

## CHAPTER FOUR

# THE MARK OF GLORY.

### The Gospel and proclamation

*Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that the Son may glorify you (John 17:1).*

*I have glorified You on earth; I have finished the work which you have given me to do. And now O Father glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was (John 17:4,5).*

*And all Mine are Yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them (John 17:10).*

*And the glory which you gave me I have given them (John 17:22).*

*Father I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold my glory which you have given Me; for you loved Me before the foundation of the world (John 17:4).*

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Dr Calvin Cook, in a recent discussion suggested that glory as it relates to the John 17 prayer of Jesus, could be understood as repetitious conformity. The Son's glory is found in the reiteration of the Father in the Son. This could be better described as the gift of the true likeness of Jesus as the ultimate act of grace developing and being formed in the believer.

Jesus came to demonstrate within himself a likeness to the Father so that "anyone who has seen me has seen the Father". He is also able to say "I and the father are One," implying a seamless continuity of expression in which there is no divergence or even contrast between Father and Son.

The mark of mission, which is to go in the likeness of the Son's sending, is to be followed by conformity with the likeness of Christ himself. Mission has as its purpose therefore a sacramental outcome. The Christian in the world is also Christ in the world - not just in a weak presentation but in an actual mode.

It is sanctification in the believer that makes the missionary encounter more approximate, in the missionary's obedience, to the potential glory of this prospect, but not necessarily more worthy. Paul after all could not ever get over the grace that permitted him as a murderous persecutor of the faithful to become the foremost Christian ambassador. It was this understanding of grace that became the theological foundation for the very essence of the Gospel. Christ's continuing mission through us is a cause for wonder.

But it is in proclamation that God comes to the world alienated from Him. The Good News is pregnant with the imminence of God. God's Word is the place where God is revealed and where union with Father, Son and Holy Spirit becomes possible. Evangelism is the portal to glory because it fosters a new creation and sonship. In Romans 8:18 Paul expresses the hope of glory in the appearing of sonship: "*For I consider that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God*" (Rom 8:18-19).

#### 4.1. THE GLORY AS THE APPEARING OF CHRISTLIKENESS.

It is important to pause here and clarify and discuss this mark of mission as it applies to the ministry of Cassidy. This could have importance in the further development of a theology of mission and especially evangelism for Cassidy and his ministry. Evangelism is represented by the idea of sowing or of a herald proclaiming. The message is represented as a seed of the Kingdom of God that impregnates the human being, uniting with his spirit to produce a new creature.

This new creature is in mission. The revealing of the Christ in us represents the coming again of the person of Christ in each person's life in history. This surely encourages the idea of the believer as a sacrament or a means of grace. The end of evangelism must surely then be the continuity of the Christ mission in and through each believer. Mission is not just ecclesial it is latent in the believer in Christ. Christ is represented in the believer. In us there is a recapitulation of his life and ministry. Evangelism therefore precedes the regeneration and new birth of the believer. *He saved us not because of deeds done in righteousness, but in virtue of his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit which he poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that we might be justified by his Grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life* (Titus 3:5-7). The believer becomes a new man in Christ. *For whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son that he might be the firstborn among many brethren* (Romans 8:29).

Sanctification suggests a final state already assumed yet also a becoming into that state. The Holy Spirit works through the word of truth and by prayer to verify and enhance the resurrection life of Christ in the believer (Gal 5:26) and also 2 Cor 4:18): *“But we are all, with unveiled faces, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.”*

The above are all nuances of the idea of “repetitious conformity” mentioned by Cook, which is the glory that the prayer of Jesus implies. The beginning of this glory and the way it is introduced is surely evangelism. The way it is initiated is through conversion and its development through discipleship. The glory begins with us being converted and it concludes at the end of a process of following in which we discover that we are like him when we finally meet Him face to face.

With this preface about Christian formation and its relation to Evangelism let us turn to a more detailed look at Evangelism as this touched Proclamation and the Gospel as a further extension that supplements the former chapter on Mission.

#### 4.2. EVANGELISM

Evangelism is the beginning of the revelation of the glory. It prepares the way for the coming of Christ to the hearer. Evangelism is not just an optional ministry of the church. It is life saving and world changing. David Watson points out in his book *I believe in Evangelism* that evangelism is a matter of urgency.

The population growth puts 8000 babies an hour into our world so demographics press it. The decline of Christian faith in Europe requires it as spiritual apathy and decline in church attendance call for new initiative

and vision and outreach. The need of the world with its descent into moral decline, violence and secularism dictates it (Watson 1976:1-14).

#### 4.2.1. But what is Evangelism?

##### The Bosch analysis.

I would like to begin this section with a review of the perspectives on evangelism appearing on pages 409 to 420 of *Transforming Mission*, written by a former mentor, David Bosch. Bosch begins by pointing out that the word 'evangelism' had moments during the Middle Ages when it disappeared completely and was replaced by the active description of 'preaching the Gospel'. It was in the 70s that it became universally accepted in Catholic, evangelical and ecumenical circles.

The understanding of evangelism has developed with some of the following nuances.

Firstly, that it has to do with persons in the West who are no longer Christians. Mission on the other hand has to do, especially in the Third World with those who are not yet Christians.

Bosch quotes Margull as saying:

The distinctive feature of the foreign mission is to proclaim the gospel where no church as yet exists, where the Lordship of Christ has never yet – historically - been proclaimed. Where pagans are the object of concern.... Evangelism distinguishes sharply from the regular church's preaching to its members, as the proclamation of the gospel among those who have left the church or those living in a post-Christian milieu, such as Eastern Europe (Bosch:410).

Secondly, there is a tendency to define 'evangelism' more narrowly than 'mission'. The tensions developing between evangelicals and the WCC were strained by the extent of the ecumenical definition of mission in an ever widening range of ecclesial activities. The word mission became discarded in the light of this to be redefined as evangelism. Mission as McGavran wrote was evangelism by every means possible (Ibid. 410).

Thirdly, in Catholic and Ecumenical circles over the last four decades 'mission', 'evangelism' and 'witness' have become interchangeable concepts. Evangelism is seen as an umbrella concept embracing the whole church.

Fourthly, in more recent times the word 'evangelization' has become the all-defining verb for what was formerly called mission. An example of this could be demonstrated in the Lausanne covenant in which the former dimensions of mission are being incorporated or strongly bound to the process of evangelism (Ibid:411).

In seeking to arrive at a constructive understanding of evangelism Bosch draws these conclusions:

**Mission is to be wider than evangelism.**

Mission is not merely evangelization. Mission denotes the total task the church is sent into the world to do for its salvation, but it always relates to a specific context of evil, despair and lostness as defined in Jesus' own ministry according to Luke 4:18.

**Evangelism should not be equated to mission.**

We have to hold the distinctive within the wider mission of the church but we cannot disassociate evangelism from it. Evangelism is integral but distinct. Authentic evangelism is imbedded in the total mission of the church.

**Evangelism may be regarded as an 'essential dimension of the total activity of the church'.**

If we accept this, says Bosch, then the Lausanne movement's definition propounded by Stott that evangelism is one of two segments of mission, the other being social action, means that evangelism may never be given a life of its own.

I would have liked to have discussed this with David Bosch. I was a member of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelisation and I always understood Stott's distinction as a demolition of the false dichotomy and duality that existed in discussion about evangelism that suggested that social action was subversive to evangelism and that too much dabbling in it would lead to a surrender to liberalism or capitulation to 'revolutionaries' in the WCC. Evangelism had to be depoliticized according to many, and sanitized. The whole prospect of a rapprochement between the agendas of the WCC, other church confessions and evangelicals turned on this issue and the furtherance of a full understanding of contextualization depended on this.

**Evangelism as always contextual.**

People cannot be separated from their context, as this sees the world as a hindrance which devalues history and has eyes for the 'spiritual' or 'non-material' aspects of life. The same is true of evangelism that couches conversion only in micro-ethical terms, such as regular church attendance, abstinence from alcohol and tobacco, and the daily reading of the prayer. Much of evangelism is commercially driven in a surrender to culture, having more to do with the chamber of commerce and the entertainment world. So evangelism cannot be divorced from the preaching and practice of justice.

**Evangelism involves witnessing to what God has done, is doing, and will do.**

Evangelism is connected to the coming reign of God. It announces that God, Creator and Lord of the universe, has personally intervened in human history and has done so supremely through the person and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth who is Lord of history, Saviour and Liberator. In this Jesus, incarnate, crucified and risen, the reign of God has been inaugurated. So evangelism cannot be defined in terms of effectiveness. It is a response to what God has put into effect, is doing and will do.

**Even so evangelism does aim at a response.**

It is on the basis of the reality of the fullness of time and the irruption of God's reign that Jesus summons his listeners to 'repent and believe the gospel'. This summons us to make

specific changes and renounce evidence of the domination by sin and to accept responsibility to love our neighbor. Conversion or matanoia involves the total transformation of our attitudes and style of life. Conversion becomes a life-long process.

**Evangelism is always an invitation.**

Evangelism is not a cure-all nor should it foster coaxing or descend into threat. People should be drawn by the kindness and grace of God as displayed in his Son. The offer of new life is transforming and the eternal hope this offers us begins in the present moment transacted through faith.

**The one who evangelises is a witness and not a judge.**

This quote by Newbigin expresses the idea of our own limitedness and unworthiness.

I can never be so confident of the purity and authenticity of my witness that I can know that the person who rejects my witness has rejected Jesus. I am witness to Him who is both utterly holy and utterly gracious. His holiness and grace are as far above my comprehension as they are above that of my heart.

There is a rich elaboration which could not be accommodated here. Bosch finally defines evangelism as follows.

As that dimension and activity of the church's mission which by word and deed and in the light of particular conditions and a particular context, offers every person and community, everywhere, a valid opportunity to be directly challenged to a radical reorientation of their lives, a reorientation which involves such things as deliverance from slavery to the world and its powers; embracing Christ as Saviour and Lord; becoming a member of his community, the church; being enlisted into his service of reconciliation, peace and justice on the earth; and being committed to God's purpose of placing all things under the rule of Christ.(Ibid.:420)

These insights all have a very real bearing on the conduct and understanding of Cassidy and the many evangelists in African Enterprise. They are mentioned here as a spur to further reading in *Transforming Mission* and a critique of the ministry.

The writer was privileged to be on the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelism in the 70s and 80s and was present in Lausanne in 1994. The covenant, as Bosch suggests, could be seen to move toward the convergence between the ideas of mission and evangelism. All of the clauses in the covenant though tend to support and elaborate Clause 4. That is, it suggests that certain relationships should surround evangelism and support it but not assume that evangelism is becoming mission.

The Lausanne Congress on Evangelization defined evangelism in the following terms in Clause 4 of the Lausanne Covenant:

To evangelize is to spread the good news that Jesus Christ died for our sins and was raised from the dead according to the Scriptures, and that as the reigning Lord he now offers the forgiveness of sins and the liberating gifts of the Spirit to all who repent and

believe. Our Christian presence in the world is indispensable to evangelism, and so is that kind of dialogue whose purpose is to listen sensitively in order to understand. But evangelism itself is the proclamation of the historical, biblical Christ as Saviour and Lord, with a view to persuading people to come to him personally and so be reconciled to God. In issuing the gospel invitation we have no liberty to conceal the cost of discipleship. Jesus still calls all who would follow him to deny themselves, take up their cross, and identify themselves with his new community. The results of evangelism include obedience to Christ, incorporation into his Church and responsible service in the world.

(I Cor. 15:3,4; Acts 2: 32-39; John 20:21; I Cor. 1:23; II Cor. 4:5; 5:11,20; Luke 14:25-33; Mark 8:34; Acts 2:40,47; Mark 10:43-45)

Bosch does not always agree with the Lausanne Covenant and its programmes and strategies. This is evident in his critique of the church growth motif of mission in which church growth is often divorced from evangelism, and mission becomes church extension. The use of management and the gnosis of human sciences of anthropology and sociology and not the Gospel itself as motivation need great care. The power of technique and strategic goals that are triumphalistic is also often somewhat arbitrary and not reminiscent of the Man in journeys of simplicity on the way to the Cross.

#### **4.2.2. Evangelism communicates a truth.**

Man has an incurable preoccupation with defining and formulating truth. Often this quest has been subjective in suggesting that persons can arrive at better and more exact approximations to truth than others have from their own inner illumination. Philosophers have sought through cognition, logic, reason and thought to arrive at the best penetration, definition and content of truth. Diviners and seers pursued truth by making a sacrifice or looking at bones or animal entrails or natural affirming signs to satisfy a client's request to know or receive a revelation. In the East the Guru was honoured as someone who had unique realisation of truth and thereby was often elevated to an approximation of a god. Watson writes:

The very idea of the Gospel is that it is an objective external truth that is unchangeable and it is given with the express purpose to convey to others that it is found to be good news... It is a Gospel of God which is of and about Him. It is the Gospel of Jesus Christ because it was brought by Him into the world and is embodied in Him (Watson:33).

The evangelist is a *Keryx* or herald and he is commissioned to convey a message that he may not tamper with or neglect to share. This message therefore is communicated essentially through proclamation. This fixed deposit is the *Kerygma* or circumscribed message that the herald brings. Cassidy in a recent conference on preaching held at the African Enterprise Leadership training centre makes this distinction:

*Kerygma* is in distinct contrast to another body of truth known as didache which is ethical, moral, spiritual and devotional teaching given to Christian converts so they may grow in faith, commitment, discipleship and obedience to their Lord. Grasping this distinction is extremely important because in many churches people endlessly hear *didache*, but have never heard, properly understood or have fully responded to the

*kerygma*. Pastors and ministers often preach the doctrinal superstructure before the doctrinal foundation has been laid. Not surprisingly, many churches in consequence are filled with nominal though sincere people who have never experienced true conversion or spiritual new birth. I was exhibit A of this myself.

#### 4.2.3. What is the Gospel?

The core message can be summarised in different ways. At the Durban Congress on Mission and Evangelism held in 1973, Douglas Webster delivered a paper on evangelism. In this he offered five statements in answer to the question: What is the Gospel? (Cassidy 1974:94).

1. The Gospel is God's message to mankind, the good news.
2. It arises out of an event, the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
3. It demands a decision of the yes or no type.
4. It admits those who respond into a new experience.
5. Its application is universal and for all time.

At the Durban Congress Cassidy further elaborated on the biblical message in a quote from C.H.Dodd:

- The age of fulfilment has dawned.
- This has taken place through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- By virtue of the resurrection, Jesus has been exalted to the right hand of God as the Messianic head of the new Israel.
- The Holy Spirit in the Church is the sign of Christ's present power and glory.
- The Messianic age will shortly reach its consummation in the return of Christ.
- The Kerygma always closes with an appeal for repentance, the offer of forgiveness, the gift of the Holy Spirit and the promise of salvation.

Cassidy points out that there are always a historical proclamation, a theological explanation and an ethical challenge (Cassidy 1974:19).

In the booklet *Making an Impact* Cassidy comments that although our evangelism needs to be contextual and flexible in the face of great changes in the circumstances and environment of individual members of the audience, there is always a core content or fixed deposit of truth which is communicated to the seeking person (Cassidy 2006:37). His outline of the Gospel would be:

##### 1. One event.

The Jesus event (Acts 8:35) His life, death, resurrection and return

##### 2. Two offers.

The forgiveness of sins (Act 2:38a)

The gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38)

##### 3. Three demands.

Repent. (Mark 1:15)

Believe (Mark 1:15)

Follow (John 1:43)

#### **4. Four new relationships.**

With God (Eph 2:4-6: 1Peter 2:9-6)

With oneself (Matt 22:39)

With the church (Acts 2:49)

With the world (Mark 16:15)

There is something theophanic about preaching and reading Scripture as Christ appears and is experienced in relation to the Word of God as though it were a chariot in which He travelled to meet us. When the Bible uses the words ‘the Word of the Lord came’, it frequently implies that God is profoundly present in the message of the messenger. So Evangelism is in itself a representation of Christ who inhabits the Word that is proclaimed.

#### **4.2.4. Christ is the message.**

David Watson makes this observation:

Perhaps the difficulty in summarising the apostolic message stems from the fact that in proclaiming the word the apostles were not so much, declaring Bible words or a Gospel formula as proclaiming Jesus Christ Himself. “*We preach Jesus Christ as Lord.*” (2 Cor. 4:5) (Watson:37).

What does this mean? In Bethlehem the Gospel was first proclaimed. The core of the angels’ message too was rooted in the person of Christ who was being given as a gift. We are offered more than good news - we are offered the source and substance of the good news itself. It is helpful, in my view, to look at the offices of the person the angels identified at Saviour, Christ and Lord. And to this view of the personhood of Jesus, Cassidy deeply subscribes. He has constantly taught along these lines over the years.

In the appearing of the heraldic angels in the field near Bethlehem came a defining revelation and explanation of the coming of God’s Son. The passage begins with the assurances that grace and not judgement is the purpose of the theophany. This great event is about a gift of love. Something is to be given to one and to all. It is for the individual shepherd but it is also universal in its destination to all. The essential aspect of that gift is in the descent of the divine into the human in a person. The angels announce that the core of this benevolence of God is found in a baby with three offices:

#### A Saviour. A priestly office. Redemption by faith through the cross

The use of the word ‘Saviour’ reminds one of the history of alienation between God and man and man’s corruption and fall as presented in the temptation in the Garden of Eden. It is reminiscent of the fact that man was made good and without imperfections but that he was debased and became enslaved to principalities and powers of wickedness through his own pride and the temptation of Satan. Man’s depravity is deepened and widened after the fall as sin affects marriage, family, society and ecology - as the narrative from Genesis 3 to 12 unfolds.

The law and the cultus were in the first instance, as Paul suggests, given as a schoolmaster. The extent of sinfulness was so great that sinfulness itself could not be defined or determined



or acknowledged. The law was given to set boundaries to sin but also to illuminate evil and sinfulness.

The sacrificial system was given to restore fellowship between man and God, which had been created by the realisation of sinfulness created by the law. The vast gulf between the holiness of God and the wickedness of man could be bridged only by a mediatory process of intercessions and sacrifices which gave temporary reconciliation and payment for sin.

This system administered by priests used symbols and forms that cast their function and form both backward to the past redemptive history of Israel in Egypt and forward to a time when the sacrificial system would be redundant and the law be written on the human heart. *“Then I will give one heart and I will put a new Spirit within them and take the stony heart out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in my statutes and keep my judgements and do them and they shall be my People and I will be their God”* (Ezekiel 11:19).

Jesus came as the means whereby the enmity and impossible distances between man and God could be reconciled through the saving work on the cross. There he became the sin-bearer of the world in order that those who wished to avail themselves of the propitiation that was made for them could have this saving power released to them by faith. The efficacy of the sacrifice is a once only permanent offering to God for the forgiveness of sins and restoration of fellowship with God.

This saving work is unique and is the only God-ordained path to redemption and peace with God. Peter declares in a sermon to the Sanhedrin whose entire purpose is the execution of the priestly duties of reconciliation with God, that something better and greater has been provided by the one they have just killed. *“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given whereby we must be saved”* (Acts 4: 12).

In defining the message of evangelism, Watson says that the work of salvation on the cross had a threefold effect. It provided for:

**Justification.** This is a judicial idea in which all men are guilty. None is righteous, no not one, no one understands, no one seeks for God. All have turned aside, together they have gone wrong. No one does good, no not one. The justification is found through grace by faith. Romans 3 :10-12 says: *“In Christ we are justified or pronounced to be righteous since Christ has taken our place and received the judgement of the law on our behalf.”*

**Reconciliation.** Christ’s death has bridged the irreconcilable gap between God and man and brought people to sonship from enmity. *“Now all things are of God who has reconciled us Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses to them ( 2 Cor.18-19).*

**Redemption.** Redemption implies a purchase from bondage to freedom. Hence the price paid by Christ in his dying on the cross. *“The Son of Man came to give his life a ransom for many”* (Matthew 20:28). We are free to enjoy the glorious liberty of the sons of God, free from the power of guilt and sin and free from the righteous

judgement of God. Liberated from our self-centred existence we are to live for Christ against the culture of sin (Watson: 72-75).

### The Christ. The kingly office. Love of God in the incarnation

In the development of Christology the idea of the Messiah is quite complex because it links with the prophecies in Daniel about the Son of Man and with Isaiah with the notion of the Suffering Servant as well as passages in the Psalms and elsewhere that suggest the triumph of a coming Ruler over the oppression and rejection of other nations.

