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Mobilizing for the Future

The Second Vatican Council (1962–65) and the Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization (1974)

If turning points could be identified in the history of Christian spirituality, renewed appreciation for the person and work of the Holy Spirit would certainly qualify as such a turning point in the recent past. Pentecostal and charismatic movements have led the way in this recovery, but fresh attention to the Spirit's quickening, sustaining, guiding, convicting, and nurturing work now appears prominently in almost all Christian traditions. Much of the new church music featuring the Holy Spirit has taken the shape of songs and choruses. But there have also been notable new hymns. One of the best of these hymns was written for the use of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship in Canada and the United States. Its author was E. Margaret Clarkson (1915–2008), probably the most accomplished hymn writer in Canadian history. For most of her life she was a music teacher in Toronto elementary schools. Her hymn, "We come, O Christ, to you," was penned in 1946 for InterVarsity's first missionary conference. This meeting took place in Toronto, but the conference soon became a fixture at the University of Illinois (Urbana). Her great hymn on the Holy Spirit, from which these two verses are taken, was written in 1959 and revised slightly in 1984. It is usually sung to the stirring tune *Blaenwern*.

> For your gift of God the Spirit,
> power to make our lives anew,
> pledge of life and hope of glory,

Savior, we would worship you.
Crowning gift of resurrection
sent from your ascended throne;
fullness of the very Godhead
come to make your life our own. . . .

He, the mighty God, indwells us;
his to strengthen, help, empower;
his to overcome the Tempter—
ours to call in danger's hour.
In his strength we dare to battle
all the raging hosts of sin,
and by him alone we conquer
foes without and foes within.[1]

Developments of the last half century within all strands of world Christianity have moved as rapidly as at almost any other time in history. And they have taken place against the backdrop of momentous changes in the world at large. These changes include unprecedented growth in world population (1.6 billion in 1900, 3.7 billion in 1970, almost 7 billion in 2010). The increasing concentration of the world's population in immense cities like Shanghai, Lagos, Mexico City, and many more has significantly altered the shape of world civilization. Cataclysmic events of many sorts have also occurred with seemingly cascading frequency: the dramatic collapse of European Communist regimes; the rise of China, India, and Brazil as world economic powers; ongoing strife in the Middle East; earthquakes, tsunamis, droughts, and floods affecting hundreds of thousands; spasms of oppression and outbreaks of democracy; devastating warfare in the Congo, Rwanda, Sudan, and elsewhere; financial booms and deep recessions; and in-migrations and out-migrations on a grander scale than ever before in human history. Another momentous change of the modern era is that information about all these significant matters (as well as about innumerable matters of less or no consequence at all) now flies around the planet with a speed unimaginable to earlier generations.

In the midst of such world tumults, the history of the Christian churches has been anything but placid. The collapse of the Soviet Union ushered in a new

1. E. Margaret Clarkson, "For Your Gift of God the Spirit," *The Worshiping Church* (Carol Stream, IL: Hope, 1990), no. 285.

day for all Eastern churches and, by extension, for the relationship between Orthodox churches and the societies in which they exist. The older Protestant churches stemming from the Reformation era have experienced strong reversals in many European countries, some expansion in selected parts of the Majority World, and a mixed record in North America. As described in chapter 12, it has also been a revolutionary era for new independent Christian movements. It is fair to say, however, that the most striking recent Christian developments have taken place among Roman Catholics and the strands of Protestant and Protestant-related churches that are described with words like evangelical, Pentecostal, independent, or sectarian. The enumerations by David Barrett, Todd Johnson, and their colleagues give some indication of the dynamism at work in these world Christian traditions. They track the number of identifiable Catholics as growing from around 665 million in 1970 to 1.16 billion in 2011. Their categories for evangelicals and Pentecostals-Charismatics-Neocharismatics overlap (and as defined by these researchers, also include some Roman Catholics), but the scale of increase for each of these sectors is striking: for evangelicals from approximately 100 million worldwide in 1970 to approximately 270 million in 2011, and for Pentecostals-Charismatics-Neocharismatics from approximately 70 million in 1970 to over 600 million in 2011.[2]

Attempting to define turning points for these two great sectors of contemporary world Christianity is easy for one but difficult for the other. Although Catholicism is much more internally diverse and Catholics are much more attuned to local cultures than outsiders often realize, the Catholic Church is still one connected organization—in fact, the oldest and largest organization in the world. Evangelical, Pentecostal, and independent Protestants, by contrast, are anything but organized. It is, therefore, only natural to view the Second Vatican Council, a conclave for world Catholicism functioning as an organization, as the key turning point in recent Catholic history. No single event has occupied the same place for the evangelical-Pentecostal-independent cohort. But the Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization was one of the signal occasions in the recent past when a wide spectrum of leaders drawn from this sector gathered together and conducted significant business. Although by the nature of the groups involved, Lausanne was not an exact parallel to the Second Vatican Council, focus on the congress can show why its unfolding also represented a significant turning point in world Christian history. In both cases the meetings shone a spotlight on new directions and, in some measure, contributed themselves to shaping the moves in those new directions.

