al. 1979:225).

Of all the immigrant groups the most intense and widespread antipathy was toward the African American. When in 1906 an Atlanta newspaper suggested some black men raped a white woman the bloody assault that followed was "one of the bloodiest racial assaults since the massacre at Wounded Knee in 1890" (1979:226). Repeatedly in cities such as St Louis and Chicago riots focused against the African American occurred. The cause of the riots ranged from labor, to housing, to the Great Chicago riot that started when a white threw a brick at a black youth for swimming over a supposed lined dividing the segregated beach. In the end twenty-three whites and twenty-five blacks lost their lives. (1979:227)

The Hispanic American

The Hispanic American influence has been integral to the forming of this nation. Much of the continent was under Spanish domination long before it became part of the United States. Many of the southwestern states were also once part of Mexico and the making of a new nation simply encompassed them in. As we move into the twenty-first century some of the oldest and newest Americans are Mexican.

The Mexican American

The Mexican immigrant group is one of the largest ethnic groups in the United States, but also the one the least publicized. In addition there are more illegal Mexican immigrants than any other group. The great majority of the Mexican Americans live in five southwestern states and about half of those live in California where they substantially outnumber the African American population.

> The millions of people lumped together as "Mexicans" "Mexican Americans" or "Chicanos" represent a variety of historical experiences -- many foreign born, more native born, and a handful of families that were here long before there was a United States. Their only common denominator is that, at some time or other, they originated in Mexico (Sowell 1981:245).

The first significant Mexican migration occurred in the early 1900s.when in 1902 Congress passed the Newlands Reclamation Act. This broadened the scope of irrigation in the southwest. The law set aside nearly all money that the government from the sale of public land and placed in a revolving fund to build and maintain irrigation projects. Before long, there was a need for thousands of unskilled workers. "The number of farm laborers in the Golden State increased from 59,145 in 1890 to 196, 812 in 1930: (Dinnerstein et al. 1979:215) and Mexicans made up the majority of those workers.

Another significant employer of the Mexican immigrant was the railroad who relied on them to build, maintain and run the rapidly growing rail system. Many lived in boxcars or shanty towns nearby. Both the railroad and agriculture tended to isolate the Mexican community in enclaves away from the average America. The children grew up in "a separate Spanish-speaking, Mexican-American world" (Sowell 1981:249)

Official numbers list over 700,000 Mexican immigrant arrivals between 1901 and 1930, but because there were no border guards before 1924 to prevent illegal entry the numbers could have easily been doubly high. In time they moved to other parts of the United States as employment became available. World War I brought immigration restrictions to European immigrants resulting in a labor shortage. This need was filled by the Mexican immigrants moving many of them from the farms of the Southeast to the foundries of the Midwest.

If Sowell's conclusions are correct, World War II brought a second wave of Mexican immigration as once again there arose a significant need for contract labor. This time it was back in agriculture. "Contract laborers were brought in under the *bracero* program, initiated in 1942. The rationale for the program was that there were simply not "enough" Americans during the wartime emergency" (Sowell 1981:254). The Mexican labor supply kept wages down long after World War II came to a close, but the program was extended. In 1945, 50,000 Mexican contract workers migrated to the United States. This rose to a high of 400,000 in 1950. The program ended in 1964, and The United States is presently in the midst of its third and highly significant wave of Mexican immigration.

The Puerto Rican American

In many ways, the story of Puerto Rican immigration is very similar to the Mexican immigration in the Southeastern states except that it occurred mainly in New York City. In both cases the immigrants were chiefly unskilled, relatively uneducated

laborers driven to find a better standard of living. The timing of the migration has followed the ups and down of the United States economy. 'The Great Depression reduced migration, and the postwar boom accelerated it" (Sowell 1981:232).

The Puerto Rican migration was not nearly as extensive as the Mexican and it started more recently. The first surge in migration occurred between 1910 and 1920 and corresponded to the need for labor during World War I. The years immediately following the war showed a notable increase that was halted by the Great Depression. As with the Mexican immigrants, World War II brought another season of labor shortages. In 1946 almost 40,000 Puerto Ricans came to New York City and migration continued to grow from that point forward (Coppa, et. al. 1976:29) Unique to the Puerto Rican migration was the availability of air transportation that allowed large numbers to migrate in a short period of time, and the potential for US citizenship.

Of the groups that migrated after World War II, the Puerto Ricans'got the most attention. Not only were they coming in large numbers but they "appeared to be introducing a new ingredient to New York City's ethnic mix" (Dinnerstein, et. al. 1979:257). In the next thirty-five years some one million would arrive in the United States with more than ninety five percent going to New York City.

> Because they were poor, spoke little or no English, and could obtain only the most menial positions in hotels, restaurants, hospitals and light manufacturing industries, many New Yorkers regarded them as another despicable and dirty immigrant group. They resembled the immigrants in previous generations except for two characteristics: they were American citizens, and they were of mixed color. Some were light-skinned, others were extremely dark, and many were in between. On the mainland those who were lighter found adjustment somewhat easier than those regarded as "niggers" (1979:257).

Chapter Summary

North American is indeed a mosaic of diverse people from every corner of the world and this mosaic is far from complete as we look to the future. Yet the future makeup of the mosaic will be drastically different than the past as the new additions will be increasingly non-white and non-western. Thus, on moves the pattern of ethnic succession with new and unique groups replacing those who have come before. This historic pattern has been in place from the foundation of the nation and will almost certainly continue into the distant future.

Our brief study of the ethnic making of America has given us the historical foundation for understanding the formation of multi-ethnicity and multi-culturalism in North America. Not only is this nation made up of a diverse people, but also each of these unique immigrant groups played a key role in making this nation what it is today. For not only did they fight our wars, labor in our factories and build our cities, but they brought with them many of the inventions that have made America what she is today.

It is clear then, diversity is America, and our uniqueness comes because of it. This paper has shown that there have been many cultural struggles between contrasting white cultures and in time, those have healed. On the other hand, the tension still exists between the western and non-western culture groups. The PCA, whose strength is in the non-Hispanic Anglo population, must understand diversity is America and be eager and willing to examine her history and adjust her attitudes so that they can seize onto the wonderful opportunity given to us by God.

In the chapters that follow, we will explore some of the implications of the multi-ethnic character of the United States for the ministry of the PCA. As we will see, the PCA must understand that America is quite diverse and be eager and willing to examine her history and adjust her attitudes so that we can reach the nation.

CHAPTER 4

THE CHALLENGE

The cultural mix that makes up the American mosaic is not as attractive as it may appear from a distance. For, upon closer examination, there is great pain, disappointment, neglect, and hatred. Though most minority immigrants came because of the labor need, their individual cultures were rejected. Those who were in the non-Hispanic white majority and willingly embraced the existing majority culture were more readily integrated into the existing culture. Those of "color" or from an "eastern" or "savage" culture were not as readily welcomed in most cases regardless of their efforts to assimilate.

Thus, as we move into the twenty-first century we are faced with the sobering reality that the majority of our PCA churches consist of those in the non-Hispanic white majority. Yet at the same time North America's rapid growth is primarily in Hispanic (of any race), Black and Asian [62] populations. In addition, there is a set of people the U.S. Census defines as "all other races" that will double in percentage by 2050.[63] The non-Hispanic white birth rate is decreasing while the rate of all the minority groups,

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[62] Latest U.S. Census numbers predict that by 2050, the Hispanic of any race will be 24.4 percent of the population, the Black alone will be 14.6 percent of the population, and the Asian alone will be 8 percent.

[63] This population includes American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, and other Pacifica Islanders alone and those of two or more races. Their population will grow from 2.5 to 5.3 percent of the population.

especially in the Hispanic and Black populations, continues to grow.[64] As North America continues to grow it will increasingly resemble the cities and regions where Peter and Paul ministered. This includes both the ethnic and cultural diversity and an absence of the Judeo-Christian morality. Like Peter and Paul, we are called to reach them.

We Should Not Be Surprised

Indeed, we should not be surprised with the changes that are taking place in North America, for as we have witnessed, these changes have been occurring for quite some time. As the nation has grown a common characteristic in the existing majority has been the reluctance to embrace any new cultural group who was not part of the existing majority population. The core majority population has consistently rejected the new immigrating population, even those from non-Hispanic white countries.[65] The rejection of those outside the non-Hispanic white majority, however, was more striking and more severe. Unfortunately, the church as a whole has responded in much the same fashion.

In time, most non-Hispanic white immigrants assimilated into the majority North American culture and "anglified" to different degrees. Those who did not were overshadowed by the droves of the new immigrants whose cultures more noticeably contrasted with the existing culture.[66] The Native American Indian was displaced and

[64] U.S. Census reports that the non-Hispanic white Baby Boomer birthrate is dropping while other groups are remaining steady or growing.

[65] Examples of this are found in chapter three where we found most new non-Hispanic white groups struggled assimilating into the existing majority culture.

[66] As seen in chapter four, these groups included Native American, African American, and all Hispanic and Asian groups.

the African American marginalized, but the Asian and Hispanic groups continued to permeate every corner of the nation.

Many Peoples, Many Churches

A quick glance at the history of the church in North America reveals that many of our existing denominations were founded by immigrants who brought their ecclesiological preferences along with them. As most of these ethnic groups settled into the new land, they established their own churches. Thus, eleven o'clock Sunday morning actually became the most segregated hour of the week.[67] At the same time it is important to note that this was not simply black verses white, but rather an across the board segregation of most ethnic groups. For example, Lutherans were primarily made up of Scandinavian and German immigrants. Episcopalian churches were primarily English, Presbyterian, Scottish and Dutch.

Over time, the non-Hispanic white ethnic groups began to melt together and cultural characteristics began to disappear. Eventually many denominational and ethnic lines became blurred. Justo Gonzalez adds:

> Another important consequence of the Second Great Awakening was that it helped break down the strict correspondence between ethnic origin and religious affiliation. Among the Baptists and Methodists there were German ex-Lutherans, Scottish ex-Presbyterians, and Irish ex-Catholics (1985:246).

Therefore today, on any one given Sunday in an evangelical church in North America, there will be people whose lineage comes from various European immigrant

[67] "At 11:00 on Sunday morning when we stand and sing and Christ has no east or west, we stand at the most segregated hour in this nation. This is tragic. Nobody of honesty can overlook this" Martin Luther King, 1963 Speech given at Western Michigan University.

groups, many of whom have little or no knowledge of their lineage. These individuals freely pass from one denomination to another having even less knowledge of the ethnic history of the church they attend. For the most part, there is little concern if an American of Irish lineage marries one of Jewish lineage.

This blending has had a positive impact on all evangelical churches and likewise the PCA. However, this only represents one portion of the population as most PCA churches consist of the non-Hispanic white majority and all other groups are strikingly absent. Those that are outside of the non-Hispanic white majority most often worship in segregated congregations. Therefore, it is important to analyze how the PCA came to be in the predicament in which she now finds herself.

God has used various events in history to mold the PCA into what it is today. One such force, often overlooked, was the development of a Populist movement from our original democratic ideals. In this land of immense multi-cultural immigration, this played a significant role in the history of the PCA.

Democracy and the Church

Significant to the history of the church in North America is the role of democracy and the Jeffersonian ideology, an ideology readily embraced by clergy and people alike. The democratic revolution that formed this land had a significant impact on established churches such as the Presbyterian Church. This tide change played a significant part in an early internal struggle that arose within the Presbyterian Church. The battle was so

intense that it resulted in a split in the denomination. Though later once again uniting, the cause of the conflict was primarily evangelistic methodology.

Gais J. Slosser, in his book entitled, They Seek a Country: The American Presbyterians, reminds us that this struggle was between those of the Old Side over and against those of the New Side. The primary concern of those in the Old Side was the new evangelistic methods being widely used at that time. The New Side, who often embraced these methods, accused the Old Side of having no passion for the lost; some accused them of being unconverted (1955:50).

Though forms and methodology of evangelism were central to the debate, there was a greater force at work and it was rampantly spreading across the land. Nathan O. Hatch writes in, The Democratization of American Christianity:

> Amidst the population boon, American Christianity became a mass enterprise. The eighteen hundred Christian ministers serving in 1775 swelled to nearly forty thousand by 1845. The number of preachers per capita more than tripled; the colonial legacy of one minister per fifteen hundred inhabitants became one per five hundred. The greater preaching density was remarkable given the spiraling population and the restless movement of people to occupy land beyond the reach of any church organization (1989:5).

With this burst of ministers came newly created American-made denominations that directly competed with each other. "Twice the number of denominations competed for adherents and insurgent groups enjoyed the upper hand. . . the Christians and the Disciples of Christ had an estimated four thousand preachers, equaling the number of clergy serving the Presbyterian denominations" (1989:5).

To the average person these new expressions of Christianity appeared more authentic and appealed greatly to those who felt disenfranchised by the church

establishment, which included the Presbyterians. If Hatch is correct, the majority of these upstart denominations were started by self-appointed leaders with little or no education whose magnetic personality and high communications skills enabled them to draw immense crowds.

Most of these new groups did not form over insignificant theological disputes with existing denominations, but formed in reaction to them. Hatch adds:

> These new expressions of faith, fed by passions of ordinary men and women, did not merely diverge from received authority; increasingly they failed even to take into account the standard theological categories that served as guides for religious experience and formed the common denominator of theological discussion. . . . Dissenters confounded the establishment with an approach to theological matters that was nothing short of guerilla warfare. The course language, earthy humor, biting sarcasm, and commonsense reasoning of their attacks appealed to the uneducated but left the professional clergy without a ready defense (1989:34).

With this came a populist power shift in which the establishment was replaced by preachers from the periphery who changed both the religious and social landscape. Distinct lines between high and low culture were broken down.[68] New theologies came into existence that were a mix of various old theologies adapted to any one particular group's persuasions.

> The new nation itself was living proof of human progress. Part of such progress was leaving behind the dogmatic attitude of traditional Christianity and the espousing only "natural religion", or at best, "essential Christianity." The traditional teachings and practice of Christian churches, except what could be understood in terms of natural reason or common morality, were considered relics of the bygone age, an unnecessary ballast in the ship of progress (Gonzalez 1985:240).

[68] In this paper "populist" is defined as a belief system that propagates the rights and wisdom of the common people. This is not to be confused with a political party formed in the United States in 1891.

This line of thought became originally institutionalized into two movements that eventually became intertwined; they were the Unitarians and the Universalists. The Unitarians were

> practically contemporary with independence, and made headway mostly in Anglican and Congregationalist circles that were no longer willing to subscribe to traditional orthodoxy. . . They were rationalists stressing human freedom and intellectual capabilities in contrast to the orthodox emphasis on divine mystery and human sin (Gonzalez 1985:24).

Universalism, which adheres to the belief that all will be saved in the end, is better understood when we know that their most famous advocate was Ralph Waldo Emerson. Emerson "combined rationalism and romanticism" (1985:24). Universalism "stressed self-knowledge as a means to understand the universe and it purpose" (1985:24).

These views, coupled with the Jeffersonian rejection of tradition, played a big part in the splintering of Christianity, as divergent groups broke away for established denominations, pursuing their personal theological convictions. Hatch sees it this way, "Populist preachers could disagree with each other as easily as they could from the establishment" (1989:34). In addition, authority of interpretation was taken from the establishment who were caricatured as proud and learned and given to the commoner, viewed as poor and lowly.

There seems to be no single force that drove the populist revolution, as both social and theological forces were at work. However, a significant driving force was a passion for equality.

A Passion for Equality

North America is land of immigrants; a land of those that have come to pursue a dream, make a new life for themselves. They have come with a passion for equality. In North America there was seemingly nothing to stop them. It is Hatch's conclusion that this passion incubated the perfect environment for the Christianization of North America. He notes,

> It was the engine that accelerated the process of Christianization with American popular culture, allowing indigenous expressions of faith to take hold among ordinary people, white and black. This expansion of evangelical Christianity did not proceed primarily from the nimble response of religious elites meeting the challenge before them. Rather, Christianity was effectively reshaped by common people who molded it in their own image and who threw themselves into expanding its influence. Increasingly assertive common people wanted their leaders unpretentious, their doctrines self-evident and down-to-earth, their music lively and sing-able, and their churches in local hands. It was this upsurge of democratic hope that characterized so many religious cultures in the early republic and brought Baptists, Methodists, Disciples of Christ, and a host of other insurgent groups to the fore. The rise of evangelical Christianity in the early republic is, in some measure, a story of success of the common people in shaping culture after their own priorities rather than the priorities outlined by gentlemen such as the framers of the constitution (1989:9).