All of this presents a kind of polarity in its conception between the anointed one as human and divine, as conqueror yet an oppressed servant. These disparate ideas are met in the revelation of Jesus as divinity (New Bible Dictionary: 818).

In this name there is a promise of solidarity and care and it gives to his life a special significance that has great power to bring comfort and solace. Christ was a man among men. He entered the human condition and suffered in all points like us. It demonstrates the meaning of humanisation. This includes what it means to manage and endure suffering and privation and rejection and pain.

It demonstrates the true nature of compassion and how individuals can link themselves to other lives to give honour and compassion and love.

While the Jewish people invested the idea of Messiah with the hope of a coming King who would establish the freedom of Israel from oppression and its elevation into prominence among the nations, the Christian Church stressed Christ as the advocate before the Father, and Christ as the incarnate God. John, writing in his epistles, especially attached the name Christ to Jesus as a name implying the incarnation, in which he affirms that this name expresses the immanence of God and his closeness to humanity.

This closeness is further amplified in the way in which Christ makes his home within the believer. Paul holds strongly to the idea of Christ in us. *“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me and the life that I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me”* (Gal 2:20).

So the home of Christ is among and in man. Here is the beginning of truth, of repetitious conformity.

### The Lord. The transcendence of God that calls for obedience, justice and hope

There was a progression in the disciples' understanding of this person who had called them. He was first understood to be an **ordinary man** and the child of Joseph and Mary. This was the contention of those who heard him claim for himself the fulfilment of the passage in Isaiah 61 which He read in the Synagogue.

The disciples initially saw Him as someone with authority when they called him master. Then they defined him as teacher with themselves as his learners or followers. As a **rabbi**.

Eventually He emerged for some as a **prophet**, even the re-presentation of Elijah.

In a burst of illumination Peter answered the question asked by Jesus, *'Who do you say that I am?'* by saying, *'You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God'* (Matt 16:16). This one is the consummation of prophecy and is the Jewish hope and the **Messiah**.

Upon the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus the disciples were suddenly faced with new realisations of their leader and teacher. He was even more than the Messiah. He was **Saviour and Lord**. This was attested to by Mary Magdalene and Thomas. This took root.

In Peter's sermon after Pentecost he said, *'Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ'* (Acts:2:36).

The Greek word Kyrios is ascribed to Jesus particularly in his risen ascended state. The term signifies divinity when it is applied to Jesus. In the use of the word the apostles intended to give Jesus the title Lord in its highest sense (Baker 1983: 690).

The conception of Lordship was further broadened and deepened in the book of Colossians which presents Jesus as the creator Christ. *"He is the image of the Invisible God, the first born of all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities and powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things and in Him all things consist"* (Col. 2:15-17).

In the early church the evangel came with different emphasis. The message emphasised in a prominent way that Jesus was Lord. That declaration caused individuals to come under submission and to live with a posture dominated by obedience and servanthood. This portrayed Christ as, above and over all, the creator and the lord of history and the conqueror and ruler over principalities and powers. This brings hope to all who believe in his power to triumph and be sovereign. It also affirms, as Mary summarises in her peon of praise, that the Christ Child is for the poor and the oppressed and that the lordship of Christ gives us grounds both to work for the salvation of the world and to hope in the ultimate triumph of the consummation. We live between the times, engaging in the privilege of mission.

These three expressions of the ministry of Christ were presented in a unified form when the angel announced to the shepherds at Nazareth, *"Behold I bring you tidings of great joy. For unto you is born this day, in the City of David a Saviour who is Christ the Lord"* (Luke 2:11).

Evangelism has to express a comprehensive view of Christ. If it does not, it will imperil the way in which believers follow. Only a holistic Christology will lead to a fullness of witness.

Cassidy discusses the metaphors of atonement in relation to the reconciliation of a Holy God with persons who are alienated through their sinfulness. He explores the following ideas:

#### Lamb of God

This concept finds its origin in the momentous initiation of the Jewish nation at the Passover. The Israelites came to experience deliverance in the very midst of judgement against Pharaoh and the Egyptians. The idea of a lamb bearing judgement took its roots here. This is further reinforced in Isaiah 53:6: *"All we like sheep have gone astray and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all."* This illuminates the sacrificial system of the temple.

### Jesus as sin-bearer

This metaphor was taken from the courts. The penalty decreed by God is assumed by the judge himself. Love and justice are thus reconciled.

### Jesus as ransom-payer.

Cassidy refers to Galatians 4:4-7: *‘When the time has fully come God sent forth his Son... to redeem those who were under the law so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of the Son into our hearts crying, ‘Abba! Father! So through God you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son an heir.’* There are two key notions here:

Redemption and adoption flow from this office of Jesus. We are ransomed from our sins and then adopted into the family of God. On the final day we will face Him not as judge but as Father.

### Jesus as Testator.

In Hebrews 9:15 the writer speaks about our having through Christ an ‘eternal inheritance’ bequeathed to us. Through the death of our Lord Jesus Christ the benefits of an eternal inheritance of forgiveness is made available to us as heirs.

Peter says in his epistle (1 Peter 1:3-4): *“By his great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and to an inheritance which is imperishable, undefiled, unfading kept in heaven for you”* (Cassidy 2005:87-93).

The many offices and functions of Jesus are richly expressed in the definition of Jesus. Those discussed above are all part of the Good News.

## **4.2.5. Evangelism, Church and kingdom.**

The priority of evangelism is often asserted. In an article on the dangers of reductionism in mission in the edited volume of *Good News of the Kingdom*, Paul Hiebert discusses the flawed priority given to Evangelism, Church and the Kingdom. He draws on the emphases of the great conferences of the IMC and the WCC during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century to clarify his views (Van Engen et al: 153-162). Below is an overview of his article:

### Evangelism as prior

Evangelism cannot stand on its own. It is pointless to stress in evangelism that persons are to be born anew or become believers without acknowledging the need for incorporation and growth into discipleship. It is also quite a common occurrence to have persons with gifts and callings to evangelism exercising this ministry in isolation of the church. An evangelist might come into a town or village and preach the gospel and then pass on to another region without taking responsibility for those who have responded and come to allegiance to Christ.

Hiebert points to John Mott in the Student Volunteer Movement, which had the motto 'The evangelisation of the World in this Generation'. This endeavour, whilst stimulating outreach, negated the importance of incorporation and spiritual formation.

African Christianity has been badly damaged by laying excessive stress on conversion at the expense of discipleship. Missionaries used to tour villages, holding one or two-day evangelistic services in each and then turning converts over to 'native' itinerant pastors who often had ten or twenty villages to superintend. Many had superficial training only. Numbers of converts consequently turned back to their old faith. The result was a shallow Christianity plagued by syncretism. Furthermore, a personal relationship with God has often been stressed over justice and other social concerns (Van Engen et al 1993:154).

#### The Church as prior.

Hiebert goes on to deplore a second reductionism which places the priority on the church. In this the task of mission is to build the church. The result is that the local church becomes ingrown and self-serving. This shift to church-centred mission is seen in the relationship between the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches. The Edinburgh Conference of 1910 marked the highpoint of the modern western mission movement. Its very success produced young churches that wanted to join the global Christian Community. The result was the formation of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam in 1948. The presence of these young churches in largely un-evangelised countries raised the question of who would do missions in these lands...foreigners or nationals? Given the growing anti-colonial ethos around the world the answer increasingly was nationals. Missions became inter-church fellowship and inter-church aid. The World Council of Churches absorbed the International Missionary Council in New Delhi in 1961. Lessley Newbiggin, the then Secretary of this body, warned that the merger could lead to a loss of missionary vision.

This happened. Missionary vision became diffuse. In former sending countries evangelicals continued to define evangelism as preaching but many of them became church-centred by institutionalisation. Churches, schools and hospitals were built. Many retained the rhetoric of evangelism but in practice assigned their responses and personnel to minister to the church.

#### The Kingdom as prior.

At the Melbourne conference in 1980 with as its theme 'Thy Kingdom come', the motive for mission was advocated to be proclaiming justice and peace in a world full of oppression and wars. This paradigm has great strength in its concern for righteousness on earth. The weakness of this view is that it loses sight of the lostness of human beings without Christ as the church becomes a political player in world politics. In this Christians are no longer part of a countercultural community. Christianity can become a vanguard in the promotion of political correctness or a civil religion.

In taking up this matter raised by Hiebert, Bosch demonstrates a similar concern:

In many cases, especially in matters of social change, the means of social change were replaced as good news. So, political liberation came to replace traditional understanding of the Gospel leading to redemption and salvation within the framework of orthodox belief. To counter this, powerful resurgences of concerns about evangelism arose and great

conferences have been convened and schools of Mission erected. So evangelism was prioritised as a remedy for corruption or transformation into something else. Mission and evangelism is an expression of opposition to the world as God's 'No' to the world. If Christianity blends with social and political movements to the point that it becomes completely identified with them, then as Moltman says, 'the church will again become what is called a religion of society .... But can the church of the crucified man from Nazareth ever become a political religion, without forgetting him and losing its identity?' (Bosch: 11).

Cassidy believed that evangelism could not be divorced from the church. Evangelism was an irreplaceable gift of ministry to be used in association with the church, which was first to provide a unity in the Kerygma and its proclamation, but secondly to evolve into ongoing united and local church initiatives toward wider mission. This wider mission would include a belief that the Kingdom of God and its reign were manifested in justice and righteousness in social structures. He also urged that evangelism could not be effective without reference to injustice in context.

We must cry out to the modern Church that evangelism must yet retain pride of place in our witness if we would be true to our Lord and his great commission. On the other side we call on more conservative Christians who are strong on Evangelism to embrace a biblical socio-political concern and compassionate action as part of a holistic ministry and witness (Cassidy 2006:33).

#### 4.2.6. Response and persuasion in evangelism.

It was Peter Wagner, a professor at the School of World Mission, who attached to evangelism two other associations. He spoke about the need for evangelism to be preceded by **presence** and followed by **persuasion**. He suggested that the witness of the gospel is verified and authenticated by identification, solidarity and care for the recipient of the message. The story of the Marianhill Mission near Durban supports this with an interesting account of its early days. The mission was originally a community of Trappist monks devoted to silence. As time went by the gracious and loving service by the monks produced a frustration. What lay behind this care? Why could they not articulate the source of their missionary purpose? A delegation of Zulus to Germany persuaded the authorities of the order to change this rule. At last the Zulus could hear the good news: the witness of community had been a preparation for evangelism.

Cassidy tells how he grew to understand the need to seek a response to the message. He quotes Canon Bryan Green as saying "You tell the story, you explain the story and you secure a response to the story." John Stott makes the comment too that 'true evangelism seeks a response. It expects results. It is preaching for a verdict.' Cassidy says,

I accepted that calling for a verdict would become part of my ministry. The method would be inconsequential and could vary from situation to situation. But people must not be allowed to remain indifferent. (Cassidy 2006:26).

In his book *Transforming Mission*, David Bosch warns against the idea that evangelism is defined by its consequence. Response does not verify that evangelism has taken place.

It is essentially not a call to put something into effect as if God's reign would be inaugurated by our response or thwarted by the absence of that response. In light of this, evangelism cannot be defined in terms of its results or its effectiveness, as though evangelism has only occurred where there are "converts". Rather evangelism should be perceived in terms of its nature, as mediating the good news of God's love in Christ that transforms life, proclaiming by word and action that Christ has set us free (Bosch:412).

The Church Growth Movement pioneered a new facet of missionary outreach in the strategy of church growth. This makes use of sociological and anthropological influences to encourage conversion to Christ. This was pioneered and extended in its application by Alan Tippett, Donald MacGavran, Peter Wagner and Charles Kraft who used the ideas of People Movements and the Homogenous Unit strategically to foster growth. This movement came to suggest that people, individually and collectively, respond to the Gospel through a number of impulses. These may be:

1. Spiritual reasons. A sense of sinfulness and spiritual hunger.
2. Rational reasons. The resolution of intellectual difficulty.
3. Practical reasons. The benefit of schooling, health care, money or housing.
4. Social reasons. The influence of others, peers, leaders, collectives and traditional culture.

Research into the latter reason demonstrated a considerable sociological persuasion potential exerted by others. Conversion and social change became bedfellows in the Church Growth Movement. This produced in turn the idea of the Homogenous Unit principle. This suggested that persons came to Christ more readily in their own cultural groupings and context. Evangelism was best to segregated communities.

In the South African historical context this was a dangerous message. The writer, while at Fuller, invited Professor Carel Boshoff, who was later to become a founder of Orania, to dinner at his residence. Boshoff had discovered in this assumption a resonance that suited his ideological proclivities. He was drawn to a missiological understanding around the idea that people came to Christ most effectively where there was a shared cultural commonality. Apartheid could be justified.

Alan Tippett, the anthologist and theologian, writes as follows:

Without a verdict theology no true church can emerge at all. If a clear-cut break is made the true nature of Christian formation reveals itself in its power to transform the value system of a given culture (Tippett:179).

Persuasion is part of the process of evangelism. Persuasion requires the rational process or reorientation in thinking about reality. This has been covered especially in Cassidy's commitment to apologetics. Cassidy adheres to Paul's guidance:

*Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade men. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience (2 Cor. 5:11).*

Evangelism requires choice and decision and allegiance. It sets up a crossroads, a point of divergence and new opportunity. So this central motif has also impacted the approach employed by Cassidy. There is at the heart of proclamation a summons and a fulcrum. This quite expectedly creates a viewpoint that is not heavily graded with many options and room for fence-sitting. It produces strong alternatives and contrasting options. These pervade the assumptions and understanding that Cassidy brings.

Cassidy was constantly calling for others to follow and surrender and choose and turn. His calling was directed to the idea that men and women could choose in an instant to serve God or serve themselves. Decision and choice and the appropriation of grace by faith were central to his message. In large meetings or in discussions in public transport he would challenge the will of individuals. His message kept echoing the call Moses gave to those who followed, 'Choose ye this day whom ye will serve.' An appeal to the mind was always followed by a call to faith and allegiance and the surrender of the will. All men were the same under the cross, all men were equal through the creator Spirit. No one was too high or too low for fellowship.

#### 4.3. CONVERSION.

##### 4.3.1. Clarity on conversion.

Cassidy writes;

Conversion comes in many shapes and sizes - gradual as in the apostle John, a crisis as in the apostle Peter – and no one pattern may be declared normative for all. Nevertheless it remains true that without a definite and clear personal knowledge of Christ as saviour and Lord, no one will have an effective ministry in the biblical sense. Indeed it is just this lack which presents us worldwide with the pitiful spectacle of certain clergy, and even some theologians, trying to ply their trade and reproducing in others the barren spiritual confusions and wastelands which characterise their own lives (Cassidy 2006:5).

David Bosch discusses the issue of conversion and asks if this is just changing religion. Is it born out of a sense of guilt-riddenness which drives one to look for peace out of an introspective conscience? Bosch examines the conversion of Paul and makes the suggestion supported by other authorities that Paul was responding to an experience of the revealing of Jesus to him, accompanied by a calling. 'What is often referred to as his conversion experience is absorbed by the greater reality of his apostolic calling,' says Bosch.

It was the revelation of Jesus that caused Paul to undergo a radical change in values, self-definition and commitments. This reorientation and change of perception and value initiated a transformation or change of direction. Paul experienced a fundamental revision of his perception of Jesus and the saving nature of Grace in contradistinction to the law.

Bosch quotes Gaventa in saying.



It was indeed a primordial experience and one that Paul understood to be paradigmatic of that of every Christian (Bosch :126).

Grant, quoted by Bosch says:

Conversion brings the converts from the realm of death and unreality to the realm of the life and reality of God (Ibid.:134).

Malherbe, also quoted on the same page, writes:

This is a metamorphosis far more fundamental than anything the philosophers envisage (Ibid:135).

For Paul, says Bosch,

The goal is not achievement of one's natural potential but the formation of Christ in the believer. Paul's preoccupation was that conversion was to be consummated. In Galatians 4:19 Paul writes this to young believers: 'My little children for whom I labour in birth again until Christ be formed in you...' (Bosch :134).

Evangelism is the good news of the coming of the Son in a way that exemplifies and demonstrates the Father and offers the benefits of the Father's grace to human creatures. This offer, when it is received, brings to birth the person of Christ within the believer at conversion. Conversion is the beginning of the glory in the believer as the son is demonstrated in him and discovered in the same way that the Father is revealed in the Son. This is surely why Christian believers are called sons of God.

#### **4.3.2. Conversion is not baptismal regeneration.**

Conversion presupposes repentance, faith and commitment as we have already shown. Cassidy raises a critical question about baptismal regeneration precisely because these dimensions of response are not present.

This kind of phenomenon is not uncommon in certain denominations where the disastrous, mistaken and non-biblical notion of 'baptismal regeneration' is taught. This teaches that when a baby, or adult for that matter, is baptised, they are automatically born again and regenerated. Such teaching cuts the nerve of evangelism and kerygmatic proclamation and gives people the false idea that by external ceremony, ritual or sacrament they are born again into the Kingdom of God.

In fact baptism, especially infant, like circumcision in the Old Testament, simply indicates the person is brought into the privileged place of being in the visible 'household of God'. The new birth has yet to happen (in the case of Christened infants) and should already have happened in the case of adults coming to be baptised by immersion. Whatever mode is followed, the Apostle is clear *that 'in Christ Jesus neither circumcision is of any avail, but faith working through love'* (Gal 5:6).

He repeats this in the next chapter: '*For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision but a new creation*' (Gal 6:15) – that is, being regenerated by the Holy Spirit into newness of life by new birth. (See also Titus 3:5-7.)

In other words, the external whether circumcision or baptism (as its New Testament counterpart as Paul links them in Col 2:11-12), is not so much the critical thing as the internal. The Apostle therefore not surprisingly declares his priority activity and commitment in these terms: 'For Christ did not send me to baptise but to *preach the gospel*' (1Cor 1:17). The Greek word used here is *evangelisthai*, i.e. 'evangelise' (Cassidy 2006 :16-17)

#### 4.4. DISCIPLESHIP

Jesus' use of the word 'disciple' is consistent with the idea of re-presentation. The purpose of conversion is to take the new creature so formed from a union of the human soul / personhood / spirit and the Holy Spirit to produce a new man. The formation of Christ within the believer is the purpose of discipleship which has its consummation at the appearing of Christ when believers will be formed into the likeness of Christ. '*Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as he is*' (1John 3:2).

This new personhood in Christ cannot be formed in any way but through an initiation of new birth through water and Spirit as Jesus informs Nicodemus (John 3:5). Water represents the earthly act of cleansing, renunciation and repentance often signified in baptism. Spirit represents the divine act of grace that gives eternal life and sonship in a process of sanctification. Discipleship is the nurture and bringing to term of this new creature of the kingdom that is being formed into Christ. The glory of the Christian is the formation of Christ within. We sometimes refer to this as spiritual formation or discipleship. The idea suggests something that progressively takes place, sometimes consciously through deliberate intent but often in hiddenness and without knowledge. The word 'disciple' means follower or apprentice, a role that is consummated in the emulation of the teacher or model.

##### 4.4.1. Sanctification.

Cassidy has a chapter on sanctification in his book *Getting to the heart of things*. Below in summary is the content:

Sanctification is the name of the process that begins at conversion and is made possible by justification. It is the process whereby the continuous operation of the Holy Spirit, by which the holy disposition is in regeneration, is maintained and strengthened.

It is not our hope for salvation but it follows conversion as an essential outcome and consequence.

##### Separating justification and sanctification.

Justification ensures that our acceptance by God is complete, perfect and final. Righteousness is **imputed** to us. In sanctification righteousness is **imparted** to us. It concerns state of being and our spiritual fellowship. It shows the progress in our morality and holiness before God and in our efforts to attain Christian character. Justification is a single act of the father coming to us by grace through faith. Sanctification is the gradual process of the Holy Spirit dealing with the old nature over our whole lifetime.

### Practice

The means by which we can grow in Christ are discovered in the following practice:

- We should read our Bibles.
- We should pray daily.
- We should be constantly engaged in Christian fellowship. We should share our faith with others.
- There is our regular involvement with the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.
- We must be willing to allow Jesus Christ to attain lordship.

