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THE THREE-SELF MISSION APPROACH IN THE CONTEXT  
OF THE IGREJA EVANGELICA LUTERANA DO BRASIL

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A Thesis Presented to the Faculty  
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,  
Department of Practical Theology  
In partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Master of Sacred Theology

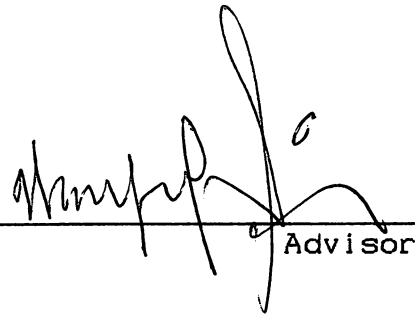
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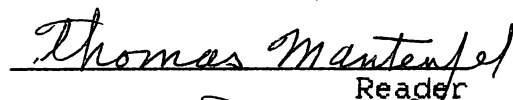
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Egon Martim Seibert

February 1989

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## INTRODUCTION

The Rev. Mário L. Rehfeldt, in his 1962 S. T. M. thesis, stated that the Igreja Evangélica Luterana do Brasil (hereafter IELB), although not yet completely self-governing, self-propagating, and self-supporting, was marching in that direction.<sup>1</sup> The Rev. Elroi Reimnitz, in his 1975 Th. D. dissertation, affirmed that the IELB had taken important steps which had contributed toward the making of a self-governing, self-propagating, and self-supporting church.<sup>2</sup> Both affirmations dealt with the three-self principle and also with the IELB.

This thesis intends to deal with the three-self principle and the IELB. In the first chapter the historical origin and development of the three-self mission approach will be presented. The question "Are they biblical?" will be answered in the second chapter. The third

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<sup>1</sup>Mário L. Rehfeldt, "The First Fifty Years Of The History Of The Igreja Evangélica Luterana Do Brasil, The Brazilian District Of The Missouri Synod" (S. T. M. thesis, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 1962), 210.

<sup>2</sup>Elroi Reimnitz, "The Mission Enterprise of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod in Brazil: The Course of the Past and the Prospects of the Future of the Igreja Evangélica Luterana do Brasil" (Th. D. diss., Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 1975), 241.

chapter will focus on the Brazilian background of the IELB, with the ethnic composition of its people, its economic and social status, and its chief religions. The foundation of the IELB and the most relevant facts of its history will be discussed in the fourth chapter. Finally, the conclusion will provide an explanation of how the three-self principle can be applied. The IELB will be evaluated in terms of the three-self principle. In addition, recommendations will be given to help the IELB to continue to reach the goal of becoming a self-governing, self-propagating, and self-supporting church.

CHAPTER I  
HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE THREE-SELF  
MISSION APPROACH

Origin of the Three-self Mission Approach

Mário L. Rehfeldt, a professor of Theology in Brazil, stated in his S. T. M. thesis that the first missionaries of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod (hereafter LC-MS) intended to form an indigenous church in Brazil, that is, a self-governing, self-propagating, and self-supporting church.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, J. Hartmeister, one of the first Lutheran missionaries in Brazil, seemed to agree with this affirmation when he wrote about the establishment of the first Seminary in Brazil. He observed:

The will to train an indigenous ministry in Brazil went with us from the Seminary in St. Louis. . . We had come to Brazil to plant the Church of the pure doctrine. If our work was to succeed, we needed a school for the training of native church workers.<sup>2</sup>

At the time when Hartmeister's article was pub-

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<sup>1</sup>Mário L. Rehfeldt, "The First Fifty Years Of The History Of The Igreja Evangélica Luterana Do Brasil, The Brazilian District Of The Missouri Synod" (S. T. M. thesis, Concordia Seminary, 1962), 207.

<sup>2</sup>J. Hartmeister, "The Sowing of a Mustard Seed," Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly 22 (January 1950): 166.

lished, the three-self idea was well known in the LC-MS. In 1942, the Department of Missionary Education of the LC-MS published the booklet On Paths Of Destiny which clearly stated that "the aim of foreign mission work is not merely to gain Christian converts here and there, but to gain them in a definite locality in sufficient numbers to organize a Congregation." To this it added: "The further aim is to organize a string of such congregations with a view of tying them together into a native Church that will function as a self-governing, self-supporting, and self-growing body."<sup>3</sup>

The three-self idea was not a method discovered by the Mission Board of the LC-MS. The LC-MS had in fact already affirmed through its Board of Foreign Missions that after making disciples and bringing them together, "our aim must be to build up this church in the foreign mission fields into self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating bodies and agencies."<sup>4</sup> However, the Board of Foreign Missions never said that the three-self mission approach was a result of its research and studies.

Similarly, John Livingston Nevius never claimed to be the author of the three-self idea, he presented its

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<sup>3</sup>Department of Missionary Education, On Paths of Destiny (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1942), 86.

<sup>4</sup>Otto Henry Schmidt, Mission Methods (St. Louis: Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod Board of Foreign Missions, 1956), Ch. 2, pp. 2-3. [In this book the pages in each chapter are numbered separately.]

principles in what is known as the "Nevius Method." In 1885, Nevius wrote a series of articles in the Chinese Recorder which dealt with his work in Shan-tung, China. He confessed that the interest which his work created among other missionaries was due to the fact that he had adopted these new principles.<sup>5</sup>

Horace G. Underwood, one of those who participated in a meeting with Nevius in Korea in June 1890, confirmed that Nevius never claimed to be the originator of the self-support aspect of the three-self plan. However, he said that Nevius was its most prominent propagator.<sup>6</sup>

Like Nevius, Henry Venn also spoke in terms of the three-self concept. As secretary of the Church Missionary Society (hereafter CMS), Venn wrote in 1841 to the missionaries who were under his supervision, showing them the necessity of developing local resources for the support of missionary work. Even though he had been struggling with the same principles, at this time he had not yet used the term self-supporting. Later, in 1846, in one address, he used the term self-support. In December 5, 1851, he was using both the terms self-support and self-government in his instructions to a group of missionaries. But only in

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<sup>5</sup>John L. Nevius, Planting and Development of Missionary Churches (Philadelphia: The Reformed & Presbyterian Co., 1958), 3-7.

<sup>6</sup>Lark-Jun George Palk, The History of Protestant Missions in Korea, 1832-1910 (Pyeng Yang, Korea: Union Christian College Press, 1929) 283.

1855 did he use the three-self principles as a unity.<sup>7</sup>

Although R. Pierce Beaver affirms that Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn are to be regarded as the authors of the three-self principle,<sup>8</sup> it is this researcher's opinion that Rufus Anderson was the sole author of the three-self mission approach. For as early as in 1841 Rufus Anderson mentioned all these aspects in the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (hereafter ABCFM) Annual Report. There he stated that the apostles ordained in the early churches "generally, if not always, natives of the country," and that "in this way the gospel soon became indigenous to the soil, and the gospel institutions acquired, through the grace of God, a self-supporting, self-propagating energy."<sup>9</sup>

In this same report Rufus Anderson said that the ABCFM "mission-churches must have native pastors, and pastors of some experience, who can stand alone, before we can leave them,"<sup>10</sup> showing the need for men who could manage the church with efficiency. In other words, he was proposing the self-governing principle.

A German missiologist, Peter Beyerhaus, analyzing

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<sup>7</sup>Wilbert R. Shenk, "Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn: A Special Relationship?" International Bulletin of Missionary Research (October 1981): 171.

<sup>8</sup>R. Pierce Beaver, ed., To Advance the Gospel. Selections from the Writings of Rufus Anderson (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1967), 37.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 103.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 105.

the three-self formula affirmed that Henry Venn adopted Anderson's three-self principle. But he also recognized that "some still think that it was he [Henry Venn], and not Anderson, who coined it."<sup>11</sup>

Although Henry Venn and John Livingston Nevius are not the authors of the three-self formula, they contributed to the concept of an indigenous church--a self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating church.<sup>12</sup> Therefore in the next section of this chapter, it is the writer's intention to present a brief biography, as well as the principal thoughts, of each person involved with the three-self principles.

#### Rufus Anderson

Rufus Anderson, an American Congregationalist, was born on August 17, 1796, in North Yarmouth, Maine. He was the son of a pastor of the same name. From the time his father took him to the ordination service of the first group of American overseas missionaries in the Tabernacle in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1812, Rufus Anderson began to nurture in his heart the desire to be a missionary.<sup>13</sup>

In 1819, Anderson began to study at the Andover

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<sup>11</sup>Peter Beyerhaus, "The Three Selves Formula - Is It Built On Biblical Foundations?" The International Review of Missions 53 (1964): 395.

<sup>12</sup>Theodore Stanley Soltau, Missions At The Crossroads (Wheaton, IL: Van Kampen Press, 1954), 20.

<sup>13</sup>Beaver, Advance the Gospel, 10.