These changes did not come about through governance and polity, but had more to do with the incarnation of the church into popular culture. Hatch's conclusion that the populist religious movements articulated a democratic spirit makes sense when he writes,

> First, they denied the age-old distinction that set the clergy apart as a separate order of men and refused learned theologians and traditional orthodoxies. Second, these movements empowered ordinary people by taking their deepest spiritual impulses at face value rather than subjecting them to the scrutiny of orthodox doctrine and the frowns of respectable clergyman [Third], Religious outsiders, flushed with confidence about their prospects, had little sense of limitation" (1989:10).

Supposing Hatch is accurate, we see a people motivated by a democratic hope – a passion for equality – and this passion outpaced the highly structured and undemocratic groups.

Educational Equality

An underlying but highly significant concern in the Old Side verses New Side conflict centered on the education of ministers. With the rapid growth of both the population and new brands of Christianity, there was a great need for more ministers. In addition, the Great Awakening caused rapid growth inside the church (Slosser 1955:50). This growth fueled the problem.

The New Side argued for lower education requirements and came with a William Tennet perspective. Tennent had been training men for ministry on the frontier for almost twenty years in his Log College The Old Side, on the other hand, insisted that Presbyterian ministers receive a formal classical education in the British Isles. The New Side remained convinced that such a formal training would not only take too long, but would not provide the practical training necessary for work on the vast frontier (1955:53).

The New Side had a legitimate concern regarding the type of training needed for the new frontier. For not only were there cultural and social concerns, but they were faced with a new breed of men and women that no longer dialogued in the same manner. It is this author's opinion that Jeffersonian republican thought played heavily into this as it rejected the wisdom of the past. The Presbyterians and Calvinists, having a theology deeply rooted in the past, were a prime target. Presbyterian ministers, having been

trained in the value of history and having taken vows to uphold the historical standards, were helpless against those who disregarded their very area of expertise.

Though the primary old school vs. new school conflict was solved with better education opportunities made available in North America (Slosser 1955:53), the problem did not go away and continued to grow as the democratic or populist movement had come to the church. Magnetic and gifted populist preachers "associated virtue with ordinary people and exalted the vernacular in word, print, and song" (Hatch 1989:5). The result was a collision of the canon of American religious history – deeply rooted in respectable intellectualism and cohesive institutions – with a populist religious chaotic situation led by men and women from the uneducated lower class. Hatch adds:

> At the same time, British clergy were confounded by their own gentility in trying to influence working-class, America exalted religious leaders short on social graces, family connections, and literary education. The religious activists pitched their messages to the unschooled and unsophisticated. Their movements offered the humble a marvelous sense of individual potential and collective aspiration (1989:5).

As we have seen in our study in chapter three, many of the "unschooled and unsophisticated" were immigrants and blacks. They were the labor backbone of North America's expansion and economy. Having arrived in this condition and often living and working in oppressive environments, the freedom that the immigrants had hoped for came alive through the energetic messages of the new populist preachers. Even more sobering was that the message of many of these upstart preachers was not a message of freedom in Christ, but freedom from the religious establishment:

> A diverse array of evangelical firebrands went about the task of movement building in the generation after the Revolution. Intent on bringing evangelical conversion to the mass of ordinary Americans, they could

> rarely divorce that message from contagious new democratic vocabularies and impulses that swept through American popular cultures. Class structure was viewed as society's fundamental problem. There was widespread disdain for the supposed lessons of history and tradition, and a call for reform using the rhetoric of the Revolution. . . The Christian movement, the Methodists, and the Mormons all commonly referred to all other Protestant denominations as "sectarians" (1989:7).

Men like Francis Asbury saw it as his obligation to condescend to people of low estate while Peter Cartwright recast the gospel in familiar idiom. Most notably, they welcomed the commoner into their ministry, "creating a cadre of preachers who felt and articulated the interests of the ordinary people" (1989:8). Meanwhile the Presbyterians, often coupled to the upper classes, were unable make the broader society accept their language and analysis.

Presbyterians and African Americans

Ulrich B. Phillips, in his book entitled, The State of the Economy of the Old South wrote, "We do not live in the past, the past lives in us" (1968:269). Being a denomination that finds over half [69] of its churches in states that once formed the Confederacy,[70] as the Presbyterian Church in America looks to the future we must live neither in a reminiscent "Mayberry"[71] past nor in an angry resentment of the present. We must understand that the past does live in us and has shaped us.

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[69] I estimate it to be 53 percent. This number is based on the 2003 PCA statistical report of 1,248 churches. 666 of these were estimated to be in what were Confederate states. This number includes Korean PCA churches.

[70] South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Texas, Virginia, Arkansas, North Carolina, and Tennessee.

[71] Mayberry is the name of the fictitious town of the Andy Griffith Show. Still popular today, this show typifies what many believe America was and still should be.

All history has good and bad elements, and such is true of the Southern Presbyterian Church, of which the PCA has its deepest roots. Of the many struggles that she has faced, one of the most significant was her role in slavery and attitude toward the African American people. As we seek to find answers for how the PCA can have effective Gospel ministry to those outside the non-Hispanic white community, it is important to examine how we have approached this in the past. Because the African American has played such a significant role in the PCA's past, they will be the primary cultural group studied.

It was not until after the American Revolution and the Great Awakening that an organized interest arose for evangelizing the African Americans. At that time, the African American population was approximately a half a million. The earliest missionary to African Americans in the South was John Chavis, appointed by the General Assembly in 1801. "He labored in a time when the slave system was hardening into a more rigid pattern" (Murray 1966:53)

In Volume One of Earnest Trice Thompson's, Presbyterians in the South, he writes:

> All the Southern churches, Methodists, Baptists, Episcopalians, and Presbyterians, came to recognize their obligation to carry the Gospel to the slaves, and their work met with considerable success. Among the Presbyterians, Rev. Archibald Alexander and Rev. John Holt Rice . . . were diligent as young pastors in preaching to and catechizing the Negro (1963, I: 204)

Thompson goes on to write that Dr. Rice, who then lived in Charlotte County, Virginia and had been paid part time by the General Assembly's Committee on Missions as an evangelist to the African Americans, spent twenty-five percent of his time in that

activity . Rev. Patillo of Greenville County, North Carolina also carried on a "successful" work, but few details of his work are available (1963, I: 205).

Robert Marshall, a Presbyterian minister in Kentucky,

> sent a child of one of his slaves to a subscription school. The schoolmaster insisted that his action was "contrary to the customs of the country" and refused to teach her. The minister replied: "If I must teach her at home, I can also teach the rest of my family . . . when we mix in the family continually with slaves it can be no dishonor to mix with them at school" (as quoted in Thompson 1963, I: 206)

It seems that from early on there was sincere interest in evangelizing the slaves. In fact, the 1825 General Assembly stated:

> We notice with pleasure the enlightened attention, which has been paid to the religious instruction and evangelizing of the unhappy slaves and free people of colour of our country, in some regions of the Church. We would especially commend the and zeal combined in this work of mercy by the Presbyteries of Charleston Union, Georgia, Concord, South Alabama, and Mississippi. The millions of unhappy people in our country . . . constitute at home a peculiar mission field of infinite importance, and of most inviting character. No more honoured name can be conferred on a Minister of Jesus Christ, than that of Apostle to the American slaves; and no service can be more pleasing to the God of heaven, or more useful to our beloved country, then that which this title designates (as cited in Thompson 1963, I:206).

This type of declaration continued year after year, showing a sincere interest in evangelizing the slave. Unfortunately, there was a shortage of Presbyterian ministers at that time to meet the need of the exploding white population[72] and therefore little action took place (207).

By 1830, a significant movement to evangelize the slaves on large Southern plantations began to take place. Up to this point, the work with African Americans had

[72] This, as we have previously discussed, was due to the rapid population growth as well as the available qualified men who would go to the frontier.

primarily been in Border States where the slave population ranged from four to fifty per farm.[73] Many of these slaves had close contact with their owners and therefore had better access to the church (209). In stark contrast, the large tobacco, cotton, rice, and sugar plantations had slave populations that ranged in the hundreds. The slave quarters on those Deep South plantations often resembled villages and had not been evangelized. The slaves, writes Thompson, "were generally ignorant, superstitious, and practically heathen" (209).

From its outset this effort was well supported and money was given to build chapels on these large plantations. However, as the cry for abolition grew louder in the North, much of the South lost its interest in the spiritual condition of the slaves. In fact

> Because of certain insurrectionary movements, limitations were placed on the activities of Negro ministers, and it became unpopular, and even unlawful, to teach them to read. When Virginia, for example learned that Nat Turner, leader of an uprising in that state in 1831, was a minister, it passed a law forbidding Negro ministers to carry on the exercise of their office except in compliance with very rigid regulations and in the presence of certain discreet white men (209).

This tension grew as the Presbyterian Church courts agreed that these restrictions were necessary. In 1832, the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia adopted a resolution that stated:

> The synod deeply sympathizes with the citizens of South Carolina and Georgia in their present feeling in regard to our colored population. They are, many of them personally interested in this species of property, and feel themselves called upon to cooperate as citizens in all measures that have for their object of preservation the good order of Society. They concur in the opinion which seems to be general, that the class of our population do need proper religious instruction . . . They also concur in the opinion general among our citizens that the preaching of colored men

[73] The slave states of Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri, which refused to secede from the Union in 1860–61.

> should be subjected to stricter regulations or set aside, and that competent white instructors be employed in their stead (210).

To put to rest all opposition, Thompson explains that the synod went on formal record to record,

> That in the discharge of this duty (of religious instruction by white men), we separate entirely the civil and religious condition of this people; and while we devote ourselves to the improvement of the latter, we disclaim all interference with the former (210).

Soon most of the synods within the Southern states made resolutions concurring with the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia and in fact, states including Mississippi, Louisiana, and Alabama passed laws "forbidding the instruction in reading, writing, and ciphering," which the slaves were accustomed to receive in many of the Sunday schools (201).

Abolitionism

Rev. James Gilliland, who some regard as the father of abolitionism in the Presbyterian Church, was a native of South Carolina and pastor of Bradaway Church near Belton, South Carolina (Thompson 1963, I:336). When Gilliland was ordained to the ministry, his ordination was on the condition that

> He agreed to desist preaching against slavery. In the fall of that same year the young minister brought the matter before the Synod of the Carolinas, expressing the opinion that the obligation the presbytery laid on him was contrary to the counsel of God. After due deliberation the synod concurred with the presbytery advising Mr. Gilliland to content himself with using utmost endeavors in private to open the way for emancipation. "To preach publicly against slavery, in present circumstances, and to lay down as the duty of every one, to liberate those who are under their care," said the synod, "is that which would lead to disorder, and open the way to great confusion" (as cited in Thompson 1963, I:336).

Gilliland faced opposition from his church and the community where he worked. By 1805, he had moved to Ohio, where he spent the rest of his ministry years (201). If fact, the trend of abolition ministers continued as many men such as Rev. Robert G. Wilson of South Carolina and Rev. James Hoge[74] of Virginia both moved also to Ohio (337).

A Rev. George Bourne was deposed for heresy by the Presbytery of Lexington in 1816 because of his abolitionist convictions and moved to Germantown, Pennsylvania where "he devoted his life to anti-slavery publications and assisted in founding the American Anti-slavery Society in 1822" (337).

This migration of gifted Presbyterian ministers to the North

> cannot be overemphasized . . . It deprived the South of men and women whose combined intelligence, moral courage, and Christian benevolence would have gone far toward modifying the harsher features of slavery, toward preventing so great unanimity of opinion in that section in the support of slavery as a positive good, and toward keeping alive the spirit of free discussion (Dwight Lowell Dumond,[75] quoted by Thompson 1963, I: 338).

As the stream of abolitionist ministers leaving the South continued to grow, there were many who felt like Dr. Rice, when on February 24, 1827 he wrote this as part of a letter to his friend William Maxwell:

> I am fully convinced that slavery is the greatest evil in our country, except whiskey; and it is my utmost ardent prayer that we may be delivered from it . . . [But] the reason I am so strenuously opposed to any movement by the church, or the ministers of religion on this subject is simply this. I am convinced that any thing we can do will injure religion, and retard the march of public feeling in relation to slavery . . ., as slavery exists among

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[74] James Hoge was the son of Dr. Moses Hoge, president of Hampton-Sydney College and the Synod of Virginia's professor of theology (Thompson 1963, I: 337).

[75] Dwight Lowell Dumond, Antislavery Origins of the Civil War in the United States. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press,1939; pp. 8-9

> us, the only possible chance of deliverance is by *making the people willing* to get rid of it. At any rate, it is this or physical force . . . Under this conviction, I wish ministers of religion to be convinced that there is nothing in the New Testament which obliges them to take hold of this subject directly. In fact, I believe that it never has fared well with either church or state, when the church meddled with temporal affairs . . .
>
> But I tell you what I wish. While we go on minding our own business, and endeavoring to make as many good Christians as possible among masters and servants, let the subject of slavery be discussed in the political papers . . . as a question of political economy. Keep it entirely free of ecclesiastical connexions . . . and treat it as a matter of State concernment . . . Considerations of this sort, combined with benevolent feelings growing out of a gradual, uninterrupted progress of religion, will, I believe, set the people of their own accord to seek deliverance. They will foresee the necessity of a change; soon begin to prepare it; and it will come about with violence or convulsion (as cited in Thompson: 339).

Letters like Dr. Rice's, reveal the struggle the church faced. On one hand, there were those who sought abolition at any expense and on the other hand, those who felt strongly that the church should not be concerned with affairs of the state.

Dr. J.H. Thornwell, a commissioner to the 1845 General Assembly, wrote in a letter to his wife while at the Assembly:

> I have no doubts but that the Assembly, by a very large majority, will declare slavery not to be sinful, will assert that it is sanctioned by the word of God, that it is purely a civil relation, with which the Church, as such, has no right to interfere, and that abolitionism is essentially wicked, disorganizing, and ruinous. I feel perfectly satisfied that this is the stand which the Assembly will take (as quoted in Thompson: 530).

The Assembly's resolution was not all what Dr. Thornwell had hoped for, but it did speak to his concerns. The report, adopted by a 168 to 13 majority, declared among other things that "since Christ and his inspired Apostles did not make the holding of slaves a bar of communion, we as a court of Christ, have no authority to do so" (531). Contained in the resolutions that accompanied the declaration was a challenge to keep the

Presbyterian Church together and not let this debate divide her. The underlying belief was that it was abolitionists rather than slavery itself who were dividing the church.

Post Civil War

At the close of the war, President Andrew Jackson declared December 7, 1865 to be a National Day of Thanksgiving and Prayer. On this day, Dr. James A. Lyon, Pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Columbus, Mississippi and former moderator of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America "determined to take advantage of the opportunity [afforded] to discharge the dictates of his conscience as God's Ambassador" (as quoted in Thompson 1973, II: 193).

Dr, Lyons' meeting was not well attended and he faced stiff opposition. Yet he firmly believed it was a day of Thanksgiving,

> and also need for repentance – the great sins of the South all being connected directly or indirectly with slavery. He went on to recall his efforts, carried on during the previous 15 years, to remove the confessed abuses of the system and his plan for gradual emancipation of the slaves. The Negro's degradation, Dr. Lyon declared, stemmed from the way "we have treated him." And urged that it be accepted as a privilege and an honor to elevate "the black race in our midst in the scale of Christianity and civilization" (Thompson: 193).

Dr. Lyon's message was not received with enthusiasm, as the problem was both immense and complex. Most at that time were in agreement with the author of the Southern Presbyterian Review[76] who declared:

> The elevation of the black people to a positive political and social equality with whites is simply an impossibility. Vain must be every effort to resist the decrees of God; and if any fact is demonstrable … it is in fact that God

[76] "The Future of Freedmen," SPR Vol. XIX, No2 (April 1867) p.279

> has so constituted the two races as to make their equality forever impossible (Thompson 1973, II:198).

The consensus was that nothing could be done, and unfortunately, this perspective was to become the view of the South.

