

Part 3

"WILL NOT OVERCOME"

The Church of the Messiah Fights Back

While Europe was being convulsed by political and military eruptions the Roman Churchoid had made several small missionary ventures into Asia and South America, but these were visions of individuals rather than Churchoid enterprise. At the close of the eighteenth century several Protestant missionary organizations in Britain were formed: the *Baptist Missionary Society*, the *London Missionary Society*, the *Scottish Missionary Society* and the *Anglican Missionary Society*. But these were extensions of their denominational institutions and they conformed to the growing political forms of colonialism with the missionary pastor or priest becoming the “*mini-pope*” or superintendent, or leader, of the “*mini-churchoids*” of their missionary communities, with the native converts dependent on them for financial as well as spiritual support. Throughout Asia these became known and dismissed as “*rice Christians*”.

In the United States the “*First Great Awakening*” had been more complicated than the spiritual “*revival*” in England because of the compromising combination of the Wesleyan mass evangelism with the theories of the European “*Enlightenment*” movement. The fundamental simplicities of Wesley’s Methodism merged with the more intellectual fervour of the American Jonathan Edwards’, but

battled with the pietistic quietism of the Quakers and Samuel Johnson's eclecticism. Where the North American Churchoid differed greatly from its counterparts in Britain and Europe was in its strong emphasis on "gospel evangelism". By the nineteenth century the American Churchoid, together with post-Wesley surge in evangelism in Britain by Bible-centred groups such as the "Plymouth Brethren" and the Pentecostal "Apostolic Church", became the "Second Great Awakening" of a world-wide outreach and an ambition to carry the Jesus Gospel to the whole world.

In America the first of a succession of great national evangelists emerged in 1821 with Charles Finney, launching an extraordinary spiritual "Second Great Awakening" which swept every State in the United States and added a million converts to the churches, and crossing the Atlantic to Britain to add a million more converts there. It influenced "dead" institutional churchoids and political parties, generated a social revolution in ameliorating conditions in housing, factories and prisons; and it produced a wide variety of foundations, charities, and foreign missions to almost every country in the world. Finney declared:

"When a man is fully determined to obey God, because it is right that he should obey God, I call that principle . . . Many young converts depend almost entirely on the state of their feelings to go forward in duty, Some will not lead a prayer meeting, unless they feel as if they should make an eloquent prayer . . . Young converts should be carefully taught that when duty is before them they are to do it...Do not wait for feeling, but do it! Most likely the very emotions for which you would wait will be called into the exercise when you begin to do your duty . . ."

Finney broke with the universal practice of a minister speaking from a pulpit, and he was the first of itinerant ministers without a church acting as spokesmen for God. Writing of the "Great Awakening" some years later he said:

"Slavery seemed to shut it out from the South. The people there were in such a state of irritation, of vexation, and of committal to their peculiar institution, which had come to be assailed on every side, that the Spirit of God seemed to be grieved away from them. There seemed to be no place for

Him in the hearts of Southern people at that time."

But within a short period the spiritual revolution had swept the whole nation, from New England in the north to Texas in the South and westwards to Ohio and California. A leading secular newspaper reported:

"The Revivals, or Great Awakenings, continue to be the leading topic of the day...from Texas in the South, to the extreme Western boundaries and our Eastern limits; their influence is felt by every denomination."

After the earlier Wesley and Whitfield spiritual movements the English Churchoids had settled back into religious conformity and there was an Anglican impetus to turn again to the Roman Churchoid as a response to their congregations' popular interest in evangelism. The movement was centred in Oxford University where there were an unusual number of very gifted scholars involved in the discussions. Both Oxford and Cambridge Universities at the time were under attack as centres of privilege epitomizing those sections of society in urgent need of reform. The French Revolution in Europe had given birth to the "Enlightenment" theory of "Secular Democracy" broadly based on the Cartesian Rationalist principles which the Enlightenment theory of "secular democracy" as a consequence, if not a policy, forced religion to the sidelines of all political practice. It was a Rationalism so extreme that it legislated a week should be ten days, and there should be ten hours to a day instead of twelve. The proposal lasted for seven years before it was quietly shelved.

In England John Stuart Mill sought to bridge the gap with "Unitarianism" theory in a variety of philosophical dissertations in *The London Review*, and major publications such as *A System of Logic* and *Principles of Political Economy, Liberty and Representative Government*.

In Scotland the parlous economic conditions had given birth to a growth of trades unions to represent workers' rights, especially in the shipyards and mines, and a powerful political movement emerged in the person of James Keir Hardie, who helped form the

Scottish Labour Party in 1888, with a strong religious interest. Five years later he created the Independent Labour Party for Britain, and this body federated with the trades unions in 1900.

In England the Anglican Churchoid was under attack from a formidable group of intellectual and liberal "*high churchmen*", known as "*Tractarians*" from their printed material, the most eminent being John Keble, John Henry Newman and Edward Pusey. Keble was an Anglican priest, theologian and poet who originated the *Tractarian Movement*, with the goal to revive the Anglican Churchoid launched by his sermon "*National Apostasy*" in July 14, 1833, in the University Chapel. The *Tractarians* encouraged the reading of the early Church writers, edited their works, and arranged for their translation. In 1869 Keble College, Oxford, was founded in his honour.