Theological Seminary. At the same time he worked in the office of the ABCFM in Boston. After his graduation in 1822, Anderson was required to continue working at the ABCFM for at least one year. By the spring of the next year the board decided to retain him in the office of the ABCFM, and therefore he was named assistant secretary.<sup>14</sup> Three days later, on May 10, 1826, he was ordained with the title of evangelist in Springfield, Massachusetts.<sup>15</sup> In 1832 he assumed as corresponding secretary, and soon he was the chief guide of the Prudential Committee, "which determined policy, carried on all business between annual meetings, and appointed missionaries."<sup>16</sup>

At the time when Anderson began to work as corresponding secretary, a thought influencing missions in general was that the aim of mission is the transformation of civilization.<sup>17</sup> In a sermon that he preached in 1845 at the ordination of Edward Webb as a missionary, he declared that this thought contained a two-fold object in missions. He said that the first was

that simple and sublime spiritual object of the ambassador for Christ mentioned in the text, "persuading men to be reconciled to God;" the other,

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<sup>14</sup>R. Pierce Beaver, "The Legacy of Rufus Anderson," Occasional Bulletin of Missionary Research 3 (July 1979): 95.

<sup>15</sup>Beaver, Advance the Gospel, 11.

<sup>16</sup>Beaver, "Legacy of Anderson," 94.

<sup>17</sup>Beaver, Advance the Gospel, 13.



the reorganizing, by various direct means, of the structure of that social system, of which the converts form a part. Thus the object of the missions becomes more or less complicated, leading to a complicated, burdensome, and perhaps expensive course of measures for its attainment.<sup>18</sup>

Contrary to the emphasis on transforming society Anderson focused the attention of his hearers on that point which was, in his opinion, the "true and only office and work in missions to the heathens," which is to "proclaim abroad the fact, history, design and effect of his [Christ's] atonement, and bring its renovating power to bear as widely as possible upon the human race,"<sup>19</sup> and which has only one object, "the reconciling of rebellious men in heathen lands to God."<sup>20</sup>

It was by studying Paul's missionary activities that Rufus Anderson observed nine different facets with regard to Paul's work as missionary. 1) Courage and spiritual strength stream from Paul's intimate relationship to Christ. 2) His responsibility was to gather converts into churches. 3) His most important activity was the gathering and forming of local churches under their own presbyters. 4) To their contemporaries the apostles did not appear to be extraordinary individuals. 5) There were no missionary societies; Paul, however, received some support from the Church of Philippi even though he did not depend upon the

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<sup>18</sup>Rufus Anderson, The Theory of Missions to the Heathen (Boston: Press of Crocker and Brewster, 1845), 5.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.      <sup>20</sup>Ibid., 13.

mission churches for his maintenance. 6) The apostolic strategy was to work not from the top of the society down, but vice versa. 7) Noted as important was the influence of pious women in the mission work. 8) The apostolic churches were not perfect. 9) The apostles planted self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating local churches in the most important cities of the Roman Empire.<sup>21</sup>

Having in mind these characteristics, Rufus Anderson affirmed:

Such were the apostolic missions. Such were the efforts made for propagating the Gospel among the heathen by missionaries under a special divine guidance. It was by gathering converts into churches at the centers of influence, and putting them under native pastoral inspection and care. The means employed were spiritual, namely, the Gospel of Christ. The power relied upon for giving efficacy to these means was divine; namely, the promised aid of the Holy Spirit. The main success was among the middle and lower classes of society; and the responsibilities for self-government, self-support, and self-propagation were thrown at once upon the several churches.<sup>22</sup>

For Anderson, the reason for which the church was established was mission,<sup>23</sup> and obedience to Christ was the principal motive for doing it.<sup>24</sup> For him, in fact, the great object of mission was "to plant and multiply self-reliant, efficient churches"<sup>25</sup> composed only of true converts. These churches should have, as soon as possible,

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<sup>21</sup>Beaver, Advance the Gospel, 15-16.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 16.      <sup>23</sup>Ibid., 43.

<sup>24</sup>Beaver, "Legacy of Anderson," 95.

<sup>25</sup>Beaver, Advance the Gospel, 101.

native pastors of the same race who have been trained to take care of the local church and administer the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. These churches, since they have native pastors, should have the responsibilities of self-government, should become self-supporting at the earliest possible time and should also be self-propagating from the beginning.<sup>26</sup>

### Henry Venn

Born in the village of Clapham on London's outskirts on February 10, 1796, Henry Venn was the son of John and Catherine (King) Venn.<sup>27</sup> His father, rector and pastor of Clapham's parish, presided at the meetings which confirmed the need for a missionary society within the established church, and which culminated in the formation of the CMS of the Anglican Church on April 12, 1799.<sup>28</sup> Venn grew up in a family where life was based on spiritual values. He and his brothers were taught to rise early, engage in private devotions, and keep diaries as acts of personal discipline. The whole household always took part in daily prayers.<sup>29</sup> Before his father's death on July 1, 1813, during the time he spent at his father's bedside, Henry committed himself to

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid., 98.

<sup>27</sup>Wilbert R. Shenk, Henry Venn - Missionary Statesman (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1983), 1.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., 2.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., 3.

the Christian ministry.<sup>30</sup>

In January 1818, Venn received his B.A. degree at Queen's College, Cambridge. After leaving Cambridge he attended meetings of the Bible Society for several months while in London. In October of the same year the bishop of Ely ordained him a deacon, and on November 28 he "performed clerical duties for the first time, reading prayers and preaching at Clapham, the church where he had been baptized and confirmed."<sup>31</sup> In June 1821, he was ordained priest of Norwich and in July he completed his M.A. degree at Cambridge. In January of the same year he had assumed the position of curate at St. Dunstan's, a parish consisting of six thousand people. This parish had been served by men such as William Tyndale, John Donne and William Romaine.<sup>32</sup>

After five years at St. Dunstan's, Venn resigned the curacy and returned to Cambridge where he started to study for his Bachelor of Divinity degree. In the spring of 1828 he assumed the curacy at Drypool, on the outskirts of Hull. On January 21, 1829, he married Martha Sykes, whose financial situation allowed him to work for CMS for more than thirty years on an honorary basis.<sup>33</sup>

In his parish Venn introduced the visitation scheme which his father had pioneered at Clapham. Through this

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., 5.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., 7.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., 8.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., 10.

scheme all members were visited periodically.<sup>34</sup> After six years spent at Drypool, Venn moved with his family to Halloway, where he had been offered the curacy at St. John's. In 1837, the Anglican Church was eager to have Venn work in Madras, India, in the place of Daniel Corre, who died a short time before. But Venn declined because he felt he was not qualified for that work, and because of health problems in his family.<sup>35</sup> Almost three years later, on March 21, 1840, his wife Martha died, leaving him three young children.

By the end of 1843, Venn wrote in his diary that he "would give himself fully to the CMS and the missionary cause."<sup>36</sup> Almost two and half years later he resigned his pastorate at St. John's and was installed as honorary clerical secretary of the CMS on April 13, 1846. His appointment to this position was likely due to his work at the CMS as an interim secretary since 1841.

From this time Venn had a growing preoccupation with the creation of foreign native churches. In 1841, when the CMS was suffering a severe financial crisis, one of his first tasks was to write a letter to all missionaries calling their attention to the necessity of putting more emphasis on the development of local resources for the support of the mission.<sup>37</sup> It was this crisis which helped

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid., 11.      <sup>35</sup>Ibid.      <sup>36</sup>Ibid., 13.

<sup>37</sup>Shenk, "Anderson and Venn," 171.

him to see the need to create a church which was responsible for pastoral duties and independent of foreign support.<sup>38</sup> In 1846, Venn used the term self-support to describe this responsibility.<sup>39</sup> Later, in 1851, in his paper "Employment and Ordination of Native Teachers," when he pointed to the ultimate object of a mission, he clearly used the term self-supporting and mentioned the establishment of a native church under native pastors, the self-governing point. He wrote:

Regarding the ultimate object of a mission, viewed under its ecclesiastical aspect, to be the settlement of a native church, under native pastors, upon a self-supporting system, it should be borne in mind that the progress of a mission mainly depends upon the training up and the location of native pastors; and that, as it has been happily expressed, "the euthanasia of a mission" takes place when a missionary, surrounded by well-trained native congregations, under native pastors, is able to resign all pastoral work into their hands, and gradually to relax his superintendence over the pastors themselves, till it insensibly ceases; and so the mission passes into a settled Christian community. Then the missionary and all missionary agency should be transferred to "the regions beyond."<sup>40</sup>

In the same year, on December 5, as Venn was instructing some missionaries who were ready to go to Yorubaland, Africa, he emphasized again: "Keep in mind the importance of introducing, from the first, the principles

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<sup>38</sup>Peter Beyerhaus and Henry Lefever, The Responsible Church and the Foreign Mission (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964), 27.

<sup>39</sup>Shenk, Anderson and Venn," 119-120.