> Religious considerations were being used to bolster policies adopted in part to maintain the political, economic, and social interests of the white man. Odd that the disciples of Calvin did not see that their innate sinfulness of mankind would prevent the white race from using their unchallenged power for the benefits of the blacks and therefore for the final good of the South (198)

As unfortunate as the situation was, an advocate for African Americans was found in Dr. John L. Girardeau. In his paper entitled, John L. Girardeau (1825-98): Philosopher, Theologian, and Preacher to Slaves,[77] C.N. Wilborn writes the following:

> Within a very short time of Girardeau's arrival in Charleston, the building for the religious instruction of the black community was overflowing. The work had begun in the basement of the Second Presbyterian Church in Charleston. By 1850, the outreach needed its own facilities and so a 600-seat Gothic style meeting hall was built on Anson Street. In the mid-1850s, under the preaching of Girardeau, this modest building became inadequate. By 1857, after some interruptions, a new building was erected near the corner of Calhoun Street and Meeting Street, *the* thoroughfare of Charleston. The seating capacity of the new building, built with funds raised by the community, was in excess of fifteen-hundred (1500) people– one of the largest in all the Southland.
>
> In 1855, the mission work begun in 1847 was organized as a particular church with forty-eight (48) white members who constituted the financial core of the church. By the time the new building was completed in 1857, the white membership had been tripled. The black membership was growing at a considerably greater rate. Unlike other churches with ministries to the black population, Girardeau preached to an integrated gathering. The main floor was primarily for the black congregants while the whites occupied the gallery or balcony with the overflow of black

[77] A paper presented at the Southeastern Regional Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society March 16, 2002 by Dr. C.N. Willborn, Associate Professor of Church History and Biblical Theology, Greenville Theological Seminary.

> attendees. In another atypical practice, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered to all, without respect to color, at the same time. "A class-worship, as it is called, is not produced," explained Girardeau (2002).

Dr. Girardeau was a recognized preacher and scholar and became a central figure in exploring the Presbyterian Church's relationship with the African American. An immediate concern that the Presbyterian Church faced was the mass exodus of African Americans from the church. Dr. Girardeau, a long time advocate of ministry to the African Americans presented his elaborate paper to the 1866 General Assembly as it discussed this very issue. "Girardeau accepted the fundamental unity of all mankind by God's creation, as well as the spiritual unity of all believers in Christ . . . . However, he was convinced that the South would never grant the African American social or ecclesiastical equality" (Murray 1966:148).

In the letter, Girardeau wrote:

> The force of this difficulty does not lie in the fact that our people are in any degree indisposed to worship together with the colored people. That, they have always done. They have been accustomed to sit with them in the same buildings, and at the same communion tables. But in the past there was a no tendency either to social equality or to an equal participation of the blacks with whites in the government or discipline of the church. The case is now changed. The elevation of the colored people to civil equality with the whites tends to produce in them a desire for social and ecclesiastical equality. This, the whites will not be willing to concede (as quoted in Thompson 1973, II: 209).

Dr. Girardeau presented two questions that the Assembly had to address as they looked to the future. The first question was whether the African Americans should be encouraged to withdraw from ecclesiastical connection. Dr. Girardeau was convinced

that if the Presbyterian Church were to retain the African Americans several concerns lay before the Assembly. They were:

> The Negroes are our neighbors and in need. We have been prepared by long experience to give them aid. The Negroes are not now prepared for their own organization. Should they separate they will be exposed to fanatical, licentious, and superstitious influences, which will tend to ruin them and injure the interests of society in general. The ecclesiastical union of the two races would help to produce harmony and goodwill between the two races; ecclesiastical separation would have the opposite effect (210).

The obvious following question that Dr. Girardeau believed must be asked was, "upon what plan should we proceed? …Many of them have left us already, and should they become totally separated from us it is feared that our opportunities for doing them good, so far as the masses would be concerned, will forever have departed" (210). Dr. Girardeau saw two possible solutions. The first was to organize separate churches for the African American with full powers and rights of representation in the higher courts. This plan he saw as hopelessly impractical as he was convinced that the African Americans were not ready for it and therefore it would not be for their own good. Girardeau was also convinced that if the African Americans insisted, they would have to go their own way. Girardeau's second option was to continue as in the past making no concessions to the African Americans. But he was not convinced that under these conditions they could be retained in the white churches (210).

Dr Girardeau's conclusion was that the African Americans must be given limited authority in their own congregations, or at the very least the right to elect their own deacons and perhaps their own elders. The conclusion of the Assembly was that the

African Americans be organized as branches of the white congregations, under a white pastor and with the white ruling elders representing them in the higher courts.

After lengthy discussion the Assembly

> moved a half step in the direction indicated. It reiterated it's belief that it was "highly inexpedient that there be a ecclesiastical separation of the white and colored races, that such measure would threaten evil to both races, and especially to the colored, and therefore it is desirable that every warrantable effort be made affectionately to dissuade freed people from severing their conexion with our churches and to retain them with us as of old" (210).

It was also determined that if the African Americans wanted their own congregations,white sessions would have to help organize them and have oversight of them. They did not deem it wise to ordain an African American, but some could be licensed to preach if deemed properly qualified. This action was rejected by Northern Presbyterians and as a whole the African American Presbyterian (Thompson: 211).

Dr. J.M.P. Atkinson[78] was concerned about what was happening and wrote a series of articles in the Central Presbyterian. In one article quoted by Thompson, he wrote,

> There is a strong and I fear growing declination among them to belong to our churches, or even to join in our worship. Sunday Schools once well attended, have been closed because forsaken by their pupils. Ministers, whose preaching before the war would attract large audiences, have in some cases felt obliged to desist from their labors among this people, or speak with few, sometimes with none to hear (211).

The main concern in his writings was "how to remove the aversion to receiving the gospel at our hands"? His suggestions included admitting African American communicants to all the privileges of full membership including the office of deacon,

[78] Atkinson was President of Hampton-Sydney College.

ruling, and teacher elder. Atkinson was not naïve to the prejudice of the Assembly, but was utterly convinced that as long as the African American was excluded from ecclesiastical participation they would not embrace Presbyterianism and the exodus would continue. "It was not only expedient to admit the Negro to the ministry, he contended, it was also his right in the church of Christ" (210, 211).

Dr. William Brown, "the influential editor of the Central Presbyterian" (212), was not in agreement with Atkinson and wrote at length against Atkinson's recommendations. Dr. Brown was convinced that there was a need for a separate organization specifically for the African American. He argued for this on two grounds: (1) That the current desire of the Negro population was in this direction; and (2) that no people had ever been thoroughly evangelized and improved except by the by the ministry and church organization composed mainly of their own class (Thompson 1973 II: 214).

This suggestion was vehemently opposed by a Dr. Thomas E. Peck, Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Polity at Union Theological Seminary and, when argued that if this was true than the church would not be free to minister to the poor of the land, whether white or black , Thompson quotes Peck:

> Why . . . should the freedman who cultivate our soil, serve us in our houses, cook our food, and nurse our children be put off into a church by themselves? . . . If the freedman should, all of them, become Presbyterians in faith and order we ought to welcome them all into our pale. This distinction of race, be it remembered, has been expressly abolished by Christ, and abolition of this distinction is one of the characteristic features of his church under this dispensation. Do you wish the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. to be destitute in this feature, and *pro tanto,* to be in want, one mark of a Christian church (214)?

Peck did concede however, that it was not necessary for mixed races to sit together as sexes sat apart in rural churches, and the races were separated in most other parts of the community.

The tension grew as those on each side of the debate became increasingly entrenched. Variations of Girardeau's plan were presented and rejected and one congregation of African Americans in South Carolina asked to be organized as a "branch congregation under a white minister, but with their own elders and deacons" (220), which in fact was a recent General Assembly plan. Nevertheless, the presbytery rejected the proposal.

> Unfortunately, the pressures of Reconstruction and the Freedmen's Bureau, and the hardened positions of notables like B. M. Palmer and R. L. Dabney brought the church to a pivotal moment. The weight of political and social issues eventuated in "organic separation" of white membership and black membership and the formation of churches along the color line. Girardeau alone dissented against the resolution at the 1874 General Assembly in Columbus, Mississippi, for which he served as Moderator (Wilborn 2004)

Murray adds that by the 1890's the African American work in the southern church had dwindled down to "some twenty-four ministers and seven hundred members" (1966:150). Under the leadership of A.L. Philips, there was a movement to organize African American members of the southern church into a separate denomination. This was approved and in 1897, the Afro-American Presbyterian Synod was formed. By 1901 it had twenty-one ministers and a membership of 1,352 (150).

By 1917 they had grown to thirty-seven ministers and 1,400 members and asked to be readmitted into the Southern Presbyterian Church. They became part of the

Snedecor Synod and were sent yearly to General Assembly, theoretically on an equality with white commissioners.[79] However, as one white southern Presbyterian admitted:

> For years we have kept them segregated rather far back on one side of the auditorium. They had no part or lot in the proceedings of the Assembly. At a meeting of the Assembly in Montreat which I attended a good many years ago, the Negro commissioners were housed in a damp room under the porch of Geneva Hall and had their meals in the kitchen of the old Alba Hotel, while we were comfortably housed in the hotels and had our meals in hotel dinning rooms (as quoted in Murray: 151).

Alex Batchelor reorganized the African American work in 1947 and under L.W. Bottoms "They made a vigorous effort to reach the more educated Negroes, by establishing churches in urban areas" (Murray 51) and in 1951 the Snedecor Synod was dissolved and on the most part integrated into the white synods of the church.

Though there is more to this history than our discussion permits, as we look back over the years to the eighteenth century, the words of Dr. Leland Cozart ring true:. [80] "Because of the Presbyterian Church, the Negro in America today is indefinitely the richer in body, mind, and spirit; because of the Negro, the Presbyterian Church is immeasurably more responsive to human needs, more brotherly and more Christian" (Wilmore 1983:72).

Presbyterians and Koreans

The Presbyterian Church has a long a rich history in regards to Korea. After the Korea-U.S. treaty of 1882, American Protestant missionaries began taking the Gospel to Korea. Paul Settle, in his text, To God All Praise and Glory writes, "In the forefront of

[79] So named for a former head of Stillman Institute of Tuscaloosa (Murray 1966:151).

[80] Dr. Leland Stanford Cozart was the first African American president of Barber-Scotia College (Wilmore 1983:72).

the pioneer evangelistic efforts were many devout men and women form the southern denomination, the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. (which had been founded only 21 years before). The Presbyterian workers reaped a harvest of thousands of souls" (1998:74).

This missionary effort was truly blessed by God, and paved the way for Korean Americans to join the PCA. Settles points out that many Koreans in the PCA have spiritual roots that take them back to the Presbyterian missionary efforts that started some 106 years earlier:.

> When the First General Assembly convened in Birmingham, Alabama, on December 4, 1973, only one Korean pastor, Dr. Nam Jin Cha, was present. But Dr. Cha, pastor of a large Korean church in Los Angeles, California, was 'Gods instrument to attract others of his southern California Korean brothers into the new denomination. Before long, eight Korean churches and nearly a dozen Korean pastors had joined the Pacific Presbytery of the PCA. Their reception was attended with great excitement because this was the first time Korean pastors and churches had joined a denomination outside their native land (Settles 1998:75).

Over the coming years, the numbers of Korean pastors and churches increased, but with this growth came cultural tensions. Settles goes on,

> Though the Koreans were well received by their Anglo brethren, the language and cultural barriers proved almost insurmountable. The Koreans felt isolated because few of them had the English skills necessary to enter fully into the ongoing work of presbyteries. Therefore, January of 1981, the Korean Presbyterian Minster's Association (KPMA) was founded in order to provide fellowship, denominational information and continuing orientation and instruction in the nuances of Presbyterianism, PCA style. In 1982, the KPMA requested the General Assembly to establish a nation-wide Korean language presbytery for the seven Korean churches and nine pastors (75-76).

By the end of 1982 the numbers of Korean churches had increased to sixteen and the 1983 General Assembly voted to divide the Korean Presbytery into two (76). Under

the leadership of Dr. Daniel Dae Gee Kim of the PCA's MNA committee, who was a positive catalyst in building the Korean church, it blossomed. By 1987, the number of churches grew to fifty-one, and by 1995, there were 120 churches in the Korean Language Presbyteries and seventeen Korean churches and missions in various Anglo presbyteries (76). Today there are seven Korean Language Presbyteries with sixty-nine churches and with seventy-five mission works.[81]

African American versus Korean Involvement in the PCA

There are strikingly different results between the PCA's effectiveness in reaching the African American community over and against that of the Korean community. In the following section, we will seek to analyze this and then offer some possible solutions. Much of my information on the Korean church comes from an interview with Rev. Dwight Linton,[82] and on the African Americans, Rev. Wy Plummer,[83] and Louis Wilson.[84]

Education

The Presbyterian tradition has rightfully placed a high value on the education of both its ministers and people. The PCA follows in the footsteps of this tradition and has

[81] These statistics come from the PCA 2003 Yearbook, p. 593.

[82] Rev. Dwight D. Linton, DMiss: was born and raised in Korea. He has served as missionary in Korea and as MNA Ethnic Church Development. In retirement, he continues to be actively involved in the Korean PCA churches. Dwight planted Open Door Community Church, a Korean church in the North Georgia Presbytery.

[83] Wy Plummer is the African American movement leader of MNA.

[84] Louis Wilson has served as a Teaching Elder in the PCA and studied both the African American and the non-Hispanic white populations. Louis grew up on the streets of the South side of Chicago. He graduated from Moody Bible Institute, Dallas Theological Seminary, and is presently pursing a doctoral work from University of Arizona.

some of the highest educational requirements in North America for her ministers. The Book of Church Order of the PCA states:

> An intern applying for ordination shall be required to present a diploma of Bachelor or Master from some approved college or university, and also a diploma of Bachelor or Master from some approved theological seminary or authentic testimonials of having completed of and endorsement from a theological study program as by the General Assembly and one of the Presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church in America (BC0 21-4).

Education and the acquiring of knowledge concerning the Scriptures, theology, church history, and the languages of Hebrew and Koine Greek are of great priority. Also, as a whole; the PCA make up is of those who highly value the role of education in the life of her ministers and her people.

African Americans

As we have seen in our study, the Presbyterians had a sincere interest in educating the African Americans. In fact, as has been noted, this often occurred in the white's home and with his children. Men such as C.A.Stillman[85] started The Institute for Training of Colored Ministers in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. The school started with two Presbyterian candidates, three Methodist and one Baptist, but by it's fifteenth anniversary nineteen of the twenty-nine African Americans in the Southern Presbyterian Church were educated there (Thompson 1973 II:310-311).

In fact, Gayraud S. Wilmore in his text, Black and Presbyterian, writes:

> The Presbyterian pastors and missionaries were the best educated in the nation and, therefore, could be of assistance to Black people who were always looking for opportunities to learn how to read and write. In terms

[85] Rev. C.A. Stillman D.D. was pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Tuscaloosa, Alabama (Thompson 1973 II: 310).

> of educational opportunities, the Presbyterian churches were much superior to the more zealous but less erudite Baptist and Methodist churches. It may have been one reason why some Blacks were drawn to the Presbyterian Church, despite it's elitism and in the face of its hypocrisy on the question of slavery, the answer probably lies in the widely publicized opportunities the Presbyterians gave them to improve themselves through reading, writing, arithmetic, manners, morals and better social contacts. Presbyterians placed an uncommon emphasis on these things, and no doubt the denominations greatest contribution to both slaves and freed Blacks was advancement in learning and proprieties of the upper classes (1983:64).

As Wilmore points out, "Blacks were drawn to the Presbyterian Church, despite its' elitism" and though educational elitism has long been present in the Presbyterian Church we must acknowledge both its presence and destruction.

Korean Americans

Dwight Linton sees "the strength of the Korean growth is tied directly to the strength of the Presbyterian church in Korea." In fact, the PCA did not plant most of the original Korean churches. These churches were already in existence and simply moved into the PCA. The men who started them came to North America having already received their formal seminary training in Presbyterian seminaries in Korea. Linton points out that most of the men who have received their seminary training have been received into the PCA rather easily.

Assimilation

Webster's Dictionary defines assimilate as **"**absorb into the system**:** to absorb into the culture or mores of a population or group." Specifically, we want to exam to what

extent both the African American Presbyterians and the Korean Presbyterians have become part of the PCA system, including their reception by the PCA, as well as their involvement in the broader denomination

African Americans

Wy Plummer, African American Movement Leader for MNA, believes there is much to be encouraged about as God continues to plant African American PCA churches. He points out two recent works in Jackson, Mississippi and Birmingham, Alabama that are healthy and growing. On the other hand, Wy reminds us of the challenge the PCA has of living with its past as he says, "Every African American Pastor in the PCA is a miracle." He is convinced there is nothing inherently attractive about the PCA to African Americans and that they come because God has clearly brought them here.

This clearly influences assimilation. Wy sees himself as unusual among African Americans in the PCA because when he came to faith he also felt at home with the PCA doctrine. However, for the most part, assimilation has been hindered by racism from both sides and as Wy comments, "by known racists within the PCA." Wy believes, on the other hand, that if white PCA churches would hire African American assistants and associate pastors this would be a positive step in the right direction. Wy also is convinced that the two things that keep the average African American from worshipping at a PCA church are community and music. In regards to community, they want to know they will be welcomed, embraced, and included. Therefore, in most instances African

Americans come into the denomination with no knowledge of how to "act" and are acknowledged by the denomination accordingly.