### Being separated and set apart.

The idea of separation for holy use is an ancient one. Aaron and his sons were 'sanctified' to minister to God in the priest's office and Israel as a nation was 'set apart' as God's chosen people. Indeed those who are set apart by God are required to sanctify themselves, or to separate themselves from all that defiles. So, apart from the practical steps we take toward sanctification, we should avoid evil and base influences. It is the Lord, not us who is the primary actor in the universe. It is through the blood of Christ and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit that we become clean vessels.

### Spiritual gifts.

Spiritual gifts or gifts of the Holy Spirit are supernatural endowments that enable us to do what we otherwise could not do. Every believer is so endowed. Paul confirms that *'To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good'* (1 Corinthians 12:7). But to a certain extent it is up to us to develop the gifts that have been given. We are likewise instructed to *'Make love your aim and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts'* (1 Corinthians 14:1).

According to scripture, various spiritual gifts enable and equip us to do a variety of things. These include, among others, the ability to teach, preach, prophesy, speak in tongues, administer, counsel, heal, help and lead. Wisdom, faith and knowledge are also regarded as gifts of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:8-10).

Every one of these gifts is vital to healthy congregational life and the strengthening of faith. Without love our gifts will be fleshly and empty and of little benefit.

### Faith and sanctification.

Sanctification is the deepening of the Christian's faith, which allows us to walk more and more in step with the Lord and to glorify him more fully.

The eleventh chapter of Hebrews provides a clear picture of what faith can accomplish. The sixth verse says that *‘without faith it is impossible to please Him. For whoever would draw near to God must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who seek Him.’*”

Faith obeys and follows when it hears the voice of God. Faith will make sacrifices. Faith does not balk at obstacles, it perseveres. Faith calls us to journey and pilgrimage and a transcendent yet relevant and caring life in real circumstances.

In his splendid booklet *Making an Impact* Cassidy tells how, during his period of mentorship under Stephen Neill from 1971 to 1980, Bishop Neill’s guidance and review of his life and ministry made a crucial impact. First on Bishop Neill’s list of priorities was **devotion**. Neill deplored the idea of anyone in ministry not having his service born out of the daily nourishment of the Bible, prayer and the enabling power of the Holy Spirit (Cassidy 2006:21).

Cassidy himself makes use of Robert Murray McChayne’s *Classic Daily Reading Plan*. This has been published by African Enterprise with a helpful introduction about reading principles and how the believer should claim the promises of Scripture and hold to the Bible’s authority and inspiration.

#### Stephen Neill and others

Cassidy strongly affirms that effectiveness in ministry, and indeed in living, is profoundly linked to prayer and he cites examples of this in literature and in his own experience. Neill further required from Cassidy that he demonstrate a **diligence** in his application to tasks and responsibilities and cautioned that there was no place for laziness and slackness. Neill maintained that effective ministry came forth from those who would work while others frittered, pray while other played, and study while others slept (Ibid.:23).

**Study** too is important, and should be wide and comprehensive. Cassidy cites a conversation with Dr Billy Graham in which he said, ‘If I had my life over again, I would study more.’ John Stottis is one of the truly great examples of assiduous reading and study. Cassidy quotes the following paragraph from Stottis’s book *I believe in preaching* in his own booklet:

To withdraw from the world into the Bible (which is escapism), or from the Bible into the world (which is conformity) will be fatal to our preaching ministry. Either mistake makes bridge-building impossible and non-communication inevitable. Instead it is our responsibility to explore the territories on both sides of the ravine until we become thoroughly familiar with them. Only then shall we discern the connections between them and be able to speak the divine Word to the human situation with any degree of sensitivity and accuracy. Such exploration means study.

This insight is especially apposite to the practice of church Bible study groups that meet in ways that produce withdrawn colonies of believers who become more and more isolated from the world around them as they get deeper and deeper into the study of Bible. The Bible cannot be read without the world peeping over your shoulder and saying, ‘What does it say about good news for me?’ Cassidy quotes Spurgeon as saying, ‘He who no longer sows in the study will no more reap in the pulpit.’

In *African Harvest* Cassidy also affirms that discipleship is related to scripture by quoting the following lines from Dietrich Bonhoeffer:

It is not our judgement of the situation which shows us what is wise, but only the truth of the Word of God. Here alone lies the promise of God's faithfulness and help. It will always be true that the wisest course for the disciple is always to abide solely by the Word of God in all simplicity (Coomes: 536).

Stephen Neill also pressed on Cassidy the need for a properly ordered life with a carefully synchronised balance between the demands of one's God-given calling and the importance of having all of life's basic relationships working properly.

Cassidy's personal experience of the Holy Spirit.

Cassidy's book *Bursting the Wineskins* draws on his reflection on the work of the Holy Spirit. In it he shares his own journey toward an understanding of the baptism and fullness of the Holy Spirit.

He tells how, at the Berlin Congress, he received a warning from an Evangelical leader not to touch the Charismatic Renewal which was just becoming a worldwide movement at that time. Cassidy maintained an open mind on this matter. His experience at a Kathryn Kuhlman healing service opened his mind to the clear evidence of supernaturalism in Christian faith. Cassidy writes.

Keep in mind that my mood was that of sniffing out the phoney. My spirit was sceptical. Testimony upon testimony was given of healings right there in the service – often accompanied by manifestly authentic amazement and astonishment at the happenings. ....there and then I came to believe not just academically but deeply and truly that God still heals today (Cassidy 1983: 42 - 44).

Cassidy's openness brought other influences and events. The witness of friends widened his perspective. He began to wonder why more of the working of God in power could not be discerned. He mused about the fact that a church so conditioned by 20<sup>th</sup> Century naturalistic presupposition presumably sees very little of the overtly miraculous because it believes in the supernatural so little. Dr Rodman Williams, a Presbyterian writer, confirmed Cassidy's view:

We have to learn much in matters of the Spirit. We now know that the world of extraordinary healing, mighty works of deliverance and so on, ought never to have become alien to us. It surely was not thus to the primitive Christians. We now realise that we have been blinded by a modern world view that intellectually and empirically views all that happens as belonging to the realms of natural forces (Ibid.:48).

Cassidy began increasingly to feel that this missing dimension needed to be included in the life of the church and the work of African Enterprise. Others were thinking the same. Dr Henry van Dusen, one-time President of Union Theological Seminary in New York, said this:

I have come to feel that the Pentecostal movement, with its emphasis on the Holy Spirit, is more than just another revival. It is a revolution in our day. It is a revolution comparable in importance with the establishment of the original Apostolic Church and with the Protestant Reformation (Ibid.:50).

Cassidy struggled with certain issues in relation to the Pentecostal Movement and the Charismatic Renewal. One of these was the preoccupation with power as though the receiving of power referred to by Jesus in the first book of Acts turned Christians into supermen. He consulted other evangelical leaders. Michael Griffiths was able to say:

God's power is not intended to make men powerful, but rather to display God's transcendent power in the scruffy earthenware of dedicated but frail human vessels.

Michael Green noted that the Corinthian Christians were always out for power and always seeking shortcuts to it. Yet Paul's reply was to boast not of his power but his weakness through which alone the power of Christ could shine (Cassidy:105). Cassidy decided that the Spirit's power will always just be the Spirit's power.

At the Durban Congress in 1973 Cassidy arranged for two well-known South Africans to speak on the subject of the Holy Spirit. These were the then Bishop Bill Burnett (later to become Archbishop of the Church of the Province of South Africa) and Dr David Du Plessis, a leader in the Apostolic Faith Mission in South Africa. Burnett was to speak on his experience of receiving 'the Baptism of the Holy Spirit', an event that transformed his understanding of church and ministry. David Du Plessis was one of the key middlemen that encouraged Protestant and Catholic denominations to embrace the Charismatic renewal through top-level contact with their leaders all over the world, including contact with the Vatican.

The effect of their messages was to open up South African churches to a fresh consideration of the Holy Spirit's work. But it was another conference that pressed Cassidy to a new day. This was the Renewal Congress held at Milner Park in Johannesburg in 1977. Cassidy had been invited to share a message which he later summarised as follows: 'It seemed I was to remind evangelicals of Pentecost and remind Pentecostals of politics.' It was a hard message to bring. Cassidy shared something of the deeply painful reality of South Africa and called for reconciliation and an acknowledgement of the oppressed.

Cassidy describes how that night he experienced an extraordinary fresh touch as a spirit of praise came upon him.

Hour after hour I praised my God in unrestrained and unrestrainable doxology and song. In words of men and angels I rejoiced. No fatigue visited me that night. All my senses were vibrantly alive to God. The Holy Spirit was blessing me. Wave after wave, it seemed. Flow upon flow. He seemed to be bubbling up from within, surrounding from without, ascending from below and descending from above. Somewhere in the early hours of the morning I said to myself, 'I don't know the correct biblical name for this but this is the experience I have heard others talk of' (Ibid:122).

In the hours that followed, Cassidy recalls, a special word appearing in Colossians and Ephesians kept coming to mind. The phrase ‘in Him’ appeared with renewed impetus and meaning in an illumination of all that is in Him and all that we have in Him ( Eph 1:3). This confirms that the purpose of the giving of the Spirit is not only to secure our new birth but to begin to bring to completion within us that which is in Him.

In Christ, says Cassidy, every spiritual blessing is already ours. It is all reckoned to our account. We have come to fullness of life in Him (Col 2:10). ‘We must,’ says Cassidy, ‘possess our possession’ (Ibid:148).

In *Bursting the Wineskins* Cassidy seeks to theologically identify the experience. He wondered ‘whether it was part of and a continuation of the Holy Spirit’s work at conversion or if it was part of the more classical Protestant or evangelical description of “being filled by the Spirit” or something of a special effusion or immersion into a crisis or irruptive type of experience one could call “the Baptism in the Spirit”.’

It is worth commenting that this and related experiences of the Holy Spirit have the unifying and common effect of stirring up the life and work of Jesus Christ more deeply and profoundly and effectively. All of this empowers the believer more truly to serve others in blessing, deliverance, wisdom and healing in an emulation or repetition of Christ’s ministry, in association with new capacities to worship and give praise to God. In other words it is about the repetitive conformity to Christ.

The effect of this on the evangelistic strategy of African Enterprise was to allow much more openness for the Spirit, and to enable more supernaturalism in the missions - especially focussed around prayer for healing and release from human afflictions founded in relationships, the body, and spiritual oppression.

#### **4.4.2. Suffering servanthood and costly grace**

Other aspects of spiritual formation would include suffering, testing and hardship. There is an inescapable requirement in discipleship for the dying to self. The passage in Philippians 2:2-9 demonstrates the Jesus way of self-emptying, servanthood, and suffering in graphic terms. This profoundly ties in with the suffering-servant passages in the book of Isaiah.

Jesus links discipleship or Christ formation within as directly consequential to taking a cross and bearing a cross (Matt 10:38, 27:32). Paul writes about being like Christ in the fellowship of his suffering, implying that this is an inescapable aspect of life in Christ.

In the book of Isaiah and in other prophets the hope of Israel began to settle on the coming Messiah (or Christ). The Jews in their historical perception believed that this human person with a likeness to God would take David’s throne and lead Israel to the establishment of a new commonwealth, even empire, in which he would overcome Israel’s enemies and receive the adoration and allegiance of nations. In reading the prophetic literature the Jews failed then as they fail now to recognise that the person they were anticipating would come in a humility that preferred the company of sinners; and in suffering which would choose the cross rather than a crown.

Suffering seems to be the obverse of good news. Pain, rejection, persecution and trials are bad news. Yet it is possible to say that while the good news summons a response - belief in God in the face of his grace and goodness and the offer of sonship - then the prospect of difficulty and self-denial also has redemptive potential, even in the face of the seeming absence and disassociation from God. Suffering produces the 'why' and that 'why' reflects on matters of faith. If I lose a loved one or contract an incurable disease or lose my savings in a market crash then immediately questions are raised about the love and power of God. Does He love me and does He really have the capacity to prevent bad things happening to good people? Is He capable of intervention on my behalf?

The story of Job demonstrates how monumental loss and affliction carried with it the choice to curse God and die or love Him even if He seemed responsible for Job's calamities. Bad news demands a response of choice.

Likewise the way in which God does not despise the smoking flax or a bent reed (similes of impotence) demonstrates how his strength is made perfect in weakness. Paul says that he glories in his infirmities '*that the power of Christ may rest on me*' (2 Cor.12:9).

Hebrews 2:10 makes an extraordinary suggestion - that Jesus Himself attained perfection through suffering. Jesus could say 'It is finished' from the cross. Until that moment He had not completed that which was the expression of his love. So suffering had the action of completion and fulfilment. But this also demonstrates the potential of suffering to further our own growth and to fill out the range and expression of our discipleship.

So suffering operates to test and toughen faith and give it a consistent endurance. We are to endure suffering as part of our service. So Christians must also enter the obverse witness of Christ to know Him and shine with his light by enduring suffering and choosing hidden and lowly paths like Christ. This means giving up the allurements of human elevation and advantage so that He can be recognised in them as the treasure in earthen vessels.

This position is powerfully exemplified through the writings of Dietrich Bonhoeffer that suggest that we cannot demonstrate or proclaim the grace of God in ways that devalue the cost of discipleship. If we do this then we present a cheap grace to the world that subverts the true expression of the divine. Christians sometimes look to enjoy the consolation of grace rather than following Christ. This is cheap grace.

True grace is costly. It calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow *Jesus Christ*. It is costly because it costs a man his life, and grace because it justifies the sinner. The only man who has the right to say he is justified by grace is the man who has left all to follow Christ. (Bonhoeffer: 36, 43).

The Christ likeness we strive for is in the end that of a suffering, serving and dying Christ. We are to be '*like him in his suffering and death as well as in his resurrection*' (Romans 6:5). Suffering and trial yields humility and obedience in the disciple. We are mirrors of the one we follow.

#### **4.4.3. Mentorship**



One cannot separate discipleship from the idea of apprenticeship. We consider teaching as a major factor in creating disciples. The enormous energy and time put into confirmation classes has as their focus the model of a teacher instructing a class with a strong reliance on the cerebral imprint of truth. Understanding and rational explanation are part of our cultural understanding of how we get educated in schooling systems.

Jesus demonstrated ministry by bringing twelve disciples along with him to show them how to do ministry. The actual content or truth around the mentorship of Jesus was often hidden in stories and parables and demonstrated in example. Indeed most of the time the disciples proceeded with degrees of mystery which were gradually illuminated with truth. To follow Jesus would lead you to the Way and the Truth and the Life in an unfolding revelation.

It was Paul who began to give content to faith and who in his letters gave an explanatory context to ministry and set up systematic understanding of truth.

Mentorship has been an important aspect of Cassidy's style of ministry. Cassidy has always been able to associate with promising and able young Christian men and women whom he met in his ministry. He has engaged several of these to help him as interns in the work, such as preparing his books for publication. In the early days of the ministry interns from other parts of the world were especially sought to assist with the city missions. These were sent from congregations in many parts of the world.

So while discipleship can be actualised by cognitive enhancement or reinforcement, it is the contention of the writer that much, much more attention needs to be given to the idea of **mentorship**. This means attaching learners to exemplary men and women who are exercising discipleship in such a way that the prayer of Jesus is exemplified, namely that the Father appears in the Son and that the Son appears in the disciples and the disciples press what they have learned and are learning onto others. A vast network on this subject exists. One of the links is: <http://www.mentors.ca/mentorlinks.html>.

We have tended to encourage the more monastic paradigm of **spiritual directors** and **spiritual friends** who deal with the progress of our inner lives. The model of Jesus and of Paul is far more extroverted and dynamic. They continue with the ancient models of apprenticeship exemplified in the **schools of prophets**. These gathered initiates into collectives that sat at the feet of men of wisdom and renown. In the case of Jesus and Paul a model was created which we have largely overlooked. The **apostolic bands** did not just continue the teaching of Jesus and Paul, they continued the life and ministry in a practical expression and overflow of that truth so that it also became a Way and a Life.

In the ministry of African Enterprise this would lead us to consider much more development around the idea of using our missions as places of learning ministry as well as winning people to Christ. It also points to an expanded programme of mentorship with interns associated with the work. Finally it suggests that direct exposure and links be created with practitioners who are exemplary models of ministry. The notion of finding or recruiting a 'faculty' of mentors and have these mentors have periods of accessibility to young men and women in the formative stages of their Christian development could have great effect. Are we, in equipping today's saints, being diverted by the idea of scholarship as a dispersed collection of cerebral references from a more ancient and valid understanding of nurture and teaching by association and example?

There is no doubt that the most powerful organ for influencing young people today in South Africa is the **African cultural initiation school**. In this an almost irreversible imprint is registered on the social, spiritual and cultural understanding of young people that tie them uncritically to an immutable world view. The attempts by the Christian Church to offer effective Christian alternatives to this, still need to be redefined.

Youth ministries like Scripture Union and YFC have broadened and widened their input to young people in high schools in cities by offering courses in life skills that have a strong focus on a Christian worldview.

Yet a further model which would have great potential for emulation when it comes to interaction with other faiths is the **Ashram** model pioneered by E. Stanley Jones. In a relaxed dialogical and respectful environment the gospel can be propagated through the establishment of trust relationships to encourage truths about faiths in one-on-one conversations. This model could be re-interpreted as a means to find faith in community.

Links with the International Christian Ashram movement are available through the web page <http://www.christianashram.org/site/Templates/template4.aspx?tabindex=3&tabid=66>

#### 4.5. HOPE

The idea of evangelism, conversion and discipleship all cohering around the idea of glory in Jesus' prayer also leads us to the anticipation of fullness – the completion of Christian fullness in hope.

I return at the end of this chapter to the idea of glory. I have mentioned that evangelism begins something wonderful and miraculous. It establishes sonship. The old Adam gives way to the new (even though he may not be fully dead in our experience). The blessings of heaven must surely be consummated in this prospect.

We are incomplete. We cannot be triumphalistic, for what we achieve is provisional and marked still by aspects of fallenness and penultimacy. We are not yet what we may be. We have not actualised what we have been given. The Kingdom, while being here, is yet to come in finality and fullness. What we will be is caught up in the hope of becoming like Him. And despite ourselves and unable to discern it for ourselves, Christ is being formed in us. This hope is also fortified by Jesus' prayer. His request to his father will not fall on deaf ears. We are being sent like Him.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE MARK OF UNITY

#### Gathering the saints

*Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to you. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are one. (John 17: 11)*

*I do not pray for these alone , but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that the all may be one as you Father are in Me and I in you ; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe you have sent me. (John 17: 21)*

*And the glory I have which You gave Me I have given them that they may be one just as we are one I in them and You in Me that they may be made perfect , and that the world may know You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved me.(John 17:22-23)*

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In Church art and architecture the theme of unity of the Godhead is often expressed in a variety of forms and designs including overlapping rings and triangles, the Fleur de Lys, the clover. In the town of Franschoek the French Huguenot memorial committee have erected a grand monument with three high arches that link together representing Father Son and Holy Spirit in union.

Jesus constantly looked back toward the Father and forward to the Spirit and confirmed their interrelatedness and commonality. The Three persons of the Godhead were both One and disparate. That Oneness was facilitated and made possible through union. This is mystery but it is also found in practical reality. The Trinity is not so much a theological but an experiential construct. It is existential as well as ontological thus it has to be expressed.

Jesus not only talks about the similarity or likeness being represented in believers as we saw in Chapter 3, but he also prays for an ontological and essential communal likeness in the relationship between Father and Son being present in the Church. The Father/Son relationship sets a precedent. It sets the agenda and it defines the nature, in perpetuity, of the community of faith. The measure to which this prayer for the church is realised is also the measure to which the world will come to believe. Unity should be missionary in its effect.

The unity celebrates and honours the diversity. Indeed there is respect and humility and submission in the Son toward the Father and obeisance toward the Father's will. The Spirit hides or obscures itself in its attempt to reveal the Son and its purpose is to foster the Son's purpose and service. Diversity is never seen as competitive or threatening but rather as the diverse other is exalted so the union is fostered. The diversity is the engine of unity not the cause of its destruction.