<sup>40</sup>Shenk, Missionary Statesman, 119-120.

of self-support and self-government among converts." Then he added: "Never let them [the natives] imagine that the society is to do all and to pay all. Remind them daily and hourly that you only come amongst them to put them in the way of doing for themselves."<sup>41</sup>

Venn did not use the three-self principles as a unit until 1855, in one of his instructions to missionaries.<sup>42</sup> According to Wilbert Shenk, however, the third concept of self-propagation was always present in Venn's thinking.<sup>43</sup>

In July 1861, in another paper issued by Henry Venn, he stated that the work of the missionary has a twofold character: To bring the heathen to the knowledge of Christ and to bring the converts together into a "Native Christian Church."<sup>44</sup> In this paper, he, as an Anglican, conceived the idea of a whole independent native diocese, and developed a system which, in four stages, should lead to the establishment of the native diocese.

According to Venn, then, in the first stage the converts should be organized by the missionary into "Christian Companies" under the leadership of a "Christian

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid., 44.

<sup>42</sup>Shenk, "Anderson and Venn," 171.

<sup>43</sup>Wilbert R. Shenk, "Henry Venn's Instructions to Missionaries," Missiology, 5 (October 1977): 474.

<sup>44</sup>Shenk, Missionary Statesman, 120.

Headman."<sup>45</sup> The Christian companies should have weekly meetings under their leader and with the occasional presence of the missionary. The headmen, in turn, should have a monthly meeting with the missionary for spiritual counsel and encouragement.

In the second stage, a congregation should be established. It would be composed of one or more companies, which had a schoolmaster or a native teacher living in their midst.

The third stage was the formation of a native pastorate, under an ordained native pastor. The headmen of the companies united into a native pastorate would attend the monthly meetings of headmen no longer under the direction of the Missionary but under their native pastor.

The final stage was the establishment of a district conference, which consisted of pastors and lay delegates from each of their congregations. Then the sponsoring foreign agency would leave and the district could establish a native episcopate.<sup>46</sup>

In Venn's concept, at each stage, the first aim was self-support. Therefore he advised that the Missionary Society

must commence its work by accustoming the converts to support their own institutions in the simplest forms,

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<sup>45</sup>Ibid., 122.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., 123-124.



so that the resources of the mission may be gradually released, and be moved forward to new ground.<sup>47</sup>

He also intended that the new converts should try to bring other converts to Christ. Here he was dealing with the self-propagation of the church. It was his opinion:

It should be enjoined upon each company to enlarge its numbers by prevailing upon others to join in their meetings. The enlargement of a Christian Company, so as to require subdivision, should be regarded as a triumph of Christianity, as a festive occasion of congratulation and joy, as men rejoice "when they divide the spoil."<sup>48</sup>

Venn also intended self-government, and therefore he advised the formation of congregations under native ordained pastors. In fact, the establishment of the three-self principles was his hope for a growing native church. Therefore he also wrote:

If the elementary principles of self-support and self-extension be thus sown with the seed of the Gospel, we may hope to see the healthy growth and expansion of the native Church, when the Spirit is poured down from on high, as the flowers of the fertile field multiply under the showers and warmth of summer.<sup>49</sup>

#### John Livingston Nevius

John Livingston Nevius, son of Benjamin and Mary, nee Denton,<sup>50</sup> was born on March 4, 1829, in New York, and died in Chefoo, China, on October 19, 1893.<sup>51</sup>

In December 1850, he entered the Theological

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<sup>47</sup>Ibid., 124.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 125.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid.

<sup>50</sup>Helen S. Coan Nevius, The Life of John Livingston Nevius (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1895), 19.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 469.

Seminary at Princeton with the intention of becoming a minister of the Presbyterian Church. On March 29, 1853, in a letter written to Helen S. Coan, his future wife and biographer, he expressed his desire to be a missionary to Laim or Ching.<sup>52</sup> Almost two weeks later, on April 11, 1853, in another letter he affirmed that when he submitted his application to the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Mission he had not expressed a preference for a place to work. However, he also wrote that "if I were called upon now to select for myself, I should decide upon going to Ningpo, China."<sup>53</sup>

The Committee assigned Nevius to the Ningpo mission in China, as a missionary of the Presbyterian Church. There, after eight years of work, in 1861, he wrote a letter to the executive Committee of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions telling them of his concern that a theological seminary for the training of a native ministry and a Synod be established. He also mentioned the fact that the costs of a native ministry should be less expensive, and that this ministry should be best suited to speak of the wonderful works of God.<sup>54</sup>

In December 1882, Nevius wrote a letter in which he presented his views about self-support and self-propagation

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., 106.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., 107.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., 233-240.

of the church.<sup>55</sup> As stated previously, in 1885 he wrote a series of articles for the Chinese Recorder which dealt with his work in Shan-tung. He stated that the interest which this work created in other missionaries was due to the fact that he had adopted new principles and methods. These articles were reprinted in book form in 1886.<sup>56</sup>

In May 1890, Nevius presented an essay for the Second Missionary Conference in Shanghai with the title, "A Historical Review of Missionary Methods, Past and Present, in China."<sup>57</sup> In June, invited by the missionaries of the American Presbyterian Church, he and his wife went to Korea where he spent two weeks advising the young missionaries in the wide variety of things involved in God's work.<sup>58</sup> In a letter that he wrote from Japan a few weeks later, commenting on this meeting, he said: "We had a delightful visit in Korea; and if the missionaries there were not benefited by our sojourn with them, it was not because they were not willing to profit by our suggestions and advice."<sup>59</sup>

As a result of Nevius' visit the Korean missionaries adopted his suggestions. His methods became so important for this mission that all new missionaries "were required

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<sup>55</sup>Ibid., 404.

<sup>56</sup>John Nevius, Planting and Development, 3-7.

<sup>57</sup>Helen Nevius, The Life of Nevius, 446.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., 447.      <sup>59</sup>Ibid.

to read Nevius' book and pass an examination on it."<sup>60</sup>

Horace Underwood, one of those who participated in the meeting with Nevius in Seoul,<sup>61</sup> summarized the Nevius Method in four points, as follows:

First, to let each man "Abide in the calling wherein he was found," teaching that each was to be an individual worker for Christ, and to live Christ in his own neighborhood, supporting himself by his trade. Secondly, to develop Church methods and machinery only so far as the native Church was able to take care of and manage the same.

Third, as far as the Church itself was able to provide the men and the means, to set aside those who seemed the better qualified, to do evangelistic work among their neighbors.

Fourth, to let the natives provide their own church buildings which were to be native in architecture, and of such style as the local church could afford to put up.<sup>62</sup>

Allen D. Clark, analysing the Nevius Method, said that "its real core was in the Bible study system which encouraged every Christian to study his Bible and to be able to pass on to others what he had found here."<sup>63</sup>

Charles A. Clark agrees with him as he said that Nevius' Method was based on Bible emphasis, but he also adds other points which are, to him, the outstanding principles of

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<sup>60</sup>Wi Jo Kang, "The Nevius Method - A Study and an Appraisal of Indigenous Mission Methods," Concordia Theological Monthly 34 (1963): 335.

<sup>61</sup>Ro Bon Rin and Marlin L. Nelson eds., Korean Church Growth Explosion (Seoul, Korea: World of Life Press, 1983), 218,

<sup>62</sup>Horace G. Underwood, The Call of Korea (New York: Flemming H. Revell Co., 1908) 109-110.

<sup>63</sup>Allen D. Clark, History of the Korean Church (Seoul, Korea: Christian Literature Society, 1961), 187.

Nevius' method. He summarized them as follows:

I: Missionary personal evangelism with wide itineration. II: The Bible central in every part of the work. III: Self-propagation: every believer a teacher of someone, and a learner from someone else better fitted; every individual and group seeking by the "layering method" to extend the work. IV: Self-government: every group under its chosen unpaid Leaders; circuits under their own paid Helpers, who will later yield to Pastors; circuit meetings training the people for later district, provincial and national leadership. V: Self-support: with all chapels provided by the believers; each group, as soon as founded, beginning to pay towards the circuit Helper's salary; even schools to receive but partial subsidy, and that only when being founded; no pastors of single churches provided by foreign funds. VI; Systematic Bible study for every believer under his group Leader, and circuit Helper; and of every Leader and Helper in the Bible Classes. VII: Strict discipline enforced by Bible penalties. VIII: Cooperation and union with other bodies, or at least territorial division. IX: Non-interference in lawsuits or any such matters. X: General helpfulness where possible in the economic life problems of the people.<sup>64</sup>

Wi Jo Kang, a graduate from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, said that the establishing of an indigenous self-propagating, self-supporting, and self-governing church was the objective of the Nevius Method. Nevius, to reach that goal,

emphasized extensive traveling for missionaries, personal evangelism by all believers, systematic Bible studies, strict discipline, education for native leadership, cooperation and union with other church bodies, and noninterference in lawsuits, or any such matter.<sup>65</sup>

O. H. Schmidt, former executive secretary of the

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<sup>64</sup>Charles Allen Clark, The Nevius Plan for Mission Work in Korea (Seoul: Christian Literature Society), 42.

<sup>65</sup>Kang, "The Nevius Method," 336.