2. Todd M. Johnson, David B. Barrett, and Peter E. Crossing, "Status of Global Mission, 2011," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 35 (January 2011): 29.

The Second Vatican Council

The Second Vatican Council, which met in four separate sessions from October 11, 1962, to December 8, 1965, opened a new era for the Roman Catholic Church. It decisively changed the trajectory of the world's oldest and most numerous Christian communion but changed it in ways that continue to be hotly contested long after the council came to an end.

Early in his tenure as pope on January 25, 1959, John XXIII announced his intention to call for a council. The elderly pontiff, who had served the Bishop of Venice before being called to the papal office, was at first viewed as a placeholder. The long tenures of his predecessors, Pius XII (1939–58) and Pius XI (1922–39) had witnessed worldwide warfare, the Great Depression, the unfolding of the Cold War, the rapid secularization of much of Western society, and the beginnings of decolonization in the Majority World. Many observers thought that by electing a septuagenarian bishop the church would be given a few years of respite. Instead, John XXIII acted almost immediately to call a council that he described as an opportunity to "update" the church and address "the spiritual needs of the present day."[3] Later, in his official summoning of the council, promulgated in December 1961, the pope repeated his desire that it would "give the Church the possibility to contribute more efficaciously to the solution of the problems of the modern age."[4]

As it unfolded, the council witnessed a full share of intrigue, suspense, and sometimes bitter controversy. Some Catholic conservatives hoped that it would reaffirm the kind of top-down papal supremacy that had characterized the decrees of the First Vatican Council of 1869–70. Some radicals wanted the church to embrace progressive movements of social renewal and theological modernism. But most of the approximately 2,300 cardinals, archbishops, and bishops who made up the council proper, along with a small army of theological advisors and invited guests, did not want changes inspired by positions on either the extreme Right or the extreme Left. They hoped that the necessary steps could be taken to preserve the church's traditions while making necessary adjustments to the modern world.

The sixteen official documents produced by the council included four "constitutions" (on the church, divine revelation, the sacred liturgy, and the church in the modern world), nine "decrees" (on subjects like ecumenism, the training and life of priests, and the functions of the laity), and three

3. Quoted in Giuseppe Alberigo, *A Brief History of Vatican II* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2006), 1.

4. Walter Abbott, SJ, ed., *The Documents of Vatican II* (New York: Guild Press, 1966), 705.

Although the Catholic Church has become even more international since the early 1960s, this photo from the opening of the Second Vatican Council in 1962 illustrates the growing importance of non-Western leaders in the church.

"declarations" (on Christian education, relationships with non-Christian religions, and religious freedom). Compared to the mood of the First Vatican Council, the tone of these documents was much more conciliatory to non-Roman Catholics, especially the Eastern Orthodox churches. Non-Catholic Christians, the council affirmed, were also "in some real way . . . joined with us in the Holy Spirit."[5]

Sophisticated Bible study informed much of the council's debate, but so also did sophisticated reliance on church tradition. As an indication of the many hands that contributed to its formulations, the council reaffirmed a high doctrine of papal authority but also spoke extensively of the need for bishops to act collegially in guiding the church and also called upon the laity to become more active in all phases of the church's life.

From the perspective of long-standing Protestant–Catholic controversies, the council seemed to be moving Catholicism away from time-tested stand-offs toward an opening for productive dialogue. From a Protestant angle, it looked like the church was "changing." Catholics, for whom a fixed ideal of ecclesiastical continuity remains important, spoke more of "clarifying" or "developing" earlier Catholic positions.

5. Ibid., 34.

The Second Vatican Council

From *Dei Verbum* (Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation)

> [T]here exist a close connection and communication between sacred tradition and sacred Scripture. For both of them, flowing from the same divine wellspring, in a certain way merge into a unity and tend toward the same end. For sacred Scripture is the word of God inasmuch as it is consigned to writing under the inspiration of the divine Spirit. To the successors of the apostles, sacred tradition hands on in its full purity God's word, which was entrusted to the apostles by Christ the Lord and the Holy Spirit. Thus, led by the light of the Spirit of truth, these successors can in their preaching preserve the word of God faithfully, explain it, and make it more widely known. Consequently, it is not from sacred Scripture alone that the Church draws her certainty about everything which has been revealed. Therefore, both sacred tradition and sacred scripture are to be accepted and venerated with the same sense of devotion and reverence.[1]

From *Lumen Gentium* (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church)

> Though they differ from one another in essence and not only in degree, the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood are nonetheless interrelated. Each of them in its own special way is a participation in the one priesthood of Christ. The ministerial priest, by the sacred power he enjoys, molds and rules the priestly people. Acting in the person of Christ, he brings about the Eucharistic Sacrifice, and offers it to God in the name of the people. For their part, the faithful join in the offering of the Eucharist by virtue of their royal priesthood. They likewise exercise that priesthood by receiving the sacraments, by prayer and thanksgiving, by the witness of a holy life, and by self-denial and active charity.[2]