John Henry Newman eventually left both the *Tractarian Movement* and

Anglicanism when he became a Roman Catholic in 1845, later becoming a Cardinal in the Roman Churchoid. Newman delayed his departure from Anglicanism because of his indecision over the historical contrast between the early Biblical Church and the modern Roman Churchoid. He finally rationalized his decision by applying "*the law of historical development*" evident in society, and given impetus by the theory of

Darwinian evolution becoming popular at the time and applying it to the development

from the early and undivided Church to the modern Roman Churchoid. In 1864 he published his notable *Apologia pro Vita Sua* ("A Defence of His Life"), which brought him international eminence.

WG Ward was a friend of Newman who joined the Roman Churchoid at the same time. Ward wrote *Ideal of a Christian Church* and became editor in Ireland of the influential *Dublin Review*. Ireland was in a chaotic state at the time with a potato famine in which thousands of peasant farmers were starving, ruined, dying, or immigrating to the United States. Christian intellectuals of all denominations were challenging the apparent helplessness of the Irish Churchoid in the face of the catastrophe.

A similar situation was apparent in Scotland where the lovely but unproductive Highlands had become over-populated relative to means of subsistence. Landowners introduced sheep, the kelp industry collapsed in the decade 1815-1825, and landowners evicted their impoverished tenants in what became known as the "*Highland Clearances*" with mass migrations to Canada and the United States. In the mid-1840s this desperate situation was magnified with the potato famine like Ireland, and in 1882 there was a "*Crofter's War*" whose incidental effect was to integrate the Highlands and Lowlands into a unitary identity.

During the nineteenth century political tumult in Scotland a religious ferment was developing in England on the perimeters of the Anglican Churchoid's distress at the defection of John Henry Newman. A group of able scholars emerged who were not only challenging those who "*are punctual in attendance at chapel for five minutes in a morning, and regular in wearing the proper vestments, and showing themselves at the hour of grace before meat*", but also the whole ethos of the expanding

institutionalising of the multiplying Churchoid denominations. John Henry Newman's brother, Francis, linked up with two Oxford brilliant scholars, Sam Tregelles and William Kelly, and was joined by John Nelson Darby from Ireland, to reject all Churchoid institutionalisms and advocate a return to the Pauline simplicities of the *New Testament*.

These men became part of a group in Scotland, Ireland and England whose primary concern was not national or world evangelism but simple conformity to the words of God. In 1820 in company with other "*Dissenters*" who were discontented with the Established Churchoid, and who met regularly to discuss conditions and Biblical applications, they initially met to take communion together without the usual formalities of Churchoid membership. One of the early members, Edward Cronin, described this:

"Oh the blessed seasons with my soul, which John Parnell, William Stokes and others know, while moving the furniture aside and laying the simple table with its bread and wine on Saturday evenings, seasons of joy, never to be forgotten, for surely we had the Master's smile and sanction

in the beginning of such a movement as this was."

This was the first mention of what was to become the "*Plymouth Brethren Movement*" after its leaders had moved to Plymouth in England and its work of expansions had started. In 1838 when John Nelson Darby was invited to Scotland he found a "*Brethren assembly*" of thirty-six believers already in existence in Edinburgh, and discovered that this was only a "*small flock*" of many such gatherings in the country. A Henry Craik from nearby Prestonpans, and a graduate from St Andrews University who would also become a notable Brethren leader, had left for England where he met with Anthony Norris Groves and, later, Edward Cronin, Edward Wilson, George Bellet, and William Stokes.

George Muller and Thomas Barnardo opened charity homes for orphan children; Anthony Norris Groves and John Parnell and others went to India, Russia, Italy and Baghdad as missionaries. The indefatigable John Nelson Darby went to Switzerland and met with the "*Free Church*" movements taking place in Europe, and his prophetic discourses regarding the "*last days*" of the Church caused great excitement and were widely disseminated in France and Belgium, Germany and Holland, Italy and beyond. G H Lang went to Egypt and other countries of the Middle East and then went on to India in support of Anthony Norris Groves. George Shekleton of Ireland took his family—and "*chapel*"—with him to Australia and, together with former Anglicans Richard Smith and Henry Martin, and others launched the Brethren movement in Australia.

Meanwhile, Anthony Norris Groves' missionary travels through the Middle East to India had also generated great excitement in evangelical circles. Arriving in places where the institutional churches of the West were already established he was met with antagonism. He responded:

"My object in India is two-fold: to try to check the operation of these exclusive systems, but showing in the Christian Church they are not necessary for all that is holy and moral; and to try to impress upon every member of Christ's Body that he has some ministry given him for the Body's edification, and instead of depressing, encouraging each one to come

forward and serve the Lord. I have it much at heart, should the Lord spare me, to form a church on these principles; and my earnest desire is to re-model the whole plan of missionary operations . . ."

This release of "*lay participation*" in church activities instead of "*clerical domination*" opened up the way for evangelical denominations to recruit and send "*foreign missionaries*" to un-churched territories, and this was done by organizing them into Churchoid-based missionary organizations; or, in the case of independent evangelical groups, into "*Faith Missions*", where the individual missionaries were responsible to find their own financial support through personal faith in God.