Board of Mission of the LC-MS, commenting on the Nevius Method, said:

The essential points of the method of Dr. Nevius can be boiled down to two principles, that of self-support from the very beginning, and that of a thorough system of Bible Study penetrating to every member of the group."<sup>46</sup>

It was this Nevius Method with some adaptations which was implanted in Korea successfully by the Presbyterian Church. The missionaries sought to follow Nevius' recommendations about self-propagation and self-support, so that Lark-Jun George Paik supposes that the self-support principle was the main cause for the rapid growth of the Korean Church.<sup>47</sup> But with regard to the third point, where Nevius emphasized the training of young converts to occupy the leadership of the church, the Korean missionaries did not follow his method.

When Nevius answered the question "What is the best way to train men for usefulness in the Church?" he said:

I know of no better answer, at least for the first stage of preparation, than to repeat the Scripture injunction, "Let every man abide in the calling wherein he was called." Nothing else can supply the place of God's providential training in the school of ordinary life and practical experience. If God, who has called a man to the fellowship of His Church, has also called him to the work of the ministry, He will manifest His purpose in His own time and way.

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<sup>46</sup>Schmidt, Mission Methods, Ch. 10, p. 1.

<sup>47</sup>Paik, History of Missions in Korea, 282.

Meanwhile, we should give these young converts all the instructions, advice and help which Christian sympathy and prudence suggest.<sup>68</sup>

Here Nevius shows clearly that, in his opinion, this training should not occur by taking the natives from the place where they live and setting them in a theological or academic school. The Korean missionaries who accepted Nevius' idea for training native leaders did not follow this advice. On the contrary, they developed the training of the natives in fine educational institutions and their change resulted in success. Wi Jo Kang affirmed that "the success of the Protestant work in Korea is therefore, not due in its entirety to the Nevius Methods, but rather to their adaptation to the Korean situation,"<sup>69</sup> and he justifies this adaptation by saying:

The principles of self-propagation, self-support, and self-government must be kept and practiced in all mission fields. However, a principle exists to aid mission work, mission work can never be used to defend a principle. The principle must be adapted and adjusted to the conditions in the mission fields. The Nevius Methods are not an exception.<sup>70</sup>

#### Synthesis of the Three-self Principles

Although there is no uniformity in the thoughts of Venn, Anderson and Nevius about the sequence of importance of the three-self principles, the manner which they can be

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<sup>68</sup>John Nevius, Planting and Development, 28.

<sup>69</sup>Kang, "The Nevius Method," 341.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., 342.

achieved, and their meaning,<sup>71</sup> the different approaches of these men helped to shape the general ideas that can be found under the same concepts. In an effort to bring these different views together, the following appear to be the most important aspects of each.

#### Self-government

Under self-government it is generally accepted that in the beginning of the work in a new mission field, the foreign missionary must occupy the leadership. Through his effort, the establishing of the preaching of the gospel will occur, through which the Holy Spirit will convert the first natives in the mission location. However, as soon as possible, he should permit the natives to manage the church in such a manner that they administer and make their own decisions.<sup>72</sup> To reach this goal it would be necessary to train the natives for these tasks, prepare them to be leaders and pastors. In this respect, the educational effort of the mission had a great significance.

#### Self-support

The implementation of the self-support principle should occur from the beginning of the work. As soon as the first native becomes a Christian he shall be expected

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<sup>71</sup>Beyerhaus, "The Three Selves Formula," 393.

<sup>72</sup>Melvin L. Hodges, The Indigenous Church (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1976) 22-24.



to offer support for the mission. This support is not necessarily expected to be given only through money. It could be given also through free work or by the "setting apart of grains and other foods, or even of parcels of land for cultivation for the support of the minister or church leader."<sup>73</sup>

By self-support is meant that a church, when it is established, must as soon as possible "become independent of the financial support provided by 'Western' missionary societies and rely instead upon the economic resources of its own people and its own country."<sup>74</sup> The church should support its full-time workers through offerings of the membership. They also should build and support their schools and churches by their own effort and money, contribute for new mission fields in their neighborhood or country, and support their theological seminary.<sup>75</sup>

#### Self-propagation

Self-propagation is understood to be the growth of the church which occurs through the work of each member of the church in winning people to faith in Jesus Christ. The church should grow normally through the testimony of the

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<sup>73</sup>Soltau, Missions Crosswards, 22.

<sup>74</sup>Charles H. Kraft and Tom N. Wisley, eds., Readings in Dynamic Indigenity (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1979), 74.

<sup>75</sup>Schmidt, Mission Methods, Chs. 10 and 11.

members of the church and through their missionary efforts. The members should receive special instruction and training to improve their efforts in self-propagation.

## CHAPTER II

### BIBLICAL EVALUATION OF THE THREE-SELF PRINCIPLE

The purpose of Chapter II is to examine the three-self principle in the light of the Scriptures. The three-self principle as such is not quoted in the Bible. However, even though the term never appears in the Scriptures, this is not reason to doubt its existence in Scripture and that it is biblical.

#### The Self-Governing Principle

At Pentecost the Gospel of Jesus was preached, and, as a result, the Holy Spirit worked many conversions (Acts 2:1-40). Under God's blessings, that little group of 120 Christians (Acts 1:15) grew to 3,000 (Acts 2:41). Not much later, as God continued adding to the saved, the number reached 5,000 (Acts 4:4), "not counting women and children of whom, there was, of course, a due proportion."<sup>1</sup>

Among the new converts there were many poor people. Therefore, motivated by God's love, the members of the church in Jerusalem began to share their possessions on

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<sup>1</sup>Richard C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961), 155.

behalf of the poor (Acts 4:32). The gifts were brought and put at the apostles' feet (Acts 4:35) who probably distributed them.

While the church continued to grow, some difficulties arose among its members. The Grecian Jews of the congregation suddenly began to complain against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were overlooked in the daily dispensation of support (Acts 6:1). Therefore the apostles called for a meeting when they said:

It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.<sup>2</sup>

At first, the apostles had served tables. But their call was in fact for another work. They should preach the gospel (Mark 16:15), and make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:19-20). They should be stewards of the mysteries of God (1 Cor. 4:11), ministers of the New Testament (2 Cor. 3:6), and ambassadors of Christ (2 Cor. 5:20). Therefore, distinguishing between their particular work and the work of the other Christians, they said to choose out seven attested men to serve tables. They, the apostles, would continue to pay attention to prayer and to the ministry of the Word.

Through this suggestion the disciples were not

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<sup>2</sup>Acts 6:2-4 (NIV).

giving away a part of their apostolic office which they received from God. In fact, the task of dispensing food for the needy was necessary. But they recognized that this activity was interfering with their real office and, therefore, they turned it over to other hands.

With the agreement of the congregation, seven men--seven deacons--were elected.<sup>3</sup> This action seems to be the first which was done to organize a congregation. This office of deacon was also filled by women, as can be seen in the case of Phoebe, who was a deaconess in Cenchreae (Romans 16:1).

Deacons did not have the same responsibilities that elders had. They were not assigned the tasks of overseers, nor did they act like pastors and as spiritual leaders of the church.<sup>4</sup> Their work in fact consisted in attending to the common needs of the poor, of the widows and orphans, and of the sick.<sup>5</sup>

Although in his first letter to Timothy, Paul did not give a description of the deacons, functions and duties, he prescribed the qualifications which are necessary for

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<sup>3</sup>Richard C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the Epistle to the Romans (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961), 899.

<sup>4</sup>Richard C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the First Epistle to Timothy (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961), 592.

<sup>5</sup>Richard C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961), 701.

those who would enter in this office (1 Tim. 3:8-13). According to him, a deacon should have both a steady character and faith. He also should be a responsible head of his house, married with a dignified, temperate and faithful wife.

However, the early Christian church did not have only deacons. In Acts 11:30, the author writes that Paul and Barnabas went to Jerusalem, taking with them a special gift from the church of Antioch for the poor of Jerusalem. This gift was given to the elders, the presbyters. It seems that these officers of the church worked at first as a group because they are mentioned repeatedly in the plural form. In passages like Acts 11:30, 15:2, and 16:4 the elders of Jerusalem are mentioned as a group. According to Acts 20:17 the church of Ephesus was attended by a group of elders, and in the letter of St. James 5:14, the instruction is given that the sick should call for the elders of the church.

Although in many passages of the Scriptures the elders were presented as a group, it must be said that the terms presbyteroi (elders) and episkopoi (bishops) describe the same office (Titus 1:5-7), and that Paul refers to the term bishop in the singular when he describes his work in Titus 1.15.

According to Acts 14:23, the elders were appointed through a vote by stretching out the hands. Richard C. H.

Lenski described the process saying, "The apostles presented the matter, had the eligible men named, had the vote taken, and thus appointed those chosen and ordained them as elders."<sup>6</sup>

The elder should be apt to teach and one who knows to rule well his house (Titus 1:5-9; 1 Tim. 3:1-7). He also should take heed to himself first and then to the flock, the church of God, which he should shepherd and feed (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2).

That the office of elder was a necessity can be seen by Paul's word to Titus: "The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you."<sup>7</sup>

Elmer J. Moeller, in his article concerning the Ministry of the Church, said that the congregation in Crete had a lack of presbyteroi, and that this office was God's ordinance.