From *Dignitatis Humanae* (Declaration on Religious Freedom)

> This Vatican Synod declares that the human person has a right to religious freedom. This freedom means that all men are to be immune from coercion on the part of individuals or of social groups and of any human power, in such wise that in matters religious no one is to be forced to act in a manner contrary to his own beliefs. . . . The Synod further declares that the right to religious freedom has its foundation in the very dignity of the human person, as this dignity is known through the revealed Word of God and by reason itself.[3]

1. Walter Abbott, S.J, ed., *The Documents of Vatican II* (New York: Guild Press, 1966), 117.
2. Ibid., 27.
3. Ibid., 678–79.

However defined, the key teachings of the council were indisputably significant. As indicated by the quotations in the sidebar above, the council redefined the relationship of Scripture and tradition, not as two separate sources, but as one complex expression of revelation from God. It also affirmed that the

Catholic laity took their full part in the church as "the people of God." A most practical outcome of this emphasis was the provision that Mass could be said in vernacular languages. The divide between people and priest that had been sustained by preserving the Mass in Latin gave way almost immediately as the council's grand principles filtered down to local parishes. In a reversal of much Catholic tradition, the council also affirmed that religious freedom was a basic human right. This decision, which benefited from the positive experience of Catholics in the United States, proclaimed that free exercise of religion should be enjoyed by everyone, regardless of the religion. The affirmation would provide significant support for Catholics in Communist lands. It also began a process in Italy, Spain, and much of Latin America to loosen the strong establishmentarian unions of Catholic Church and conservative regime that had long existed in those areas.

In the wake of the council, Roman Catholicism could not remain the same. The ferment of Vatican II stimulated a profusion of Catholic special-interest groups—charismatic, socially active, modernist, biblical, conservative, ecumenical, and more. In fact, one of the enduring features of the Catholic Church since the 1960s has been the intense debate over just what the council *really* intended. Merely to sample opinions is to note the wide range of conclusions on what the council was and accomplished.

A Lutheran, George Lindbeck, was impressed with how far Vatican II moved the Catholic Church away from earlier habits: "All the major documents have clearly abandoned the classical framework of thought with its triumphalist and authoritarian view of the church, individualistic notion of worship and religious experience, and intellectualistic concept of revelation. . . . They display a unity which . . . constitutes a sphere of theological discourse and conceptualization which is sharply and definably different from that which has prevailed in Roman Catholic magisterial teaching ever since the Middle Ages."[6] An evangelical, David Wells, immediately recognized the need for non-Catholics to recalibrate their assessments: the church's altered positions on matters as "fundamental as revelation, the relation of the natural and supernatural, salvation and the doctrines of the Church and papal authority has rendered the vast majority of Protestant analysis of Catholic doctrine obsolete."[7] An opinion that mattered even more came from the Polish bishop and council participant, Karol Wojtyla, who in 1978 became Pope John Paul II.

6. George A. Lindbeck, *The Future of Roman Catholic Theology: Vatican II—Catalyst for Change* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1970), 116–17.

7. David F. Wells, *Revolution in Rome* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1972), 117.

> The Council outlined the type of faith which corresponds to the life of the modern Christian, and the implementation of the Council consists first and foremost in enriching that faith. . . . [quoting from council documents] "Only the light of faith and meditation on the Word of God can enable us to find everywhere and always the God 'in whom we live and exist' (Acts 17:28); only thus can we seek his will in everything, see Christ in all men, acquaintance or stranger, make sound judgments on the true meaning and value of temporal realities both in themselves and in relation to man's end."[8]

In the roughly half century since the close of the council, debate has continued as to what the conclave signified and what it promoted. For almost any significant development in recent Catholic history voices have been raised, often conflicting voices, to explain how the particular matter related to "the spirit of Vatican II." Did Latin American liberation theology express or betray the spirit of the council? What about Pope Paul VI's encyclical against modern forms of birth control (*Humanae Vitae*, 1968)? The sex scandals that have infected many regions? The burgeoning of Catholic populations in Africa and parts of Asia? The increased number of bishops and cardinals from the Majority World? The decline of vocations for priests and nuns in the Western world? The administrative styles of Pope John Paul II (1978–2005) and his successor Benedict XVI (2005–), who as Joseph Ratzinger had been an influential theological advisor at the council?