The key element in this development was the formation of the "*Evangelical Alliance*", an association of Christians of different denominations formed in London in August, 1846, at a conference of over 900 clergymen and laymen from all parts of the world. The proposal originated in Scotland the previous year, and was intended to "*associate and concentrate the strength of a enlightened Protestantism against the encroachments of Popery and Puseyism, and to promote the interests of a Scriptural Christianity*" as well as to combat religious indifference. The objects of the Alliance were variously said to be: "*girdling the world by prayer . . . a world-wide week of prayer . . . the maintenance of religious liberty throughout the world . . . the relief of persecuted Christians in all parts of the world . . . the manifestation of the unity of all believers and the upholding of the evangelical faith.*"

In China, these two aspects - denominational church-based evangelical outreach, and non-denominational faith-based church-planting—were represented by such notable missionaries as Robert Morrison, of the *London Missionary Society*; and Hudson Taylor, of what was later called the *China Inland Mission*. Unfortunately, the Opium War and the subsequent Treaty of Nanking opened the door into China for the worst elements of Western commercial, political and religious elements with the overt sale of opium as the major enterprise, and missionaries entering China from the same opium ships and the repressive terms of the Treaty of Nanking.

When Robert Morrison, of the *London Missionary Society*, arrived in Hong Kong in 1807 he had to earn his living as a secretary to the notorious British East India Company, and he was not permitted to preach the Christian gospel. He devoted himself to learning the Chinese language, compiling a Chinese dictionary, and translating the Bible into Chinese. When he died in 1834 there were only three Protestant missionaries in China, two British and one American. In that same year of 1834 a Dr Peter Parker from the United States began medical work in Canton with a small dispensary. That was before the appointment of the incorruptible Chinese Commissioner Lin, and the "*Opium War*", with the subsequent Treaty of Nanking, signed in 1842.

By 1870, there were 254 European, and about 150 native, Roman Catholic priests, with some claimed 404,530 converts. Roman Catholic influence in China was mostly synonymous with French missionary activity, and this diminished almost to zero with the Franco-China War of 1884. But by the turn of the 20th century there were 38 Vicariats-Apostolic, 21 Bishops, 42 mutually independent Catholic missions, with 1063 Europeans and 493 native priests, 4961 places of worship and 803,000 converts.

In 1865, James Hudson Taylor of the *Chinese Evangelization Society*, arrived in China, became sick, went home, finished his study of medicine, and returned to China to found the *China Inland Mission*. He issued a call for 24 workers to join him, two for each of China's twelve inland provinces, and, despite warnings that it was premature to go inland at that time, he went ahead. His example was soon followed by others, and, when he died in 1905, there were almost a thousand missionaries in the *China Inland Mission*, and there were almost a million Christians, Catholic and Protestant, in the country.

In 1877, the number of Protestant missionaries at 113 principal mission stations in China had reached 305; of which 109 were British, 90 American and 17 German. If independent preachers, colporteurs (Bibles and booklets distributors) and other associated activists were included, there were 417 missionaries in all. The *London Times*, reporting an address by Bishop Cassels of West China to the

Church Missionary Society in England, said:

"A few years ago China was said to be dying, and the European Powers, like harpies, were already beginning to divide the spoil. These pangs, however, had been not a sign of approaching death, but the birth-pangs of a new life. With a Literary Chancellor exhorting students to read Christian books and distinguish between Protestants and Roman Catholics; with the spread of a purely native movement against foot-binding; with the rise of colleges and universities, mints and arsenals, post offices and publishing establishments; and, with a new attitude to Western ideas in general, here was abundant proof of an awakening which gave glorious opportunities for Christianity . . ." (author's emphasis)

What was not mentioned at the time was that all of the missionary activities were being carried out within the restrictive terms of the *Nanking* and later *Treaties* giving outrageous privileges to the foreign colonizers who, with the missionaries, were living in their isolated islands of Western culture in the vast surrounding continent of resentful Chinese nationals. What was even more unconscionable was that they also introduced their Western religious institutional rituals and artefacts ecclesiology, music, liturgies, and, final folly, a "*comity of missions*". This last was an agreement to parcel out territories for exclusive denominational operating, and excluding all others, resulting in Christianized islands of western culture, and not Pauline bridgeheads of evangelistic opportunities.

Even the non-institutional Plymouth Brethren and Pentecostal movements were guilty of this colonial practice inside their street-built "*gospel halls*", with western Moody and Sankey hymns played on imported harmoniums, and the missionaries being patronizing and lifetime "*mini-popes*" presiding over simple Chinese natives. The "*Pentecostal Movement*" had emerged at the same time as the influential "*Plymouth Brethren Movement*" in the early nineteenth century. It began as a comparable evangelical movement known as the "*Apostolic Church*" by Edward Irving.

Irving was an archetypical figure of the 1820s despite his peculiarities and excesses. He was fiercely opposed to rationalism and democracy in general, the *Industrial Revolution* and its social

consequences, and the *Catholic Emancipation*, while applauding monarchy and tradition. In 1825 he had a spiritual experience "whether for the better or worse I know not . . . I seek . . . to be a tongue unto the Holy Spirit . . ." Irving denounced "the sensual forms of the Romish Church which do tend to superstition," and his quest was to restore "the spiritual liberty of the Church."

The major difference between the "Plymouth Brethren" of John Nelson Darby and the "Apostolic Church" of Edward Irving was that the Brethren concentrated on the study and exposition of Scripture, while the Apostolic Church concentrated on the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which gave the description of "Pentecostals" to the latter. It was to prove a critical distinction as the Brethren movement split into two factions of "Open" and "Exclusives" over a textual dispute known as the "Newton Controversy", with John Nelson Darby intemperately leading the breakaway *Exclusives* into multi-faction obscurity, while George Muller and others kept an *Open* fellowship with other denominations. The *Plymouth Brethren Movement* lasted with varying success into the mid-twentieth century, when it diminished into irrelevance and near obscurity through spiritually sterile leadership.