In an interview with Louis H. Wilson, he answered the question, "Why did you join the PCA?" Louis writes:

> First, let me preface my answering this question with understanding that its answer is associated with the next question also. Theologically, I had become a progressive dispensationalist. Simply, I did not see dispensationalism as historically explained at Dallas Theological Seminary (there were two profs beginning to assert this position) as sufficient to explain what seemed to bean undeniable relationship between the "dispensation of grace" and 'other' dispensations. Theologically I was shifting.
>
> Second, after being called by a large church planting network in the Atlanta area to plant a church, the question arose if I had considered the PCA. I was already there. For a couple of reasons, (1) I had been part of the bible church movement, as promoted by DTS and my experiences as an African American.
>
> Independent churches had become to me just that, independent; and they often did not stay focused on kingdom issues. In this sense, being a part of a movement, even if successful, had to be closely associated with God's kingdom plan as expressed through churches that were 'relationally and theologically' bound together. DTS was bound theologically, but not necessarily systemically relationally. I thought the PCA was different. The last comment is an important point, for I think it under girds my second reason for joining the PCA. As an African American, in my opinion, we have always functioned within our communities and churches in a covenantal way. We are part of an extended family. For these reasons, the theological expressions of the PCA, as being a part of the 'Covenant Family' of God were consistent with my own personal shift in theology and my cultural experiences.

The follow-up question to Louis was "Ecclesiastically, how do you feel like fellow non-Hispanic white PCA Teaching elders have received you? Included in Wilson's reply was,

At first, I thought the reception between the dominate culture of the PCA and other ethnic groups culturally normative; but I also believed the proviso for overcoming what many other had failed to do in other Christian circles to mend social/cultural differences were to be mediated in the PCA by a commitment to Covenant Theology. I took the introductions of "to my Fathers and Brothers" in Presbytery meetings seriously. One would not use these terms of endearment and commitment in the African American community, and I will say many other ethnic communities unless they were actionable and unconditional attitudes. My goal in making these observations is not cast fault, but rather to suggest how cultural frames of reference influence our perceptions.

Every group majority or minority validates it existence and ways of doing things. Christians, no different than the religious of the "Old Testament" or those during Christ's day, seek to affirm not just what they believe but how they live out those beliefs. This is a two-sided coin. We affirm that which we understand and agree and denounce or at the least marginalize those things that we do not understand or agree.

What it seems many of us do no account for is that much of what we couched in biblical jargon are really culturally influenced expression of how things should be and how people should interact. This too is important because we are all live in distinctive cultures, that have preconceived ideas about other cultures and, importantly, preconceived ideas about what social/cultural/economic issues are relevant.

Presbyterian ecclesiology has the allusion, and is designed to appear culturally value free, but presbyters are also social/cultural beings. Issues important to a given presbytery will to governed and evaluated by issues important to the dominate group, and I might add the dominate group within the group. Any attempts to question or deviations from cultural expectations will either be deemed peripheral, inferior, or invalidate. All too often, if the clash is between minority/majority, the minority person in the worst cases is stereotypically labeled, as unbiblical and contentious.

The predilection of dominate groups to assess others by their own orientations affects how African Americans are received into the PCA. African Americans in the mainstream of society are subliminally bicultural. They know how to make it in a white world. Again, in my opinion, when cultures interface they tend to take the path of least resistance.

> Therefore, African Americans in the norm come into the denomination with knowledge how to 'act' and are acknowledged by the denomination accordingly.

Korean Americans

The Korean representation in the PCA is quite strong and growing and, as mentioned earlier in the paper, the growth is represented both in the number of churches and presbyteries.[86] However, Linton says that the Korean Presbyterians "have not assimilated like we wanted them to." He sees the problem as primarily a language barrier as many pastors are not fluent in English. Many of the pastors are first generation, having grown up and been educated in Korea. Living in family clusters, most can survive in the broader culture with little English. In Korean PCA churches, worship services, Bibles, and hymnbooks are all in Korean.

Linton also notes that the Korean culture is very hierarchal. This enables them to fit into an existing PCA authority structure without much problem. Dr. Stephen Um[87] agrees that Korean culture preconditions it for not only the Presbyterian form of government, but for sitting under the leadership of others.

Linton adds though that assimilation is a "mixed bag" as the Koreans operate within their own Presbyteries. Though Linton was one who initially encouraged Korean-speaking Presbyteries, he now acknowledges that they have their downsides, and assimilation is one of them, He sees very little active presence of the Korean speaking churches on the General Assembly level.

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[86] Dwight Linton points out that unfortunately many of the new Korean churches are started as the result of a church split.

[87] Rev. Stephen UM, Ph.D., Pastor of Christ the King Presbyterian Church in Boston, MA

One aspect, Linton points out, that hinders assimilation is the lack of genuine community. Linton sees the Korean preferring to operate as a group rather than as individuals, while the Anglo majority in the PCA is very individualistic.

Music

In his text, With One Voice, Dr. Reggie Kidd, Dean of the Chapel and Professor of New Testament at Reformed Theological Seminary, Orlando writes:

> One day, I was talking with an older lady on the church staff. I noticed she wasn't making eye contact with me. Instead, her eyes kept scanning the outline of the afro. I realized she was so distracted, she couldn't hear a word I said. I almost audibly heard God: "Your move." That very night I went to the mirror, scissors in hand. Just like hair, music can either be a means of pushing each other away or of drawing closer to each other. "Music doesn't open doors nearly as much as it builds walls," maintains middle-aged Orlando Sentinel columnist and cartoonist Jake Vest, commenting on why musical performances during a recent Grammy awards telecast sent him to his refrigerator as much for escape as for refreshment (2005:96).

Dr. Kidd comically illustrates a problem the PCA faces within the non-Hispanic white community. The tension between advocates of A cupola, Psalter[88] only, Traditionalist[89] worship styles have been around for some time and have somewhat been minimized with the emergence of contemporary worship music. [90] As we continue to analyze the assimilation of the Korean verses the African American Presbyterians, we will now take a brief look at the role of music.

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[88] Those who advocate only the singing of Psalms.

[89] I have defined traditionalist as those who primarily use the Trinity Hymnal.

[90] Contemporary worship attempts to reach a contemporary audience with contemporary instrumentation and lyrics.

African Americans

John L. Girardeau's book against instrumental music in public worship remains, even after more than 100 years, the standard reformed work on this subject, at least in the United States. In this text entitled, Instrumental Music in the Public Worship of The Church, he writes:

> In the discussion of the question, Whether the use of instrumental music in the worship of the church is permissible or not, it must be premised: *First*, that the question *is not* in regard to private or family worship, or to that of social gatherings which are not ecclesiastical in their nature, nor with reference to the utility or tastefulness of instrumental music, nor in relation to the abuse to which it may be liable; but, *Secondly*, the question is precisely, Is the use of instrumental music in the public worship of the church *justifiable*? The design of this discussion is, with the help of the divine Spirit, to prove the negative (1888:9).

This faithful advocate of both slave and freedman had little idea just how his views in regards to worship would hinder his efforts to include the African American among the Presbyterian body. As has been mentioned earlier in this paper, Wy Plummer ranks music as highly significant when an African American looks for a place to worship. Wy states, "We don't like each others' music." Lewis Wilson agrees with Plummer, but adds that the African American is very expressive in all of life. Part of this expression is physical and therefore they want to move when they sing. This movement makes many in more traditional churches very uncomfortable.

Koreans

The music of Korean Presbyterian churches is very similar to the average traditional PCA church, except the words are in Korean. Dwight Linton adds that

many of the songs in the Korean Hymn book are "old nineteenth century gospel songs" that were translated by Presbyterian missionaries. Stylistically, the songs have much the same tempo and are sung in much the same demeanor as the average traditional PCA church.

Linton comments that the Korean Presbyterian Churches in the PCA are struggling with many of the same tensions that their fellow non-Hispanic white PCA congregations are in regards to contemporary music. He adds that few Korean PCA churches have moved to a more contemporary format, but some have added a time before worship when some contemporary praise songs are sung. As whole though, Linton says that Korean worship services are very formal.

In summation, Korean churches are very formal in their worship and elements of the traditional Presbyterianism are evident. As Stephen Um commented, in many ways, the first generation Korean churches are more traditionally Presbyterian then their Anglo counterparts.

The PCA Today

The PCA has made progress in recent years. At present, there are eighteen African American PCA churches and twenty-five ruling elders.[91] Though the numbers are small, they represent a movement in the right direction. Another significant step occurred when at the thirtieth General Assembly, June 10, 2002, the Nashville Presbytery

[91] These numbers come from Wy Plummer, MNA African American movement leader.

brought overture twenty entitled, “Racial Reconciliation” to the assembly, later known as the Pastoral Letter on Racism. The Presbyterian and Reformed news wrote of this event,

> In a dramatic vote this afternoon, the 30th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) voted to confess its "heinous sins attendant with unbiblical forms of servitude-including oppression, racism, exploitation, man stealing, and chattel slavery," all of which "stand in opposition to the Gospel." The court voted to "confess our involvement in these sins. As a people, both we and our fathers have failed to keep the commandments, the statutes, and the laws God has commanded. We therefore publicly repent of our pride, our complacency, and our complicity. Furthermore, we seek the forgiveness of our brothers and sisters for the reticence of our hearts that have constrained us from acting swiftly in this matter. "We will strive, in a manner consistent with the Gospel imperatives, for the encouragement of racial reconciliation, the establishment of urban and minority congregations, and the enhancement of existing ministries of mercy in our cities, among the poor, and across all social, racial, and economic boundaries, to the glory of God. Amen" (June 20, 2002).

The discussion on the assembly floor was full of emotion as men debated the need for such an action. The Presbyterian and Reformed News reported the following comments:

> Dr. Ligon Duncan began the ten-minutes allotted to his Committee, as he declared: "My heart was changed. My sins were challenged.” He also stated that as far as he could tell, no man on the Committee was driven by considerations of political correctness.
>
> Mr. Sam Duncan, who was Moderator of the 1997 Assembly, said, "I come to this discussion with some baggage, that baggage being that he is a "lifetime resident of the state of Mississippi." He spoke of growing up on a farm, and of being sent to an academy when the public schools started to be integrated in the 1960s, often by court order. The Magnolia State attorney revealed that the Session of his church had decided to ban two children from a foster family which had taken them in. The one child is HIV-positive, and the second has full-blown AIDS. He added that "those children were black." Mr. Duncan said that "black ministers needed ministry tools in order to minister in black communities. . . . We need to do more than wishing them well," and that this overture would give them the needed assistance.

> The Rev. Gene Case, Stated Clerk of Grace Presbytery, spoke in favor of the motion to postpone indefinitely. "We've heard some very eloquent expressions of personal experiences," said the pastor from Woodville, Mississippi. However, he was opposed to the overture because of the implicit attack on the reputations of godly 19th century churchmen such as James Smylie, Charles Colcott Jones, and John L. Girardeau, who ministered effectively to blacks in antebellum days. Even after the War, the Southern Presbyterian Church had declared its desire that the races worship together. However, the intervention of the federal government, which had engaged in a war of annihilation against the Confederacy, had by its policies after the War caused much bitterness in racial matters.
>
> The Rev. Steve Wilkins, a scholar on the South, arose to say that "we should condemn sin and racism." However, the overture "goes far beyond that." He counseled that "it's proper to repent of the sins of your fathers, if you hold to the same sins." In his view, adopting the overture "starts us on the road of meaningless repentance" (News Bulletin #30-04 June 20, 2002).

Though discussion was heated, after considerable time the recommendation was put to the court, and it passed overwhelmingly. Upon its passing, many commissioners applauded and rose for a standing ovation.

Following the Assembly discussion, Dr. Frank Smith of the Presbyterian and Reformed News[92] interviewed Dr. Morton Smith in regards to a number of matters before the Assembly. One such question represents the tension many in the PCA still find within themselves. The question Dr. Smith asked was,

> There are those in the denomination who would charge conservatives with being racists. Besides the fact that the term has not been particularly defined, would you consider yourself a racist or a defender of such? I understand that you had close ties with blacks as you were growing up.

To which Dr. Smith responded,

> Yes, sir. I do not consider myself a racist, because I would define a racist as being one who hates another race. I personally have no problems with

[92] Interview with Dr. Morton H. Smith. Presbyterian and Reformed News . 8 (3) July September 2002.

> segregation of the races, if it had involved a full equality of practice with the races. In other words, I don't feel that there is anything wrong with that necessarily, if the inequalities hadn't been allowed to come into the system. I think we reaped the whirlwind by not doing so, not keeping equality, say, of schools and that type of thing. They were not the same level. We said, separate, but equal. We did not provide equal schools for the black children. And the result is, I think, the whirlwind we have reaped since that time. But I do not consider myself a racist, though I have no objection to the segregation of the races, for example. And I see the Biblical ground for that, in part, is God's sending Israel into Egypt where they were segregated by the Egyptians because they were shepherds. It was part of God's plan to segregate Israel from the Egyptians. If they'd stayed in Canaan, they would have mixed with the Canaanites. But God graciously put them in a country where they were segregated, so that they would grow to become a great nation of Israelites, and not be a mixed bag, as it were. And so I think the idea of the segregation of races is actually found in the Bible. (2002)

In Dr. Smiths' answer, we can see the struggle that many in the PCA face. First, he clearly does not consider himself a racist. Second, he speaks out against the "inequalities" that came into the system and advocates that it was wrong for the church to let them in. He also understands that the PCA is paying the price for that inequality. Nevertheless, he does not have a problem with the segregation of the races and goes on to give scriptural support for his conviction. Though he is correct to point out that the nation of Israel was commanded to be segregated from the surrounding cultures, the purpose as we saw in chapter two was for spiritual purity. With the coming of Christ and the conclusions of the Council of Jerusalem, the need for spiritual segregation is no longer necessary.[93] Thus Dr. Smith's conclusion is not, in my opinion, scriptural.

Even more unfortunate is that, in light of our history, opinions like this are seen as "business as usual" by those outside of the non-Hispanic white majority. As we have seen, there has always been an interest to evangelize the other races, but this was done

[93] For more discussion on the role of circumcision and the food laws, see chapter two of this paper.

within the constraints of segregation. Moreover, it is the author of this papers' opinion, that where there has been segregation, there has not been equality.

To give an additional perspective, I asked Louis Wilson the following question: "What is the biggest hindrance the PCA faces in having effective Gospel ministry in the African American community"? He replied,

> I will endeavor to be bold at this point. African Americans coming into the PCA are too sinfully concerned with support for their call, rather than the call itself. Anglos are too sinfully concerned with easing the pain of reconciliation by affirming those that do not take them out of their comfort zone.
>
> I find it interesting many African Americans in the PCA could easily with little or no adaptation ministry in an Anglo context. Do not misunderstand me, there is nothing wrong with African Americans, designed by God to accept, seek, and fulfilling their calling where Anglos as the primary congregants. These individuals are being uniquely used of God to accomplish His purposes; nevertheless, neither is it wrong for African Americans to accept, seek, and fulfilling their calling where other African Americans are the primary congregants.
>
> However, how many Anglos and how many African Americans could with ease cross over and minister in the 'other' community? The implication is obvious, very few. The question is, what systems are being perpetuated in the PCA, that makes African American cross-over into Anglo communities so easy, but African Americans in the PCA ability to contextualize the gospel to the majority African American community so difficult or appear as a step down?.
>
> It seems the call I hear most often is that we need reformed African Americans to lead the call for revival, sound doctrine, and the call for moral veracity in the African American community. Often this call is put forward by denouncing the African American church and community, without qualification. Suspiciously, I do not hear the same from PCA Anglo churches. There is regular camaraderie by PCA leaders with other denominations and denominational leaders, different in theology, but of like-mindedness. Why is it that we can be supported in doing the same? If we cannot approach our communities as serving friends how do we build relationships?

> Lastly, there are a few PCA churches that build relationship with large traditional African American churches, even inviting them to specific meetings and partnering with them in specific ministry projects. How is it that the PCA can support African Americans outside of the "family" because of their successes in ministering to the African American community, and not endorse African Americans inside of the family that might have the same capability? I think I have answered this question but reflection is most necessary.