On the ground, changes affecting the laity, like allowing Mass in the vernacular and focusing parish devotional life on the Eucharist, were implemented almost immediately. The American historian Colleen McDannell has provided one bird's-eye account when she described what happened in her parents' Denver-area parish. In the early 1970s, "the Dominicans came . . . and gave retreats . . . on biblical approaches to spirituality in light of Vatican II. These lay retreats were designed to help Catholics personalize their relationship to God, in addition to providing the more usual instructions on the sacraments and the commandments." McDannell's mother joined the volunteers who read the Sunday's epistle passage during Mass, which had always been a task reserved for men. As a result, she "now spent time rehearsing the weekly texts. Practicing meant that she looked more closely at what was actually written in the Bible."[9] This is only one example of the multitude of practical changes that occurred in many variations throughout almost all parts of the Catholic world.

8. Karol Wojtyla (later John Paul II), *Sources of Renewal: The Implementation of Vatican II*, trans. P. S. Falla (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1980 [orig. 1972]), 420–21.

9. Colleen McDannell, *The Spirit of Vatican II: A History of Catholic Reform in America* (New York: Basic Books, 2011), 162, 181.

For Catholic theology, the council brought contrasting styles and emphases into clearer distinction. Most early accounts of the council described a struggle where "conservatives" vied with "progressives" for control of the church. In this view, conservatives defended scholastic Thomism, pictured the church as unchangeable, condemned contemporary culture, and defined ecumenism as other Christian groups returning to Rome. Progressives advocated neo- or mystical-Thomism, embraced the possibility of beneficial historical development, sought dialogue with contemporary culture, and defined ecumenism as genuine dialogue with other Christians as well as representatives of other religions. In this bipolar view the progressives were perceived as gaining the upper hand, which meant a serious loss of influence for the Roman curia and its effort to retain the letter of Pope Pius IX's actions at the First Vatican Council.

The reality that has become more apparent since the close of the council is that the so-called progressive party was actually made up of two quite distinct groups.[10] One did indeed resemble Protestant liberalism in seeking to move Catholics toward a subjective theology that stressed general religious experience and to define the church's main mission as combat against social injustice. But the other party, which flew under the radar for a decade or more, was not modernist. It was more like a Catholic parallel to Protestant neoorthodoxy. Thus, the internal debates at the council actually involved three contenders: traditionalists, modernists, and this third group that represented a position that had been anticipated in the nineteenth century by John Henry Cardinal Newman. Newman had combined reliance on the early church fathers with a belief that historical change could purify or clarify ancient church traditions.

This third party was represented at the council by bishops and theological observers whose views resembled those of Henri de Lubac, a French Jesuit who had long promoted a "return to the sources" (*ressourcement*) of the ancient fathers and Scripture as a key to church renewal. De Lubac had found himself at odds with church traditionalists for much of his career—because of how he had emphasized Scripture, drawn on the early church fathers, and used historical study to enhance appreciation of the work of Thomas Aquinas. By the early 1960s this general viewpoint was gaining ground. After the council a similar perspective informed the voluminous writings of Hans Urs von Balthasar, a Swiss priest who concentrated on exploring the "glory of the Lord." Later it would come to much greater visibility in the writings of popes

10. For orientation, see Fergus Kerr, *Twentieth-Century Catholic Theologians* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007). My account follows Jared Wicks, SJ, "New Light on Vatican Council II," *The Catholic Historical Review* 92 (2006): 609–28; idem, "More Light on Vatican Council II," *The Catholic Historical Review* 94 (2008): 75–101; and idem, "Further Light on Vatican Council II," *The Catholic Historical Review* 95 (2009): 546–69.

John Paul II and Benedict XVI. This point of view was progressive insofar as it saw historical development as a potentially positive contributor to Christian doctrine and as it defined dogma in relationship to human consciousness and the development of the person. But from a Protestant point of view, it could also be called conservative in stressing the scriptural foundation for dogma and for preferring the early church fathers over doctrinal formulations from Trent and the First Vatican Council.

This alternative form of Vatican II "progressivism" was largely dominant in crafting *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* that from its publication in 1994 has defined the official dogma of the church. The *Catechism* is most distinctly Catholic as it insists on the essential role of the church-in-fellowship-with-the-pope as central to all Christian faith and practice. The *Catechism*, in other words, is by no means a Protestant document. Yet its consistent reliance on Scripture, its strong statements on justification and on faith, as well as its traditional moral positions defined an official Catholic theology closer to norms advocated by figures like Martin Luther and John Calvin than anything seen in Catholic life since the Reformation.[11]

One important development arising from greater Catholic openness to other religious traditions has been the Vatican's promotion of official dialogues with many religious bodies. The most notable fruit of those discussions was the announcement by the Vatican and the Lutheran World Federation in October 1997 that a substantial measure of official agreement had been reached on the doctrine of justification by faith. Although ambiguity marked some aspects of the statement, the joint committee declared that Catholics and Lutherans could agree on two essentials: God redeemed humans freely and only by his grace, and redeemed humans properly responded to the reception of God's grace by doing good works.