He wrote:

It is evident that the words ta leiponta demonstrate a lack in the congregations in Crete, namely the lack of presbyteroi. Titus was to see that the lack was supplied. Paul did not leave it to Titus' judgment, nor to the will of the individual congregation, nor to its convenience. Rather, it was to be done "as I appointed thee." This office, therefore, through St. Paul, is God's ordinance. It is the same office which a pastor of a congregation fills.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Lenski, Interpretation of Acts, 586.

<sup>7</sup>Titus 1:5 (NIV).

<sup>8</sup>Elmer J. Moeller, "Concerning the Ministry of the Church," Concordia Theological Monthly 22 (June 1951): 401.

The New Testament, however, does not refer only to apostles, elders and deacons. Paul affirmed that Jesus gave the church "some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers" for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for edification.<sup>9</sup> The apostles received their immediate call from Jesus to preach his gospel to all creatures. With their death, the church had no more apostles like them, who were immediately called by Christ. The prophets "who had the charisma which all Christians are urged to acquire (1 Cor. 14:1)" and who "spoke the revelations received by the apostles and thus benefited every single one who heard them,"<sup>10</sup> probably occupied a prominent and important place in the Apostolic Church.<sup>11</sup> However they are apparently no longer necessary in the Church after the formation of the New Testament.<sup>12</sup> Only the evangelists who "proclaimed as missionaries the gospel" and "spread the Apostolic Word in those places which the

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<sup>9</sup>Ephesians 4:11-12 (NIV).

<sup>10</sup>Richard C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961), 526-527.

<sup>11</sup>H. G. Brueggemann, "The Public Ministry in the Apostolic Age," Concordia Theological Monthly 22, (February 1951): 86.

<sup>12</sup>H. D. M. Spence and Joseph S. Exell, The Pulpit Commentary, 23 vol. (Grand Rapids, MI: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1950), 20: 149.



apostles themselves had not visited,"<sup>13</sup> and the "pastor-teachers" who had the two basic tasks of feeding and leading people, remained until today as offices in the church.<sup>14</sup>

Although the different offices were established by God, those who held the offices did not know a sort of rank in their midst. Following what Jesus taught (Luke 22: 24-26), they did not practice any kind of prominence or primacy among themselves. In fact, organized congregations had many people who had different responsibilities. But by no means can it be said that in the Apostolic Churches, one man, or a group of men, or even a church exercised jurisdiction over other men and churches.<sup>15</sup>

There is no doubt that the Apostolic Churches were organized as democratic congregations. Their organization and their democratic form of government can already be seen in the nomination of Matthias as an apostle by 120 Christians in Jerusalem (Acts 1:15-22) and in the act of choosing the seven deacons (Acts 6:2). These point to the fact that they were self-governing churches. As soon as possible, after having organized a congregation, the

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<sup>13</sup>G. Stoeckhardt, Commentary on St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1952), 200.

<sup>14</sup>Richard R. Caemmerer, The Pastor at Work (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1960), 3.

<sup>15</sup>George W. McDaniel, The Churches of the New Testament (New York: Georg H. Doran Co., 1921), 22.

apostles permitted the converts responsibly to manage the church. As seen, the self-governing principle permeated the apostles' conception of church organization.

#### The Self-Supporting Principle

In order to answer whether or not the self-supporting principle is in accordance with the Bible, it is necessary to let the Bible show how the apostles were supported, and what the congregations did in reference to works of charity.

With regard to works of charity, it is well known that many of the members of the Apostolic Church of Jerusalem were poor. However, even though many beggars were found in the midst of Jewish society, the same cannot be said about the Christians. Begging did not occur among Christians because the members of the church took care of their poor.

According to the book of Acts 2:44-45 and 4:32-37, the members of the congregation of Jerusalem had all things in common. Sometimes many of them sold some of their possessions, and brought the proceeds of their sale to the feet of the apostles. Barnabas, the man who took Paul to work in Antioch, was one of them. This and the other donations were not given as an answer to a specific law imposed by the church. On the contrary, all those who sold some of their goods and allowed the distribution of the money to the poor did it voluntarily. Later on, during

the famine which occurred during the days of Claudius (Acts 11:28), the congregation of Jerusalem received relief from other Christian congregations such as that from Antioch (Acts 11:29-30), Corinth and from Macedonia (2 Corinthians 8-9). But, although the congregation of Jerusalem received this special support, the New Testament does not report that they asked someone for help. The decision to give relief to the poor was made voluntarily by those congregations which helped Jerusalem (Rom. 15:26-27). Of course, the apostle Paul was one of those who promoted those offerings. But he also never compelled anyone to give any gift for the poor of Jerusalem.

What about the support of those who were officers in the church? How were they supported? Although there is no specific passage in the New Testament which indicates the name of one self-supporting congregation, the New Testament does reveal that the apostles were supported by congregations. When Paul asked the Corinthians if only he and Barnabas lacked the right to receive support for their lives, he was in fact affirming that the other apostles were receiving it (1 Cor. 9:4-6). Although he did not receive support from the Corinthians at the time when he worked in Corinth, in his epistle to them he makes clear through analogies that he had had the right to demand it. Paul said to the Corinthians that like a soldier who does not go to war at his own expense, like a man who plants a

vineyard and eats from its fruits, like the ox which according to the law of Moses could eat from that which he threshed, like those who work in the temple and live by the things of the temple, so also according to Jesus' command those who preach the gospel should live of the gospel (1 Cor. 9:4-14). Paul also said that the elders should be supported by the members of their congregations (Gal. 6:6; 1 Tim. 5:17-18).

The New Testament never denied that sometimes the apostle Paul received and accepted support from other people. For example, according to Acts 16, Paul remained as a guest in the house of Lydia while he was preaching in Philippi. Later, in Corinth, although Paul worked as a tentmaker, he stayed in the house of Aquila and Priscilla for one and one-half years (Acts 18:1-3). The apostle Peter did the same thing. When he went to Joppa, he remained in the house of a tanner, called Simon (Acts 9:43), whereas in Cesarea he stayed for many days in the house of Cornelius (Acts 10:48). Through the hospitality of Christians like those, the apostles received support several times.

But why did Paul work for his livelihood if it was known that Jesus ordered that those who preached the gospel should live of the gospel? According to Roland Allen, at the time of Paul there were classes of people for whom philosophy and religion were a trade. Among the heathen

there was a class of teachers who wandered from town to town collecting money from the people who attended their lectures. Therefore, according to Roland Allen, Paul who did not wish to be accounted as one of them, refused to receive money from those to whom he was preaching.<sup>16</sup>

Another reason which motivated Paul to work at an occupation for money is found in 2 Thess. 3:8-12. In this passage of the Scriptures he affirms that he worked for his livelihood in order to be not a burden to any of them. Although he had the right to receive their support, he did not become a burden to the Thessalonians, in order to be a model for them. Paul himself had taught: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat."<sup>17</sup> Because he heard that many of them were lazy, he advised them to follow his own example, and work for their livelihood.

What conclusion can be drawn of the basis of those New Testament passages analyzed above? It must be recognized that the Church of Jerusalem had received support in behalf of its members, although the Scripture does not say they requested it. The Bible also does not say that they could not maintain the apostles or their elders. In the same manner, although Paul did not receive the support of congregations like those of Thessalonica and

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<sup>16</sup>Roland Allen, Missionary Methods - St. Paul's or Ours? (Grand Rapids, MI: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1962), 49-51.

<sup>17</sup>2 Thessalonians 3:10 (NIV).

Corinth while he was working among them, the accounts do not record that they did not want to maintain him nor that they were not able to support him. On the contrary, the New Testament shows that Paul did not demand support from them in order not to become burdensome to them (2 Cor. 12:13; 2 Thes. 3:8).

An appropriate conclusion from the New Testament is that the apostle Paul proclaimed that those who preach the gospel should get their sustenance by the gospel (1 Cor. 9:14). Therefore, it seems that the self-support principle is not contrary to the Scriptures, and that according to the New Testament the apostolic churches were expected to carry out their duties without financial support from outside, although the acceptance of such help was never excluded.<sup>1</sup>

#### The Self-Propagating Principle

The Lord Jesus Christ, after his resurrection, appeared many times to his disciples during his last days before his ascension. On that day when he was ready to ascend to heaven, Jesus met with his disciples for a last time. There he gave them his last instructions. Among those words, three of them merit special attention: 1) "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

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<sup>1</sup>Peter Beyerhaus, "The Three Selves Formula - Is It Built On Biblical Foundations?" International Review of Missions 23 (1964): 402.

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of age" (Matt. 28:18-20 - NIV); 2) "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.

Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:15-16 - NIV); and 3) "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8 - NIV). According to these passages of the Scriptures, it is stated that Jesus entrusted to his followers the task to make disciples of all nations, to preach his gospel to all creatures, to be his witnesses in all the world. For the fulfillment of this purpose he promised them the gift of his Holy Spirit.

The disciples, remained in Jerusalem until Pentecost (Acts 2:1). There, they began to give testimony about the wonders of God (Acts 2:4-11). Luke recorded what Peter said (Acts 2:14-40), and from this address are these words:

Men of Israel . . . This man [Jesus of Nazareth] was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him . . . Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear . . . Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has

made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.<sup>19</sup>

As a result of this preaching, those who accepted this message were baptized, and received the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38,41).