Meanwhile the political and ecclesiastical situation in Europe had deteriorated into a mishmash of disputing ideologies as intellectual philosophers, social engineers, aspiring psychologists, posturing theologians, and political manipulators all competed for a temporary place in the dying continent – like jackals disputing over a carcass. Among them was Karl Marx, whose ideology provided totalitarian dominance to State politics and dismissed Churchoid religion as a mythical irrelevance. But, like Christianity, Marxism was a philosophy of life for transforming the world. Marx's *Weltanschauung der Welveränderung* meant literally "world outlook," or "philosophy of life," and "world change," or "transforming the world."

Marx was born on May 5, 1818, the offspring of a long line of rabbis and son of a lawyer who had adopted and been baptized into Protestant Christianity the year before Karl was born. He attended a Jesuit school at Trier in Germany for five years, and went on to read law, history and philosophy in Berlin and Bonn universities.

His radical views made a university career out of reach, and he joined the staff, and later became an editor of a German radical newspaper.

Marx was living in a world seething with revolutionary changes. Following on the French revolution of 1789 there were the revolutions of 1830, 1848 and 1871, passing from the religious to the political to the social, and then to the industrial and socialist. Neither institutional religion nor secular philosophies could meet the proliferating challenges and changes as Western societies staggered from one revolutionary crisis to another.

Marx developed the theory originated by Bacon and Descartes, that it is possible to know nature and to use this knowledge in such a way as to master and change nature. He postulated that human history is not a meaningless and accidental sequence of events, but that there were laws of social development which could be discovered, accelerated and realized on the basis of that knowledge. But neither Marx, nor his disciples, was able to solve the inherent problem of this postulation: how is it possible to transfer a thesis appropriate to the natural sciences and apply it to men and women with consciousness and will?

In a revolutionary period of history Marx was more extreme than his contemporaries. Right from the start of his writing career he maintained that partial political emancipation was not possible, and that the proletariat could only emancipate itself by breaking all its chains, by dissolving constituted society, and by recreating man as a member of the human society in the place of established class and classes. In a correspondence with his radical colleagues he wrote:

"Nothing prevents us from combining our criticism with the criticism of politics, from participating in politics, and consequently in real struggles. We will not, then, oppose the world like doctrinaires with a new principle: here is truth, kneel down here! We expose new principles to the world out of the principles of the world itself. We don't tell it: 'Give up your struggles, they are rubbish, we will show you the true war-cry.' We explain to it only the real object for which it struggles, and consciousness is a thing it must acquire even if it objects to it."

The young Marx was concerned with values, with high ideals rather than the historical necessity and inflexible economic laws of his later years. He criticized the French Revolution for having produced only political emancipation and not “*a human emancipation*”. It had created liberty, but not fraternity. He declared that man had to be delivered from the bondage of his own inhumanity, delivered from his innate egotism, and he even quoted Rousseau in saying that the goal was nothing less than “*the changing of human nature*”. In his seminal work, *Das Kapital*, he said, “*Original sin is everywhere at work*”, but he never addressed the fundamental problem of how this goal of making sinners into saints was to be attained.

What is significantly revealing is that it was not rationalism, nor materialism, not even socialism, which precipitated Marx's sudden departure from early Messiah-centered belief, but occultism. He became fascinated with Satanism, and even his poems at the time reflected this obsession; for instance, with *Oulanem*, the name used in Satanic hymns and black masses to denote the Devil, he wrote:

*“Till I go mad and my heart is utterly changed
See this sword, the Prince of Darkness sold it to me.”*

The Faustian question could well be asked: “*Sold in exchange for what?*” With his friends Bukanin and Proudhon he became a member of the *Doktor-Klub*, with its notorious occult ceremonies. His prowess significantly indicated a perverse delight in the theme of the destruction of men and women. A favourite quotation of his was that of Mephistopheles in Goethe's *Faust*: “*Everything in existence is worth being destroyed.*” By the 20th century, Marxism was concerned primarily with changing social and political structures, and only incidentally with changing people—and that by official *diktat*.

The most significant opponents to the increasingly secular politics and theological liberalism of the nineteenth century were two Christian philosophers, the Danish Søren Kierkegaard and the Swiss Karl Barth; the novelists Count Leo Tolstoy of Russia, and George MacDonald of Scotland; and two preachers Charles Haddon

Spurgeon, and William Booth. All of them would leave a lasting impact well beyond their generations and centuries.

Kierkegaard was born with a spinal deformity in a family with strict parents and after studying theology he developed an incisive and brilliantly satirical style of writing with which he excoriated contemporary social and political mores. He was especially savage with organized religion and relished his self-appointed mission to “reintroduce Christianity to Christendom” — which he designated “a monstrous mental delusion”. Yet he is also remembered for his sympathetic writings regarding Abraham in *Fear and Trembling*, and Job in *Repetition*. His belief that “faith can only be reached by a leap in the dark” greatly influenced the twentieth century existentialists.

Karl Barth was an ardent admirer of Kierkegaard and, like him, was critical of the increasing secularizing religion by Germany’s liberal theologians, declaring, “So far as I was concerned there was no future for the theology of the nineteenth century.” In his impressive *Epistle to the Romans* he argued that only God’s revelation in Christ could break through the futility of individuals seeking to save themselves. The work would form the basis of the *Barmen Declaration* opposing the National Socialism of Germany.