The one unquestioned development is that the Second Vatican Council ushered in a period of unusual movement and contention for the Catholic Church.[12] Because of its very size and global presence, what happens to the Catholic Church profoundly affects the direction of Christian history in general. It will probably require many more years for observers to chart with certainty the results of the council. Yet for Catholics and all other Christian

11. On the *Catechism* as evaluated from an evangelical perspective, see Mark A. Noll and Carolyn Nystrom, *Is the Reformation Over? An Evangelical Assessment of Contemporary Roman Catholicism* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 115–50.

12. For perspectives stressing the new things promoted by the Council, see David G. Schultenover, ed., *Vatican II: Did Anything Happen?* (New York: Continuum, 2007); for the opposing interpretation stressing continuity, see Matthew L. Lamb and Matthew Levering, eds., *Vatican II: Renewal within Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

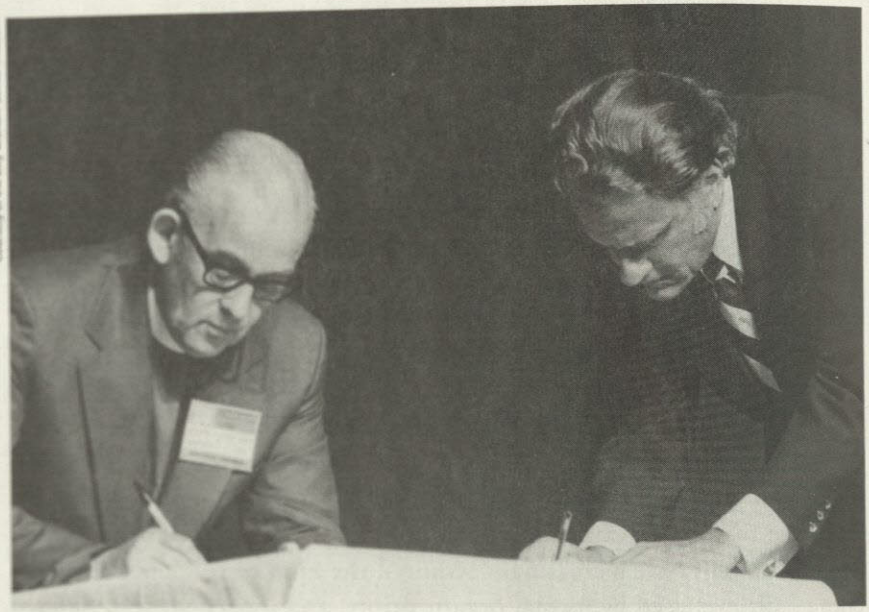
groups with any connection to Catholicism, the Second Vatican Council was beyond doubt one of the most important turning points of recent history.

The Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization

The Lausanne Congress of 1974 did not match the scale or scope of the Second Vatican Council, but it did represent and stimulate important changes among the world's conservative or evangelical Protestants. Although the congress was focused on the specific task of world evangelization, the strategic considerations of its organization, the geographical range of its more than 2,500 participants, the far-reaching concerns of its discussions, and the favorable reception accorded its concluding statement (the Lausanne Covenant) justify considering the event as a parallel to Vatican II. The congress and connected events illustrated an important fact about recent history; for a growing proportion of the world's Christian population, informal organizations and ad hoc relationships have increasingly acquired the kind of influence that was once mostly exercised by formal organizations and inherited, well-defined relationships.

The Congress on World Evangelization convened at the Palais de Beaulieu in Lausanne, Switzerland, on July 16, 1974.[13] Its participants came from over 150 countries. Delegates expected from the Soviet Union and China were not permitted to attend, but representatives did make it from a few other Communist countries, such as Cuba. Fifteen hundred observers and reporters ensured wide coverage of the event. The conference planners promoted a supernatural and God-oriented vision of the Christian gospel aiming to sharply differentiate their efforts from gatherings of the World Council of Churches, which conservative Protestants of all varieties criticized for too much emphasis on this-worldly concerns at the expense of converting people to Christ. Yet about two-fifths of the delegates were themselves members of churches belonging to the World Council of Churches. Over the ten days of the conference, the

13. This account is drawn mostly from "Religion: A Challenge from Evangelicals," *Time*, 5 August 1974; J. D. Douglas, ed., *Let the Earth Hear His Voice: International Congress on World Evangelization, Lausanne, Switzerland* (Minneapolis: Worldwide Publications, 1975); William C. Martin, *A Prophet with Honor: The Billy Graham Story* (New York: William Morrow, 1991); Billy Graham, *Just as I Am: The Autobiography of Billy Graham* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1997); Timothy Dudley-Smith, *John Stott: A Biography*, vol. 2, *The Later Years* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2001); Alister Chapman, *Godly Ambition: John Stott and the Evangelical Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); and a special series of articles on the Lausanne movement in the *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 35 (April 2011): 59–92.



Courtesy of the Billy Graham Center Museum

Australian Bishop A. Jack Dain (l), executive chairman, and Billy Graham (r), honorary chairman, sign their copies of the Lausanne Covenant at the closing exercises of the International Congress on World Evangelization, July 25, 1974.

delegates heard scores of presentations that centered on evangelistic proclamation, but that also broadened out into many other Christian concerns as well.