Paul applies the idea of diversity toward unity in his Corinthian letter in which he uses the idea of the Body as a metaphor. Here again the disparities are the ground for common life with the same humility, submission and affirmation toward others in 1 Corinthians 12. In Ephesians 4:4-7 there is a "one" and an "each". Paul instructs the Galatians to "*Keep the unity of the Body in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit , just as you were called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of*

*all who is above all , and through all and in you all. But to each one is given Grace according the measure of Christ's gift."*

There is a powerful cohesive relationship that binds the church because it is built essentially on foundations that are singular and common to all in word and sacrament and the Divine nature. This oneness fosters a rich division of grace to individuals. But these gifts are to be expressed to a corporate advantage as Paul discusses these further in the chapter.

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## 5.1. UNITY IN EVANGELISM.

This Chapter explores the not inconsiderable role that Michael Cassidy played in cultivating Christian unity in cities, in the nation and on the continent and its consequent effects.

In practice evangelism is often exercised in relation to parochial anxieties about power, resources and jealousies that are common among churches in most communities. There are often divisions and confusions in the ecclesial community about truth and confessional backgrounds, tradition and culture. Quite often the ever intrusive political structures of tradition and institution are not sure of the consequences of letting God loose. This might threaten conventions and the policies of human control and policy.

### Unity around evangelism.

In his early contact with the Billy Graham Association (BGA) Cassidy took his cue from the powerful commitment to and strategy of co-opting and partnering with local churches in the Billy Graham Rallies. These were run in such a way that enormous numbers of individuals from participating congregations could share in considerable ways in the evangelistic rallies such as; organising, funding, and training for counselling and follow up, ushering, transport, prayer and in the wonderful united choirs.

These were grand celebrations of unity and community in large cities. The co-operation between the church and BGA frequently enriched local churches with new life, new abilities, gifts and ministry and new vision. Unity around evangelism verified this prayer as the world came to believe. This was not without opposition. The evangelical constituency which agreed with Graham's theology disagreed with his friendship and openness to include Catholics and "liberals" in the Graham rallies.

Cassidy came across some of these anxieties and prejudices as he began to set up evangelistic missions in South Africa in a similar vein. He tells how the Johannesburg Evangelical Association was partly outraged that he could go to discuss a Mission to Johannesburg with the Witwatersrand Council of Churches. On reporting back to the brethren about his visit he was asked to explain what dreadful compromise or vital aspect of faith he had surrendered. In a disarming way and with a twinkle in his eye he informed the meeting that he had simply invited them in a spirit of friendship to join the endeavour.

But added to these theological complications were hand wringing and resistance to the principle adopted by Cassidy and his team that absolutely no compromise was to be made to the fact that in Christ there is no Jew or Greek, male or female, rich or poor.

Apartheid was to be banned from rallies. In the Mission '70 outreach involving 300 churches in Johannesburg not a single white Dutch Reformed church was willing to participate. The team was told that the denomination had all of the structures, functions and ministries to do its own evangelism. The DRC was self-sufficient behind a wall which could not threaten its sanctification of Apartheid.

Deep suspicions and doubts about this inter-racial stance were stirred in the intelligence circles of the South African government and the team was constantly under scrutiny with tapping of phones and investigations into its ministry, message and methods. This became common knowledge.

### Unity in relation to Apartheid.

The team was constructed in due course entirely with South Africans. A Zulu, (Ebenezer Sikakane) a Mosotho (Abiel Thipanyane) and an Indian (David Peters) were invited onto the team as was John Tooke (the writer of this Thesis) a convert from the first mission. In time a larger community would grow around the vision of Africa Enterprise representing the diversity of the Church of Jesus Christ denominationally, racially and nationally. One thing has marked this community; its continuity. It is a rare thing indeed to have disassociations and conflicts emerging around differences and distinctions in the annals of the team. Indeed many of the original team are still in harness.

In those early days the team extended its fellowship to churches and individuals as a result of its missions to the towns and cities of South Africa. A core of support began to grow as it established its integrity and parts of the large Christian community (black and white) that resisted or was in disagreement with Apartheid began to be drawn into associations with the fledgling ministry. But from the ranks of those segments of the church that saw the ministry as politically engaged or a threat to security, there also emerged individuals from Apartheid supportive churches who were drawn to the openhearted and warm spirit of Cassidy.

These diverse men and women were often also opponents of the system and the link with Cassidy created powerful bonds of deep Christian friendship and fellowship. Indeed much of what was to transpire in the events to be discussed in this thesis was to be initiated from this growing band of brothers and sisters. Their witness was to become subversive to Apartheid in its effect and spirit.

Shortly after the first mission Cassidy had an opportunity to meet with Albert Luthuli the banned leader of the South African National Congress up the North Coast. "The answer for South Africa" Luthuli told the young team "is the way of the Master."(Coomes:2002:103.)

A.E. was beginning to walk in the Master's way especially in the spirit of inclusiveness, openness and fellowship that became a spring for new prospects of unity.

### 5.2. GATHERING THE CHURCH.

If Apartheid was built on and produced division, heresy and disunity then Cassidy began to believe that the opposite was true. The enemy of Apartheid was true ecumenism and Christian fellowship.

It seemed that a way forward in South Africa in “walking in the Master’s Way” as Luthuli had suggested could be to gather Christian believers together and through mutual togetherness and reflection to discover the meaning of a common life in Christ as a precedent for the South African society.

### **5.2.1. Cottesloe.**

In 1960 the World Council of Churches set up a consultation at Cottesloe near Johannesburg. This was held in the shadow of the Sharpeville tragedy nine months previously in March 1960.

This gathering profoundly challenged all of the assumptions and the massive corpus of apologetic literature on Apartheid. The Cottesloe statement stemming from the consultation tore apartheid to shreds. Unjust discrimination was to be rejected. All racial groups of South Africa were part of South Africa and should have an equal right to make their contribution toward the enrichment of the life of their country and to share in the ensuing responsibilities. Said Cottesloe:

No one who believes in Jesus Christ may be excluded from any church on the grounds of his colour and race. The spiritual unity among all men who are in Christ must find visible expression in acts of common worship and witness, and in fellowship and consultations of common concern. (Cassidy:1989:145)

Other resolutions called for inter-racial consultations, the removal of job reservation and migratory labour and discriminatory wage structures. Realising that this disaffection by the church threatened to destabilise and collapse the metaphysical and moral basis for Apartheid and bring the whole thing tumbling down (it had after all been conceived and buttressed by theologians) the state acted swiftly with damage control. The theologians from the Afrikaans Reformed churches retracted under a heavy handed intervention by Verwoerd and other Apartheid guardians. But a core of irreconcilable opposition remained. Dr Beyers Naude and Dr Albert Geyser refused to come to heel. Their resistance was strengthened and deepened in the creation of the Christian Institute. ( Ibid:148.)

Naude was ostracised and even defrocked in the process of this refusal to be silenced. His deepening despair about the intransigence of the Church he loved was to lead him to more powerful identifications with the ANC and its liberation movement and even to the support of the armed struggle. For this he was both demonised by his own at that time but conversely, declared a hero in the new South Africa by the liberation fraternity and finally and eventually a true son of the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk who reinstated him and apologised at the end of a 15year period of rejection.

A score of other people were encouraged and emboldened in their witness against Apartheid. Among these were people like Nico Smith who was a leader in the Missionary fellowship of the NGK and a former professor of Mission, felt he could no longer be part of the ideological captivity of the white Church and so, having accepted an appointment to minister in a black congregation in Mamelodi, he moved to live in this township with his flock. Smith’s bitter resistance to the DRC church’s collusion was long and profound. Others like Eddie Bruwer, Johan Kritzinger, Dons Kritzinger, Willem Nicol, Willem Saayman and Piet Meiring sought for means to bring change within the structures they were relating to. One of the leaders of

this group was Professor David Bosch of the University of South Africa who was to play a significant role in concert with Michael and others to bring considerable pressure against Apartheid and add to the pressures that would free the NGK from its bondage and the captivity to this ideology.

The fact was that if the bad news was separation and segregation then the good news was togetherness and community.

Sadly the news from Cottesloe was too indigestible. The NGK now kept its distance from all ecumenical initiatives and organisations closing it off from their pernicious influences. Nevertheless some movement toward ecumenism did flow from Cottesloe. It gave birth to the ideal of a Christian Council of South African Churches. This suggestion came originally from a Dutch Reformed Church Synod (Saayman:77.)

But even as the South African Council of Churches came into being it was in a climate of extreme tension with the White Afrikaans Reformed churches.

This became more antagonistic as the World Council of Churches stepped up its action against Racism in South Africa on the world stage. While formal ecumenical contact became impossible some of Cassidy's initiatives would begin to mobilise informal contacts and a growth toward an organic unity of individuals rather than churches. Many "unofficial" forerunners of a new Christian community in the Afrikaans churches were to be drawn into friendships and given encouragement and hope through the fellowship potentials of Cassidy's and his friends unconditional acts of friendship.

### **5.2.2. The Durban Congress on Mission and Evangelism.**

Following on Cassidy's attendance at the Berlin Congress he and others in the ministry began to plan the South African Congress on Mission and Evangelism in Durban. This created an opportunity for this nascent "new ecumenism" to be expressed. Many ministers from mainline churches heard of the plans and jumped at the opportunity to participate. The gathering was underrepresented by blacks but numbers were adequate given the circumstances in the country. In the words of Bishop Alpheus Zulu, Chairman of the African enterprise board quoted in the preface he wrote to the book published on the gathering called *Prisoners of Hope*.

We were all "brethren in prison". None of us were free because of Apartheid but we were together drawn by a twofold commitment of belief in grace and (perhaps hesitantly) justice".

Later Calvin Cook was to urge the congress to see that those who follow Christ are not prisoners of history but prisoners of Hope.

In March 1973 the Congress took place in the Durban Methodist Church in down town Durban. Along with the 700 local Christian Leaders who had come largely from Protestant churches were a vanguard of some who had come somewhat covertly from Baptist and Pentecostal churches whose denominational leaders were hesitant about 'political interference'. These churches, like the Dutch Reformed church, had federal systems of government with black, white, Indian and white churches formed into satellite denominations defined along racial lines.

Friendships with some of the leadership in the South African Council of Churches had also born fruit. Dr John de Gruchy, Secretary of the Council, was a delightful and valuable member of the organising committee. John Rees who was to become a later General Secretary of the S.A.C.C. was the chairman of the Congress. (He was another “layman” of note.)

There was an extraordinary addition to this mix. The world church was also informally present. Cassidy’s former links to the Billy Graham Association had meant that invitations had been accepted from Dr. Leighton Ford and Dr Billy Graham and his team who were coming to share especially in a rally at the Kings Park Rugby Stadium. Other evangelical leaders in the form of Michael Green and Dr. Don Jacobs followed suit. There was even a Director of Biblical Studies from the World Council of Churches Dr. Fans-Rudi Weber. Black Church leaders from “independent Africa” were represented chiefly by John Gatu an eminent East African Presbyterian.

As the delegates began to think about the meaning of the Christian Community in South Africa, two Cooks added spice to the diversity of the mix. Jack Cook of the Methodist church reminded participants of Paul Tillich’s statement that when we turn from another person he is only a stranger in disguise and in fact he is really the estranged part of ourselves. He also quoted the story loved by Seth Mokitimi an ex-president of the Methodist Church.

“One day there were 2 men on a pavement. The one pointed to the man on the other side of the street and said I don’t like that man. His companion said to him. I didn’t know you knew him. Back came the reply. No, I don’t know him; that’s why I don’t like him. (Cassidy: 1974:50)

Professor Calvin Cook, the distinguished Presbyterian minister and academic, had been asked to be the resident “prophet” or listening ear to discern the voice of the Spirit. He tells how a word representing a metaphor began to repeat itself again and again as he struggled to find a relevant word. The word was “Platypus” He was tickled by the appropriateness of this image describing the strange amalgam of people that make up the Christian Church. He commented further:

I discovered that one of the first scientists who came across this animal called it *paradoxus*

Here is the paradox of an egg laying mammal with an extraordinary range of unlikely features. The Platypus defies classification. Imagine the confusion when it came up the ark. To which group were they to be assigned?” The extraordinary paradoxical nature of the church requires and acceptance of its different parts, identity and paradoxes. (Ibid.:45.)

But everywhere bridges were being crossed and incipient relationships were being initiated. While the congress venue provided opportunities for worship, workshops, meals and discussions the real breakthrough had come at the Athlone Hotel at the mouth of the Umgeni River in Durban.



The idea of living together had been seen as an essential witness. The laws of the country forbade other than whites staying in hotels especially because they would have to share the same toilet facilities in the bars! The congress committee held out like a bulldog petitioning the cabinet repeatedly for a positive decision to waive its rules and allow the hotel to open its doors to all. Eventually, at the last cabinet meeting of the year in 1972 approvals were given. This gave the congress the green light to proceed. This was later to have a domino effect in opening all hotels in the future.

Imagine the euphoria for South Africans to actually participate in this temporary and limited moment of equalisation. Breakfasts and suppers were filled with excitement and hilarity and the wonderful Athlone Hotel swimming pool gave a new meaning to the idea of being baptised into the community of the faith as delegates, some of who had never learned to swim, were plunged and immersed into its blue chlorinated waters.

Much began to happen in the congress and many truths surrounding evangelism and its relation to its context were discussed. One of the chief of these is that evangelism is the overflow of fellowship and vice versa. The imposition of Apartheid was therefore in effect being counter-productive to the spreading and proclamation of the Gospel. The Gospel could not be spiritualised and partially applied, it was relevant to the whole man. Salvation related to the whole of life and to the whole world.

Present at the Congress was one of several new faces and voices. One of these was that of Professor David Bosch who had joined the Organising Committee at a late hour. He was a professor of Missiology at the University of South Africa. He was one of a very limited number of self appointed participants from the white Dutch Reformed Church who had come under his own recognisances. His paper on Evangelism and Special Needs demonstrated his sensitivity and ability. His connection to the now growing yeast of fellowship and community was to be crucial in future.

De Gruchy, who became historian and theologian at Cape Town University wrote afterwards.

I have never experienced or imagined possible what occurred in Durban. 800 people of virtually every racial, theological and ecclesiastical variety found in Southern Africa along with those from East Africa, Europe and North America confronted one another and ended up by discovering one another as members of one body called into fellowship for the sake of the Gospel in the life of the world. This does not mean that all is now well and that the kingdom has finally arrived in our midst. It does not mean that everyone ended up in agreement, that tensions are no more, that theological differences have been overcome and rendered obsolete. No. It means that the Body of Christ is greater than any of its constituent parts, and that the healing power of the gospel is more potent for personal and social change than anyone of our own unavoidably partial interpretations of it. All I know is that some black brother has offered me his eyes and ears so that I might see and hear things to which I have hitherto been blind and deaf. (Coomes:389-390)

In similar vein the writer of this thesis was asked by a member of the press to make a comment. I drew an analogy with the blind man who Jesus healed. At the first touch only the

beginning of sight began to dawn as he saw men as trees walking. So too the congress had just begun to lift the veils of myopia.

In assessing the Congress Dr Calvin Cook was to say

In the 30s there were conferences of mission societies. In the 50s there were conferences of church leaders. But this conference brought together the whole people of God. That is its unique importance.  
(Cassidy:183.)

The whole people of God had partially come together. There was a wholeness in the range but the whole, was still provisional and limited. Nevertheless the closing meeting of the congress was a rally at Rugby stadium that was addressed by Dr Billy Graham. This was truly unprecedented in its representivity of all.

### **5.2.3. The Pan-African Christian Leadership Assembly.**

John Gatu, the Presbyterian leader in Kenya took the news of the Durban Congress back with him to East Africa and began to share his experience. In a visit to Nairobi in 1973 the Bible translator John Mpaayei had a meeting with Cassidy. They were talking about Africa and its challenge to the church and how a gathering of Christian Leaders could take a cue from the Durban Congress. Ideas about something similar in Kenya began to percolate.

In 1969 the door had been opened for an unlikely partnership. Festo Kivengere, a world renowned lay preacher, leader of the East African Revival Movement and soon to be made Bishop of the Anglican Church in Uganda, agreed to become a partner with Cassidy and take on the leadership of the East African Team. This was a difficult thing to do and many were the suspicions aroused and the rebukes received by Kivengere in agreeing to being yoked in this way.

In 1974 the momentous Lausanne Congress was convened in Switzerland. African Enterprise decided to have the East African and South African teams attend this and to hold the first ever joint and combined meeting between the two teams. This was partially effective as the new alliance could only be introductory and initiatory. But the relationship began to progress toward a partnership when at the Congress the idea of a Pan African Christian Leadership Assembly was mooted among the 600 African delegates to the Lausanne Congress. The suggestion drew great interest and in due course Michael Cassidy a South African, Festo Kivengere, a Ugandan and Gottfried Osei-Mensah, a Ghanaian ( who was later to be the General Secretary of the Lausanne Movement) were charged with setting this up.

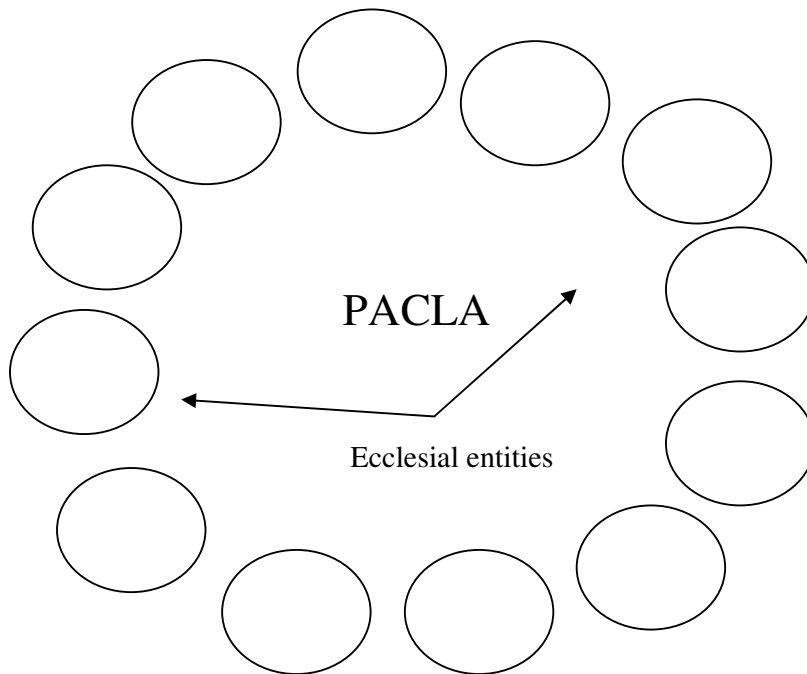
The conference gradually drew interest and engagement. The World Council of Churches African affiliate the All Africa Council Churches were also committed to help and support.

There was no prospect of setting up a suitable office or organisation to get this going and so eventually the organisational muscle of African Enterprise was co-opted to work at this assignment. The teams began to cohere and unify around the monumental task before them. Plans for the housing of the Assembly in the Kenyatta Conference Centre began to be formulated.

The assembly was astonishing in its range and impact. The book “*Facing the New Challenges*” containing the addresses exceeds 650 pages. It is a mine of information about mission and evangelism in Africa. The conference had to offer proficiency in French and interpreters had long hot days.

In defining its identity the organisers did not want this to be seen exclusively as an extension of the Evangelical Association of Africa and Madagascar. Nor would the congress benefit if it were seen as an arm of the All Africa Council of Churches. Although the Assembly had been initiated at Lausanne, some of the people coming would know nothing of this and be suspicious of a foreign tag. Eventually it was decided that Pan African Leadership Assembly would draw from all groups, churches and agencies and the identity would be defined from the final collective of who participated.

DIAGRAM G. SACLA Ecclesial identity.



In assessing PACLA Cassidy was to say.

The next vital issue was to face who we were and whom we were going to aim at. Were we an exclusive group of evangelicals? Or were we an exclusive group of ecumenicals? Were we an unofficial arm of the All Africa Council of Churches (AACC) or were we an extension of the associations of Evangelicals of Africa and Madagascar (AEAM)? The problem was that many of us felt we were both evangelical and ecumenical. Not only that, but as a group, our ties were with both AACC and AEAM. More than that we had a sense that there were strengths and weaknesses in both agencies and each could bring useful correctives to the other. The AACC was admirably strong in its horizontal concerns for the

socio-political needs of man. On the other hand AEAM had splendid biblical and doctrinal commitments and a deep evangelistic concern,

If we were not exclusively AACC or AEAM, were we an official and formal follow-up to the Lausanne Congress of 1974. Certainly all our sympathies were with the rounded and comprehensive Lausanne wrap up of both evangelism and social action exhibited in its Clause 5.