In Russia, Count Leo Tolstoy had emerged as a towering literary figure following the publication of his novels, *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina*. In reaction against the extravagant lifestyles of Russian society at the time Tolstoy renounced his title, divided his estate between his family members, freed his serfs, and went to live and work with the peasants. He gave his reasons in *My Religion* published in 1882 as “following the example of Christ”.

In Scotland, George MacDonald was the son of a weaver whose house was so small George had to sleep in the attic. After studying at Aberdeen University he became a minister of a *Congregational Church* in Sussex in England, before giving up the ministry for a life of writing in London. His most popular novels for adults were *Phantastes* and *Lilith*, but it was his imaginative stories for children that brought him wide popularity and were influential in the following century on JR Tolkien and CS Lewis, both of whom acknowledged “MacDonald was my master”.

In 1865 William Booth broke away from his Methodist roots to form an independent Christian Mission in a tent in London’s poor

East End, claiming that ordinary people were being ignored by the churches. After a few years of "street evangelism" Booth outfitted his followers with uniforms and formed military-style bands of musicians, calling them the "*Salvation Army*". In 1890 he published *In Darkest England and the Way out*, declaring that "*the poorest ten per cent in Britain are as needy as the slaves in 'Darkest Africa'*", and providing an ambitious program of urban and rural "*settlements*" to provide work and housing. In the following century the Salvation Army organization would expand into almost ninety countries worldwide.

Meanwhile, across the city of London, Charles Haddon Spurgeon was preaching in a large chapel in Southwark. By 1861 the numbers of converts were so great that a new Metropolitan Tabernacle was built in Central London to hold six thousand attendees and he preached there to crowded services for the next thirty years. His favourite reading was the Puritan writings, and he denounced regularly the weak and comprising theology of the nineteenth century writers and preachers.

Europe, by the mid-twentieth century, and after two World Wars, was a disaster area, not only politically and economically but also ecclesiastically. A series of nihilist philosophers – Nietzsche, Spencer, and Schopenhauer – together with "*higher criticism*" theologians, had created havoc with their "*Death of God*" triumphalism, and a declining Churchoid evangelical interest. The nineteenth century religious quarrels between clericals and lay parties were carried over into the twentieth century with increasing intensity. Clericals thought the Church should be integrated into, and privileged within, the State; lay liberal Christians contended that the two should be kept strictly separated. The Roman Churchoid was content to use its influence with the rulers of any stripe so long as they weren't democratic or socialist, as they contended these two elements led to atheism.

But a Roman Catholic priest, Luigi Sturzo, founded Europe's first *Christian Democratic Party* in 1919 to reconcile Roman Catholicism and Democracy and gave birth to the *Christian Democrats*; which, from the 1950s onwards, would dominate and change the face of

Europe with the fundamental belief that “*religion determines voting behaviour more than class does.*” The initial visionaries were outstanding leaders - the German Konrad Adenauer, the Italian Alcide Gasperi, the Frenchman Robert Schuman—and even the later less religious “*technocrats*” were formidably reputable individuals—Germany’s Helmut Kohl, Italy’s Giulio Andreotti, Belgium’s Wilfried Martens, and Holland’s Ruud Lubbers.

Toward the close of the twentieth century, as Marxism collapsed in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, it was Christians of different persuasions in East Germany, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Rumania, who took to the streets from their churches in protest against a failed Marxism, and the Marxist Revolution in Russia and Eastern Europe came to an ignominious end. It was these “*street*” Christians who courageously led the protests against tyrannical Marxism and brought it down—not, as was claimed exclusively, the policies of American President Ronald Reagan and British Premier Margaret Thatcher—and who later became the basis of a new Europe: Lech Walesa of Poland; Tamas Vasary of Hungary; Jan Carnogursky, Josef Hromadka, Richard Sacher of Czechoslovakia; Gunter Hanisch of the Nikola Church, where the East German “*street*” revolution was born; Hristofor Subev of the “*Independent Religious Rights Committee*” of Bulgaria.

Only in China, among the major Marxist countries, did the remnants of Marxist Revolution stagger on; and, even there, unknown Christians defied the worst tyrannies that could be devised by the pseudo-Marxist authorities, and survived to vastly outnumber them in terms of committed membership¹². Eventually, students and workers took to the streets in China to protest the failure of the Marxist system, and the cynical geriatric leaders in Peking put down the protest with a bloody massacre to maintain themselves in power. In the early twentieth century, in China, there had been a revolution against feudalism, a revolution against imperialism, a revolution against monarchism, a revolution against nationalism, and, finally, a non-violent Christian revolution against Marxism which went unnoticed by all because it was so unprecedented—a revolution for Christian values.

¹²See GOD and CHINA: A Perfect Moral Revolution. by the author

China, historically, had been divided into seven realms, each with its own identity, each struggling to occupy the dominating position of “*the Mandate of Heaven*” to rule the nation. Encircled by deserts and mountains and oceans, the Chinese people had excluded all foreign ideas and directed their awesome energies inwardly. Every Chinese family “*compound*” reflected this inwardness of emphasis as their high walls shut off outside views and internalized all the inmates’ interests. The fundamentally social philosophies rather than religions of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism taught the people compromise and detachment from surrounding circumstances. The Chinese novelist Ya Ding, who was a participant in an earlier student protest movement in China, and who started the first Beijing University student magazine, had written:

“The West believes in God, but the East in heaven. But, whilst God has a name, an image, and leaves concrete messages (like the Testaments) heaven in China has neither an image nor a concrete message. Remaining vague always, this powerful divinity can only reveal itself through the agency of a man’ the ‘Son of Heaven’. Judeo-Christian civilization has only two sides—God and man. Once God was out of the equation the spirit of equality and democracy among men emerged. Whereas in China, despite formal changes in the social system, man has always retained absolute obedience for the emperor—a habit of mind forged over the course of 5,000 years. So, under the title of the popular republic, Mao and Deng became the two ‘Sons of Heaven’, both demanding complete submission from the population.”