The key figure in convening the congress was the American evangelist Billy Graham. He was ably assisted by John R. W. Stott, a thoughtful English minister who had already been at work for more than twenty-five years in strengthening the evangelical witness of the Anglican Church; Jack Dain, an energetic Anglican bishop from Australia; and Leighton Ford, a Canadian-born member of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA). Before and during the conference, interventions from Latin America, especially by Samuel Escobar, a Peruvian who was then serving as the director of InterVarsity in Canada, and C. René Padilla, an Ecuadorian Baptist then working in Argentina with the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students, made a special impact in expanding the congress's agenda.

The vision for the congress was an outgrowth of Billy Graham's preaching ministry. Beginning in 1954 with a well-received mission in London and then a tour of continental Europe, Graham had devoted an increasing share of his evangelistic campaigns to regions outside North America. From that time to the end of his active ministry, Graham regularly held at least three crusades every two years—and for some stretches an average of two or three

per year—in these foreign venues.[14] While many of these trips were to Europe, most ranged farther—India for the first time in 1956; Africa and the Middle East for the first time in 1960; South America for the first time in 1962; South Africa, Korea, and Brazil in 1973–74; and these were followed up by many return trips to such regions of the world. Beginning in 1977 with a tour in Hungary, Graham also passed through what was then known as the Iron Curtain, and he returned repeatedly to Communist countries. Inaugural visits were to Poland in 1978, East Germany and Czechoslovakia in 1982, the Soviet Union in 1984, Romania in 1985, and the People's Republic of China in 1988.

Over the course of the twentieth century, no one except the popes of the Roman Catholic Church symbolized the universality of Christian faith for more people than Billy Graham. Yet not even his warmest admirers would claim that Graham always acted with complete wisdom in his travels outside North America. He was criticized upon returning from his first trip to the Soviet Union, for example, because of comments that exaggerated freedom for the churches in that country. But whatever his sins of omission or commission, Graham accomplished much and absorbed much as he traveled. Sometimes he spoke to small groups and modest assemblies but often to record-breaking crowds. In proclaiming the message of new life in Christ where few believers lived or in regions where regimes contested the churches, Graham saw firsthand the need for cross-cultural Christian fellowship and cooperation in the tasks of evangelism. During a period of history when Christianity was exploding throughout the world, Billy Graham became a unique point of reference, with unusually wide recognition among believers of many varieties.

Under the sponsorship of *Christianity Today* magazine, but with funding from the BGEA, Graham had convened a similar, but smaller, meeting in Berlin in late 1966. This earlier convention was more distinctly Western in its personnel, with evangelism more or less still viewed as a missionary task carried out from Europe and North America to the rest of the world. This meeting heard from the Pentecostal faith-healer Oral Roberts, the Dutch survivor of German death camps Corrie ten Boom, and the apologist Francis Schaeffer, who was residing in Europe but would later return to the United States and promote conservative causes in both theology and politics. The presenter at Berlin who would mean the most for what unfolded at Lausanne was John Stott.

Stott, who had met Graham during the latter's earlier campaigns in England, had led a resurgence of evangelical conviction from his post as the rector of All Souls Church, Langham Place, in London. If Graham provided the spark, publicity, and funding that made Lausanne possible, Stott contributed biblical

14. A list of these crusades is found in Graham, *Just as I Am*, 736–39.

depth, cultural sensitivity, and effective mediation. Already in a series of new organizations within the Church of England and in evangelistic missions at universities in Britain and abroad, Stott had displayed an unusual capacity to link forceful witness to well-considered theology. In the partnership of Graham and Stott, the Lausanne meeting can be viewed as the climax of Anglo-American world evangelical leadership. Significantly, however, because both leaders poured great energy into encouraging, training, heeding, and learning from evangelicals in the Majority World, they made the Lausanne Congress a symbolically important transition where evangelical leadership began to shift toward Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

Between the Berlin meeting of 1966 and the Lausanne Congress of 1974, the Graham organization hosted major regional assemblies in Singapore (1968), Minneapolis and Bogotá (1968), and Amsterdam (1971). Even as these gatherings rehearsed theologies for evangelism and explored practical means for spreading the gospel, they also began to push toward broader understanding of what the gospel entailed. The meetings in Singapore and Bogotá, for example, heard from speakers who urged an evangelistic message that addressed practical human needs as well as the need to be reconciled with God.

Graham opened the 1974 congress with an address that defined "a time marked by signposts of both promise and danger." The promise was "that God is at work in a remarkable way. Never have so many people been so open to the Gospel." The dangers were famine, warfare, the occult, economic uncertainty, and moral breakdown. In response, "this Congress convenes to reemphasize those biblical concepts that are essential to evangelism," which Graham spelled out as the authority of Scripture, human lostness without Christ, salvation in Christ alone, the need to witness in deed as well as word, and the necessity of evangelism.[15] Stott then took the podium to explore biblical teaching on five key words: mission, evangelism, dialogue, salvation, and conversion.