So perhaps then we were really “Lausanne” follow-up, especially as Osei Mensah, Kivengere and Cassidy were all on the Lausanne Consultation Committee. Certainly Lausanne’s theological stance was our own. Yet, on the other hand, some of the group had not been at Lausanne. Not only that, but some brothers felt that any ‘outside’ or ‘foreign’ tag, whether Lausanne, Geneva or whatever, could prevent certain important leaders from being able to identify. They would feel PACLA was something foreign and alien to Africa. So we renounced all tags. PACLA would draw from all groups, churches and agencies like this: (Cassidy & Verlingen.1978: 22& 23)

Calvin Cook makes the comment that this attempt to transcend existing structures was truly significant although some would ask “Is this neo-colonialism or a truly new creation?”

PACLA was a blessing to the church of Africa. Cassidy was to say:

Overall, PACLA provided God’s people across Africa with a tremendous opportunity to see what God was doing elsewhere in the continent. It was also a time of deep spiritual renewal for the delegates. Hundreds recommitted their hearts to the Lord, and thus refreshed, then gathered to pray and plan for the evangelisation of Africa. (Coomes:401.)

In respect of the South African participation a delegation was drawn up which continued to some extent with the impetus and relationships from the Durban Congress but more work was done on getting representivity. Here the missionaries and missiologists of the NGK were helpful. David Bosch’s influence produced a great surge of interest.

The number of NGK missionaries and theologians seeking an opportunity to break from the captivities of Apartheid mindsets into the freedom of relationships with other Africans began to grow. Numbers of young black people linked to evangelical and protestant churches also showed a keen interest. This gave them the prospect at last of a journey into freedom from discrimination into the promised land of an emancipated and independent Africa, even though many African countries were still under repressive yokes.

Some 60 persons eventually took their seats in the Jumbo Jet that glided off the runway on December 9<sup>th</sup> 1976 en route to Nairobi. The delegation was reasonably balanced in its racial make-up but, even as the plane swung northward voices of concern and doubt were being expressed as the seat belt lights winked out. These arose primarily from many of the black delegates.

The problem was that the South African group had never had any opportunity to appraise its membership. This group especially had not had the benefit of contact at Durban. The seeds of suspicion began to flourish. Why were there so many Dutch Reformed dominees on board?

Before long the suspicion began to surface that they were most likely to be agents of BOSS. (The intelligence organ of the South African State). By the time the plane had touched down at Kenyatta airport this suspicion had grown to a certainty and all of the anguishes, hostilities and alienations of South Africa were roosting among the members. Indeed no sooner had delegates registered at the Congress venue than some black delegates asked that the Nairobi City Newspaper 'The Daily Nation' carry the story that the South African group was compromised. Fortunately this impulse was diverted. In fact this concern was unfounded.

On the first day of the Conference an extended time was given for national groups to meet, elect a chairman and get to know one another and assess the potentials of the group and their interests and preference for participation in the seminars and workshops.

The South African group met. The election of a chairman proved impossible. None of the black delegates would countenance the thought of a white (and possibly an apartheid stooge) giving leadership. What a travesty of dignity to come to independent Africa at last and have 'white dominion' again. Whites were offended by the rejection of blacks and dug their heels in. For hours the group struggled to find a way that seemed appropriate and Christian with emotions running high. No person nominated seemed suitable. No consensus could be achieved.

Eventually John Wilson the black Ugandan member of the organising committee came to find a way forward with the group. Dr Frank Mdlalose a doctor from Zululand was voted in just at the moment when the time ran out. The news of the upset and turbulence experienced by the South African group spread to all members of the congress.

The Conference programmers had made a courageous decision. The evening plenary meetings had become popular and central with key addresses and wonderful worship. Admission to the Assembly of Christians from Nairobi had been open to those who would wish to come and share in the excitement of the event as well.

At one of those evenings, at the centre point of the programme, an impossible event was to take place. Prof David Bosch was to give an address entitled. "*The Renewal of Christian Community in Africa Today*". There was something close to outrage. How could a white Afrikaner representing a people who were most responsible for the destruction of and oppression of community in Africa actually have the temerity to come to independent Africa and to Nairobi and speak on such a topic. Intrigue, anger and wonder jostled for prominence in the response to the news. The atmosphere was electric as South Africa's most distinguished missionary thinker made his way to the podium to be and introduced by Gottfried Osei Mensah the PACLA Chairman.

The paper *Renewal of Christian community in Africa Today* delivered by David Bosch was a passionate synthesis of mind, heart and soul that rendered deep insights into the truth about the Alternative Community that the church should be in, order to meet the deepest needs of Africa. This paper had a marked impact on the PACLA conference and the subsequent events that were to follow in South Africa. The record appears in *Facing the new challenges* Edited by Cassidy and Verlingen. (see bibliography). On Bosch's return many in the Reformed

Afrikaans Church community sought to water down and divert the truth of what Bosch had declared that challenges all attempts to divide and particularise the church.

At the close of the address Bosch narrated an account of a meeting he and his wife Annemie had had.

One evening about a year ago, my wife and I had a visit from some black ministers of our church. Our discussion inevitably was on what it means to be Christians in South Africa today. The attitude of the blacks was: 'In spite of everything you two whites say tonight, you will belong to the group of the oppressors. You benefit from the system we don't. You are privileged we are not, you remain white and we black. Your feet remain on our necks'. We talked until the early morning hours and it seemed as though we would never be able to find one another.

We were not people but blacks and whites. We were not people but categories. Eventually, when the blacks were preparing to leave, my wife broke down and wept, pleading for understanding and acceptance. And so they left. But the next day one of them returned on behalf of the others. He said 'your wife's tears made all the difference. If it can still happen in South Africa that a white woman weeps because of a desire for real, human fellowship with black men, then this is something that cannot be explained logically. It must be of God'.

Are we prepared to follow the way of the cross for the sake of real Christian Community in Africa; we who are today gathered here from all over our continent. It is such a temptation to reply with a show of bravado. 'Of course I will follow where he leads, even to the cross'. I myself am less confident. I know myself and my repeated failures too well. And I know my fears and my prejudices. But I also know our Lord Jesus Christ and what He expects of us in form of real community. I know him as the Lord of Compassion. I know He will have compassion upon me. And upon you. Kyrie eleison! Lord, have mercy upon us!

At that moment David Bosch himself broke down in tears. Here was a deeply touching witness of the profound search of Annemie and David, two Afrikaners consumed by their longing for authentic Christian Community with their brethren in Christ weeping before the Church of Africa who themselves had reason to remember their own causes in other histories to withhold fellowship. Those tears had the remarkable effect of washing the stain of deep historical hurts and also convicting the church and its members in other places for its failures of unity and fellowship.

There was a silence. And then from one place and another Christians from Africa began to respond. Here a man from Angola, there a woman from Kenya, someone from Egypt, a representative of a congregation in Accra a theologian from the Ivory Coast. Stepping from their seats they began to gather in the aisle leading up to the dais and make their way up to embrace David Bosch as only Africans can and say to him. "You are my brother." Hundreds came in handshakes and embraces of forgiveness and confession being reconciled and all experiencing the gift of unity in answer to the prayer of Jesus. "That they may be one!"

Cassidy makes a comment on this moment. (Cassidy & Osei Mensah :1978:130.)

PACLA was now at Calvary. All were at the foot of the cross because here was a man at the foot of the Cross. Healing and reconciliation were happening. Fractured and divided members of the body of Christ were coming together. The cost of ministering truly to Africa's wounds was now being glimpsed. For there was Bosch the in-between person and the symbol of so many Africa's in-between people- crushed.

The conference organisers simply suspended all other aspects of the evening. Some delegations convened their national groups again. The matter of alienation and division was common everywhere in the continent in different ways.

The South African delegation met again but with a profoundly different spirit. A delegate who had confessed to hating every white person took the hand of an Afrikaans minister. New eyes seemed to have been given to the group to see one another beyond the blame and accusations and culpabilities. Right there deep friendships were born and reconciliation discovered. Indeed it was from this remarkable "Baptism of Unity" given by the Holy Spirit that the future initiative would stem that became called the South African Christian Leadership Assembly. This event in turn carried its own seeds of transformation.

Coming home on the plane from Nairobi the South Africans found a joy and freedom with one another that was marked with joy. One of the other passengers, mistaking the group for a delegation from another country, gently suggested that they watch their behaviour when they land at Johannesburg.

Bishop Stephen Neill quoted by John Stott has this to say.

Within the fellowship of those who are bound together by personal loyalty to Jesus Christ, the relationship of love reaches an intimacy and intensity unknown elsewhere. Friendship between the friends of Jesus of Nazareth is unlike any other friendship. This ought to be normal experience within the Christian community. That it is so rare in existing Christian congregations is a measure of the failures of the church as a whole to live up to the purpose of its founder for it. Where it is experienced, especially across barriers of race, nationality and language it is one of the most convincing evidences of the continuity of Jesus among men.  
(Stott:1992:237.)

#### **5.2.4. The South African Christian Leadership Assembly**

The gestation of the South African Christian Leadership Assembly took some time. Cassidy quailed at the thought. PACLA had demanded a huge price of energy and administration. Depression and exhaustion had come as an aftermath from this mountain top.

But as in so many of the initiatives that were to drive Cassidy, the reading of scripture and prayer began to open an insight into the purposes of God. On February the 2<sup>nd</sup> 1977 he read again the story of the 12 spies who had been sent to the promised lands to test the prospect of its acquisition according to the promise of God. Ten came back with fearful tales of obstacles and

difficulties. Two came back with supreme confidence. Michael felt a challenge from the Spirit. “Are you with the ten or with the two?” (Coomes:402.)

David Bosch too was getting encouragement. Writing to Cassidy he said this. “As I have travelled around South Africa I have found people saying, “Well, if it could happen in Nairobi why not in South Africa?” And thus was born the willingness to take preliminary steps. At the Holiday Inn at the Johannesburg airport a process of consultation began. More and more encouragements came. Eventually a council of 200 was formed and in due course an executive committee.

The executive had extraordinary individuals in it. Vusi Khanyile who was later to become a force in management at the highest level in the country assented to participate. He combined a passion for liberation with capacities for accepting and listening to whites while Caesar Molebatsi revealed and propagated his legendary spirit of forgiveness. He had had his leg amputated through the witless behaviour of white drunken driver. It was this great striving for freedom combining with a spirit of forgiveness that created the arena for change that the organisers hoped to foster. A variety of people nominated by the Council took up membership in the executive.

#### Five conferences in One.

SACLA, convened in July 1979 was to have five conferences all in one. There was a sub conference for Church Leaders. This was the largest group. Two other conferences were organised for Youth and University students respectively. A fourth conference was to focus on Political, business and community leaders. These 4 Conferences would all be united and cohere in a combined 5<sup>th</sup> conference which began and ended the day. The Pretoria Show grounds were chosen as the venue, It was a perfect choice. Amongst the persons engaged in the setup of the conference were the writer and the now well known missiologist Dr Willem Saayman.

#### Fellowship design.

Two wonderful provisions were made in the programme design as a requirement. The first was the formation of cross conference groups in which delegates from the different conferences were given fellow travellers or dialogical partners in the period after tea and before supper. These groups of 10 or 12 shared their lives and insights in extraordinary bridge crossing encounters between race, class, generation, gender, economic background and Christian experience.

The second provision was that individuals coming to SACLA would not go to hostels or hotels or friends. Rather the homes of Christians in Pretoria whether in the suburbs or the townships would be opened to offer Christian hospitality in cross racial housing. Of the 6000 delegates more than half experienced this precedent setting and barrier breaking opportunity to live together. Pat Withey, David Bosch’s Secretary and Annemie his wife had a crucial part in enabling this to happen. Every morning delegates had to depend on the kindness of others to get to the venue. Every night an appeal was made to ensure that every delegate had a lift to their home. Every night a miracle happened and no one was left.



In a very real sense these two strategies simply shattered and demythologised Apartheid. For those leaving the conference Apartheid was over and finished. Profound diversities became the road to Unity. And this disaffection began to spread everywhere.

### Fear and Opposition.

Opposition there was aplenty. The NGK resisted as much as it could seeking to restrain involvement. Dr Piet Koornhof was drawn in to negotiate miscellaneous obstacles. The City of Pretoria tried to block the use of facilities and meeting places. The radical right Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB) sent its shock troops to do what it could stabbing and deflating the tires of cars parked outside the conference venue. But the dismay of persons so affected was soon swallowed up by the support and help and care that were lavished on those with no functioning wheels and they were assisted and upheld by the rise of deep Christian community.

### The Biblical Basis.

The Assembly was designed around the theme of Acts Chapter 1:1-8. This was the sending of the disciples to all nations to witness in the power of the Spirit and under the authority of the Kingdom.

A crucial moment included the contribution made by Bishop Tutu. Many of the delegates had ambivalences about Tutu who was the General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches. His capacity to combine an anti-Apartheid political or pro-ANC agenda with a deep spirituality had many partly confused or alienated.

The conference was agog on the evening he came. Tutu's kindness, lack of bitterness and wonderful spirit of fun and humanity completely disarmed everyone and had them roaring with laughter and singing Tutu's favourite choruses. Others like M. Stanley Magoba and Caesar Molebatsi further produced the glue of unity. All of this was consummated in the most extraordinary and memorable communion service celebrated by Bishop Michael Nuttall with the backing of the marvellous multi-racial orchestra provided by Christ Church Kenilworth in Cape Town.

Michael Cassidy as the SACLA programme director provided the tone and direction to the conference in the programme events in the Plenary. Bosch became a symbol in his chairmanship, of the new face of the Afrikaner for the new day. His opening address around the distinctive of church traditions emerging from a diverse Christology laid foundations for acceptance and openness.

Pretoria, the Apartheid Capital, had knowingly or unknowingly had its core value overturned. Apartheid was still standing but it had been undermined. It was no longer possible to produce any valid justification for it. Bosch, Willie Jonker and other Dutch reformed Church brothers would get it in the neck from the establishment but too many people were giving them approval. Piet Meiring, one of SACLA group was to be honoured later in being selected by Tutu as a commissioner of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as was Dr Khoza Mgojo a close ally of A.Es ministry and former board member.

In only a few years Apartheid would lie dying and discredited at the Rustenburg Consultation of Churches.

### 5.2.5. The Rustenburg Consultation

In December 1989, ten years after SACLA, President F.W.de Klerk in a timely moment appealed to the church in South Africa to formulate a strategy conducive to negotiation, reconciliation and change. While this might have been an astute move to involve the church that represented 75% of the country's population it did present an opportunity for the church to be the church and find a common voice.

In all of the former gatherings including to some extent the National Initiative for Reconciliation that we will look at in a later chapter the official nominated representation of congregations was absent. In the Rustenburg Conference every known denomination in whatever demographic grouping was hunted down and formerly invited. While Cassidy was present in all the discussions and arrangements it became very much a conference with two agendas. The one an opportunity for all the elected heads of churches to gather and declare their past and future roles and agendas regarding the transition of power into a new democratic society and to find a place in the ecclesial community.

Secondly it was the place to gather at the funeral of Apartheid and to cleanse the church of the mistakes and failures of the past.

While Cassidy took his place in sharing his vast experience and knowledge of Conferences there were two primary figures Dr Louw Alberts and Frank Chikane. The one was the General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches and a pastor of the Apostolic Faith Mission and the other a Physicist and a man with a brilliant ability to teach and preach. But he was also a powerful figure in the Afrikaner establishment and at the same time an immensely valuable patron and guide to Youth for Christ. He informally represented the government.

Also present was Barney Pityana a former Anglican Priest who had returned from exile. His very great interest and friendship with Steve Biko meant that a very key member of the Black Consciousness movement was present with impeccable credentials. Pityana, after the acquisition of a doctorate from Cape Town University, was to become first, the first Chairman of the Human Rights Commission and after that Vice Chancellor of the University of South Africa where a primary interest of displacing white influence and power was given an outlet. Frank Chikane too became right hand man to President Thabo Mbeki playing a new and important role in the new dispensation

The actual setup and administration of the Rustenburg Consultation was handled by YFC, which was to do the arrangements for the venue, and African Enterprise which was to get people there and registered and admitted to the conference. The diversity was enormous. Cassidy writes this.

Now we had everything from ultra pietists to radical liberationists. Rustenburg seemed to push out the boundaries of attempted Christian unity to impossible extremes. But it came off somehow. God's Grace I guess. Also Frank Chikane, Louw Alberts and others were terrific. Beyond that the apology and seeking forgiveness from blacks for Apartheid from Dr Willie Jonker of the Dutch Reformed Church paved the way for a great spirit of humility from everyone to everyone else especially when

Archbishop Tutu, responding so movingly for the black side, received the confession and extended the forgiveness.(Coomes: Op cit.463.)

A four page statement of repentance and socio-political intent was born from a committee Cassidy chaired to formulate the statement. It called on political leaders on all sides to work together in new ways for a new day in South Africa. For the first time official and representative leaders from all churches had come together to provide God centred solutions to then problems. (See APPENDIX 3.)

What was of particular interest was the use of a dove as the symbol. Not the New Testament representative of the Holy Spirit in Acts but the Old Testament motive of a dove holding an olive branch. This was not a conference on the ministry or mission of the church. It was about peace and the rescue of the country from the floods of judgement and revenge. The church was given a crucial opportunity to cooperate and assist in the coming transition.

The era of division was at least officially over; the struggle for unity was to now begin. Cassidy had played his part in sometimes overt but often in obscure and serving ways to set examples and precedents of togetherness in expressing unity in the body of Christ through the medium of gathering the saints.

### 5.3. CHURCH/ PARACHURCH UNITY

Before we leave the subject of Unity in the Church it would be useful to note yet another contribution Cassidy made in the cause of Unity. The Lausanne Movement, because it was so strongly linked to parachurch and missionary organisations, and because its ecclesiology was also profoundly married to the local church, wanted to clarify and foster understanding and unity between them. The writer of this and others met in Pattaya Thailand in 1980 in a consultation to look at the issue of 'Co-operating in World Evangelization'. Eventually the meeting initiated the Lausanne Occasional Paper 24. This met ostensibly to flesh out the implications of Clause 7 of the Lausanne Covenant which is entitled "Co-operation in Evangelism." It reads:

We affirm that the church's visible unity in truth is God's purpose. Evangelism also summons us to unity, because our oneness strengthens our witness, just as our disunity undermines our gospel of reconciliation. We recognize, however, that organisational unity may take many forms and does not necessarily forward evangelism.

Yet we who share the same biblical faith should be closely united in fellowship, work and witness. We confess that our testimony has sometimes been marred by sinful individualism and needless duplication. We pledge ourselves to seek a deeper unity in truth, worship, holiness and mission. We urge the development of regional and functional co-operation for the furtherance of the church's mission, for strategic planning, for mutual encouragement, and for the sharing of resources and experience (Jn. 17:21,23; Eph. 4:3, 4. ; Jn. 13:35; Phil. 1:27; Jn. 17:11-23).

Three relevant points may be made about this paragraph.

*First*, it begins with the theological affirmation that unity in truth is God's purpose, rather than with the pragmatic statement that disunity undermines our gospel and mars our testimony. We endorse this order as a right and biblical emphasis.

*Secondly*, the unity in truth which is God's purpose is described as "visible." Although it is added that "organisational unity may take many forms" (and evangelical Christians are not in full accord with each other about this), we are agreed in our rejection of the two extremes of rigidity and formlessness. For on the one hand "the church is the community of God's people rather than an institution" (Para. 6), that is, its essence is people not forms; and on the other, we refuse to take refuge in a concept of spiritual unity which nobody can see. Some kind of visible structure is indispensable.

*Thirdly*, God's summons to unity is strengthened by his summons to evangelism. The two were closely related in the teaching and intercession of Jesus; he pleaded and prayed for his disciples' love and unity, so that the world might believe (Jn. 13:35; 17:21,23). We cannot preach reconciliation if we do not exhibit it. God is creating through Christ a new community, even a "single new humanity" (Eph. 2:15); it is for the bringing into being of this people that Christ died (Titus 2:14). So the church is an essential part of the Good News, and every church proclaiming it must embody it. The people of God must be seen to be what they claim to be. We have no liberty to duck the challenges to a visible fellowship of love.