After five thousand years of imperial tyranny and military warlords, China in the twentieth century had tried to change their rigidly oppressive circumstances—which all their native brilliance in the arts, science and philosophy could not alleviate—by means of two important and contrasting foreign concepts: institutional Churchoid Christianity and totalitarian Maoist-Marxism. The former brought in Western ideas which allowed them to retain their arts, science, philosophy and superstitions; while the latter was a Western idea that they moulded to conform to their art, science, philosophy and superstitions. The marriage of the two in China’s

Churchoid schools and universities gave birth to China's unique Maoist-Marxism offspring with its bastardized "spiritual" ideology of Mao-Thought "brain-washing" moral values. But after fifty years of Maoist-Marxist persecution with imprisonment, beatings, tortures, rapes, and depriving the Messiah believers of all social benefits for their families, there were an estimated hundred million dynamic Christians in China—more than double the listless forty-million-plus Communist Party membership—with fifty thousand converts being added every day, and one hundred thousand preparing to evangelize the world.

Meanwhile, the "Pentecostals" were expanding rapidly in Britain and other places, with particular emphasis on "healings". The "Revivalist" fervour which had swept the Western world in the nineteenth century was gradually replaced with variously structured worship services conducted by seminary-trained "Reverends", who had been academically ordained in ecclesiology and preaching skills, and generally influenced by the emerging intellectual "higher criticism" of the mainline Churchoids. But in the United States the enthusiastic and rhythmic "gospel" hymn-singing, musical accompaniments, and the "miraculous healings" of the Pentecostals Aimee Semple MacPherson, Charles Price and Oral Roberts had a dramatic appeal and rapidly increased membership.

The single most influential branch of the Pentecostal *Charismatic Movement* has been the "Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship", which attracted Christians across the world from other denominations, as well as Roman Catholics and Jews, to its breakfasts, programs, conferences, and regional conventions, often held in prestigious hotels, as supplementary to the standard church activities. Charismatic Christianity promised deliverance from the irrelevance, sterility, institutional deadness afflicting denominational churches and offering hope and satisfaction of spiritual renewal.

But the sensationalism of the "Healing Movement" was distasteful to many

Pentecostals and there were several breakaway sects, the most significant of which was the "Assemblies of God" formed in 1914 with a moderate version of "the baptism of the Holy Spirit" and glossolalia,

or "*speaking in tongues*", and a greater emphasis on personal holiness of behavior. This became a "*Holiness Movement*" and the dominant factor in fundamentalist evangelical churches across the world, with an estimated eight hundred "*Assembly of God*" churches being created every year, supporting almost a thousand overseas missionaries on a missionary budget of seven –ten million dollars, and maintaining the largest number of Bible Schools in the world. Their charismatic principles were eagerly embraced by other denominations, and these eventually became breakaway denominations especially in Asia, Africa and South America.

Within a half century, this "*Charismatic Christianity*" had hundreds of million adherents in almost every country in the world. They are the largest non-Roman Catholic communion in France, Italy, and Portugal in Europe, in Brazil, Chile, El Salvador, and Mexico in Latin America; and in most African countries. The rapid expansion of their churches, with the central message of charismatic empowerment, has led to their questionable contention that numerical success is the distinctive sign of God's blessing and divine approval. They frequently refer to their Movement as "*the Third Great Force in Christendom*": a faithful reproduction of the their claimed "*First Great Force*" Apostolic movement of the first century; a worthy, and perhaps even superior, successor to the "*Second Great Force*" Reformation of the sixteenth century and subsequent English Wesleyan evangelical revival of the eighteenth century.

At first known as *Neo-Pentecostalism*, because of the varying beliefs in, and practices of, the charismatic gifts, it gradually and increasingly came to be identified as "*Charismatic*" because of the objections to the more extreme forms taught by sectarian Pentecostalism. It was this Charismatic Christianity which swept aside the Marxist-influenced "*Liberation Theology*" of Latin America, as well as the subsequent Pope John Paul II's authoritarian ecclesiastical and Mariolitary dogmatism. In Latin America, the most charismatic gift after "*speaking in tongues*" was "*healing*"; and these, combined with the warmth of "*church fellowship*" and vibrant preaching and singing, has made millions of converts in the major Latin American countries.

The most publicized of the 1960s three most recent Biblical-based spiritual revolutions - *Plymouth Brethren*, *Pentecostals* and the Catholic "*Liberation Theology*" – was the "*Catholic Revolution*" in Latin America. Although it has been most closely identified with, and articulated by, Latin American Christian leaders as their "*Liberation Theology*", it really had its roots in Europe's University of Louvain in Belgium, and the Jesuit intellectual community there. But the trumpet call to the Roman Churchoid Revolution was sounded by Pope John XXIII in his famous address, *Peace on Earth*, in 1962, in Latin America; followed by the *Vatican Council II*, from 1962-65, which effectively decentralized the Roman Churchoid's hitherto oligarchic authority.

The hero-martyr of Latin American Roman Churchoid "*Liberation Theology*" revolutionaries was Camilo Torres, a priest who stated passionately:

"I took off my cassock to be more truly a priest. The duty of every Catholic is to be a revolutionary, is to make revolution. The Catholic who is not making revolution is living in mortal sin."