In their addresses, both Graham and Stott paused for self-criticism. Graham confessed that it had been too easy for him "to identify the Gospel with . . . one political program or culture."[16] Stott admitted that "we have some important lessons to learn from our ecumenical critics. Some of their rejection of our positions is not a repudiation of biblical faith, but rather of our evangelical caricatures of it."[17] The congress continued on with considerable

15. Graham, "Why Lausanne?," in Douglas, *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, 22, 28.
16. Ibid., 30.
17. Stott, "The Biblical Basis of Evangelism," in Douglas, *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, 65.

enthusiasm, but these realistic notes at the start dampened the triumphalism to which such gatherings are sometimes prone.

Many important personal connections were made between plenary sessions and behind the scenes. As one example, Janani Luwum came to Lausanne only one month after he had been consecrated as the Anglican Archbishop of Uganda. During his stay in Lausanne, Luwum enjoyed a great deal of conversation with other evangelical leaders from throughout the Anglican world. But he also asked to share a room with Stephen Mungoma, the head of a new charismatic fellowship in his own country, Deliverance Church Uganda, so that he might hear from this young leader about the aspirations of this new church. Within a few short years, Luwum was killed by order of Idi Amin, and Mungoma was forced to flee for his life into Kenya.

An especially important breakthrough at the congress, which eventually exerted a wide influence, was acceptance by most of the delegates that efforts at social justice deserved a secure place alongside the most vigorous evangelism. This conviction had been gathering strength in Latin America and in other parts of the world. Stott, for example, had chaired an Anglican evangelical congress in 1967 that affirmed the necessity of this linkage. But at Lausanne, presentations by Samuel Escobar and René Padilla made the point with special force. As the historian Richard Lovelace has summarized their contribution: "A powerful impact was made by Latin-American representatives who unveiled an Evangelical form of liberation theology seeking to deal realistically with the terrible extremes of wealth and poverty existing in the Third World, the disparity between American prosperity and mass starvation elsewhere, and the tendency of multinational corporations to reinforce these patterns out of a blind concern for profits."[18] Some Western mission strategists argued against giving up exclusive emphasis on evangelism itself, but a strong majority of the participants agreed with the cautious statement that was eventually hammered out in the Lausanne Covenant.

This covenant emerged from hard work on a number of successive drafts. As with the documents of the Second Vatican Council, pre-congress formulations were sometimes changed drastically because of interventions from delegates. The differences between Vatican II and Lausanne in their formal statements, however, were characteristic of these contrasting forms of Christianity. Where the Catholic bishops labored for four years to produce documents totaling several hundred thousand words, the Lausanne Congress, with a drafting committee chaired by Stott, worked feverishly around the clock for ten days

18. Richard Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life: An Evangelical Theology of Renewal* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1979), 380.

The Lausanne Covenant

The Authority and Power of the Bible. We affirm the divine inspiration, truthfulness and authority of both Old and New Testament Scriptures in their entirety as the only written Word of God, without error in all that it affirms, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice. We also affirm the power of God's Word to accomplish his purpose of salvation. The message of the Bible is addressed to all mankind. For God's revelation in Christ and in Scripture is unchangeable. Through it the Holy Spirit still speaks today. . . .[1]

The Uniqueness and Universality of Christ. We affirm that there is only one Savior and only one Gospel, although there is a wide diversity of evangelistic approaches. We recognize that all men have some knowledge of God through his general revelation in nature. But we deny that this can save, for men suppress the truth by their unrighteousness. We also reject as derogatory to Christ and the Gospel every kind of syncretism and dialogue which implies that Christ speaks equally through all religions and ideologies. Jesus Christ, being himself the only God-man, who gave himself as the only ransom for sinners, is the only mediator between God and man. There is no other name by which we must be saved. . . .[2]

Christian Social Responsibility. We affirm that God is both the Creator and the Judge of all men. We therefore should share his concern for justice and reconciliation throughout human society, and for the liberation of men from every kind of oppression. Because mankind is made in the image of God, every person, regardless of race, religion, color, culture, class, sex or age, has an intrinsic dignity because of which he should be respected and served, not exploited. . . . Although reconciliation with man is not reconciliation with God, nor is social action evangelism, nor is political liberation salvation, nevertheless we affirm that evangelical and socio-political involvement are both part of our Christian duty. For both are necessary expressions of our doctrines of God and man, our love for our neighbor, and our obedience to Jesus Christ. . . . The message of salvation implies also a message of judgment upon every form of alienation, oppression and discrimination, and we should not be afraid to denounce evil and injustice wherever they exist. . . .[3]

1. *The Lausanne Covenant*, with exposition and commentary by John Stott (Minneapolis: Worldwide Publications, 1975), 10.
2. Ibid., 14.
3. Ibid., 25.

to write a statement of three thousand words. The result at Lausanne, as indicated by the quotations in the sidebar above, affirmed traditional but nuanced positions on the authority of Scripture and on Christ as the only way of salvation. Debates over social action led to a carefully phrased affirmation

on the importance of seeking justice alongside efforts at converting the lost. The relative brevity of the Lausanne Covenant contributed to the widespread recognition the statement has received as a defining theological standard for the world's multitudinous evangelical, pietist, and sectarian evangelicals. That respect owed even more to the care of Stott and his collaborators in producing a statement with biblical balance, doctrinal restraint, and unusual attention to the concerns of participants from the Majority World.