Cassidy was asked to assist in making comments and suggestions that could help the committee get to grips with the topic and raise the issues. In his paper he brought the members to the point with a simulated dialogue between a church and a para-church leader in which the tensions are expressed. The writer includes this as an example of Cassidy's deep understanding and commitments to unity co-operation and accord ecclesial relationships. This dialogue became the core around which the work of the committee revolved

This document is also essential reading to further illuminate the discussion on structural organisation in relation to mission structures and the local congregation.

An excerpt from the text appears in the APPENDIX. 4. Where Cassidy begins a fascinating and helpful dialogue between a church leader and a para-church leader.

Following on this input from Cassidy the commission saw that dialogue on this issue should come first. It may well be that lack of communication and understanding is an even more serious problem here; because as Cassidy says in the document.

"While para-church agencies occasionally tip their caps in the direction of seeking church blessing, they do it even more rarely with each other. The need therefore is for contact and togetherness both formally and informally."

This remains a matter for ongoing development Cassidy's understanding of cooperation and the convocation of believers demonstrate his acute understanding of the nature of and the obligation of the search for unity. He undoubtedly verifies the goal of unity as expressed in the prayer of Jesus. That they may be one that the world believe

#### 5.4. CONCLUSION AND A REAPPRAISAL

Henri Blocher, quoted in the Lausanne Congress compendium ( Douglas:380), has some important insights. He strikes a blow at those who believe that unity is essentially lost and it must be found again by the energy of its guardians in church structures. This makes unity an ontological impossibility for how could structural unity ever be achieved by human endeavor in a world where there are 14000 denominations.

Rather, says Blocher,

We should believe that unity is given. Unity is invisible and spiritual. Christian unity is seen as the gift of God rather than the fruit of our works. It is essentially different from the administrative centralisation brought about by in the economic and political realms.... We know our unity when we feel the presence in the other believer of the same spirit that loves in us.

In assessing the impact of Cassidy in advancing this truth it is evident that all of the approaches and search for unity he has employed is predicated on the fact that there is no need for an undue accent on structural continuities to contain or maintain unity in an ecumenical structure. The unity that is already latent is expressed in the contact and shared life between believers. So Mission arises from this recognition of the unity that is already there and mission also then continues to feed and perpetuate further unity which then feeds further mission.

In an interesting sidelight to the SACLA gathering, The South African Council of Churches insisted that their participation in the SACLA Assembly would be agreed to provided that there would be no ongoing other structure developed that would compete or take the ecumenical initiative away from the SACC or damage their programmes. Conciliar organisations by their very nature work at organisational unity as a primary goal.

Certainly the invisible unity of the Church has to be actualized but then the forms this may take may rise and fall and metamorphose in scores of ways. The prayer of Jesus is already a reality. When the Spirit came the Father bound all together who had received the Spirit in a perpetual unity in Christ. When that unity is actualized the world believes.

#### Religious Unity.

Cassidy however was to be placed on the horns of a dilemma. In the process of transitions in 2004 the ANC adopted an approach to religions that sought to co-opt faith constituencies to its political agenda. It had of course benefitted from the deep allegiance to its cause evidenced in the struggle for liberty by Dr. Beyers Naude.

There was another significant minister of religion connected to the movement. Rev Cedric Mason a Methodist Minister also joined the struggle and contributed significantly to the fight against Apartheid. Indeed he was imprisoned for his resistance in Pretoria Central prison for a period. He was to play a part that his position and sacrifice would warrant. In the post 2004 transition Mason exercised influence in two realms.

In an interview with a senior ANC representative in Zimbabwe in the 80s the writer was informed that there was a plan to create a ministry of Religious Affairs in the post liberation

Cabinet in South Africa with this idea in mind. Religion should serve the ideological, social and political cause of the ANC. Social cohesion was a prize that would foster the development of the country and state. Although this particular configuration has yet to be fully implemented Mason became active in this function. He began to be given openings and opportunities within the SABC to mount initiatives, through the broadcaster, to advocate dialogue with other faiths that had the intended effect of uniting them behind the new dispensation. Divergences between religions on faith grounds needed to be prevented and inclusiveness emphasized.

A parliament of religions was proposed and initiated. Mason developed powerful antipathies to any dissonance among religions. This would mitigate against national unity. Mason espoused a universalistic viewpoint which stood against the positions especially of evangelicals. The pre-eminence of Christ was less important than the cause of national unity. Mason was also given the brief of coopting the powerful and influential SACC into partnerships with the government from a close association within the organisation.

While liberation, justice and human rights overlaps the concern for the righteousness of the Kingdom of God, they are nor equivalent. While the partnership of ANC and SACC had obvious advantages for the social life of the new democracy it goes without saying that this close alliance could mute the prophetic and distinctive role that the Church has in relation to state.

In the post apartheid era Cassidy began to feel that his understanding of truth in relation to context began to diverge from the views emerging from the SACC/ANC. This was that the Bible was not equivalent to ANC policy documents. Liberation and human rights was not a higher calling than the pursuit of truth in certain instances. Evangelism could not be emptied of its call for conversion and new birth no matter how much the ANC desired the social glue of religious convergence. The extraordinary consensus wrought in the ministry of Cassidy in evangelism and described in this chapter began to unravel. The SACLA2 gathering in Pretoria still held the fellowship. However, the issue of Gay Marriage was to prove decisive in driving a wedge within the church. When Cassidy and other leaders convened the National Initiative of Reformation in South Africa at the end of the first quarter of 2008 the invitation to the SACC to participate and share was turned down.

The Chapter on Truth examines this issue and the interaction between Cassidy and the SACC in respect of the legislation. This chapter closes with the observation that the generous inclusive and irenic spirit of Cassidy was to become muted or more secondary as the calling he had received from God to be a defender of the faith began to grow in his being. The interaction between truth and the ideological fruit of secularisation and the interests of political power began to give a new focus

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## CHAPTER SIX

# THE MARK OF LOVE.

### The social witness of the Gospel

(John 17: 24) *For you loved me before the foundation of the world. And I have declared to them your name and will declare it that the love with which You loved me may be in them and I in them.*

Love precedes creation. It is surely love that is the goal of existence and its substance. The human life is to be a receptacle for a profound benediction. The name and the love of God are tightly bound. The being of God is love's source. Love is God's nature.

The ultimacy and mystery of God's love is not beyond human expression but its expectant possibility. The mission of God is to be accompanied not by fractions of or the stretching of and pressing of human love in variegated self motivations and attempts to rise to love from within. Rather the love of God Himself, which is the quality by which He is defined, can be realised in the missionary enterprise. The prayer makes this impossibility possible in Mission.

This love is not sought after as an acquisition or a fruit of human discipline and design. The love of God comes distinctly into human creatures as receptacles fostered for this purpose. That love is also then related to the living presence of Christ which may also abide in the heart of the believer as Love's fount.

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John Stott writing in the *Contemporary Christian* records Paul's high view of love as the hallmark of genuine discipleship.

“knowledge is vital, faith indispensable, religious experience necessary and service essential but Paul gives pre-eminence to love. Love is the greatest thing in all the world for God is Love in His innermost being. Father, Son and Holy Spirit are eternally united to each other in self-giving love Love is the principal, the paramount the pre-eminent, the distinguishing feature of the people of God. (Stott:199:148)

If there was one distinguishable feature about Michael Cassidy that rises easily and naturally into view it is this mark. He preaches and illustrates it.

#### 6.1 LOVE IN PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE.

Those who have partnered with Cassidy have enduring memories of their relationships with him. Cassidy is someone you simply can't leave or walk away from. African Enterprise reveals a fair amount of grey hair simply because the team has proved to be largely indivisible and the rewards of mutual Christian love a blessing. The founder maintains strong enduring friendship links even with those who have left the work for another calling. They serve on related boards all over the world or they become part of a correspondence network where each person gets individual care and contact.

Some did leave Cassidy as people do, drawn by other prospects and callings. Some left, no doubt, with causes and grievances and thwarted ambition; but who can obviate that in any organisation? They too were kept in hope of a shared journey in other ways.

### **6.1.1. Luthando Charlie.**

This love was not only expressed in collegueship. During a mission to Kimberley African Enterprise came into contact with Luthando Charlie. He was a political heavyweight among young blacks in Kimberley. He and a group of several others were drawn into the mission and were invited to come to the African Enterprise Centre. On their return he and 19 others were taken into custody by the police in relation to riotous and destructive behaviour and the burning of school classrooms and text books. They were arrested as witnesses not as the accused. Cassidy and local church leaders acted to try and do something about these detentions, Hel went to the authorities in Pretoria on behalf of the Kimberley churches but to no avail.

For 19 months six of these young men were in solitary confinement and tortured to get information to damn their peers. When they came out Michael and Carol Cassidy had a conversation. “We can’t be held responsible to care for all South Africa’s detainees but we can take responsibility for one we know.”

Luthando became a temporary foster son to the Cassidy couple and a scholarship was secured for him at Hilton College, one of the country’s most prestigious schools. He became the first black boy to play rugby for the school and secured his matriculation. Later scholarships were obtained for university and technikon education. The link still functions and his witness to Christ is firm. He is the director of the alumni for the technikon from whom he received his higher education. (COOMES: 247)

### **6.1.2. Forgiving slander.**

In another story Cassidy performed an unusual act of forgiveness. In the run up to the SACLA conference in Pretoria there had been a softening of attitude in the white Dutch Reformed Church. While the church would not approve any official involvement there was a hesitant openness to allow individual ministers and laypeople to attend behind the back of the church. Nevertheless some strong reservation to this softening persisted.

But this became threatened by an unexpected event a few weeks before the assembly in July 1979.

Cassidy’s many friends in the DRC alerted him to a rumour circulating that would be guaranteed to precipitate the withdrawal of the NGK completely. The rumour touched the very core of Afrikaner fears and raised the spectre of Cottesloe as never before. The rumour had two assertions.

1. Michael Cassidy was being investigated by the special branch and he was to have charges of treason levelled against him.
2. Cassidy had been involved in marital infidelity. He had left his wife and was living in sin with an African woman.



The source of this slander and misinformation was the headquarters of the Dutch Reformed Church in Windhoek. The person circulating the information was Ds. Piet Strauss a leader on the NGK in Namibia. Cassidy did not wait a moment. He boarded the first plane to Windhoek and confronted Strauss in an unannounced and surprise visit. They sat down together and Straus admitted that the man before him was not the man he and others had maligned. They were reconciled in a spirit of grace and friendship. Nevertheless Strauss did not revoke his slanderous comments publicly when Cassidy left and he stood by his own interpretation. In spite of this Strauss was not able to unduly discredit SACLA or dissuade engagement from his peers in the DRC.

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June 1979, barely days before the SACLA conference Cassidy read this passage of scripture as the consequences of the misinformation had its impact nevertheless.

*(Is 54:17). “No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgement thou shalt condemn: This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord.”*

Strauss and others were right in their assessment that SACLA could produce an ecumenical encounter that could undermine Apartheid. It did profoundly and Apartheid was discredited and could no longer prosper. But it was finished and doomed anyway as the world ( and heaven) rose against it. The NGK was thereby relieved of an impossible and heretical burden and a new journey began to restoration and faithfulness from the ashes.

But behind SACLA stood the lives and witness of Dutch Reformed Afrikaner men and women of faith whose resistances had already been established, whose anguishes were already a deep travail. There were many who had worked for its destruction and especially the missionaries who had given all to live and work in black communities. Dr Nico Smith accepted an invitation to move to Mamelodi to lead a ‘gemeente’. Afrikaner theologians were crossing rubicons and declaring their souls. This thesis honours the names of many who are mentioned in this work. Fresh life-giving water for the transformation of the Dutch Reformed Church was rising from their witness and obedience.

Cassidy provided an impetus, he never acted in judgment or condemnation but like his grandfather, he sought grounds for deep friendship. He set up an ecumenical opportunity and the spirit of Christian fellowship that was fostered was a fruit of the Spirit and it washed out part of the error and hatred in those heady SACLA days.

It is quite true to say that the bonds of friendship nurtured with so many in the ministry of African Enterprise have often made it possible to describe all of the initiatives that have grown from the faithfulness of Michael Cassidy as acts of obedience by him and his friends.

But Cassidy has also always, in the process of sharing the Gospel been moved with compassion at the perplexities and anguishes of human life that the evangelistic contact gives in African Enterprise missions. He manages to carry with him at any one time numbers of ongoing pastoral concerns and caring agendas with others. It is significant that the very first published work “The Relationship Tangle” is about right relationships and the maximising of loving relationships.

The writer has a vivid memory of Cassidy on the roof of a mud hut with a hammer in hand seeking to secure and hammer in the corrugated sheeting that had been torn through a settlement close to his home in Hilton.

This chapter also examines the application of love in a wider social field of its impact on others. Cassidy was a man for others and understood the wider application of the Gospel in this.

In looking at the following aspects of love in Politics it is important to emphasise that in the transition process toward a new South Africa was often believed, by whites, that the steps toward the resolution of the conflict could be achieved by the following.

**Firstly** an absence of the conflict (or peace) had first to be achieved. One could not proceed in a climate of violence. (This posture is classically represented in the present day conflict in Israel) **Secondly**, reconciliation to arrive at agreement was to follow and then **finally** justice could be legislatively arranged.

In fact the NIR Theology group (mentioned in this chapter) were in profound agreement that the **opposite** needed to be applied. Justice would lead to Reconciliation which would slowly work its way out toward the establishment of peace .

Those in the liberation movements insisted on this order in any events. This Chapter follows this precedent.

## 6.2. LOVE AS JUSTICE.

Cassidy had been led through his early contact with members of the Liberal party to understand the injustices of the country. He grew up with a sense of stark rejection of the lot of indigenous people down through history prior to Apartheid South Africa. Shortly after leaving school and at Cambridge he participated in protest action in London and marched against South Africa House in company with Michael Nuttall and Alasdair Macaulay.

He summarises in his book *The Passing Summer*. some of the details and experiences of the legal structures of injustice and analyses the offence against his fellow South Africans. He advocates a righteousness in human affairs that is the fount of justice. This sense of justice had its origins in political thought and the obvious outcomes of the politics of the day. So it was bred from the conviction that justice was righteousness fostered by love. Perhaps this was idealistic in the early Cassidy but he later, in his own reorientation around faith came to believe that the Love of god shed abroad in the believers heart could enlighten and modify political outcomes. The Gospel could save society.

Cassidy often referred to the idea of Christian patriotism as a political posture in opposition to nationalism. Cassidy never had discontinuities between individual and personal understandings and the place of love in society or in politics. Love was the stuff of every link between individuals. You could not shut love off or put it on hold. The line between love and justice was a continuum, not broken into two separate parts.

Perhaps the most persistent and powerful impulse that drove Cassidy was to believe that love could be substantial and be a manifest influence in macrocosm. This was a conviction that

drove the gatherings and conferences that were convened as Cassidy's response to South Africa's anguished and unjust situation.

### **6.2.1. Love as a political virtue.**

One of the early chairmen of the South African Board of African Enterprise was Dr. Edgar Brookes. He was a former Senator in the South African parliament and famous fighter and champion of black rights in South Africa. He trained as a Historian in political theory. He was one of the leaders of the Liberal Party when it was first formed and a writer and commentator and a historian at the University of Natal. After retirement from the university he was ordained and became a canon of the Anglican Church. He often wrote about the challenging theme of bringing Christian faith and politics together. Brookes had an influence on Cassidy who was challenged by his philosophy about love. Brookes wrote that

Love is a political virtue... the world languishes because love is being tried so little. It is imperative that it should be admitted into the field of political thought. (CASSIDY 1989:23.)

Other Chairmen reflected a similar posture. Bishop Alpheus Zulu was retired from his diocese in Zululand and Rev. Dr. Mmutlanyane (Stanley) Magoba were men who had every reason to be bitter and vengeful but they too were unremitting in their belief in "The Master's Way" referred to by Albert Luthuli the renowned but banned leader of the ANC. Luthuli, who was a minister of the Gospel, persistently refused to throw his weight behind a change in strategy in the fight against Apartheid.

He and others opted, in concert with other of history's "struggle" heroes like Gandhi and Martin Luther King, to search for non-violent means. Eventually the change in strategy toward armed resistance left the Christian stance of ANC weakened and other secularist, humanist and socialist/communist ideological influences gained some ascendancy.

Interestingly Magoba had been involved in the armed struggle and was a hero to those in the Pan African Congress. He served his term on Robben Island. But his conversion experience led him also to begin to march to the sound of a different drum.

### **6.2.2. The failure of Violence to create an ethos of peace.**

One of the abiding tragedies of post Apartheid South Africa is the hagiographic elevation of the violent aspect of the struggle against Apartheid. One thinks of heroes like Peter Mokaba and Jacob Zuma whose fame is linked to their public use of struggle songs. The former with his cry "Kill the farmers kill the Boers" the latter, "Bring me my machine gun." Of course these are reminiscent of hard days being consummated in victory but they affirm violence as the best way to bring social change even though they are increasingly being regarded as themes of history that is needed to stimulate memory. The new president of the ANC Youth League has as his inspiration a large portrait of Mandela in battle fatigues. Militancy is his chosen posture.

This militaristic spirit is still profoundly present and it has had consequences in relation to inter party violence and even warfare. South Africa has the highest murder rate. Hijacking and cash in transit robberies are all aggravated by military style action and the ubiquitous presence of AK 47s. Even worse, the fabric of South African society is being battered and

bruised by violence in the home, guns and knives in schools, brutality in worker strikes, and the rise of gangs as the doctrine that violence is the way of redemption remains imbedded in national consciousness. Strike action particularly by COSATU uses the threat of violence and often offered lame excuses rather than condemning violence amongst its members. This is hardly distinguishable at times from the anti-apartheid action of the 1980s. Considering that COSATU is a partner with the government as part of the alliance it is even more puzzling that such animosity in wage negotiation takes place.

In a very real sense Nelson Mandela and others like Oliver Tambo were unique in that they did not allow the deeply corrupting power of violence to take them captive and overflow into post Apartheid South Africa in new forms of oppression and revenge. They were able, with Mandela as the chief exponent, to exercise love in political contexts.

### **6.2.3. Two books on Love.**

In his book *The Passing Summer* and later *The Politics of Love* Cassidy makes his own case for political love. Cassidy had some influence despite his peripheral relationship to the engine of revolution in Robben Island and across the border. He was invited to join the UDF and be one of its leaders in Pietermaritzburg. But his influence was with Christians everywhere and he gave leadership to the church. His words and deeds also found their way as yeast into the Afrikaner constituency and contributed in its own way as one of many influences that fostered a search for reconciliation and a negotiated settlement. All he did and said was predicated on the truth that Christ, rather than the ideologies of man, would be the best foundation and provide the surest way. He was for the politics of love. Justice was love in social structures.

In 1989, Cassidy, like many others saw the slow approach of the doom Alan Paton foretold in his great work, *Cry the beloved Country*.

Alan Paton seemed right in his assessment that Apartheid would produce such hatred and impossible polarities that South Africa would descend into a maelstrom of social catastrophe as blacks would run out of suffering endurance and “turn to hating as whites finally turned to loving”.

In this situation Cassidy picked up his pen and wrote the influential book *The Passing Summer*. The book gave a sympathetic and fair and understanding look at the history of South Africa in which no groups were spared and some of the myths of the past debunked. The book called on compatriots to recognise that the opportunity to resolve the impasse caused by the collision of black and white nationalisms was slipping by and that it needed to be resolved. Cassidy painted a canvas in which the threads of our tangled history were traced in its colourful potentials and its dark and desperate injustices.

In Chapter 20 of this work he wrote this.

Love is the most neglected yet the most necessary political virtue, especially in South Africa, where every other form of politics has been tried and found wanting. In fact to labour for such love in the social arena is to labour for the Kingdom of God. My deepest conviction is that on this path and along this way lies the answer for South Africa

The book was written in 6 parts. Most importantly Cassidy set aside one of the 6 parts of the book to reflect specifically on the politics of love. In this he drew on his roots with the traditions he admired in the Liberal Party and exemplified through Brookes, Paton and Brown. Social justice is love. This residue fixed in his consciousness from childhood days was still there. He argued in the first instance that from the perspective of constituency and demography that Christians had the duty to initiate change because;

- **Constitutionally** the country was self-confessedly and self-consciously Christian by definition in its placing the nation under God. (This is no longer the case with the new constitution)
- **Statistically** in broad terms the confession of most its citizens (78%) was Christian, So South Africa would be blatantly hypocritical if it could be nationally content with the despicable expedient of professing one thing and doing another.
- **Inspirationally** the challenge that a country could actually live out its faith would be an exemplary witness while saving itself.
- **Practically** in the midst of enormous divergences and polarity there could be a common ground of the golden rule around which to unite.