Harvey Conn pointedly challenges us with these words, "Every church must learn to be both the learner and a teacher in theologizing. The Third World church will find sit greatest struggle in learning to be a teacher of the West. The Western Church will find its agony in being taught to be a learner" (1984:253). If the PCA is going to have an effective Gospel ministry with those outside of the non-Hispanic white majority, we not only must have dialogue, but we must be willing to learn.

. Tim Keller, in his vision for Redeemer Presbyterian Church in Manhattan, New York, points to a sociological trend occurring in North America.[94] He refers to a 2002 lecture given by George Gallop in New York City where he predicted that non-white people groups and Americans born after 1980 show significantly more interest in spirituality in general and Christianity in particular than their older Anglo counterparts.[95] Significantly, Gallop forecasts that as North America becomes more multi-ethnic and as the young generation rise up into influence, faith should become more influential in our society. Gallop believes that the leaders of this spiritual resurgence will be especially African-American, the most profoundly Christian of all people-groups in the country.

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[94] This information is from Redeemer Presbyterian Church's "State of the Vision" document available at www.Redeemer.com.

[95] George Gallop, "Who Will Lead the U.S. Religious Revival?" November 26, 2002, www.gallop.com.

North America is rapidly becoming multi-ethnic and multi-cultural. The position the Presbyterian Church in America finds herself in, in light of her history and her present mindset is daunting. Because the evidence vividly shows the enormous population growth in the non-Anglo population and some predict that this same group is also the most receptive to the Gospel, there is great opportunity if the PCA will embrace her reformed heritage and be a reforming church as it looks toward an opportunity provided to her through the providence of God.

Chapter Summary

In summary we have seen that the circumstances that have brought the PCA to where it is today are rather complex. With the rapid growth of North American and the corresponding populist mindset, the Presbyterian churches were hit especially hard because of both their orthodoxy and tradition. Many of the immigrant populations and African Americans were drawn to the start up denominations where they felt affinity with others of lower educational and socio-economic standings.

We looked at slavery and its role in our history. We found that from early on the Presbyterians had a sincere interest in evangelizing the slaves and some in educating them. While as a whole slavery was not condemned by the Southern Presbyterians, but abolitionists were. However, there were men like John Girardeau who had a genuine interest in the African Americans. Because of the churches' reluctance to treat the African American as equals, most moved away to other churches and denominational groups.

We contrasted the Koreans and the African Americans in their involvement in the church, paying careful attention to the areas of education, assimilation, and music. We found that the reason the Koreans have prospered in the PCA is because of the years of Presbyterian missionary service in Korea that prepared them educationally and culturally to better adapt to the PCA culture. The Koreans' music and worship style is very similar to the non-Hispanic white congregations. On the other hand, the African Americans have not had the educational opportunities and have had far greater difficulty assimilating because of the significant cultural differences.

As we proceed to chapter five we will examine a strategy of where the PCA should go from here. We will see that God has given us a missionary opportunity right here in North America. As we seek to be missionaries, we will look again at the necessity of understanding the Gospel as well as culture.

CHAPTER 5

A NEW MISSION FIELD

Putting our past cultural errors behind us and looking toward an America that is possibly very different than we had presumed, we face the obligation to be faithful to God and respond in a biblically and doctrinally sound manner. In Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America, Craig Van Gelder writes, "A missional ecclesiology requires the church start with biblical and theological foundations before proceeding to designing organizations or assessing the viability of our present denominations" (1998:69). The goal of this chapter is not to lay a new foundation, for that foundation is present in Scripture and our Confessional Standard. Rather, our goal is to build upon that foundation a renewed vision for the PCA and her ministry to multi-cultured America.

A Renewed Vision

In the constitution of the PCA, chapter three entitled, "The Nature and Extent of Church Power" we read, "The sole functions of the Church, as a kingdom and government distinct from the civil commonwealth, are to proclaim, to administer, and to enforce the law of Christ revealed in the Scriptures" (BCO 3-3). Again, "The Church, with its ordinances, officers and courts, is the agency which Christ has ordained for the

edification and government of His people, for the propagation of the faith, and for the evangelization of the world" (BCO 3-5).

Foundational to the existence of the PCA is the proclamation of the law of Christ, the propagation of the faith and the evangelism of the world. This scriptural mandate is rooted in some of Jesus' last words as recorded in the Gospel of Matthew where we read,

> When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age (Mt 28:1-20).

John Calvin comments on verse nineteen, in his Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists: "The meaning amounts to this, that by proclaiming the Gospel everywhere, they shall bring all nations to the obedience of the faith . . . . Here Christ, by removing the distinction, makes the Gentiles equal to the Jews, and admits both indiscriminately in the covenant" (1993:383-384).

David Brown, in his contribution to Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible writes:

> This glorious Commission embraces two primary departments, the *Missionary* and the *Pastoral,* with two sublime and comprehensive *Encouragements* to undertake and go through with them.
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> First, The MISSIONARY department (Mt 28:18): "Go, make disciples of all nations." In the corresponding passage of Mark (Mr 16:15) it is, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." The only difference is, that in this passage the *sphere,* in its world-wide compass and its universality of *objects,* is more fully and definitely expressed; while in the former the great *aim* and certain *result* is delightfully expressed in the command to "make disciples of all nations." "Go, conquer the world for Me; carry the glad tidings into all lands and to every

> ear, and deem not this work at an end till all nations shall have embraced the Gospel and enrolled themselves My disciples."

Brown continues as he admonishes those who want to view this commission as only to the original eleven disciples rather than applying it to our present day:

> Now, was all this meant to be done by the Eleven men nearest to Him of the multitude then crowding around the risen Redeemer? Impossible. Was it to be done even in their lifetime? Surely not. In that little band, Jesus virtually addressed Himself to all who, in every age, should take up from them the same work. Before the eyes of the Church's risen Head were spread out, in those Eleven men, all His servants of every age; and one and all of them received His commission at that moment. Well, what next? Set the seal of visible discipleship upon the converts, by "baptizing them into the name," that is, into the whole fullness of the grace "of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," as belonging to them who believe. (See on 2Co 13:14). This done, the Missionary department of your work, which in its own nature is temporary, must merge in another, which is permanent (1871).

Yet, Brown does not let us be content with simply evangelizing, but reminds us that there is an additional ingredient in Christ commission. "Second, The PASTORAL department (Mt 28:20): "Teach them"--teach these baptized members of the Church visible--"to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," My apostles, during the three years ye have been with Me" (1871). The task that Jesus gave the disciples was enormous. There is little doubt that they were overwhelmed by it just as we in the PCA may be overwhelmed by our rapidly changing world. We like the disciples may fear the uncertainties and the perceived impossibility of the task ahead. Brown emphasizes:

> What must have been the feelings which such a Commission awakened? "WE who have scarce conquered our own misgivings--we, fishermen of Galilee, with no letters, no means, no influence over the humblest creature, conquer the world for Thee, Lord? Nay, Lord, do not mock us." " I mock you not, nor send you warfare on your own charges. For"--Here we are brought to Third, The ENCOURAGEMENTS to undertake and go through with this work. These are two; one in the van, the other in the rear

> of the Commission itself. First Encouragement: "All power in *heaven*"--the whole power of Heaven's love and wisdom and strength, "and all power in *earth*"--power over all persons, all passions, all principles, all movements--to bend them to this one high object, the evangelization of the world: All this "is *given unto Me.*" as the risen Lord of all, to be *by Me placed at your command*--"Go ye therefore." But there remains a Second Encouragement: "And lo! I am with you all the days"--not only to perpetuity, but without one day's interruption, "even to the end of the world" (1871).

As the PCA moves into the twenty-first century, we must renew our commitment to the Great Commission of Christ. This is not simply another verbal agreement but a change of heart and perspective. It is a call to missions; a call that goes beyond simple evangelism to a kingdom work where the Gospel is proclaimed and the converted are brought in, embraced, and taught.

A Call to Missions

To the average member of the PCA, a missionary is someone who goes. The common perception of a missionary from North America is one who would go to a distant land in order to preach the Gospel to those in that land. However, with the continual non-Anglo population growth and the influence that it brings, the mission field has come to North America. Craig Van Gelder is correct when he writes in, The Church between Gospel and Culture: “the day of the professional minister is over and the day of the missionary pastor has begun” (1996:57).

What does that mean? That means we have to look at our own world differently and grasp hold of the opportunity given to us by God. It means that the distinctions between minister and missionary must be removed and as George Hunsberger writes,

"for us who are in the place from which so many cross-cultural missionaries emanate, our most fundamental missional calling is to live the same way in our own culture that we counseled others to live in theirs" (1996:291). Our call to missions is still to go, but that going does not mean extensive travel, but to simply step outside our front doors and begin to love our ethnically and culturally diverse "Jerusalem" and "Judea."[96]

As we pursue our missionary endeavor to the multi-cultural world here in North America it is evident that God has providentially placed the PCA in a strategic position. For not only are the people coming to us, but we have been provided two advantages to enhance our efforts. The closeness of family relationships in many of these groups and the convenience of a common trade language.[97]

The Tentacles of Extended Families

Beyond the biblical mandate to reach the non-Anglo cultures is a strategic opportunity that opens the Gospel to those outside North America. In her discussion of the African American extended family in The Black Family: Past, Present and Future, Dr. Darlene B. Hannah writes, "it is imperative to note that in contrast to Western culture, the extended family is a prevailing mode of organization throughout Africa and other Third world settings" (1991:37). Included in the characteristics that Hannah gives are that these groups are multigenerational and often augmented with those from outside the unit. These extended family units emphasize obedience and respect for elders, and a high

[96] Taken form Acts 1:8, by using Jerusalem I am referring to our own local city or town in which we live and Judea as North America.

[97] By trade language, I am referring to a common language used for the purpose of communicating among people of different language groups. For instance, Spanish can be considered the trade language of South and Latin America, Swahili for East Africa, etc.

value on motherhood. "The Black extended family system, a network that transcends socioeconomic, biological kinship, and geographic boundaries, is a well established component of Black culture" (Hannah 1992:50).

Similar extended family characteristics are found in the two other fastest growing population groups in North America: the Hispanics and Asians.[98] Many of these extended families still have close ties to their native country.[99] The Mexican and Mexican American immigrants still send financial support to friends and families in their country of origin.

In the Jewish community, reaching one family member often resulted in reaching the entire family. An example of this was observed in the conversion of Cornelius (Acts 10) and that of the Philippian jailer (Acts 16) where entire households came to faith. Many of those outside the non-Hispanic white majority have similar extended family connections. These connections are a strategic aspect in reaching non-Anglos in North America as well as their extend families around the world. The tentacles of family, ethnic, and cultural ties are far greater than most non-Hispanic whites understand. For each person outside the non-Hispanic white majority that we reach with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, an opportunity opens to reach family and friends.

As a people of faith, called by God to expand His Kingdom, we must look at the fields that God has brought to us. We must be willing to tear down our walls of pretence,

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[98] Mexico represents the largest source of immigration to the United States. Of the 32.5 million foreign born covered in the March 2002 CPS, 9.8 million or 30 percent were from Mexico; the next largest source, the Philippines, accounted for only one-seventh as many at 1.4 million. The rest of Latin America accounted for 7.3 million or 23 percent. Asian immigrants, at 8.5 million, made up 26 percent of the total foreign-born population. There were 5.4 million foreign born from Europe and Canada, accounting for 17 percent of all immigrants. Africa and the remaining countries, at 1.4 million, made up four percent of all foreign born (migrationinformation.org)

[99] Note in chapter three particularly the Chinese and Japanese men who often migrated to the United States alone and sent their earnings back to their families. This pattern continues today with most groups.

arrogance and prejudice and see all people as worthy of reaching, as did Jesus when he challenged the disciples and said, “Do you not say, “Four more months, and then the harvest” (Acts 4:35); for the fields are ready for harvest.

The One Language Opportunity

One of the most difficult barriers for many foreign mission endeavors is learning the native language of the people. Some dialects are very difficult to learn and basic communication skills unattainable. Yet, God has provided the church in North America an opportunity to reach many of these people groups without that language barrier. Sowell points out:

> The United States is one of the largest cultural-linguistic units in the history of the world. From San Francisco to Boston is the same distance as Madrid to Moscow. Yet there is one language, one set of laws, and one economy in area that, in Europe, is fragmented into a multitude of nations, languages and competing military and political blocks. The size and the cohesion of American society are all the more remarkable because of the diverse origins of the people who make it up…. The United States as a whole is larger than the Roman Empire at its greatest expansion (1981:4)

Though learning a culture is an essential ingredient for successful missionary endeavor, the language barrier is not present. There have been few times in history that the church has had an opportunity like this. Once again, God in his providence has not only brought many people groups to us, but many who are learning English as well. This is by no means a challenge to use only English in our outreach efforts, but simply points out that many of the language barriers that prohibited the average Christian to share the Gospel are not as strong as they once were.

Now that we have seen the need to renew our vision for the Great Commission and have seen both the need and the unique opportunity that we have in North America, we will now study two essentials for effective missionary endeavor. As rudimentary as it sounds, we must first examine our understanding of the Gospel. Following that discussion, we will study culture, and this will be followed by a model to bring Gospel and culture together.

Understanding the Gospel

What is the Gospel? For a word so commonly used in the church, there is confusion as to its meaning. To be effective as missionaries in the advancement of the Reign of God we must first fully understand the Gospel and be able to communicate it clearly in word and deed to the multi-cultured world around us.

In its simplest form, Gospel means "good news" and this good news is astoundingly simple.[100] The Apostle Paul writes. "That if you confess with your mouth 'Jesus is Lord' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (Rom 10:9). Though the Gospel involves your personal salvation, it is much more. In The Coming of the Kingdom, Herman Ridderobos writes concerning the Gospel:

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[100] *euaggelion* good news; in the NT, only of God's message of salvation the Gospel, good news. *basar* a primitive root; TWOT - 291; v • AV - tidings 16, show forth 3, publish 3, messenger 1, preached 1; 24 • 1) to bear news, bear tidings, publish, preach, show forth 1a) (Piel) 1a1) to gladden with good news 1a2) to bear news 1a3) to announce (salvation) as good news, preach 1b) (Hithpael) to receive good news

> Jesus' preaching is repeatedly summarized by it [the Gospel] (e.g., Matt. 4:23; 9:35; 24:14; 26:13; Mark 1:14, 15; 8:35; 13:10). Although the word is for the whole of preaching of the kingdom of heaven . . . the word means good or joyful news, and characterizes the contents of Jesus' preaching as the promulgation of salvation. All this stands against the Old Testament background of the word "gospel" which is especially sought in the second part of the prophecies of Isaiah. There the messenger of good news is mentioned, the *m□ebass□e□r,* who preaches the kingly dominion of Jahwe, the dawn of the new era (Is. 52:7), bringing salvation and peace to Zion . . . it is announced as a message of joy (1962:71).

In The Gospel of the Kingdom, George Eldon Ladd comments more fully on this kingdom.[101]

> The Kingdom of God is His kingship, His rule, His authority. When this is once realized, we can go through the New Testament and find passage after passage where this meaning is evident, where the Kingdom is not a realm or a people, but God's reign. Jesus said that we must "receive the kingdom of God" as little children (Mark 10:15). What is received? The Church? Heaven? What is received is God's rule. In order to enter the future realm of the Kingdom, one must submit himself in perfect trust to God's rule here. We must also "seek first his kingdom and his righteousness" (Mark 6:33). What is the object of our quest? The Church? Heaven? No, we are to seek God righteousness – His sway, His rule, His reign in our lives (1959:21).

The Gospel was not an invention of the New Testament, but rather is rooted in Covenant of Grace (Gen 3:15) and God's covenant with Abraham to build a great nation. It is the good news of the coming Messiah. John Goldingay writes in, Old Testament Theology: Israel's Gospel,

> The New Testament story focuses on Jesus of Nazareth, the herald of Gods reign, the prophet and teacher, the king repudiated by his subjects, the Word of God embodied, the light of the world. It begins by advertising its continuity with the First Testament story. Priests and prophets minister in the temple. Women who could not have children bear children. Parents have their firstborn circumcised, name him and make the offering that Moses' teaching requires. Men and women break out in

[101] For an excellent discussion on the common use of the word "kingdom," see George Eldon Ladd's discussion on p 18ff in, The Gospel of the Kingdom. (1959).

> praise like that of the Psalms and in the manner of people such as Miriam, Moses, Deborah, Hannah and David. The shortest and perhaps oldest Gospel announces itself as "the beginnings of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (Mk 1:1) and thereby suggests its own continuity with the original "beginning" (Gen 1:1) and the original proclamation of "good news" (Is 52:7-10) (2003:289).