The first who heard the disciples' testimony were natives of Jerusalem, Jews from different parts of the world, and also Gentile proselytes (Acts 2:38-41). The disciples taught and proclaimed the good news in the temple (Acts 3:11-26), before the Sanhedrin (Acts 4:5-22), the supreme court of Israel,<sup>20</sup> and from house to house (Acts 5:42). Their effort to do God's will was so blessed by Him that the mission outreach in Jerusalem was successful. Before Pentecost, the congregation of Jesus' followers numbered 120 believers (Acts 1:15). On the day of Pentecost there were added almost 3,000 (Acts 2:41). After the first imprisonment of Peter and John, the Church of Jerusalem had more than 5,000 members (Acts 4:4).

The preaching of the gospel caused resentment (Acts 4:1-2). Because John and Peter were teaching the people and proclaiming that Jesus was resurrected from the dead (Acts 4:2), the priests, the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees seized them, and put them in jail (Acts 4:3). Asked not to speak or teach anything about Jesus,

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<sup>19</sup>Acts 2:22,23,24,33,36 (NIV).

<sup>20</sup>Robert G. Hoerber, ed., Concordia Self-Study Bible (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1986), 1661.



Peter and John replied that they could not stop speaking about what they had seen and heard (Acts 4:18-20). Later Stephen, one of the deacons of Jerusalem, was opposed by members of the Synagogue of the Freedman (Acts 6:8-10). Through their false accusations, Stephen was brought before the Sanhedrin. There he testified about Jesus, and this testimony cost him his life (Acts 7:52-8.1).

Immediately after Stephen's death, a great persecution broke out against the Church of Jerusalem. But through this persecution the words which Jesus directed to his disciples on his ascension day began to be fulfilled. Although the apostles stayed in Jerusalem, all the other Christians were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria where they began to preach the gospel (Acts 8:1-4).

One of those who was scattered was Philip, a deacon (Acts 6:5). It was Philip who began to work with the Samaritans. This work in Samaria can be considered as an important step in the transition of Christianity from the Jews to the Gentile because the Samaritans were considered a halfway house between Judaism and the Gentile World.<sup>21</sup> Philip's work was so blessed that many believed in Christ and were baptized. When the church of Jerusalem heard that, Peter and John were sent to Samaria. These apostles not only corroborated Philip's work, but also began to

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<sup>21</sup>Charles Webb Carter and Ralph Earle, The Acts of the Apostles (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House), 111.

preach the gospel in many of the Samaritan's villages (Acts 8:12-25).

It was also Philip who brought the Gospel to the Ethiopian, a black man,<sup>22</sup> who went to Jerusalem to worship God. When the Ethiopian was on his way home, Philip met him. There, using the book of the prophet Isaiah (Acts 8:31-35), Philip shared the gospel, and the Ethiopian believed in Jesus and was baptized (Acts 8:36-38).

The above-mentioned events clearly show through whom, for whom and how the "mother-church" of Jerusalem spread the gospel. Therefore it only remains necessary to show how Paul and the "Gentile churches" did their job.

The first time that Paul is mentioned in the New Testament, he was giving his approval to Stephen's death (Acts 8:1). Later, the persecution of the Christians led him to go to Damascus. On the way there, Jesus appeared to him and his life was completely transformed. Paul, the persecutor of Jesus' followers, was chosen by Christ himself to carry the name of the Lord before the Gentiles and their kings, as well as before the people of Israel (Acts 9:15).

At first the Christians regarded Paul with mistrust when he began to preach (Acts 9:21). But he continued his work, and, after three years,<sup>23</sup> when his enemies resolved

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<sup>22</sup>Lenski, Interpretation of Acts, 337.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 371.

to kill him, Paul already had had many followers in Damascus who saved his life by lowering him down over the wall in a basket (Acts 9:23-25). From Damascus he then went to Jerusalem where he stayed fifteen days. Then, having seen the apostle Peter and James, the brother of the Lord, he went to Syria and Cilicia (Gal. 1:18-21), where he stayed the next twelve years.

In the meantime, some Christians who left Jerusalem after Stephen's death (Acts 11:19) arrived in Antioch. These Christians who at first preached only to Jews, began also to speak the good news to the Greeks in Antioch (Acts 11:20). Because a great number of people believed in Christ, the Church of Jerusalem resolved to send Barnabas to work in Antioch (Acts 11:21-22). It was only then, twelve years after his trip to Jerusalem, that Paul is mentioned again. Barnabas, realizing that he needed help, went to Tarsus and brought Paul to work with him in Antioch. A year later, under the command of the Holy Spirit, the church sent Barnabas and Paul to do mission work (Acts 13:2-3).

Paul, as a missionary, chose to go first to the urban centers where he could find the greatest concentration of people. The cities could provide the best facilities to communicate the gospel. Ephesus is an example. At the time of Caesar Augustus it began to be an

international center of trade.<sup>24</sup> It was the capital of the Roman province called Proconsular Asia. As a religious center, Ephesus had the Temple consecrated to Diana which was considered one of the seven wonders of the world. The Theatre at Ephesus was the largest in the Hellenic world, having the capacity to accommodate 50,000 people.<sup>25</sup> It was in Ephesus that Paul stayed more than two years teaching the gospel. As in other cities, he taught first at the synagogue. But when troubles with the Jews began,<sup>26</sup> then he went to the school of Tyrannus where he taught two years, day by day (Acts 19:9). It was during this time that the gospel spread, and the entire province heard the Lord's Word (Acts 19:10).

A question that arises when Paul's work is analysed is this: did Paul do all this work alone? Lenski, commenting on Paul's work in Ephesus, stated:

While he remained in this metropolis and political center he reached out as far as possible by means of his assistants; how many he employed we cannot estimate. Congregation after congregation was formed.<sup>27</sup>

Dean S. Gilliland, professor of the school of World Mission at Fuller Theological Seminary,<sup>28</sup> commenting on

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<sup>24</sup>Allen C. Myers, ed., The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1987), 341.

<sup>25</sup>McDaniel, Churches of the New Testament, 98.

<sup>26</sup>Lenski, Interpretation of Acts, 786.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., 790.

Paul's mission work at Ephesus, suggested the same conclusion when he commented:

During the course of the two-year instruction, the whole province of Asia, including the provincial capital, was evangelized. . . Since Paul was daily and systematically teaching the disciples in Ephesus, it would appear that this work of evangelism was done by the newly-won converts. None of them would have had more than three years of experience and many would have had less.<sup>29</sup>

Therefore, according to the facts which are in evidence, the answer to the question asked above must be: No, Paul did not do this work alone. As can be seen, in the apostle Paul's time, the gospel was preached and taught by the apostles and also by laymen. All the members of the church had the task to witness. Both ministers and laymen were part of "a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God" with the sublime privilege to "declare the praises of him who called" them "out of darkness into his wonderful light".<sup>30</sup> And because they fulfilled the Lord's desire, this chapter can conclude with the affirmation that the apostolic churches were not only self-governing and self-supporting, but also self-propagating churches.

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<sup>28</sup>Dean S. Gilliland, Pauline Theology and Mission Practice (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1983), 7.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., 289.

<sup>30</sup>1 Peter 2:9 (NIV).

CHAPTER III  
THE BRAZILIAN BACKGROUND OF THE IELB

The Ethnic Composition

Brazil, with a territory of 3,286,473 square miles,<sup>1</sup> is bigger than the United States, excluding Alaska and Hawaii.<sup>2</sup> It was discovered by Pedro Alvares Cabral, a Portuguese fleet commander, on April 22, 1500.<sup>3</sup> Brazil remained a colony of Portugal until September 7, 1822, when Prince Pedro, in São Paulo, with his "Cry of Ipiranga"-- "Independence or Death!"--proclaimed Brazil's independence. Not much later, Pedro was proclaimed Emperor Pedro I of Brazil.<sup>4</sup>

Because Emperor Pedro I inherited the throne of Portugal, he left Brazil in 1831, turning over the throne to his five-year-old son. During most of the next ten

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<sup>1</sup>William R. Read and Franck A. Ineson, Brazil 1980, The Protestant Handbook (Monrovia, CA: Missions Advanced Research Communications Center, 1973), 6.

<sup>2</sup>Rose Brown, The Land and People of Brazil (Philadelphia and New York: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1960), 1.

<sup>3</sup>João Pandiá Calógeras, A History of Brazil, trans. and ed. Percy Alvin Martin (New York, Russel & Russel, 1963), 1.

<sup>4</sup>Rose Brown, The Land and People, 35.

years a regency composed of three men governed Brazil. Finally, in July 23, 1840, the son of Emperor Pedro I was declared full emperor and crowned Dom Pedro II.<sup>5</sup> But forty-nine years later, on November 15, 1889, the monarchical system of government was declared extinct by General Deodoro da Fonseca.<sup>6</sup> On the next day, Deodoro created a federal republic by decree.<sup>7</sup>

Because it was discovered by Portuguese people, Brazil's national language became Portuguese, even though many Brazilians speak fluent German, Italian, Spanish, Japanese, Korean and other languages that the immigrants brought with them.<sup>8</sup>

The first habitants of Brazil were the native Indians. The different tribes were classified into two groups: the Tupi-Guarani and those once called Tapuya. All the Indian groups tended to be short in stature, bronze in color, and to have straight, black hair.<sup>9</sup> The Brazilian Indians lived in large thatched huts. Most of the tribes had at least a nominal chief, the "cacique" or "morubi-

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 36-37.