The book encouraged basis and method for negotiating a different outcome than revolution and catastrophe.

In suggesting this approach Cassidy turned to the scriptures and the precedents and philosophy of many Christians who were struggling to find a way to make faith count in political context. (Summary at APPENDIX 5)

So profuse is the material in these his two books on love that it is almost impossible to present it coherently in this overview. This articulation of love and its meaning in history is Cassidy's dominant heartfelt and passionate word above all other words to South Africa. It was expressed in a moment of transition and at the moment after the release of Nelson Mandela when the future hung in the balance.

There is a strange reserve in the church regarding political action for just causes. The church is told to stick to "spiritual" service to the nation by the state. It colludes in this often by its confusion about its function in a fallen world. It sees itself too often as a lifeboat giving refuge. Sometimes the church becomes absorbed in the interior difficulties of individuals and their immediate difficulties.

Christopher Sugden writes;

We cannot reduce all problems to the micro-problems of individuals. It means that the church as the church, and not just as Christian citizens, must be involved in politics. Charles Elliot's essay in Christian faith and political hopes, defines politics as choosing between possible human relationships. A political act is one whereby there is an effort to preserve or change what exists in social structures. The church cannot be neutral in politics, however hard it tries. Its business is human relationships. Even by its non-involvement it

supports the status quo of between those with and those without power.  
(Sugden:1981:67)

I conclude with this comment from Cassidy.

“Suffice it for the moment to register the necessity in this nation of attempting to fix things by love’s resources and not any other. Indeed who knows what power might be released if we could rise to walk the more excellent way.” (Cassidy.1990:119)

### 6.3.LOVE AS RECONCILIATION

SACLA had played its part in subterranean ways. All sorts of initiatives were taken some hidden some obvious, The famous SACLA Clinic on the Cape Flats was stimulated by Dr. Ivan Thoms. A creative disturbance had begun among the 500 white delegates from the Dutch Reformed Church in their denomination. A process was started especially under the leadership of Professor Johan Heyns to declare Apartheid a sin. It was to be the end of Johan Heyns who died at the hands of an assassin’s bullet. This was not a party game. This was about power and it was deadly serious. History was taking South Africa to the brink. Polarities were increasing.

In other quarters the place of Christian faith and theology in change continued through the Institute for Contextual Theology which fostered the strengthening and growth of black theology. It is likely that much of the movement led by Cassidy was seen as not sufficiently representative of exponents of the liberation struggle. It could appear as weak and irrelevant to the freedom fighters.

Black theology was wrestling with the demons as well. Their analysis of the South African situation was full of suspicion and despair of white Christian initiatives. Black theology had its origins in the Black Conscious Movement that stemmed from Steve Biko and the student organisations UCM (University Christian Movement) and SASO (South African Student Organisation). This suggested that black people could find in their blackness an awareness that could be affirming and empowering.

In their view the oppression of South African blacks had a long history. Lebamang Sebidi defined these as a **Koisan phase** in which the first permanent European settlement was established and the victims of that encounter were the Khoi and the San.

This was followed by the **Tribalistic phase** in the Eastern frontier with the earliest skirmishes between Bantu and Boer in 1792. **The nationalist Phase** was the delineation of the republic ( without reference or input from blacks) into four provinces with strong linkages to two Boer republics at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. This gave way to the **Black Consciousness** phase of struggle with its almost total break with white liberal tutelage. Black consciousness was an attitude of mind and a way of life. This outline of history overturned the perspectives of a liberal interpretation of history. South Africa’s history was the history of struggle. Its theology a theology of liberation.

There was recognition that black theology had an ideological content informed by historical, cultural roots and the experience and thinking of North American and South American exponents of liberation as well as Socialist and Marxist analysis and the history and culture of

Africa. The content drawn from ideology was seen as positive in the way that the construction of new social realities could be served and guided by its ideas and feed off the lessons of history. (MOSALA:1986:1-13.)

Nevertheless ideologies inevitably are exclusive. Scratch an ideology and you find a group interest. Ideology also provides a system of self-justification that makes self-criticism extremely difficult (Apartheid proved this). In critiquing its own stance as a specifically black movement its exponents countered the concern about its own racial composition and overtones of exclusion as temporary and strategic. Exclusivity is not a goal but a strategy. (Ibid 34.)

Black theology carried deep suspicion and despair in relation to the kind of exercise that Cassidy was mounting. Because Cassidy was white it suggested that he could not bring a relevant or universal word. The Gospel in white hands had not delivered. Indeed it had sown tares.

Black theology rejects most of white theology's interpretation of the Gospel as self-serving. Through its unfaithfulness to the Gospel it had implicitly declared the death of God just as in the Exodus story the children of Israel had apostatized during Moses absence and created for themselves a golden calf. Black theologians saw as part of their agenda the discovery of the original teaching, the message behind the distorting tendencies of white theology. (Mosala.Op Cit. 47)

Divergences were growing and there was increasing estrangement about what to think about the situation and how to respond.

In late 1985 Cassidy and others convened a gathering to think about a way forward. It was decided to convene an emergency gathering of church and parachurch leaders at three week's notice with 400 delegates. In September 1985 this conclave met in the hall of the Metropolitan Methodist church in Pietermaritzburg. At one end of the spectrum were a group of angry AZAPO ( Azanian Peoples Organisation) young people, also present were a 56 person largely official contingent from the Dutch Reformed Church.

Alan Paton opened the proceedings and this was followed by Desmond Tutu who once again played a major role as a bridge from the past into the future. He said to the black representatives.

In spite of everything we are nevertheless called to the business of forgiveness and reconciliation. To whites he said. "How can you ask forgiveness from someone when you still have your foot firmly planted on his neck. True reconciliation my brothers and sisters is costly. It involves confrontation because the cross was confrontation with evil. The cross showed the evil of evil. Are we ready even to die? Are we ready to die physically, to die to our popularity, to die to our security? Are we ready to be made fools for Christ's sake? ( Cassidy:1989:451-452).

Many others spoke. David Bosch, Khoza Mgojo, Peter Storey, Professor Bonganjalo Goba and Professor Klaus Nurnberger. This was a 5 day conference and in most evenings the

conversations and dialogue would go on to midnight and beyond. One of these was an earnest and fascinating engagement between Tutu and key thinkers of the Dutch Reformed Church.

At the end of the conference a National Initiative for Reconciliation statement was drawn up. But the conference also initiated an extraordinary follow-up to the conference. Christians in the country were to be called to a national day of prayer which would also be a “Pray Away”. Christians would demonstrate the urgency of the country’s crisis by staying away from work. This was called for October 9<sup>th</sup> and in most cases this initiative emptied the streets of South Africa’s cities. On October 10<sup>th</sup> the Johannesburg Star showed one of the busiest roads in South Africa between Soweto and the city to be empty except for a solitary bicycle.

A delegation was to go to President Botha on 8th October and the stay away was to be on the following day. The delegation would take the following demands.

- 1) The end to the state of emergency
- 2) Remove the SADF and the emergency police forces from the townships
- 3) Release all detainees and political prisoners, withdraw charges against the treason trialists and allow exiles to return home.
- 4) Begin talks immediately with authentic leadership of the various population groups with a view to equitable power sharing in South Africa.
- 5) Begin the process of introducing a common system of education in South Africa.
- 6) Take the necessary steps toward the elimination of all forms of legislated discrimination.

The NIR however had been trumped by the appearance of the Kairos Document which had been released in the interim between the end of the NIR and the visit to the president. In the end, Michael went along to the President’s office to try to pave a way for the NIR delegation. But it was a very tough and seemingly fruitless encounter with the President. Botha seemed quite incapable of seeing the difference in posture between that initiative and the NIR.

The prospect of the stay away planned for the next day further soured the meeting. The encounter closed with bluster and threats from the president. Cassidy as Chairman of NIR and the person chosen to address the nation on T.V. that night was told by Botha that if he did not on T.V. personally denounce the Kairos document he would be personally “fixed” by the President. Cassidy wondered if this means elimination, imprisonment, harassment or what? Before the T.V. programme he phoned his wife, Carol to say that if he disappeared next day, she should know it was the president who was responsible.

The Kairos Document issued in this climate of crisis critiqued what it called “state theology” and “church theology”. Churches were in captivity to oppression. It advocated a “prophetic theology”. It also criticised the theological statement about God in the preamble to the constitution. This God was an idol said Kairos. He was exclusively on the side of white settlers. The worship of this God entrenched oppression.

Kairos saw the government as tyrannical and against the common good of the populace. The regime is therefore illegitimate. The document insisted that the unity of Christians is found in catholic solidarity or in a common praxis toward liberation. Saayman suggests that Kairos, in its understanding, was reacting to narrower more traditional understandings of mission that were outdated. Contemporary Missiology could affirm the need for liberation and humanisation. (Saayman:1191:90&91



Stung by this critique of church theology a group of church leaders calling itself “Concerned Evangelicals” got together to add their bit to the strong critique of the Kairos document. Many of their churches were guilty of collusion or silence. These were churches with federal structures that were apartheid reminiscent or who had overseas mission control, or were evangelical and Pentecostal churches that were uncritical of Apartheid. This initiative was long overdue but at least they entered the lists and sent forth a much delayed voice for engagement in the pursuit of a just resolution which was welcomed.

But in the period after NIR a group of thinkers and theologians who had been part of the journey with SACLA and NIR began to see the necessity for further reflection on 2 counts. The one was to state categorically what Reconciliation was all about for those who were resisting the move to create an environment to foster this. The other was, in the face of the polarisation brought about by Black Consciousness and black theology with its suspicion of white theology to provide for reflection on the South African situation that would provide grounds for rapprochement and dialogue among NIR theologians and those who were in Kairos.

Many of those in the NIR had been co-signers of the Kairos document in its intent but differed in its understanding of salvation and Christian community and in their hope that the situation was still fluid and a new day attainable.

The writer took the initiative to convene a group of laymen and theologians and later to arrange for the publication and distribution of the three books that were produced. These were: *The Cost of reconciliation*, *Violence and the quest for Justice* and *A democratic Vision for South Africa*.

The group called itself ‘The NIR analysis and theology group’. The chief thinker and exponent of the content of these books was the Lutheran theologian and ethicist Professor Klaus Nurnberger.

In a preface to the first, Nurnberger stressed the need for reconciliation. The Kairos document had hardened the positions and amplified the divide between contending parties.

There are Christians in this country who are less concerned about a free and just society. They are increasingly lured into a holy war mentality. Whether they support a totalitarian revolution or an authoritarian backlash, their motive is victory not reconciliation. Can we allow this trend to develop unchallenged? Even if violence can no longer be avoided does this mean that we must capitulate before its escalation? Can we allow it to be legitimated in the name of Christ? Conflict implies suffering, but reconciliation also implies suffering, the suffering of the cross. There can be no reconciliation without the cross. In a nutshell the cross means willingness to sacrifice for the sake of fellowship.  
( Nurnberger & Tooke 1989:7)

Nurnberger spelled this out more succinctly.

I have defined Reconciliation as the formerly declared readiness of both parties in a conflict to suffer each other and to suffer the consequences of

the conflict after the cause of the conflict has been removed or while it is still being removed.(Ibid1:15.)

Cassidy quotes Nurnberger again in Chapter 15 of his book, *The Passing Summer*. Nurnberger points to 2 Corinthians 8:9 “*For you know the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you, through your poverty might become rich.*” Nurnberger applies this.

“Christ lets us into the secret of horizontalising our relationships. We can easily substitute “powerful” for “rich” and “weak” for “poor” and the sentence still applies. He who is at the top moves down to enable the others to come up. The idea is that that the latter move up so that they too can move down with Christ so that others can move up. Only when you have, can you give; only when you are up can you move down. Those who can afford to carry the burden at any point in time are invited to do so. God himself set the example.”

There is no real peace among brothers until the fault is dealt with. The pressures from below for the structures to change are to be met with the dismantling of unjust structures. Just having goodwill is not enough. Reconciliation can be seen by those below as a trick to get acquiescence to legitimate the continuation of the injustice. Injustice causes conflict that produces rage and violence. The solution to this is to begin with justice and then to peace and finally to reconciliation.

Reconciliation could mean for many an easy transition without costs or conflict or a way to make the problem go away. The cause of the conflict had to be tackled

Cassidy also gave his own view on reconciliation in *The Passing Summer*.(Pages 262-286). This summarised in APPENDIX 6.

All of this reflection and talk about process and the content of reconciliation were offered informally in books and conferences by word and mouth. Cassidy was a little like John the Baptist, a singular man with a group of friends and disciples speaking from outside structures and with no real constituency beyond those who opted to become fellow travellers and companions on the way. It is a remarkable fact that much of what Cassidy expressed in spirit was already shared by many and it grew through Cassidy’s reminders and promptings to show that Christian faith could interact meaningfully with its environment, the society the church and the political contenders.

It is most likely that many were encouraged and their political stances strengthened, confirmed and affirmed by his lead. It would seem that God had quickened in the early Cassidy a special empathy and spirit of rapprochement and friendship toward the Afrikaner. Nowhere, in any of Cassidy’s writing or utterances was there anything but a hope for light and illumination, realisation and renunciation of that which cast such a slur on this people and threw their own greatness and special place in Africa into shadow.

In all Cassidy’s dealing with black church leaders at that time he met with nothing but encouragement. Here was an ally. In all the invitations for dialogue and insight with theologians, church leaders, and the South African Council of Churches there had been grace and help guidance and encouragement.

In the Lusaka Evangelistic Mission it was the ANC in that city that opened the doors for the ministry to get visas for all the missionaries from South Africa. Indeed the team were met by ANC representatives and shepherded through passport control and housed with SWAPO and ANC cadres in suitable accommodation in the city. All over Africa Cassidy's stance against Apartheid was honoured and celebrated within the Christian community. The writer was once told that one of the NIR books *A Democratic vision for South Africa* was being widely read by black leaders and was considered helpful in the shaping of a new democratic order.

The facts are that negotiations were conducted, forgiveness was put into the mix, and whites climbed down and gave up. Just structures were created or changed to accommodate all. Honour was maintained. The way to justice was opened, reconciliation was entered into.

Cassidy might not have been a key in the actual bargaining and negotiating process in Lusaka and South Africa. But he had got it right. He did define the way. He did set the tone. He might have been peripheral to the power negotiations and of no great consequence to any political grouping's clout but he was primary in articulating the hope of which he was a prisoner. He did in the end map out the "Master's Way."

#### 6.4. LOVE AS PEACE

Peace is the gift of love. Love brings alienation to an end in friendship. But peace journeys beyond the moment of reconciliation. Acts of enmity can be forgiven but memories replay our history on the screen of consciousness and emotion, stimulated by hurts and anguishes that don't meekly follow our wilful acts of social forgiveness and surrender.

This was to be powerfully revealed in the Truth Commission chaired by Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Getting at the truth of the anti-human effects of Apartheid state violence and other violations of human rights might have brought extraordinary acts of forgiveness and in many instances closure to its trauma but memory is often a recording on a loop that does not still the accusation and apportioning of blame that reverberates within and presses for the conflict to rise again.

##### 6.4.1. The refusal to use violence.

Some refuse to participate in deeds that hurt and alienate. They forestall enmity by withholding participation in acts of violence and war against others. They are peacemakers who often suffer the consequences of their refusal to share in these activities. Conscientious objection is regarded often as a simplistic reductionism that does not take into account all the reasons for conflict that are linked to the national or group interest and the fundamentals of self preservation or the heroic good of removing injustice.

Cassidy, as has already been mentioned, had seen in the history of his family and his friend the awful consequences of being caught up in the agenda of war and violence. His Grandmother as a war nurse at the siege of Mafeking and later a nurse in concentration camps had to try to deal with the catastrophic consequences on the brutal end of war that gave the lie to its trumped up glory. His friend had been destroyed by his despair about Apartheid when he had turned from democratic strategies to seeking violent means. This caused his subsequent flight into exile and unrelieved anguish about the beloved country.

His own nephew Charlie Bester stood in the tradition of abhorring violence. He resisted a call up to the army and endured several years in prison for refusing to become a violent instrument not only because he did not identify with this strategy but largely because he could not participate in an unjust cause. Charlie's reason for abstaining is quoted in the *Passing Summer* in this testimony (Ibid:461)

“Evil is manifesting itself in a political system and the government of the day is using the army and people of my age to uphold and defend that system.... I believe that in order for me to follow a path that will best demonstrate my love for God, my country and my fellow South Africans; I must pursue the way of reconciliation and non-violence. I will therefore refuse to serve in the SADF, and take the consequences”

There is a heroism linked to war which is affirmed by its participants as valour against the enemy. Our country's towns and roads and schools still have the names of Afrikaner heroes who fought well against English oppressors. The ANC too has a memory of heroes of the struggle that inform the name changing impulse that must follow the historical realignments.

Peacemakers often stand alone against the zeitgeists of the day and suffer the dismissal and collective amnesia of victors and vanquished alike. They too were victors in their pursuits of righteousness but often it is only their own hearts that give them applause and their memories resound in loneliness. Heaven remembers and smiles on these heroes.

#### **6.4.2. Shalom.**

Cassidy did not shrink from the dynamics of violence. He objected to violence but he proactively sought to do something about the causes. In this Cassidy reflected the Old Testament understanding of peace as Shalom. Etienne de Villiers writing in the NIR reader *Conflict and the Quest for Justice* writes as follows (Ibid:121)

Shalom is more than the absence of war. Formulated negatively, it includes the absence of alienation, material need and oppression in society. Formulated positively, it indicates a state of comprehensive social harmony and national wellbeing in society. The Old Testament emphasises that peace and justice are indissolubly linked to each other; it is also not possible to talk of peace in the absence of true worship to God. (Ez. 13: 10, 16.) Shalom finally includes also harmony between humanity and nature as well as harmony in nature itself. (Is. 11:6-9) The Old Testament teaches us that peace is multi-dimensional and comprehensive. One can only speak of complete peace if there is harmony in nature and human beings have the right relationship with God, themselves, and their fellow human beings (in both personal relationships and in different institutions of society.)

In the New Testament peace is profoundly related to the fact that Jesus ushers in a rule of God whose currency is peace. Christ was peace's Prince in that he has reconciled man to God. The difference between the Old Testament and the New is God's rule in Jesus and not a change in its basic character. So the question is how can unbelievers constitute a righteous society?

The cause of man's breach with God is sin that is the cause of the lack of harmony in the whole world. De Villiers goes on to say.

By eradicating enmity with God Jesus Christ initiated a comprehensive renewal of human existence (2 Cor. 5:17) which includes among others, the liberation from fear and the conversion from self-destructive behaviour. His work of reconciliation also led to the foundation of a completely new community, the church, in which people that differed greatly in social status, and cultural background coexisted. (Ibid: 122)

Cassidy pressed for both of these understandings of peace. He painstakingly revealed the causes of the conflict and insisted that peace could not be achieved without their redress. His books on the politics of love are filled with social and political and historical analysis. He stood to alert the nation to doom and suggest a way forward. He later provided a significant input, whether decisive or not, to the negotiation process and encouraged redress and restoration and a recovery of justice.

#### 6.4.3. Conversion.

Cassidy also has as a core concern the summons to reconciliation with God as a very important aspect of reconstituting the nature of man in conversion. True conversion would lead to social peace. (Wallis:1981:5,6.)

Conversion in the Bible is always firmly grounded in history; it is always addressed to the actual situation in which people find themselves. In other words biblical conversion is historically specific. People are never called to conversion in an historical vacuum. They turn to God in the midst of concrete historical events, dilemmas and choices. That turning is always deeply personal, but it is never private. It is never an abstract or theoretical concern; conversion is always a practical issue. Any idea of conversion that is removed from the social and political realities of the day is simply not biblical.... We are called to respond to God always in the particulars of our own personal, social and political circumstances.

This quote raises real questions about the kind of conversion that happens at evangelistic rallies and their follow-up.