Six months after Torres' death, in September, 1966, the journal *Christianismoy Revolucion* was launched

". . . to reflect the meaning, the urgency, the means, the movements of Christians in the revolution...because only revolution can feed the hungry, house the homeless, care for the sick, bring dignity to the dispossessed, freedom to the exploited, life to the drowning, calm to the frightened, happiness to the miserable, the earth to the meek . . ."

One year later the Latin American "*Encounter Camilo Torres*" was established to get all Christians of Latin America to work together, those "*who feel that our duty as Christians is to be revolutionaries and know that the duty of all revolutionaries is to make revolution.*" At its first general meeting on February 15, 1968, in Montevideo, they issued a four-page newspaper, pre-dated 1 November, 1967, which included a *Manifesto* signed by seventeen bishops, entitled, *Gospel and Revolution: Pastoral Letter from the Third World*, under the direction of Archbishop Helder Camara of Brazil. This *Manifesto* sparked similar

spiritual revolutionary movements in Africa and Asia.

It was this spiritually-motivated revolutionary ferment which caught the attention of the Latin American Marxists and led them to invite Christians to join with them in the struggle to transform the variously oppressed national societies there. The Latin American writer Jose Miguel Bonino, in his book *Christians and Marxists*, has written:

"Juan Rosales, an Argentine Marxist author who has given careful attention—and much incisive criticism—to the role of religion in our society, makes this rather startling assertion:

"... the bringing about of true revolutionary transformation in our country . . . is for us (Communists) inconceivable without the participation of a renewed and engaged Christianity, which is equipped to make its specific contribution to the revolutionary baggage . . ."

"But right and left, ecclesiastical hierarchies and the common man in the street, the social analyst and the journalist, Latin Americans and foreign observers, are equally arrested by this new phenomenon: not a Christian-Marxist dialogue, but a growing and overt participation in a revolutionary project, the basic lines of which are undoubtedly based on a Marxist analysis . . ."

Despite the many apparently irreconcilables between Christianity and Marxism the point at which the Latin American Catholic Christians united was in the concept of *praxis*; the important emphasis on practical activity over theoretical abstraction; or, better still, the uniquely dynamic inter-relationship of the two aspects. In *praxis*, experience is the source of the theory which informs the action; and the ideas which are inseparable from activity have meaning only in relation to each other. What this meant in practice was the consequent inevitable change of both individuals and societies—the step never taken by Soviet or East European Marxists. *"Love and righteousness, truth and justice,"* were things to be done, Jesus declared to his followers: *"Whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God."*

Both Marxists and Catholic Christians in Latin America could

agree with the fundamental Judaic-Christian principle of *"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself"*. At the *"First Latin American Encounter of Christians for Socialism"*, which met in Santiago de Chile on 23-30 April, 1972, under a banner displaying a man freeing himself from chains, were the words of the Cuban revolutionary leader, Che Guevara: *"When the Christians dare to give an integral revolutionary testimony, the Latin American revolution will be invincible."*

Another Latin American revolutionary, Paulo Friere of Brazil, in one of his books declared:

*"I am more and more convinced that true revolutionaries must perceive the revolution, because of its creative liberating nature, as an act of love. For me the revolution, which is not possible without a theory of revolution—and therefore science—is not irreconcilable with love. On the contrary: the revolution is made by men to achieve their humanization. What, indeed, is the deeper motive which moves men to become revolutionaries, but the dehumanization of man? The distortion imposed on the word 'Love' by the capitalist world cannot prevent the revolution from being essentially loving in character, nor can it prevent the revolutionaries from affirming their love of life. Guevara (while admitting 'the risk of seeming ridiculous') was not afraid to affirm it. He is quoted in *Venceremos*: 'Let me say, with the risk of appearing ridiculous, that the true revolutionary is guided by strong feelings of love.' It is impossible to think of an authentic revolutionary without this quality."*

Unfortunately for the *"Liberation Theology"* of Latin American Roman Catholic Christians, while their end was agreed the means to the end were inimical. To the Marxists, love was defined as something that was imposed on the people *"in their own interests"* by self-appointed leaders, with world-wide examples of lack of Marxist compassion. In Russia, even the word for compassion, *stradanya*, had been dropped from common usage, because it was considered *"a religious idea belonging to a dishonoured past"*. Compassion was replaced by *"a national striving for the highest Marxist ethic"*.

The successes of the *Charismatic Movement*, especially in Latin America, with the related monumental decline in Roman Churchoid influence across the continent, was a major focus of John Paul II's

papacy after his election in 1978 as he issued strict orders of discipline, personal morality and religious life, which were rapidly superseded by the devastating revelations of widespread child abuse, homosexuality and Churchoid official silence. He was accused by his adversaries in the Roman Churchoid of being too interested in political matters, too fond of travel to other countries, too fond of making sweeping speeches and streams of written opinions. It was also felt he interfered too much in the internal affairs of subsidiary groups within the Churchoid, including the election of the head of the Jesuit order. He attempted without much success to build bridges with the Eastern Orthodox Churchoid, the Jews and some Protestant Churchoids, but with little success.

Following World War II and the subsequent Yalta Agreement between the major powers the political and religious spheres of the world were dominated by Soviet Communism and Western Secular Democracy, during which there were only two major Christian voices being heard, Dietrich Bonhoeffer of Germany, and Alexander Solzhenitsyn of the Soviet Union.