Jesus, a Jew, was born into the Israelite world. Both he and his parents did all that was required of them as Jews. As Goldingay mentions, that included all the laws of Moses, including his parents having him circumcised on the eighth day. Jesus came into this Jewish world at a time when the second temple was standing as God had restored the nation of Israel from exile. The temple was up and many of the exiles were back, "they still lived in servitude and longing" (Goldingay 2003:789) as the imperial power of Rome was heavy upon them. "When Jesus was born, a Jewish king ruled Judea, but it was Rome that had given him the title, and anyway Rome soon replaced this line of kings by governors such as Pontius Pilate" (790).

John the baptizer prepared the way for the Christ by preaching a message of good news. "The good news is that Israel's political life and its relationship with God is being restored. Like Israel at the exodus, it is being freed to serve God in holiness and righteousness (Lk 1:74-75)" (791). Luke writes of the result of John's work when he writes, "Many of the people of Israel will he bring back to the Lord their God" (1:16).

"Unlike a Deuteronomist,[102] Jesus does not seek to bring about a change in Israel by formulating a new social policy, and unlike a prophet, he does not seek to bring about change by confronting the leadership of the capital" (791).

> God's ultimate design in Christ was to expand Israel's national theocracy into a universal kingdom . . . Between the resurrection and Christ's return;

[102] The Deuteronomistic History are the books of Joshua, Judges, 1 & 2 Samuel, and 1 & 2 Kings.

> the church has been set free from its nationalist moorings and set sail for the glorious universal kingdom. Now the Christian community is between ports, existing as a sub-culture among the nations of the world (Pratt 1999:371).

> God's reign is here. . . There are some realities that belong to a later time, to an age to come, that are proleptically present in Jesus' person and ministry. Yet Jesus warns his disciples that God's reign is not going to appear immediately – for instance, when they reach Jerusalem (Lk 19:11) . . . In John, Jesus declares that, through the activity of God's Spirit, people can get such a new start in their lives now that it is like being born again. They can thus have an anticipatory experience or sight of God's reign in their own life that will naturally lead into experiencing and entering God's reign when it comes (Jn 3:3, 5). The one event we cannot influence over is our birth, so it takes God to bring about this turnaround, rather than leaving us with our blindness (Mk 4:11-12) (Goldingay 2203:792).

Sidney Greidanus, in The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text, adds:

> There is not an unbridgeable gap between then and now but a definite continuity: the ancient Israelites were involved in the same struggle for the coming of God's kingdom as we are today; their needs and obligations were very similar to ours. Most importantly, of course, the same God who worked in their history is working in our history today for the final perfection of his kingdom. Consequently, as 1 Corinthians 10:11 puts it, these stories of the past can be instructive for us "upon whom the end of the ages has come (Greidanus 1988:101).

During Nicodemus' clandestine meeting with Jesus, recorded in John 3, we read,

> He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him." In reply, Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again. "How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!" Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit" (3:2-5).

In Jesus telling Nicodemus how to have eternal life, He associates it closely with the Kingdom of God. "They indicate that one must enter into life in order to enter into

the Kingdom of God; he must be born again" (Ladd 1959:66). The Gospel is about life, and Jesus says, "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full" (Jn 10:10).

> God's Word offers a life higher than the physical life which all men enjoy. It is the life of the Kingdom of God. We are all familiar with the text, "unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." But frequently, we dissociate eternal life from the truth of the Kingdom of God and do not usually think of eternal life as an aspect of God's Kingdom. However, these verses join together these two great Biblical realities. They are fast inseparable. The life which Christ came to bring us is the life of God's Kingdom (Ladd 1959:66).

A proper proclamation of the Gospel has a real and genuine effect on both the individual and the community. It is the good news of Jesus Christ that through Him we become citizens of the eternal Kingdom of God where there is no Jew or Greek, slave nor free, male nor female (Gal 3:28). It looks ahead to that day when distinction will be entirely gone when "The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a child will lead them" (Isa 11:6). It is an invitation to brothers and sisters of the King that all who come will fully enjoy the benefits of being co-heirs with Him. Just as we have not yet received the full benefit of the Kingdom of God, we have yet to receive the full benefits of the Gospel.

Therefore, a community with origins in the gospel is an eschatological community of salvation.

> As such, it comes form the preaching of the reign of God – the reign of God is its beginning and foundation. And it moves toward the revealed consummation of the reign of God – the reign of God is its goal, its foundation, its judgment. The church is defined by its origins in the gospel and casts a vision of its destiny that always draws forward . . . The essence of what it means to be the church arises perpetually from the church's origins in the gospel: it is in every moment being *originated* by the Holy Spirit as it hears the gospel and is *oriented* by the present reign of

> Christ in which the coming completed reign of God . . . is revealed and becomes effective in the present" (Guder 1998:86, 87).

Now that we have briefly examined the Gospel, it is important for us to take the next step in our study and examine culture. We have already seen that the Gospel was given to us in and through a culture, therefore to have a more effective Gospel outreach; we must learn to be students of culture.

Paying Attention to Culture

Everyone lives within the context of culture and in North America; there are various layers of culture. Each community and individual lives within a set of social norms and practices and in fact there are no neutral cultures. But there are dominant cultures, and it is usually those who live within the dominant culture that believe there is a neutral place where one can stand outside of all cultures. Lois Barret points out that, "There is no such neutrality of culture. All culture is particular" (1998:114). She gives the example of a seminar where the participants were asked to write their ethnicity on a poster board on the wall. The African-Americans and Jews knew their ethnicity, but the "Anglo" participants did not know what to write and said they had no ethnicity. This she says only occurs because they are part of the dominant culture. In fact, as we have seen, every expression of the gospel is "in-culturated," as the gospel is a distinctively ancient Jewish notion.

As most people in North America, the PCA is primarily made up of those who do not see their own ethnicity and are not aware of the ramifications of their culture. At the core of our culture is a western worldview. Paul G. Hiebert reminds us "that for the most

part, worldviews are implicit in the culture and therefore are hard to detect. Their power over us exists, in part, in that we are not aware of them or the ways they shape our lives" (1996:42). Even more disconcerting is our tendency to blend a western worldview into the reformed worldview

In addition, the commonalty the PCA has with other non-Hispanic white evangelical groups because of their shared western worldview isolates and blinds them to the differences they have with neighboring people groups. Because of this lack of awareness, there is a failure to see how the gospel has been clothed in their own culture.

It must be made clear that there is no cultureless gospel, as Jesus himself lived and taught in a Hebrew culture. The goal then is to not find a cultureless gospel, but understand the culture in which the Gospel first came and then communicate it effectively to the cultures we meet. To accomplish this we must not only learn to be students of other cultures but we must come to understand the strengths and weaknesses of our own culture. Van Gelder adds:

> When we recognize that what we are engaging is a cross-cultural missionary situation made more complicated by the fact that the culture in view is our own, we are thrown into serious difficulty. How can we critique our culture and seek the gospels' critique of it, while our way of judging the culture and our way of reading the Bible are themselves shaped by our own culture (1996:7).

It is imperative that we learn to pay close attention to our culture and those around us so that we can be better stewards of the commission that Christ gave us to make disciples of all nations.

Hiebert defines culture as, "the integrated systems of beliefs, feelings, and values characteristic of our society. These systems are our mental maps of the world that define

reality for us, which we use for guiding our lives" (1996:142). If we are going to be able to operate in a changing landscape, we must learn to read and analyze social and cultural maps because they are in constant flux.

As a whole, the non-Hispanic white majority has a low cultural intelligence.[103] This undoubtedly comes from our populist and individualist mindset that spends little time reflecting on our cultures' patterns. Though our actions may be offensive to those in other cultural groups, we find little need to examine our own actions and attitudes. We have little concern if the cultural map that guides our lives collides with or runs over another because of our "west is best" mentality.

David Scothmer gives three reasons why it is critical for the church to do its' own cultural analysis. His first reason is what he terms "C*ultural Proximity."*

> We are simply to close to our kith and kind for a truly missional encounter without developing some critical and analytical distance. One of the failures of the contemporary church is its inability to see its own captivity to the rules and norms of Western society. We all too easily rush to meet religious needs with a consumer oriented religion or to organize our religious institutions into cost effective businesses, not realizing that we need the objectivity of social science to reveal to us our hidden and unquestioned assumptions about the world, others, God and how we are engaged in God's kingdom. No theological retelling of the gospel so that others can hear it in their own idiom and with their own metaphors can take place until we know from what we have been saved, given our cultural idolatry, and to what we have been called, given God's gifts to the church for the sake of others (1996:159).

The PCA must see its need to stand back and take an objective look at how those on the outside view us. We must not be preoccupied with theological fortification and unaware of our cultural prejudices.

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[103] Cultural intelligence is gained by both an interest and growing knowledge of culture other than your own.

The second reason given by Scothmer is "*cultural diversity."* This, he writes, is forcing the society as whole to

> Wrestle with competing worldviews and loyalties. While some congregations are fortifying themselves against the influx of new and different neighbors, and while others wrestle with what it means to be missional in their own block, the church is woefully unprepared to be missional in any cross-cultural sense. . . . We white Christians do not have a clue how to be missional in ways that build solidarity and offer salvation instead of paternalism and patronage (1996:160).

Third, he writes:

> If we are to be mission outposts and missioners committed to a theological and methodological paradigm adequate for our post-Christendom status, we desperately need the tools of cross-cultural engagement. This I will call *cultural acuity* or the ability to think and act critically within and outside the comfortable limits and known expectations of our own world and enter the unknown world of the cultural other (1996:160).

Clearly, reaching the non-western community is not an easy task. Using the biblical marriage idiom (Gen 2:24; Mt 19:5) we must be willing to "leave" our home culture and "cleave" to the Gospel culture as we charter into unknown territory. "This "leaving" requires that we shed (or die to) our cultural, ecclesial, and theological baggage long enough to see what we must abandon forever and what we may pick up tentatively once again for the sake of "indwelling the gospel" (Scothmer 1996:160). Though we can never truly stand outside our own cultural context, we must take a hard-and-fast look at our cultural assumptions and expectations.

As a people called to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we must learn to be students of all cultures. Moreover as we seek to accomplish this we must do so with the understanding and conviction that we are the ones who have the plank in our eyes (Mt

7:1-5). It is only as we begin to understand the cultural plank that is in our eye that we will come to appreciate and love those in differing cultures.

So then, how do we go about this task of analyzing culture? Cultural theory is an ever-changing path that is often far more theoretical than practical. Scotchmer points out that what anthropologist Clifford Geertz "did for anthropology is important because of what his approach does for us – namely, free us to interpret culture from within real life experience and not outside it, as if we ourselves were hermetically sealed from it" (1996:161).

Geertz' approach to culture uses symbols that we use for articulating, relating, and communicating. Culture then, is not based on abstract theories and precise definitions but rather is a simple recognition of what humans do uniquely. To Geertz then, a symbol would be anything that serves as a vehicle for meaning, whether that is a word, an act, an object, a ritual, an event or possibly a person. "Above all, symbols are *extrinsic* sources of information" (Scotchner 1996:163).

Scotchmer goes on to point out that:

> Culture coheres and consists not so much in the rules and order that people create but through the symbols they use to unite, express, and summarize the rules and understandings between people, both within and across communities. Thus one who is "acculturated," not when one learns the rules of relations, or even the words of the culture, but when one manages the symbols or tools for making meaning, interpreting "facts," and communicating effectively in context. . . . What makes symbols *cultural* with enormous social impact is the fact that there is always a *context* for their use and their misuse, their death and their resurrection (1996:164).

Regardless of the size of the community, symbols serve as a way to identify those inside the community as well as those outside of it. Though far from perfect, understanding cultural symbols is a significant way of uniting divergent groups of people.

For example, let us take a simple object as a cross, though it is one object, its symbolism changes in any given cultural context. Whether it is a fetish, a decoration, a grave marker, an aid in confession, a place of death or disappearance, a holy site for worship, an attack because of racial status, a promise of sins forgiven or a hope of life to come does not depend on the actual object itself, but the context in which it exists. To place a burning cross in the yard of an African American from Mississippi does not bring comfort of sins forgiven.

Sherry Ortner developed a typology for analysis of symbols that believes that every culture contains core or key symbols that the analyst must both identify and understand. These key symbols fall into two categories which are "summarizing symbols" and 'elaborating symbols." Scotchmer sums up Ortner's definitions this way:

> *Summarizing symbols* are diffuse and serve to crystallize commitment around a central core idea, issue, or reality. They provide loyalty by speaking to attitudes and emotions in an evocative way. The flag, the cross, and the Bible are examples.
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> *Elaborating symbols* work just the opposite in that they help clarify and sort our "complex and undifferentiated feelings and ideas, making them comprehensible to oneself, communicable to others, and translatable into orderly action." Rarely sacred in the sense of eliciting an emotional response, these symbols are analytic and rational; they help order action and sort ideas (1996:168).

Elaborating symbols consist of a root metaphor and a key scenario. The root metaphor "provides the categories for ordering experience" while the key scenario

"provides the strategy for action or actualizing belief linked to core values" (Scotchner 1996:168). The root metaphors are the railroad track upon which we run our experiences. The Masai of East Africa could not be understood unless the significance of cattle was comprehended. The cattle to the Masai are a root metaphor. A root metaphor to the local church is finances. For a church to consider any significant undertaking without considering the cost analysis would be unheard of.

Key scenarios, on the other hand, personify a culture's essential notions of success and performance. A key scenario illustration of North American cultural ideals is found in the Horatio Alger myth. This story is based on a poor boy that becomes wealthy through sheer determination and hard work. The goal of the story is to reinforce key values and successful social action. The key scenario is if one works hard, one will be successful. This perspective then leads to comments like, "The problem with African Americans is they are lazy. After all, I know Sam Smith and he has a good job selling insurance because he works hard." To make false assumptions concerning the key scenario is to misjudge the person and or the community.

As fundamental as symbols are in cultural analysis they cannot stand on there own and must be observed in light of the context. Just as key to a proper hermeneutic of Scripture is the passages' context, the proper understanding of key cultural symbols also cannot be determined outside of the context wherein they occur. Scotchmer writes:

> The goal is the unveiling and describing of those larger dominant structures of meaning that are triggered by the use of culture's key symbols. Because culture is public, it is interpretable. But this interpretation relies on observation of behavior and attention to the words and expressed beliefs (what is meant by what people do, as opposed to the

> meaning told in what they say they are doing, given the larger context of their symbol system) (1996:170).

The context of analysis then can be defined as the social, economic, political, and psychological realities that exist for the people being studied. These realities are stated or unstated, conscious or unconscious, but all have some bearing on the symbols. For example if a young man was to say emphatically, "This is bad!", only a proper analysis of context could determine what he means. If he is a North American who has just taken a drink from a Masai warrior and found that the warm sour milk and blood mixture is not a cold Coca Cola, then he is saying the drink is horrible and he does not like it. On the other hand, if he is a car stereo enthusiast who has just seen the latest state of art sound system in a low rider pickup truck, then he is saying he really likes it! Context changes meaning.

If the PCA is going to be a reforming church that effectively ministers to non-western cultures we must not only be students of culture, our own and those around us, but we must be a listening church. For it is one thing to have studied a culture and to have grasped its symbols through experiencing it, but mastering the culture comes through dialoguing, with an emphasis on listening to the culture we are trying to learn. Just as an effective missionary to foreign land must spend years with the people observing and listening, we too must take the time and listen to what those outside the non-Hispanic white majority can teach us about them, and more importantly, what they can teach us about ourselves.

Harvey Conn, taking from the work of Orlando Costas, gives four reasons why it is important for us to listen to those outside the non-Hispanic white majority or non-

Anglo. In this case, we are asking what we can learn from our brothers and sisters. First, non-Anglo churches can serve as a mirror to help us see ourselves for who we are; a mirror for the critical self-understanding of American white Christians. The writings, lectures, and leadership of theologians and church leaders from the non-Anglo community will help us see ourselves and the limitations of our communal understanding.

Second, they can offer models of authentic contextualization:

> To be sure, after almost two hundred years of Anglo-Saxon-culture Christianity, the American church and theology need desperately a process of deculturation. Michaelson's assertion that mission in America "must begin by de-Americanizing the Gospel" cannot be treated lightly. Yet the process of de-Americanization must go along with an inverse process of incarnation in the present reality. Otherwise, Christian faith in the United States will succumb further to an otherworldly, escapist faith, which in the end will be no more and no less than a silent supporter of the same system (Conn 1984:256).

Costa's third point is that non-Anglos can provide meaningful paradigms of dynamic and liberating church leadership. In contrast to the highly "clericalized" non-Hispanic white church life in North America, the churches of the non-Anglo are strongly lay-oriented. Training is begun in the heat and sweat of everyday life and not bound by formal, academic, and abstract structures often found in seminaries.