<sup>6</sup>E. Bradford Burns, A History of Brazil (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1970), 204.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 206.

<sup>8</sup>Read and Ineson, Brazil 1980, 6.

<sup>9</sup>Burns, A History of Brazil, 13.

xaba."<sup>10</sup> However, some seemed to recognize a leader only in time of war.<sup>11</sup> The tribal religion was replete with good and evil spirits. The elements of the nature like thunder, wind, rain, sun and moon were worshipped. An important man of the tribe was the pajé, the shaman or medicine man. He was respected because he communed with the spirits, prescribed medicines, and proffered advice. He was the man who dealt with the spirits of the forest and who had the power to bring sickness, misfortune, bad luck, and defeat in warfare.<sup>12</sup> Today the Indian population of Brazil is almost 200,000 divided into 251 tribes. There are still 29 tribes which are not peaceful. Of the 251 tribes of Indians in Brazil, 67 have no portion of Scripture translated into their language. Only 10 of them have the New Testament in their own language.<sup>13</sup>

With the increase of population within the Portuguese settlement, many laborers were necessary to work. The Indios were captured by the white men, and enslaved by them. But because by nature they were forest people, they became sick, and most of them died, victims of measles, smallpox, and other diseases.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, trying to find

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<sup>10</sup>Calógeras, A History of Brazil, 19.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 14.      <sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>"A Biblia tambem para o Indio," Igreja Luterana, 2 (1981): 39.

<sup>14</sup>Calógeras, A History of Brazil, 19-21.



a substitute for the Indian workers, it was finally decided to bring Africans to Brazil as slaves. It is estimated that in four centuries approximately 3,5 million slaves were brought to Brazil. They came from Guinea, Dahomey, Nigeria, the Gold Coast, Cape Verde, São Tomé, Angola, Congo, Mozambique, and many other parts of Africa.<sup>15</sup>

To these three different, but most important population groups--the Portuguese colonists, the native Indians, and the millions of black slaves brought from Africa--were added Italians, Germans, Poles, Japanese and other nationalities. As a result of such a mixture of people emerged a new type of man, the Brazilian. He can be white, red, black or yellow.<sup>16</sup> His color or ancestral race does not matter. What in fact matters is this: he was born in Brazil, therefore he is a Brazilian.

With almost 140,000,000 inhabitants, Brazil is the seventh largest country in population in the world.<sup>17</sup> The Brazilian population is very young. In the census of 1970, nearly 42 percent of the population was less than 15 years old, and 27 percent between 15 and 30 years. According to the same census, approximately 74 percent of those between 15 to 30 years of age can read and write. The majority of

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<sup>15</sup>Burns, A History of Brazil, 38.

<sup>16</sup>Read and Ineson, Brazil 1980, 5.

<sup>17</sup>Mark S. Hoffmann, ed., The World Almanac And Book Of Facts (New York: Pharos Books, 1988), 658.

Brazil's population is now living in the cities. In the southeast, for example, at least 72 percent of the people are urban dwellers. This is not a characteristic only of this region; each one of the others is experiencing a similar trend.<sup>10</sup>

### Economic and Social Status

Brazil is a rich country with vast forests, rich soil, abundant rainfall, and minerals of many kinds. In its subsoil can be found coal, petroleum, iron, precious metals, and gems. This mineral richness of Brazil is described by George Howard as follows:

Brazil possesses the bulk of South America's fabulous wealth -- nickel, aluminum, manganese, chrome, tungsten, cobalt, vanadium, quicksilver, diamonds, and platinum, to say nothing of coffee, cocoa, sugar, cotton, coal, rubber, and immense lumbar supplies from the jungle forests. One quarter of all the known iron in the world is to be found in that country.<sup>11</sup>

Unfortunately, the richness is not equally distributed for the well-being of all Brazilians. Therefore Brazil is a country with a large number of people in the lower economic classess. There is a very small upper class and a small, elite middle class. The financial and material level of living for the masses is comparatively low, indicating the existence of many inequalities in the present

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<sup>10</sup>Read and Ineson, Brazil 1980, 6-10.

<sup>11</sup>George Parkinson Howard, We Americans North and South (New York: Friendship Press, 1951), 52.

socio-economic system in Brazil.<sup>20</sup> The situation of the lower economic class has become worse in the last two years. After one year of relative stability, the Brazilian inflation is now eroding its economy. With an inflation of 816,05 percent in the last 12 months,<sup>21</sup> it is surprising that the Brazilian people can survive. Probably, survival is due to one of the people's characteristics which is called: O famoso jeitinho brasileiro (the famous Brazilian way to doing things). Clodomir Viana Moog explained the jeitinho brasileiro, saying:

Brazilians have a way of doing things, the famous Brazilian "way" (means, order, twist, skill, propensity, and so forth) of doing things--"Let's find um jeito," or "We have to find the jeito, the best way of getting something done--which the foreigner never quite succeeds in comprehending, a sign that the word jeito, with no exactly corresponding term in the principal Western tongues, fills a necessity of expression peculiar only to Brazilians and not to other peoples."<sup>22</sup>

Herbert Wendt, explained the jeitinho brasileiro affirming that the Brazilians, if possible, will find a jeito on all occasions, through dishonest or honest acts. He wrote:

A good deal of invidious commentary has been written about the Brazilian habit of finding a jeito on all possible occasions. Someone who causes an automobile accident first makes his getaway, then settles the matter by a jeito. But a jeito is by no means always

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<sup>20</sup>Read and Ineson, Brazil 1980, 11.

<sup>21</sup>"Indicadores de Economia," Zero Hora (Porto Alegre), 6 December 1988, 24.

<sup>22</sup>Clodomir Vianna Moog, Bandeirantes and Pioneers (New York: George Braziller, 1964), 223.

a dishonest act. It means every bright idea, every skillful dodge, every trick used to master the difficulties of every day life without bluntly offending one's fellow men or falling prey to the long arm of the law.<sup>23</sup>

Because of Brazil's bad socio-economic situation, the Brazilian family's organization is beginning to suffer much more. Many whole families are being separated. In the lowest class, it is necessary that both father and mother work for their livelihood and that of their children. Many children stay alone in their houses, from morning until evening. They must take care of themselves and cook their food. Sometimes, where it is possible, they stay all day in the creche, a home supported by the Government or Benevolent Societies, where the children receive care and food. But these homes are not many in number. More such homes are necessary for the welfare and security of the children, and also for the peace of mind of their parents.

Another factor which contributes to the separation of the family in Brazil is the natural tendency of the young people to find a job which can help them to get out of the "status quo." The solution that many have found is to go to a bigger city, where there are better schools and more jobs. Therefore, as a result of all these conditions, it is not surprising that the family unit is breaking down.

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<sup>23</sup>Herbert Wendt, The Red, White, And Black Continent, trans. Richard Winston and Clara Winston (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Co., 1966), 410.

### Religions of Brazil

Although Brazil is known as a Catholic country, in the last two decades it has experienced a rapid growth of Protestant or Evangelical churches. Though religious groups like Jehovah's Witnesses, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Jews, Budhists, Shintoists, Positivists, Muslims and others are found in Brazil, they are not numerous and will be not considered in this thesis. However, the next pages will provide a summary of those Christian and non-Christian religions which are the most prominent in Brazil and which offer to the IELB the greatest challenges at the moment.

#### Roman Catholic Church

Roman Catholicism arrived in Brazil with the Portuguese discoverers. It did not develop in Brazil as an independent institution. Rather, the discovery and settlement of colonial Brazil was a joint endeavor of the Portuguese crown and of the Catholic Church. The popes between 1455 and 1515 formed, through their bulls, a system of patronage which gave to the King of Portugal the power to found and to staff new churches as he saw fit.<sup>24</sup>

From the discovery of Brazil until the end of Monarchy, the Roman Catholic Church was seen as the

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<sup>24</sup>Thomas C. Bruneau, The Political Transformation of the Brazilian Catholic Church (London: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 11-15.

official religion of the State. But with the end of the Monarchy in 1889, the church was separated from the state and forced out the public realm to develop on its own. On January 7, 1890, a decree was passed which definitively separated Church and State in Brazil.<sup>25</sup>

The Catholic Church in Brazil has its peculiar facets. Although officially it confesses all dogmas of the Church of Rome, there is an unofficial creed which is known as popular or folk Catholicism. In this popular or folk Catholicism there are different levels of assimilation of Indian religion, Umbanda, and Spiritism, the last two being contributions of the Black slaves to the religious life of the Brazilian people.<sup>26</sup>

There are three different styles of being Catholic in Brazil. The first is characterized by the use of the sacraments, those who take part in them are part of orthodox Catholicism. The second has its characteristic in the petitioning of saints. Depending on the necessity of the moment, the individual must deal with one or more saints, make promises to them, offer novenas and benedictions, take part in processions, and so forth. These Catholics only remember that the church exists when they are in need of material or physical help. The third

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<sup>25</sup>Calógeras, A History of Brazil, 278.