Bonhoeffer was a passionate opponent of Hitler's National Socialism, denouncing Hitler personally in radio broadcast in 1933 before he came to power. In 1936 the Nazis barred him from speaking, writing and lecturing, but he was able to write two very influential books, *The Cost of Discipleship* and *Living Together* which were immensely influential. He was arrested for participating in a plot to assassinate Hitler, and hanged on April 9th, 1945. His *Letters and Papers from Prison* was published after his death. In one of his writings he said:

"When a community of a purely spiritual kind is established, it always encounters the danger that everything human will be carried into and intermixed with the fellowship. A purely spiritual fellowship is not only dangerous but also an altogether abnormal thing. When physical and family relationships or ordinary associations, that is, those arising from everyday life with all its claims upon people who are working together, are not projected into the spiritual community then we must be especially careful. That is why, as experience has shown, it is precisely in retreats of short duration that the human develops most easily. Nothing is easier to

stimulate the glow of fellowship in a few days of life together, but nothing is more fatal to the sound, sober, brotherly fellowship of everyday life”.

It was another prisoner of conscience, Alexander Solzhenitsyn of the Soviet Union, who emerged in the late twentieth century to influence the world. He was arrested in 1945 for publicly expressing his negative opinion concerning Stalin. After eight years in the notorious *gulag* labour camps to write the novel *A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovitch* which was widely acclaimed and made into an equally praised film.

He was expelled, first from the *Soviet Writers’ Union*, then from the country and he lived in exile in the United States of America for several years before returning to his own country. In his *From Under the Rubble*, referring to Kierkegaard’s “two revolutions . . . one bloodless, the other leaving everything standing but empty of significance”, Solzhenitsyn described a “third revolution . . . a moral change to inward development”:

“This turn toward inward development, the triumph of inwardness over outwardness, if it ever happens, will be a great turning point in the history of mankind, comparable to the transition from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance. There will be a complete change not only in the direction of our interests and activities but in the very nature of human beings (a change from spiritual dispersal to spiritual concentration) and a greater change still in the character of human societies. If in some places this is destined to be a revolutionary process, these revolutions will not be like the earlier ones—physical, bloody and never beneficial—but will be moral revolutions requiring both courage and sacrifice, though not cruelty—a new phenomenon in human history, of which little is yet known and which as yet no one has yet prophetically described in clear and precise terms . . .”

In England, another notable literary voice was calling for “a greater change in the character of human societies . . . in clear and precise terms”, although not for revolution except in moral terms, CS (for Clive Staples) Lewis. Lewis’s early life was devoted to Norse mythology and atheism until he was converted to Christ in his thirties on the top of a London double-decker bus, in his own words:

"the most dejected and reluctant convert in history." His conversion launched him on a brilliant academic career in English Literature at Oxford University, issuing a stream of literary criticism and linguistic works, Christian apologetics, and allegorical novels for adults and children. His most popular children's stories are the "Narnia" series, his autobiography *Surprised by Joy*, and the classic *Mere Christianity*. The contemporary atheist philosopher CM Joad said of Lewis's writings: *"(He) possesses the rare gift of making righteousness readable!"*

Rejecting those who said *"I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God"*, Lewis wrote in *Mere Christianity*:

"That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would be either a lunatic — on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg — or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either the man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him, and kill him as a demon, or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a being a great human teacher. He has not left that option open to us . . ."

If CS Lewis and His Oxford colleague JR Tolkien dominated the Christian scene in Britain in the twentieth century with their writings and films, it was Martin Luther King who was the leading Christian figure in the United States. He was an obscure Baptist pastor in Montgomery, Alabama, when a black woman refused to move from a "Whites Only" seat in a bus and created a bus boycott followed by mass demonstrations and marches, one of which became the historic march from Selma in Alabama to Washington in 1963. The following year he was awarded the *Nobel Peace Prize* because of his inspirational message in Washington, and subsequent leadership regarding equality for the black people in the USA. His inspiration was Jesus and his message of power subordinate to love, and his practice was the non-violent resistance of Mahatma Gandhi. He told his opponents:

"We shall march your capacity to inflict suffering with our capacity to endure suffering. Do to us what you will, and we shall continue to love you . . ."

But possibly the greatest evangelical contribution from the mid-twentieth century was not really a "revolution" or a "movement" but the *"Billy Graham Crusades"*. These lacked the spontaneity and cohesion of "revolutions" or "movements" *per se*, although they were responsible for perhaps millions of converts in world-wide total. The *Billy Graham Organization* perfected a system of organization which sold "salvation" like an attractive commercial product by organizing coaches, members, stadiums, choirs, singers and musicians, counsellors, and converts into churchoids organized to receive them. The millions of converts were "saved from" sin and damnation, but were not "saved to" the Apostle Paul's self-denying and soul-stretching *"Messiah-likeness"*. Unfortunately, the majority of these organized converts became processed "seat-fillers" in "Crusade-type" churchoids listening to "mini-Graham" preachers without Dr Graham's passion, power and proficiency. Towards the end of his life-work Dr Graham was asked if he had any regrets, and he is reported to have said that he wished he had spent more time with his family and on social issues.

In the United States of America they were eventually replaced by a growing number of "mega-churchoids" and "mega-congregations" meeting in three one-hour services each Sunday morning, their services "modelled on community-interest rather than Biblical expositions, and with the pastors selling widely published accounts of their successful "soul-winning."

Chapter 9

will be available on this site on the 1st June 2012