This quote probably lays bare Cassidy's dual hope for peace in South Africa. Political love and the creation of new social possibilities, through the change of heart wrought by evangelism and conversion. In Cassidy's mind the most relevant thing in the world was preaching the Gospel as it would begin such change.

#### 6.4.4. Analysing Violence.

Cassidy discusses the analysis on violence by Nurnberger (Cassidy.1991:181)

The **structural violence** of the South African political dispensation was having a direct impact on individuals in the way that humanity, dignity and equality were affected. This was maintained through **institutional violence** or the laws and legislation and coercive force that maintained discrimination and the violation of rights. This had now spawned **reactive**

**violence** from grass roots and this was orchestrated by the ANC. This in turn generated **repressive violence** which was the state's response to reactive violence in seeking to contain and suppress this involving more policing, co-option of the army into townships and the subterranean rise of secret policing. All of this producing in the end **destructive violence** in which fury and anger boiled over into an often mindless and unruly search to eliminate opponents through rumour, retaliation and revenge.

Cassidy also turned to the sociologist Jacques Ellul who maintained that violence was dictated by several laws (Cassidy 1991:182.) This is a summary of these laws.

- i) **The Law of Continuity.** Once you start using violence, you cannot get away from it. Once a man has started using violence he will never stop using it for it is so much easier and more practical than any other method.
- ii) **The Law or reciprocity.** Violence begets and procreates violence. Nor does victory bring any kind of freedom. Always the victorious side splits up into clans which perpetuate violence.
- iii) **The Law of sameness.** It is impossible to distinguish between justified and unjustified violence. Between the violence that liberates and the violence that enslaves. Every violence is identical with every other violence. Once we consent to use violence ourselves we have to consent to our adversary using it too.
- iv) **The Nothing Else law.** Violence begets violence and nothing else. It is par excellence the method of falsehood. We might have in mind admirable end objectives. Unfortunately to attain them we have to use a bit of violence. Revolutionaries say they will use just a little violence to achieve a just end. Then you will see the reign of justice, liberty and equality. The end does not justify the means. On the contrary evil means corrupt good ends. Violence will never establish a just society. It might be used as revenge but then let us not confuse hate with justice.
- v) **The Law of Justification.** Every user of violence will seek to justify both it and himself. The plain fact is that violence is never 'pure'. Always violence and hatred go together.

Cassidy made an addition to these laws from his own observation and contact with the endemic violence that was beginning to flare in townships in KwaZulu Natal as black on black violence escalated. The ANC and Inkatha engaged in a struggle for the hearts and minds of the Zulus.

- vi) **Violence is basically uncontrollable and will degenerate from the purposeful to the mindless.** It is as unrealistic to moralise against tornadoes as it is to legislate against tornadoes. Violence will hive off to other targets often taking shape from personal vindictiveness of its perpetrators.
- vii) **Violence silences the voice of love.** Che Guevera once said. "a people without hatred cannot win over a brutal enemy". To which Martin Luther King replied. "Through violence you may murder the hater, but you do not murder the hate." The only winners are the devil and his minions.

- viii) **Violence treats people as things.** Violence dehumanises its victims before it demolishes them. It also dehumanises its agent. Che Guevara said ‘Hatred transforms a man into an effective, violent, selective and cold mechanism of death’. Martin Luther King observed, ‘violence as a way of achieving racial justice is both impractical and immoral. It is impractical because it is a descending spiral leading to the destruction of all. It is immoral because it seeks to humiliate the opponent rather than win his understanding; it seeks to annihilate rather than convert. Violence is immoral because it thrives on hatred rather than love. It destroys communities and makes brotherhood impossible. It leaves societies in monologue rather than dialogue. Violence ends up by defeating itself and it creates bitterness in the survivors and brutality in the destroyers. (Ibid:186)

#### **6.4.5. Reviewing the history**

As I write this there are revisionists of history at work. The fact of the matter was that violence and non-violent strategies have ambivalences. In the end wisdom and a better way prevailed as it was that no one could overcome its enemy or contender because of a balance of power that had caused a stalemate. The liberation struggle was won but it was not won by the liberation war in the it was also won by the liberation peacemakers.

There a growing rhetoric and reworking of history that is obscuring this reality and that is glorifying the military aspects of the struggle as though they subjugated and overthrew their opponents. Cassidy represents and joins with a very large number of Christians who stood against Apartheid with their limitations and sometimes in obscurity in different ways in their opposition. Some of this might have been naive, some might have been from conscience, some from fear. Cassidy was one of many who rose and withstood as they could, in God’s name, and in the scheme of things weight was added to the balances of history.

.Nelson Mandela is a symbol of this transition and indeed its byword he forgave and with a magnanimity of heart that gave us all new eyes to see that we all had the possibility to be compatriots, fellow travellers and even friends. We salute this heroism.

There is also heroism with those who stepped down. What of the “minority regime” or “the previously disadvantaged.” Is it harder to assume power or give it up, is it more difficult to confess a sin than to show someone wrong? This kenosis has been for South Africa an obscured gift that is priceless. A self emptying that serves the nation every day in its enjoyment of peace.

#### **6.4.6. Other Peace Initiatives.**

When the 1991 a national Peace Accord was signed Cassidy was there as one of the participants. The ministry took a number of initiatives. One of these one of these was the “From Africa with love” tour in 1992. Teamlets from the ministry visited major political groupings to pray with them and seek to relate to pastoral needs. And needs there were.

On one occasion Harry Gwala the fiery and tough representative of the ANC in Pietermaritzburg and who believed in the efficacy of violence, once approached A.E. team members for prayer. He was facing the onset of a serious illness which seemed beyond the

reach of medical care. He like others needed to find a transcendent reality. Politics although it offered power could not really bring other forms of liberation and salvation.

Out of this 1992 tour came the Kolobe Lodge Dialogue weekends. The basic agenda was to provide a neutral agenda in which people met on the basis of their humanity first. People were asked to share three things.

1. One's life story.
2. One's vision for the new South Africa.
3. One's notion of the steps to be taken to achieve that new South Africa.

The plan was to invite an assortment of politicians from far left to far right. An upmarket game lodge called Kolobe North of Pretoria was selected. African Enterprise as host raised the finance from overseas friends and contacts. Some 96 politicians from all sectors of the political spectrum went through 6 dialogue meetings promoted by A.E. as "The meeting of a life time". For many it proved to be so.

Many who were political enemies became friends. A couple of AZAPO leaders came with AK 47s in their car. The word began to spread there is another way. Philip Mlambo, deputy leader of the PAC whose slogan was one settler one bullet had been on Robben Island and had lost an eye there. He had once been forced by white warders to dig a six foot deep hole. He was forced to climb into it and have it filled until only his neck was sticking out.

When white people in these meetings heard this story it was like scales falling from their eyes. Mlambo was moved by the experience and he became in many places an exponent of reconciliation. Cassidy bumped into him again in Coventry Cathedral where he was a participant in a conference set up by the Cathedral called "Reconciliation 98" where he shared his testimony. (Ibid. 467)

But in KwaZulu Natal the conflagration grew. The Inkatha Movement in KwaZulu Natal began as a cultural organisation to give Zulus a cultural identity. Into Natal came the United Democratic Front which was a legal front for the then banned ANC. It drew considerable interest especially from the youth. Inkatha rose to contest this intrusion. This clash grew in violence. A vendetta spirit took hold. Areas were cordoned off as 'no go' areas and different geographical areas in rural and urban areas became partisan conclaves often led by warlords. There were raids, retaliations and targeted killings.

Several initiatives were taken to curb the violence by church leaders and IDASA. In Pietermaritzburg PACSA (Pietermaritzburg Association for Christian Action) took a major part in monitoring what was happening through the involvement of Monika Wittenberg the wife of a theologian at the Lutheran Theological training centre. A.E. sought to link with this in some limited way.

Graeme and Darlene Swan from Canada arrived at that time at Africa Enterprise as interns. They joined this initiative and took amazing risks to limit and arrest the violence. The bombing and torching of homes was often part of the strategy of intimidation by the contending parties. The Swans would deliberately go and stay overnight in homes (on both sides of the conflict) that were rumoured to be on the hit list. Graeme's bullet ridden car, later gutted by a petrol bomb, testified to the courage of this group. (Cassidy:1991:185.)



Cassidy's strategy is all of this was to be part of the ongoing inspection of murders and burnings to demonstrate that the consequences of the deeds of violence were being noted and recorded and kept out in the open for all to see. Many were the anguished, bitter heart rending moments encountered through solidarities, consultations, negotiations and the prayers that resulted from these painful investigations..

By 1994 the country had completed a process of negotiated settlement and an election was on the horizon. But the war atmosphere continued unabated and out of control. Buthelezi, Mandela and de Klerk put out a plea for an international team of mediators led by Henry Kissinger to come and help.

#### **6.4.7. God in politics?**

Before this happened an event occurred that gave new substance to Cassidy's belief that Christian leaders in high places could manifestly affect a country. Cassidy had got to know Dr Washington Okumu, a Kenyan economist and political scientist through the Jubilee Institute and its founder Michael Schluter who had had former contact with Cassidy around South Africa and its issues.

Okumu knew de Klerk and Mandela and he agreed to come to South Africa at Cassidy's invitation and in late March and early April 1994, had rounds of contacts and meetings with many of the key political players. Okumu acted as a consultant to the Kissinger group whose attempt as mediation on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> April fell flat in its face. The Kissinger group and Okumu prepared to leave with South Africa facing the prospect of a violent showdown and unravelling of hopes and dreams. Cassidy urged Okumu to stay and continue to mediate between the ANC and Inkatha and bring understanding on a variety of issues. Tensions climbed; muscles were being flexed.

From 15-17 April mediators moved in a series of encounters and conversations all the time working on a draft document proposal that could bridge the differences and bring agreement. The story of this whole saga is found in Cassidy's book, *A Witness for Ever* in pages 141-214

By Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> April Okumu was ready to bring this document to a giant prayer rally convened by Cassidy and African Enterprise at King Park Rugby Stadium to share it with other leaders who would also be there. Some 25000 people turned out for what was to be an extraordinary event. Just before the prayer meeting Nelson Mandela phoned from Cape Town to call for Okumu to fly down by charter plane to Cape Town. Meanwhile Buthelezi had shown the document to Minister Danie Schutte (representing de Klerk) and Jacob Zuma (representing Mandela.) In the midst of the intercessions of thousands around them they began to feel that the Okumu proposal might just work.

Buthelezi called for the Inkatha Freedom party to convene while de Klerk convened his cabinet. Meanwhile Okumu was discussing the document with Mandela. On Monday 18<sup>th</sup> of April the Okumu document was fine tuned and the parties signed for peace. On Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> of April with the election a week away Mandela, de Klerk and Buthelezi announced on radio and television that the election was on track with the crucial involvement of the IFP.

One of the local papers carried headlines. "The day God stepped in to save South Africa". The BBC in London reported that the Jesus Prayer Rally that tipped the scales. Time

Magazine reported. “History has thrown up an authentic miracle.” The Wall street Journal carried a full scale article entitled “God in politics.” (Ibid. 467-470)

That last headline captures the abiding belief that Cassidy had had from the beginning of his ministry. God is sovereign and those who stand for Him in leadership in this world can profoundly influence for good the politics of the day. Cassidy was to say.

“I believe in the last analysis we have to acknowledge that God intervened in history and gave South Africa the miracle for which multitudes in South Africa and the world have prayed.”

## 6.5. LOVE AND SOCIAL REFORMATION.

The Poet Breytenbach was to say ‘Beyond the dismantling of Apartheid the real problems loom’.

Ktitzinger says in his book *Christian Mission in South Africa* (from an insight by Villa-Vicencio.) that the church has always contained a prophetic minority that rejected and struggled against the conservative nature of the church.

There seems to be two processes at work; a dominant one striving to retain the status quo and a subordinate one striving to bring about change. The church has to continue to be a site of struggle and the production of meaning that empowers people.

True spirituality exists not in withdrawing from people and their historical processes such as politics this result is alienation not holiness. (Ibid 118-120) pg.

The challenge now facing the church is different. The complex options for a new South Africa require more than just resistance. The church is obliged to begin the difficult task of saying yes to the unfolding risk of what could culminate in a democratic just and kinder social order. (Villa-Vicencio.1992:6).

In preparation for the future the National Initiative for Reconciliation had provided an excellent 600 page reader on the Democratic vision for South Africa, in this Nurnberger was to urge the use of this as a resource

South Africa is on the verge of great new possibilities after decades of Apartheid. In this situation we are balancing on a tightrope between freedom and coercion, democracy and authoritarianism of various kinds and constitutional means to resolve the immense conflicts imbedded on the population and the law of the jungle. We need to make up our minds as to where we want to go and to do that pretty fast, because we may miss out historical chance. (Nurnberger:1991:38.)

Apartheid had obscured the social reality of its effect. It obscured the harsh life of profound misery, deprivation and disadvantage of populations hidden at the fringes of the “white way of life”; suddenly the huge social challenges of South Africa began to emerge. Cassidy saw

these as giants or “Goliaths” and began immediately to try to identify these. From struggling with the demands of love in Justice, Reconciliation and Peace a new chapter was opened. How can love directly transform social problems and modify structures. He was to say this at the end of his chapter on the social challenge,

My firm conviction stands that we can indeed dent, if not defeat, out Goliaths as we obey the words of John on the Scripture, “ *Let us not love in word or speech but in deed and in truth*” ( 1 John 3:18)

To take up the challenge of social reform Cassidy began once again to lay down the gauntlet to the church. He took a new initiative. In 2002 he and others convened the second SACLA conference. SACLAII. The conference would have several sub-conferences. In most of these conferences the Giants of social dysfunction and calamity were to be identified and programmes initiated to mobilise the church to deeds of change and transformation that would seek to bring the love of Christ into the warp and woof of South Africa’s process of reconstruction and nation building. Co-Chairing the conference was the board Chairman and President of the Methodist Church in Southern Africa Mvume Dandala.

This time 4500 people gathered again, in several sub-conferences, as at SACLA1. But although much was gained in new togetherness and in the light of the coming of a new day in a new nation the voice of the giants were heard repeatedly in all convocations and discussions. The new South Africa had enormous challenges. SACLA closed with a resolve to turn to the church to seek to raise Davids everywhere to bring down the social giants. These were identified as.

HIV/AIDS  
CRIME AND CORRUPTION  
VIOLENCE  
THE CRISIS IN THE FAMILY  
SEXISM  
POVERTY & UNEMPLOYMENT  
RACISM

Cassidy and the executive later conflated Crime, corruption and violence has added another to the list.

## 6.6.LOVE AND MARRIAGE.

In the first few years of ministry up to 1969, when he married Carol Bam, Cassidy was teased by his team colleagues about his passion for marriage and the oddity of a bachelor giving himself, especially in personal contact, so seriously and devotedly to marriage counselling.

Cassidy had imbibed from his own parents and his own reading and study a passionate belief and interest in the subject and he fostered a high and holy view of it. His very first printed publication was a smallish book called “The Relationship Tangle” in which he ventures to broach this subject. The relationship of Jesus to the Church is described metaphorically as that of a husband to bride. This makes marriage all the more holy and given Cassidy deep commitment to Christ as the Way it re-inforces his perspectives on marriage which were so challenged and resistant to the same sex marriage legislation. It is important for us to understand Cassidy’s philosophy of marriage.

Later in his ministry a correspondence blossomed around this subject as persons committed their anguishes and difficulties to him for guidance. Marriage has Christological implication. Some of this correspondence is now as a series of letters in a book called *So you want to get married*. This takes the form of letters to Donovan Adams and Tracey Fox (Now married as Mr and Mrs Adams)

They are in fact real 12 pastoral letters sent by Cassidy in an ongoing contact with this couple over a period of time. Excellent work should be a must for persons preparing for a life together. These letters are very important for an understanding of Cassidy's views on marriage and the should be read by any who contest his stance against the Gay Marriage debate in South Africa.

A summary of letter 3 is given APPENDIX 7.

Cassidy insists that Christian marriage indeed is very far from being outdated. It is the best and most up to the minute arrangement that our God has put in place from the beginning of time. It is indeed the only way. But we do have to find God's rules and guidelines for it.

Perhaps a fundamental principle that pervades the thinking of Cassidy is the Christ not only designs man and creates man for marriage but that in following Him through faith in the life marriage is exalted and enabled. Christ provides the design for every social eventuality. Marriage has a missing formula. That formulation is implicit in Christ's own purpose for marriage.

Cassidy's engagement with scripture and experience led him to apply biblical truth not as a legalistic dead instruction and law but as a living joyous and wise source of living in relationship. He worked this out in his life and it blessed him and his own. The fruit from this he conveyed to the hundreds of people who crossed his path with pathology in the marriages.

These 12 letters illustrate Cassidy's passion and his depth of understanding about love in marriage effectively and is a valuable contribution to an institution under huge pressure. They also give an intimate insight into the working of Cassidy's marriage and the family relationship. To read them reveals what a healthy and whole marriage should look like. This witness of love as important in its social consequences is as for the transformation of South Africa of the other dimensions explored in this work. The family is the foundation upon which all else built.

Beyond the ideals of biblical marriage, however lies the desolations of dysfunctionality, the effects of migration and state manipulation in properly settling settlement and resettlement and the vast catastrophe of AIDS. Reflection and strategy on the role of the urban ministry in this regard is a present challenge.

## 6.7. THE RECOVERY OF THE JUDEO CHRISTIAN MORAL ETHICAL BASE

In various instances in this Thesis Cassidy's motivation for mission has been shown to be motivated by compassion. This has appeared in his contact with individuals who come across his path, it is evidenced in his concern for marriage and the family, it rises in his political consciousness it is an emotion driving his preaching.

Care is an overflow of his relationship with his colleagues and it moderates the continuities of relationship in ongoing commitment to maintain and foster relationships. This compassion is marked by availability and accessibility. 1 Thessalonians 2:8 captures this perspective. “*So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but even our own selves.*”

It was Cassidy’s commitment to love that fostered his inclusive spirit. This was true especially with the wooing of the Dutch Reformed Church to fellowship around the initiatives of the Durban Congregation, PACLA and SACLA. His spirit of fellowship and grace were crucial to their participation in these. And these events were crucial to the creation of ecclesial and other bridges that created opportunities for the reappraisal by the DRC of its stance on Apartheid. He always believed that if Apartheid was fostered by apartness then its review and renunciation would come through embracing fellowship and acceptance.

As has been demonstrated in this chapter on the Mark of Love Cassidy was also deeply drawn to the expression of love in Marriage. Much of his pastoral focus was around this important social institution and his own progress and experience with Carol and their children Catherine, Debbie and Martin clarified and informed his passion to perfect and advance the cause of Christian marriage.

It is the compassion for the Lost he is strongly aware in his evangelism of the cost of Christ’s love at the cross which was expressed in His dying. The lostness experienced by man without Christ evokes a deep identification which drives Cassidy at all times and in many ways to share the good news of Christ and summon people to repentance and faith. The sight of the lost moves the soul.

So in common human relationships, socially, politically, spiritually and in marriage relationships, Cassidy strongly expresses the grace of love.

This chapter has demonstrated how Cassidy’s theology and witness is overwhelmingly understood to have social consequences. The convictions that produce an understanding of truth, leading to volitional turning of the will to conversion, transforms not just the individual but through him everything that this new creation encounters. This life is a sacrament that brings Christ into every aspect of human experience with others. This is re-presentation.

William Wilberforce was deeply affected by his relationship with John Newton the former slaver and writer of the Hymn *Amazing Grace*. It was human selfishness that turned Newton into the beast that trafficked in human life. It was the Gospel that enabled him to work to set them free. He was eventually ordained but he played a significant role in the contest against slavery.

This antipathetical relationship began central to Wilberforce. He believed that true faith led to social justice. He wrote a book called ‘Real Christianity.’ In this he pressed the point that;

True Christianity was peculiarly and powerfully adapted to “promote the preservation and health of political communities” which are undone by their Grand Malady” of selfishness. Only with the model and teaching of Jesus Christ could this dreadful disease of selfishness be healed in its different forms in various societies and classes. (Wilberforce: Abridged. 1982 Pg xxv.)



The Judeo Christian worldview, once it re-orientates a man around its paradigm, has an extraordinary capacity to transform. This chapter demonstrates the meaning of true Christianity also in Cassidy's life. It shows the practical and vital effect in every place and every way when the prayer of Jesus is answered in a human life. "That the love with which you loved me may be in them and me in them."