Fourth, as we observe and listen to our non-Anglo brothers and sisters we see a pattern for radical discipleship. This discipleship is radical because the poor are no longer hidden, but they become objects of our action and reflection. Far too often western theology has been built on the foundation of power and wealth. The radical discipleship of the non-western says it is time to take seriously. "Religion that God our

Father accepts as pure and faultless... to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world" (Jas 1:27).

Bringing Gospel and Culture Together

As the church grapples with how to deal with our changing culture there are many dangers involved. Literature abounds that offers various approaches to crossing cultural barriers. In The Church between Gospel and Culture: The Emerging Mission in North America, Van Gelder makes a call to "de-ideologize" the Gospel when he writes:

> We will need to differentiate our Christian story from the national ideologies that have shaped our countries. For too long we have used "Christian" as a descriptive adjective to define our national identity. Cultural elitism and national ideology are obsolete as frameworks for interpreting the church's mission. In a globalized and pluralistic culture, the gospel as good news needs to be good news in spite of any particular national ideology, nor because of it. (1996:30).

It seems that rooted in Van Gelder's desire to de-ideologize the Gospel is an attempt to identify an "essential gospel" that is free of cultural influence. Along this same line, Tim Keller writes:

> Missionary strategy then consists of two parts: a) on the one hand not to remove any offence essentials of the gospel message, such as the teaching on sin, the need for repentance, the lost ness of those outside of Christ, and so on. b) On the other hand, be sure to remove any non-essential language or practice that will confuse or offend the sensibilities of the people you are trying to reach. The key to effective mission is to know the difference between essential and un-essential. If we over-adapt to a culture we are trying to reach, it means we have bought into that culture's idols . . . If, on the other hand we under-adapt to a culture, it means we accepted our own culture's idols. To the degree a ministry is over or under adapted, it loses culture-transforming power" (2003:3).

The problem that both Keller and Van Gelder are trying to address is that of the non-Hispanic white majority packaging the Gospel in their own culture and presuming their own ideologies to be correct and biblical. Van Gelder specifies his concern as "cultural elitism and national ideology" (1996:30).

The concerns these men address are legitimate. Stanley Haurerwas and William H. Williams write of a similar concern in their text, Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony, noting that the world has shifted for the church in North America. They warn the church of the inherent danger of embracing

> Constantinianism that holds the conviction that with an adopted and domesticated gospel, we could fit American values into a loosely Christian framework, and we could thereby be culturally significant. . . . The conservative and liberal churches, the so-called private (conversionist) and public (activist) churches are basically accommadationist (Constantinian) in the social ethic. Both assume that the America church's social task is to underwrite American democracy" (1989:32, 94).

These authors are correct in their concern for what they describe is not the Gospel. Inagrace T. Diettrerich writes of another misuse of the Gospel to which both Keller and Van Gelder would agree is a hindrance to its effectiveness. Diettrereich writes,

> Within the North American culture, the usual application of moral standards is impersonal, judgmental, and legalistic. When the church adopts this approach, it engenders a fear of others' knowing our shortcomings, evaluating our moral worth, or intervening in our lives. Issues of sin and confession then become divisive, oppressive, and destructive, rather than redemptive practices that nurture and sustain missional communities" (1998:170).

Moralism is not the Gospel and when it is coupled with the "Constantiniansim" of Haurerwas and Williams, it becomes a deadly duo.

Brian McLaren in, A New Kind of Christian: A Tale of Two Friends on a Spiritual Journey, advocates a reinvention of the Gospel to fit the present post-modern paradigms. McLaren and others like him come dangerously close to falling into syncretism. Harvey Conn quotes J.D. Douglas when he writes that syncretism "occurs when critical and *basic elements* of the Gospel are lost in the process of contextualization and are replaced by religious elements from the receiving culture; there is a synthesis with this partial Gospel" (1984:176).

The problem each of these men is attempting to address is how to communicate the Gospel to cultures that are alien to our own. In my opinion, Brian McLaren crosses the line into syncretism, while Keller and Van Gelder are attempting to be faithful to both the authority of Scripture and doctrine. Keller acknowledges the difficulty of this when he asks, "What does contextualization mean?" He goes on to point out that the word is a potential "minefield" because

> Contextualization can, unfortunately, be used to mean that one's interpretation of Scripture is as valid as any other. Or, it could mean that every interpretive community has a perspective that helps us see aspects of God's self-disclosure that other communities cannot in themselves see or hear. That's better. But as a practitioner of ministry, I see contextualization as adopting my communication of the gospel with out changing its essential character (2003:1).

What Keller is attempting to do is not new to the reformed community, for John Calvin contextualized as he sought to bring the Gospel to everyday application. Harvey Conn speaking of Calvin writes:

> His battle cry of *Sola Scriptura* was not simply the demand that we approach the Bible with an empty slate. As a pastor, he approached the Bible from his contemporary situation, as we approach it from ours. His work had an evangelistic dimension and he tried to apply the gospel to his

> own time and place. As a "physician of memory", he reached back in time and place through the Scriptures and sought to transform the present through the insight thus gained. . . . Across the infinite gap between Creator and creature, God baby-talked to his creation and we responded in covenant responsibility (1984:216,217).

Though Calvin was not attempting to reach a culture different from his own, he did understand that the culture from which the Scriptures were written was not his own and his desire was to see it applied to his audience – he contextualized. Conn goes on to quote Karl Barth:, "Calvin, having first established what stands in the text, sets himself to re-think the whole material and to wrestle with it, till the walls which separate the sixteenth century form the first become transparent! Paul speaks, and the man of the sixteenth century hears" (1984:217).

While it is doubtful that Calvin was truly successful in this, he does address a weakness in the essentialist desire to discover a culture-free Gospel. As we have seen, the term "Gospel" is Jewish through and through. In fact, Keller touches on that when he writes,

> There is no "non-contextualized" Christianity. Jesus didn't come to earth as a generalized being by becoming human he had to become a particular human. He was male, Jewish, working class. If he was to be human, he had to be a socially and culturally situated person. So the minute we begin to minister we must "incarnate", even as Jesus did. Actual Christian practices must have a Biblical form or shape as well as a cultural form or shape (2003:2).

The focus then should not be on an essential Gospel that is culture free, but rather a renewed commitment to understand the culture of Old and New Testaments. For it was in this culture that we find the expectation for Christ's first coming and indeed where He came, lived and ministered. With that in mind, our goal in contextualization is not to

simply put the Gospel into each culture we encounter, but rather to understand the culture of the Gospel, the Christian or PCA subculture as well as the cultures that we are attempting to reach.[104]

Our first step then is to become diligent practitioners of the Gospel, paying careful attention to the culture in the Old and New Testaments.

> As we bridge the gap between Old Testament culture and our culture, we should begin with assessing a text in light of Old Testament theocratic norms. If a passage deals with matters of flexibility, we must look beyond particulars to the more general principles involved. But when texts present more specific actions and ideas that were binding in the Old Testament theocracy, we should orient our attention more toward the particular action in view. . . . New Testament texts mediate between Old Testament culture and our world, offering fundamental guidelines for the adjustments we must make. As we see how New Testament authors handled the Old Testament texts for the church, we discover many insights into the kinds of applications we should pursue. (Pratt 1990:379-379).

At the same time, our applications are ineffective if we are not aware of our own PCA subculture.

> God originally designed Old Testament stories to direct life in national Israel. He did not inspire them primarily for Egyptian, Hittite, or Babylonian societies. To be sure, Scripture had implications for these nations, but here principle focus was the culture of Israel. In much the same way, Old Testament stories speak especially to the continuing theocracy in Christ. These texts have implications for the world at large, calling the world to repentance and faith and revealing standards of justice that should exist in all nations. But Christians are principle heirs of Old Testament stories. We have been adopted into the family of Abraham and inherit the promises given to his descendents (Romans 4:1-25) . . . For this reason application to modern life requires careful attention to the Christian subculture. We must concentrate on ways these texts challenge the church in areas of legislation and flexibility. We have been called to a distinctly holy life style, but we have also been called to cultural flexibility. Old

[104] By the PCA sub-culture, I am referring to our non-Hispanic white majority, our theology and doctrine, as well as our regular routines by which we operate as churches, presbyteries and the denomination.

> Testament themes apply to our lives on both levels. Confusing one for the other can lead to serious errors in application (Pratt 1990:379).

It is the author's opinion then, that in our effort to have effective Gospel outreach to those outside the non-Hispanic white majority; our first step is to realize that there is no cultureless Gospel. To miss the culture in which Christ was promised and to whom He came, would deprive the Gospel of its fullness. Second, we must constantly evaluate our PCA subculture and discern how it has been influenced negatively by non-scriptural ideologies, the ways of the modern Egyptians, Hittites, and Babylonians. Third, we must be willing to care enough for those of other cultural groups to learn their customs. It is through learning their customs that we avoid needless confrontation, embarrassment, or insult. Just as we would appreciate them being aware of our customs, we must as Christians show our love and interest by learning theirs. In the end, we must always keep in mind that "many cultural variations result form natural diversities that God has established in the world, but God's revelation is the standard for evaluating all patterns of life" (Pratt 1190:380).

In order to have effective Gospel ministry attention must be paid to all three of these cultures. If we give too much attention to the culture we are trying to reach, we are in the danger of over-adapting and this, as Keller correctly states, "shows a lack of gospel confidence" (2003:3). On the other hand, if we only focus on the PCA subculture this shows a lack of what Keller calls "gospel humility," which he says:

> Directs us to neither hate tradition nor be bound to it. It is proud to imagine that other Christians did not find much grace in past "contextualizations" and therefore we do not ignore tradition. But it is

> also proud to think that new cultural trends have no grace in them and that the former cultures were all more spiritually pure (2003:3).

Therefore if the PCA is going to flourish in its efforts to expand the Kingdom of God it must keep a keen eye on the Gospel, our PCA subculture, as well as the ever changing and multi-faced culture in which we live. Yet even as we seek to be students of all three cultures this alone will not automatically result in effective outreach. For without a genuine love for all the peoples of the earth our efforts will be sterile and patronizing. Our love for Christ must be the compelling force in our initiative. Without Christ's love working through us, regardless of the grandeur of our endeavor, it is nothing more than a "resounding gong or clanging cymbal" (1 Cor 13:1).

For it is Christ's love in us that will both give the grace to understand alien cultures and keep us from compromising the essentials of our faith and doctrine. If we love the people more than we love the Gospel, in the end the Gospel will be lost and so will its power. If we love our doctrine more than we love the people, then we lose our ability to minister to them in Jesus' name, for we will be unwilling to address our present emphasis and fail to grapple with problems of translation.

In the end most of the gospel-culture tension the PCA faces has little to do with true scriptural or doctrinal compromise, but rather falls into the category of "offence." This, as we have seen, is the heart of many struggles in the church. This was the core problem the early church faced that resulted in the convening of the Council of Jerusalem. The Council sought an agreement on what was permissible and what was an offence. Paul had to deal with this problem both in Corinth (1 Cor 8:1ff; 10:23ff) and in Rome (Rom 14:1-15:7).

Harvey Conn refers to Dr. Harvey Smith when he points out two important features of his approach to dealing with an offense:

> He calls them "two lines which are in tension": (1) All unnecessary offense must be avoided as something that endangers another's faith; (2) there is an essential offense that must never be avoided, for it is only by overcoming this *skandalon* that a person comes to faith (1984:237).

The Council in Jerusalem (Acts 15) had to deal with two lines that were in tension and is a good example of Smith's principles. The conclusions of the Council did not change the means of salvation for the Gentile, nor did it remove the Jewish culture from it, but rather it endeavored to solve a church sub-culture conflict. Both parties were asked to be aware of the others' cultural scruples. The Gentiles did not have to undergo circumcision but were asked to abstain from specified foods. This was done not only for the sake of unity in the church, but for the Gospel witness of the community.

Paul also deals with the problems in Corinth and Rome the same way as he deals with the tension between the weak and the strong. These issues are different as the Corinthians were eating meat that had been offered to idols. Because there were Jewish believers who still struggled with the lifting of the food laws this had become an offense. The tendency of the Romans on the other hand was to abstain from food on religious grounds. In both cases a *skandalon* arose for those whom Paul termed as weak. In Corinth the danger was division in the body, while in Rome it was the danger that the weak "will act with wavering faith and against their culturally framed conscience" (Conn 1984:238).

In dealing with both cases Paul does not minimize the offense but rather deals with it according to the context. "The strong with his freedom destroys the brother whom

Christ has saved (Rom 14:15). He wounds the conscience of his brother (1 Cor 8:12). The weak, by acting against conscience and against faith, "has (already) fallen under condemnation of the Judge (Rom 14:23). In all of this, Paul shares the faith of the strong (Rom 15:1, "we then that are strong. . . ."). However, takes the side of the weak (… ought to bear the infirmities of the weak (1984:238). We do not find Paul claiming any cultural practice religiously neutral, but to those who live by faith in Christ - the Gospel - no food or gift is wrong in itself. But, neither is it neutral. The only true offense to those who are perishing is Christ Himself.

As we have mentioned, our missionary strategy to reach the non-Anglo cultures must have a three-fold approach. First, we must know the culture of the Gospel well. We must become students of the Hebrew world where God initiated it and come to understand more fully the Kingdom of God. Second, we must look at the PCA sub-culture, in its many forms, and make a sincere effort to differentiate between what is scriptural and what is sub-cultural. Third, we must remove any non-Gospel language, practices, or tradition that will "confuse or offend the sensibilities of the people you are trying to reach" (Keller 2003:3).

An application of this three-fold approach can be illustrated through the doctrine of the Covenant. In the Westminster Confession of Faith we read,

> The distance between God and the creature is so great, that although reasonable creatures do owe obedience unto Him as their Creator, yet they could never have any fruition of Him as their blessedness and reward, but by some voluntary condescension on God's part, which He hath been pleased to express by way of covenant (7.1).

> The first covenant made with man was a covenant of works, wherein life was promised to Adam and in him to his posterity, upon condition of perfect and personal obedience (7.2).
>
> Man, by his fall, having made himself uncapable of life by that covenant, the Lord was pleased to make a second, commonly called the Covenant of Grace, whereby He freely offereth unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ, requiring of them faith in Him, that they may be saved; and promising to give unto all those that are ordained unto eternal life His Holy Spirit, to make them willing, and able to believe (7.3).
>
> This covenant was differently administered in the time of the law, and in the time of the gospel; under the law it was administered by promises, prophecies, sacrifices, circumcision, the paschal lamb, and other types and ordinances delivered to the people of the Jews, all foresignifying Christ to come, which were for that time sufficient and efficacious, through the operation of the Spirit, to instruct and build up the elect in faith in the promised Messiah, by whom they had full remission of sins, and eternal salvation; and is called the Old Testament (7.5).
>
> Under the gospel, when Christ the substance was exhibited, the ordinances in which this covenant is dispensed are the preaching of the Word, and the administration of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, which, though fewer in number, and administered with more simplicity and less outward glory, yet in them it is held forth in more fullness, evidence, and spiritual efficacy, to all nations, both Jews and Gentiles; and is called the New Testament. There are not therefore two covenants of grace differing in substance, but one and the same under various dispensations (7.6).

Louis Berkhof, in Summary of Christian Doctrine writes:

> The main promise of the covenant, which includes all others is contained in the oft repeated words, "I will be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee," Jer. 31:32; 32:38-40; Ezek. 34:23-25, 30, 31; 36:25-26; Heb. 8:10; II Cor. 6:16-18. These promises include all others, such as the promises of temporal blessings, of justification, of the Spirit of God, and of final glorification in a life that never ends (1938:82).

It is through the Covenant of Grace that we are called into God's family and participate in His reign over all the earth.

First, knowing the Gospel well, we understand the community aspect of this doctrine because it is rooted in God's promises to Abraham. We are his descendents and therefore fellow citizens with him in God's Kingdom. Baptism is the sign and seal that we are members of God's family and part of His holy nation.