After the congress closed, its work was carried on through a Lausanne Continuing Committee chaired by Leighton Ford, with Gottfried Osei-Mensah, a Ghanaian who was then a pastor in Nairobi, Kenya, as the first executive secretary. This committee has been responsible since 1974 for sponsoring over sixty regional and topic-specific conferences. These smaller gatherings have been held in every region of the globe and have explored evangelism in connection with young people, spiritual warfare, Jews, the Holy Spirit, prayer, diaspora, Muslims, human need, social responsibility, cultural understanding, and many other subjects. Two large assemblies, at Manila in 1989 and Cape Town in 2011, were labeled Lausanne II and Lausanne III as extensions of the 1974 gathering.

Tité Tiénou, who was born in Côte d'Ivoire and has led theological institutions in Africa and the United States, attended all three major Lausanne gatherings. He has commented perceptively on their strengths and weaknesses: "The challenge for evangelicals is that every one of the Lausanne Congresses was actually an *ad hoc* event. It was organized for the occasion. As a result, continuity between the three is really difficult," especially when compared to the organizational continuity of the World Council of Churches and the Catholic Church. Yet recognizing that the congresses are made up of "individuals, not ... delegates of our respective churches," Tiénou concluded that a positive result ensues for "personal renewal" and when participants take the spirit of the event back to their home regions.[19]

Tiénou's commentary points toward fruitful comparison between modern Roman Catholicism as represented by the Second Vatican Council and modern evangelical and independent Protestant movements as represented by Lausanne. Vatican II's message of renewal stressed the church as an institution,

19. Tité Tiénou et al., "Engaging Global Reconciliation," *Trinity Magazine* (of Trinity International University), (Spring 2011): 12–13.

with a special emphasis on how the church's sacraments strengthen Christian life. Lausanne's message of renewal stressed the church as task-oriented mobilization, with a special emphasis on individual commitment and individual action. Both represented movement from traditional positions to broader conceptions of the faith—Vatican II by expanding attention to the laity and coming out clearly for universal religious freedom, Lausanne by drawing explicitly on Majority World insights and coming out clearly for the necessity of social action to accompany evangelism. Because both gatherings took place before the full force of women's participation in public life had registered, neither confronted the challenges to traditional ways that modern gender circumstances have posed for the church in both the West and the rest of the world. If by comparison to Vatican II Lausanne appears helter-skelter, compared to prevailing evangelical practices it represented a triumph of organizational cohesion. Viewed in world historical terms, the gatherings represented two very different strands of Christian experience moving in parallel, and perhaps even inching slightly closer to each other, as they faced some of the major challenges of contemporary life. Whether or not responsible students at the end of the twenty-first century will identify the Second Vatican Council and the Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization as *the* key turning points of the late twentieth century, both events will probably still demand attention as significant signposts in the ongoing history of the Christian faith.

One of the positive results from large international gatherings like Vatican II and Lausanne is the interchange of prayers and devotions among peoples. In recent decades that process has involved the translation of much traditional devotional material into languages for new Christian churches. There has also been significant introduction into Western churches of prayers and liturgies from the Majority World. The following prayer, which is from the small Central American country of Belize, nicely illustrates the combined emphasis on reconciliation with God and reconciliation with fellow humans that characterized the documents from Vatican II and the Lausanne Covenant. It also speaks to conditions in Belize, with a large hereditary Catholic population, a multiplication of Pentecostal and evangelical churches, a great deal of nominal and syncretistic religion, and a high rate of HIV/AIDS infection.

> Almighty and most loving God,
> we acknowledge your overflowing love and infinite glory.

Purify our hearts,
teach us how to love and forgive.
Pour down on us the spirit of peace and reconciliation.
Challenge us to go out in service
to transform the world through self-renewal,
to transform suffering into commitment,
to transform confusion into creativity,
to transform death into life.
Teach us how to proclaim the good news:
that we may be instruments of justice,
committed to peace and equality for all.
Teach us, your people, how to survive amid death by starvation,
misery and destitution,
torture and disappearance.
Lord, sometimes our faith trembles.
Lord, sometimes it seems as though you have left us.
Lord, help us to trust you more
and to put our lives in your hands!
O God of unceasing love,
to you be honour, glory and praise. Amen.[20]

Further Reading

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