Second, as we examine this doctrine from the perspective of the PCA sub-culture, we affirm principially the above definitions, as they come from our constitution and are an accurate summation of what we believe to be true. As a church we are faithful to practice the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper - in many churches only four times a year. As a whole, the Gospel outworking of covenant community does not exist in our churches. It is the author's opinion that our understanding of community has been affected by the broader American culture's populist and mindset. Rather than theocratic, our view of community and family in the church is individualistic.[105]

Finally, we must ask how those outside of the PCA sub-culture understand what we are teaching and practicing in regards to the covenant. Dwight Linton pointed out that the Korean PCA church probably has a better understanding of covenant theology because community and extended family ties are so much more important in the Korean culture. He commented that the American/PCA attitude is highly individualistic and has great difficulty in putting covenant theology into practice. He notes that unfortunately the Anglo PCA community has "systematized" covenant theology, seeing it as a

[105] Hannah presents a very strong argument pointing out that "America was a nation dominated by extended family households. Whenever a significant number of American families were found to contain non-nuclear persons in the home, these individuals were usually strangers boarding in the household instead of relatives of close associates. The rationale for the development of an extended family household unit was primarily economic in nature, as opposed to any traditional desire to maintain generational ties" (1991:35)

"paradigm" rather than relationships. Louis Wilson, an African American, was attracted to covenant theology and earlier in this paper gave it as a reason for joining the PCA, only to be disappointed by a lack of practical application.

Hannah reminds us of an important distinction when she asks:

> How does the genesis of the Black extended family compare to the Anglicized version? First, it is imperative to note that in contrast to Western culture, the extended family is the prevailing mode of family organization throughout Africa and other Third World setting (Hannah 1991:36)

Therefore, as we seek to communicate covenant theology to those outside of the non-Hispanic white majority, we must not abandon what Scripture or our confession teaches us, nor do we need to try to adapt it to the African American or Korean cultures. Rather, we must admit that the PCA sub-culture does not practice the full implications of God's covenant with His people. Therefore, we should go back to Scripture and seek to find greater application through a more thorough understanding of Hebrew culture and its ramifications to the people of God. In fact, as we do this we may find there is great richness in this doctrine beyond the sacraments and discover deeper blessing in what comes in being the people of God. As we practice these applications we will be living the Gospel to our multi-cultured world.

Chapter Summary

In summary then, where do we go from here? First, we repent of our lack of love for the lost, especially those outside the non-Hispanic white majority. We must be convinced that God has called us be missionaries in our own land and to be fervently

engaged in His Kingdom work. Second, we must seek to understand the Gospel in its fullest sense and not be content to reduce it to a cultureless and moralistic paradigm. We must embrace the Gospel whereby we have been brought into covenant relationship with the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and we have the privilege of being citizens of an eternal Kingdom whose reign has no end and "a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language" (Rev. 7:9). Third, we become students of culture, Jewish culture, our present PCA/American sub-culture, and the many new cultures that God is bringing to us. We must learn the symbols as well as the written and unwritten language of each culture or we will not be effective in our endeavors. Fourth, as we learn to work within this three-fold approach, keeping in mind the principles Paul has given us in regards to cultural conflict, we must address such issues as the role of music in this changing world and be willing to change ourselves. Last, we must live among the people rather than in Christian sub-cultures. It is time for Christians to stop participating in "white flight" and make a concerted effort to live incarnationally among people who are not like us.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

It was the goal of this study to research three basic areas and then offer a workable solution. These three areas are the advance of the gospel into the Gentile communities with a primary focus on the ministry of Peter and Paul; the study of the major immigrant groups that make up North America and how the existing community received them; an analysis of the Presbyterian Church as it grappled with the cultural changes occurring in North America. Special attention was given to how the Southern Presbyterian Church viewed the African American population before and after the Civil War. The solution addressed was that the PCA should embrace a missional mindset with a three-fold approach to culture. They must know the culture of the Gospel, the PCA sub-culture and the culture to whom they will reach.

The research found that both Peter and Paul worked in very difficult and culturally diverse settings. The peoples and the cities that these men pursued ministry in were thoroughly pagan, with lifestyles openly offensive to anyone from a Jewish background. These cities were alarmingly similar to major cities of the twenty-first century, having diverse cultures and countless pluralistic religious beliefs.

Through the research, it became evident that little detailed study is available that examines the extent of the cultural diversity present in the first century church. The

numbers of cultures present and the potential for conflict and compromise was high, yet we see a church that thrived in spite of heavy external persecution. Remarkably, the struggle in the early church was primarily due to conflict between Jewish and Gentile believers over the place of the law. The research also discovered the simplicity of the resolution decided upon by the council of Jerusalem. Remarkably few restrictions were put in place and an immense amount of freedom was given to the Gentile converts. The laws that had been in place were not preserved for traditions' sake, nevertheless, the Gentiles were asked to relinquish some of their freedoms for the sake of the church.

The second phase of study focused on the major people groups that make up North America. The goal was to examine how each group adapted to life in North America upon immigration, and what unique challenges they faced. The research concluded that every major immigrant group had its own set of unique challenges in assimilating into the North American culture. Those of a more western lineage faced less opposition, adapted more quickly, and in time became "Americana."

The Native Americans and the African Americans are the two culture groups who were distinct from the others. The Native American, as a whole, did not have the opportunity to assimilate into the broader Anglo culture. Often classified as savage, the story of the Native Americans contains both brutal slaughter and heartless displacement from their homelands. Though many Native Americans have intermarried and assimilated into the broader culture, a cultural divide exists today like no other cultural group experiences.

The African Americans, for many years the largest non-Anglo culture, has a history like none other in North America. It is a history that is both very hotly disputed and complex... The effects of extradition to North America as slaves, bought and sold as property, and the effects of going under decades of abuse have been deep and lasting on both the African American population as well as the broader society. This lingering struggle surrounds discussions such as those that question the severity of slavery and argue that the conditions were far from harsh and, in fact, quite comfortable for that day.

In addition, our research found a second chapter in the African American history. This occurred in a post civil war migration from the Deep South to the major northern cities. The motivation behind this migration was the same as all other immigrant groups: the African American was looking for opportunity. Their settlement into the northern cities came with new hostility and to this day has lingering effects.

A new and potentially more painful struggle has surfaced for the African American with the recent increased immigration of people from Africa. These new African immigrants have very little in common with the African American other than lineage. In fact, many have unwittingly been used by the broader culture as tools for continued discrimination of African Americans when undue comparisons and contrasts have been made.

The next step in the study was an attempt to understand how the Presbyterian Church has responded to the cultural changes. The study discovered the role that a rapidly growing immigrant nation had in thrusting forward the populist movement and how the Presbyterian church was not able to transition with the change. Numerous

factors contributed to the church's struggle. Included in these was cultural and educational pride toward people both culturally and socially different.

The study also examined the attitude of the Southern Presbyterian church toward the African Americans. We found that from early on there was a sincere interest in evangelizing them. This began along the border states, and eventually spread further south. We also saw how the Southern Presbyterian church struggled with abolition as many of its ministers moved north. In the end, it was the abolitionist who was condemned rather than slavery itself. Yet, throughout the struggle, there were men, such as John Girardeau, who were advocates for both the slave and later the emancipated. In the end, the inability to see the African Americans as true equals prohibited any substantial ministry.

An analysis of the PCA's progress in reaching outside the non-Hispanic white population showed that progress is occurring. Both the Korean and the African American segment of the church are growing and there is reason for encouragement. The analysis showed that the Koreans have assimilated and more Korean churches are being planted over African American churches. The study also looked at some of the struggles the PCA has in reaching the African American population.

Conclusions

Though there is clearly room for far more research, it is apparent that in many ways the first century church faced similar cultural tensions as the North American church does today. At the outset of the church, the Jewish Christians not only faced the

persecution from their non-Christian counter parts, but also faced the loss of many important cultural traditions. To be sure, the struggle was very difficult, because those traditions had at one time been law. The advance of the Gospel meant the potential loss of a way of life.

Tim Keller, in his article, Advancing the Gospel into the 21st Century, sees our world becoming increasingly like the first century under the Roman Empire. That is, North America is increasingly losing her identity as the world becomes more "globalized, urbanized, and post-secular" (2004:1).

A globalized world is an international world where people of all ethnicities and cultures move and interact among themselves. The Roman Empire and its "Pax Romana" provided a never before realized opportunity for the movement of people, capital and ideas. This is why the cities to which Paul ministered were so ethnically and culturally diverse. North America, especially the cities within her, is becoming increasingly international, multi-ethnic, and multi-cultural. Tim Keller believes that as this occurs, there will be new allegiances that look to the world rather than Washington, thus changing present definitions of nationalism. As we have seen in our study, the cities have always been the primary location for immigrants to settle and this trend will likely continue (2004:1).

Therefore, the world is becoming an urbanized world again. If Keller's assessment is correct, "In the Greco-Roman world during the height of the Roman Empire, individual nation states were weak, and large cities (Rome, Corinth, Ephesus)

operated virtually as independent city states. Cities, not national governments, ruled the world" (2004:1).

As roads opened up the Roman Empire, today, technology and mobility allow almost instant access to most of the world. With this comes a free flow of both information and capital that is impossible to control. In addition, Keller believes, "Multi-national corporations operate out of major cities but do not submit to or serve the interests of any country" (2004:1). If these powerful international cities are strategic for international business, how much more so they should be for the PCA.

If Keller is correct, this globalization is causing North America to become both fragmented and pluralistic:

> For centuries-cultures and nations had much more wide spread consensus about basic questions of truth, morality, and the nature of God and the ultimate reality. Now, as in the Roman world, there will again be multiple vital religious faith communities and options in every society. We will have traditional, secular, and pagan world-views living side by side (2004:1).

This means that no one approach, as reliable and effective as it may have been in the past will now work for all people. It is essential that we see and understand the pluralistic setting that we live in and then apply the Gospel to that specific culture. We must be sure we can interact clearly with both the Gospel and each specific culture.

With the emergence of this new global, urban, pluralistic world, the PCA once again faces a predicament very similar to what the Presbyterian church faced in the populist movement. Then the church failed to understand the core issues at stake and responded incorrectly. Now once again, the high and low cultures are in tension and differing views of education having come to the forefront. Yet, this time, our loss will

not simply be to other brands of Christianity, but also to a plethora of pluralistic belief systems, and Islam, which is unmistakably hostile to Christianity.

Despite all these changes in the world as we know it, there is no need to reinvent any aspect of the Gospel. Remarkably, the world we face is far from new, for. as we have seen, there are close similarities to the first century. The Gospel does not need to be more sectarian, but we has a church must be willing to strip away all that prohibits the Gospel from having its full effect in the world in which we find ourselves. To simply devise a new kind of Christianity is to miss both the lessons of history and the power of the Gospel.

As we have noted North America is quickly becoming socially and culturally diverse. Not only are the non-Hispanic whites becoming a minority, but also post modernity has resulted in a neo-Anglo culture. Though the PCA is taking post modernity seriously, we must be cautious of not falling into the trap of seeing even post modernity from a purely non-Hispanic white majority perspective. Post modernity is not simply a shift in the non-Hispanic white population, but continues to be significantly shaped through a cultural blending that has come through globalization. The PCA simply cannot miss this opportunity given to us through the providence of God.

Change will not occur either through lamenting the past or "bashing" the future, but embracing it as part of God's sovereign plan. In order to "Reform" culture we must become students of culture. Our culture will not be reformed by withdrawing from it, or by attacking or ignoring it and living in the recreated past. We must come to honest assessment of just how "Anglo" "Western" and "Modern" the PCA is and learn the

language of the emerging majority in order to communicate the Gospel from a non-modern, non-Anglo perspective.

It is poignantly clear that any effort the PCA would seek to undertake be covered in prayer and especially in regards to those outside the non-Hispanic white majority. None of the goals laid out in this study will come to fruition without the hand of God in our own lives and in those to whom we seek to minister. It must be our heart's desire to see the Kingdom of God come in our lives, community, and land.

We must also look to the future with joy, not gloom. North America was wrought with change from its inception and this change has come with each immigrant group that settled here. Most food considered American has come from the immigrants that have made up this land. The change that has formed this land will continue to forge it in many new and different directions. This type of change is never easy and usually uncertain. However, when we seek to have a doxological perspective, we see that God is building his Kingdom right in front of us. When God's lost sheep is found there should be rejoicing!

As a community of the redeemed, we must cease being those who flee diversity. As a church, we must begin to see that movements such as "white flight" do not bring about the results desired and that there is a point when there will no longer be a place to run. We must learn to to not only accept diversity, but also embrace it. We must comprehend that heaven will be diverse and let that change our attitude now.

In addition, we must have a passion for the lost. A sound passion for the lost rooted in a firm conviction of Gods elective purpose and Paul's command to be culturally

sensitive and relevant is essential. We have to be willing to let go of the non-essentials! The PCA sub-culture is a familiar way of life that we do not want to lose because it is safe and predictable.

We must never forget that North America is not the Promised Land and that we are not home yet. That means our priorities on how we invest our time, money and resources will change. It means we have nothing to lose and everything to gain as we look to peoples and cultures that are very different from us. It means that both our church buildings and our homes are neither fortresses nor investments, but tools for the advance of Gods' Kingdom. It is His Kingdom and His will that we long for and it is all for His glory.

Recommendations

Though the materials directly tied to this topic are limited, there is clearly a need for further study. It was not the intent of this study to provide all the answers, but rather shed light on a significant need in North America and a weakness in the PCA, then lay out a general plan of action. Because North America has become a strategic mission field, the PCA must begin to look at her task from a "missiological" perspective. We must emphasis the "M" in MNA and see that our mission includes multi-cultured America. Even though the largest population shift is still a decade or two ahead, now is the time to lay the foundation. In our effort to complete this task, several key areas are recommended for further study.

The first area of study would be on Hebrew culture in the church. The area of research would involve a tracing to what elements have remained and what has been lost since the apostolic church. Are there key figures or times in church history when Hebrew elements may have been purposefully removed, and what effect does that have on us today?

A second area of research would surround the Reformation. The Reformation was a pivotal time in history when the Scripture once again found its rightful place both in the church. The battle cry of *Sola Scriptura* took the interpretation of Scriptures out the hands of a selected few and once again made it alive to the common person. It was the desire of the Reformers to strip away all unnecessary ecclesiology and bring Christianity back to its roots. Though the cultural mix is not the same, much of the study would apply to our present situation in regards to priorities versus church tradition.

A third area of research would center on the Westminster Standards. Both the Confession and the Catechism are of high value to the church, as we believe that they contain the system of doctrine taught in Scripture. Though there are some modern translations of the Standards available, there is still a powerful seventeenth-century Anglo bent to them. If the PCA is going to reach those outside the non-Hispanic white majority, there is a need to contextualize the Standards.

A fourth area of research would surround those out side the non-Hispanic white majority culture and covenantal theology. Scripture reveals that the covenantal system is deeply rooted in Judaism. As historic Judaism is more eastern than western in its cultural leanings it may be prudent to reexamine how we have over-westernized covenant

theology and in so doing missed many valuable perspectives in reaching the non-western world. With its emphasis on the community, covenant theology has far more in common with eastern thought with its deep family and community ties than to the western individualist world.

A fifth and integral aspect of reaching those outside the non-Hispanic white culture is recruiting future leaders. In light of our reputation and lack of action to the present, it is crucial to develop a system of locating, training, and supporting these new leaders. This system cannot patronize, but rather looks for those essential players in the PCA's advancement of God's Kingdom.

A sixth and potentially more difficult problem is how to integrate this new leadership into the PCA. For the PCA to be a viable multi-ethnic and multi-cultural denomination there must be plurality in its key leadership. The sharpest and most gifted non-Anglo leaders will not tolerate inequality at the table and will not accept patronizing attitudes. It is only through genuine integration that a unified church can press forward in its mission.

Other areas of research included the unique changes that have already occurred in North America due to the influences of non-western cultures and what future changes we can expect. Specific religious beliefs of each group would also be of great benefit to understanding each culture.

Summary

In summary, it is understood that the conclusions reached in this study are significant and therefore there is an urgent need for both the PCA and the broader evangelical church to respond with immediate and positive action. It is also assumed that many will study the same information and come to a juxtapositioned conclusion. Therefore, continued research and increased dialogue is necessary. This dialogue will not only begin the steps in effective outreach to the non-western cultures, but will be a first step in bringing non-Anglos into our body.

Ultimately, any action done for protection or promotion of a single person or a tradition will fail. Every effort must be aligned with the glory of God and the furtherance of His Kingdom.

> Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! "Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?" "Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?" For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen (Rom 12:33-36).

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Robert served as youth pastor for nine years before being ordained as a minister of the Gospel in the Central Florida Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in America in 1994. He served as Senior Pastor of Coquina Presbyterian Church before planting Christ Church Newnan, PCA in Newnan, Georgia with Perimeter Ministries International in 1998. He currently serves as the Senior Pastor of Christ Church Newnan.

Robert was a founding member of Multiplication Ministries, which later became the New Church Network of the North Georgia Presbytery. In 1986 Robert married Chris Stiles. They have one son, Taylor Cameron.