<sup>26</sup>Thomas C. Bruneau, The Church in Brazil (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1982), 24.

sort of Catholics are those who were baptized as Catholics, use the Church only for some events which have a kind of social meaning such as marriage and burial, but for the most part of their lives are involved with the practice of Spiritism, Macumba, or some other sort of AfroBrazilian cult. Only a minority of the so called Roman Catholics of Brazil can be called truly orthodox. Although 85 percent of the population of Brazil claim to be Catholic, in fact only 10 percent are actually living according to the Roman Catholic faith.<sup>27</sup>

Since 1966, the Catholic Church has not reported the communions of its members. According to its last report, dated 1965, each member communed only two times in Brazil during that year.<sup>28</sup> The fact of the matter is that in Brazil the churches are almost empty for most of their services, and there is a clear tendency by its members to abandon the church completely. In spite of this sad situation, the Catholic Church is currently giving strong emphasis to Bible study, and through its Comunidades Eclesiais de Base (Basic Christian Communities) is increasing the involvement of the laity in the work of the church.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>Read and Ineson, Brazil 1980, 13-14.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

<sup>29</sup>For better understanding of the Basic Christian Communities, read pages 127-145 of the book of Thomas C. Bruneau, The Church in Brazil.

### Pentecostal Churches

The Pentecostal churches which have a total of about 30 million adherents in the world have their largest number of members in Brazil. The Assemblies of God alone have almost 4 million members, and the Igreja Evangélica Pentecostal (The Evangelical Pentecostal Church), a member-Church of the World Council of Churches, numbers one million.<sup>30</sup> According to The Encyclopedia of World Faiths,

the roots of the Pentecostal Churches are found both in the nineteenth-century Holiness Movement (which itself developed out of John Wesley's doctrine of sanctification) and in the oral spirituality of the former slaves in the USA."<sup>31</sup>

#### The Assemblies of God

The roots of the Assemblies of God are found in Brazil in the city of Belém, capital city of the state of Pará, in the North. Gunnar Vingren and Daniel Berg, both of Swedish origin, followed the advice of a common friend, Olaf Uldin, and went from USA to Brazil and started the implantation of the Assemblies of God in Belém, on November 19, 1910. Fifty years later an account of the work of the Assemblies of God stated that

this fellowship, patterned after the organization of the Swedish Assemblies of God, is overwhelming an indigenous church and has become numerically the

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<sup>30</sup>Peter Bishop and Michael Danton, eds., The Encyclopedia of World Faiths (New York: Facton File Publications, 1988), 133.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.



strongest evangelical group in Brazil, having a membership of nearly 600,000.<sup>32</sup>

The Assemblies of God grew predominantly in urban areas where large populations are found. They discovered earlier than other denominations that the masses of migrants are very receptive to the gospel. William R. Read caught this aspect of their work and affirmed:

Ceaseless migrations from rural to urban areas are occurring in Brazil. Peasants drift into the cities and almost overnight large slum areas appear. The Assemblies preach the gospel to these people, and many respond, swelling their churches. They have discovered the new receptivity of the migrating masses. Continuous uprooting and transplanting of a restless people driven by cultural changes of all types--inflation, drought, industrialization, illness, illiteracy, and idolatry--has created a great sociological void. These people, in the throes of acculturation, feel a great lack. The vacuum that exists in the soul of the masses is not a figure of speech, but a sad reality. Of all the Evangelical Churches in Brazil, only the Assemblies and their sister Pentecostal Churches are in a position at this moment of history to take full advantage of the sociological receptivity of a people in revolution.<sup>33</sup>

Furthermore, the Assemblies of God can credit part of their success to the fact that they provide something for every member to do. The converts do not remain for a long period of time as spectators; they must be active participants in the work of the church. Read wrote about them:

In the worship service all are expected to pray, to testify of that which Jesus Christ has done in their lives, and to sing so that all can hear. Those who can play a musical instrument have a place in the

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<sup>32</sup>William R. Read, New Patterns of Church Growth in Brazil (Grand Rapid, MI: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1965), 121-122.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., 130.

church band. Visitors are expected to say a "word" to the brethren. If they hesitate, all know they are probably not crentes [believers, a popular designation given for the members of the Assemblies of God in Brazil]. All are expected to grow in grace and to live an holy life, separated from worldly stains and stigmas. All should learn to read so that they can study and read the Bible for themselves. There is something for everybody to do.<sup>34</sup>

Emphasis on personal witnessing, training of the lay-leaders on popular levels, Bible-study and home services, warm fellowship, and a ministry which is not separated from the thought forms, culture, and customs of their people<sup>35</sup> also contribute to growth in a church body of about 4 million members.

#### The Brasil Para Cristo Church

Manoel de Mello was the founder of the Brasil Para Cristo Church (Brazil For Christ). Earlier he was a lay preacher and evangelist of the Assemblies of God in the state of Pernambuco, in northern Brazil. Later he worked with the Foursquare Gospel Church. In March 1955 he became independent founding the Brasil para Cristo Movement.<sup>36</sup> In 1969 he led his denomination into the World Council of Churches.<sup>37</sup>

Radio programs carry Mello's message throughout Brazil. In the middle 1950s he began to utilize an early radio program. He does not like to prepare radio programs

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid., 132.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., 133-143.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., 153.

<sup>37</sup>Howard A. Snyder, "Brazil," Christianity Today 18 (26 April 1974): 46-47.

in advance and send them in on tape, but he chooses to be present in the studio for a "live" presentation. He used the popular, country type of Brazilian gospel music, and the vocal numbers are usually accompanied by guitar or accordion, with lots of rhythm. Through his program he announces his many campaigns, meetings, crusades, miraculous cures. Prayers are spoken and the gospel preached.<sup>38</sup>

De Mello's system of church planting relies heavily on local lay leaders. Before a new congregation can become an organized local church, it must have 120 members and be able to support a pastor.<sup>39</sup> The Brasil para Cristo is the most rapidly growing group of churches in Brazil. In 1960 its membership was less than 40,000. On January 1, 1970, the churches numbered almost 200,000 communicant members.<sup>40</sup> Now, less than four decades after their start, they number one million.<sup>41</sup> De Mello's organization built the largest church building in the world in São Paulo. The Missionário (Missionary), as he is known in Brazil, projected and built (with the help of his followers) a temple which enclosed an area of almost 12,000 square meters, which contains seats for 25,000 people, and allows for another 15,000 to stand.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>Read, New Patterns in Brazil, 147-151.

<sup>39</sup>Snyder, "Brazil," 47.

<sup>40</sup>Read and Ineson, Brazil 1980, 33.

<sup>41</sup>Bishop and Danton, The Encyclopedia of Faiths, 133.

<sup>42</sup>Read, New Patterns in Brazil, 152.

The Congregação Cristã no Brasil Church

The Congregação Cristã no Brasil (Christian Congregation in Brazil), had 360,000 members in 1973.<sup>43</sup> It began in Brazil on March 8, 1910, when Luis Francescon, an Italian by birth, arrived in São Paulo with the intention of preaching the gospel in Italian to the large number of Italian descendants who were in Brazil. In those early days, the only language used by the Church was Italian.<sup>44</sup>

One of the characteristics of this movement is that it has no paid leadership. All worship, evangelistic activity, and other functions depend upon the gifts of laymen. The collections and donations that the church receives are used to construct new churches and for works of pietade (piety).<sup>45</sup> According to Read and Ineson, this church is a people movement. They wrote:

This church is an example of an evangelical "people's movement." It began with one racial group and has succeeded in spilling over into the mainstream of Brazil's urban masses. It is now being carried back into rural areas by migrant converts who were won in the urban centers.<sup>46</sup>

Answering the question "Why does this Church grow?" Read suggested some factors. The first factor of growth was the concentration at the beginning among the Italian

<sup>43</sup>Read and Ineson, Brazil 1980, 32.

<sup>44</sup>Read, New Patterns in Brazil, 20-23.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., 36-37.

<sup>46</sup>Read and Ineson, Brazil 1980, 33.

immigrants. Then the Church made the natural and progressive jump from Italians to the Brazilian people after two generations, when the preaching and teaching in Italian was substituted by the Portuguese language. The second factor was the location of the movement in Sao Paulo, a city which receives thousands of migrants every month. After the switch from Italian to Portuguese, many of these migrants were baptized and incorporated in the church. A third factor of growth was the return of many migrants to their former homes, where they started new churches among relatives and friends. A fourth factor is that this church is not troubled by financial subsidies and pastoral support.<sup>47</sup> Its one aim and goal is "to be humble before the Lord, not allowing anything to hinder liberty of action in evangelizing and baptizing men in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."<sup>48</sup> Each member is taught to fulfill his missionary responsibilities. A fifth factor Read identifies is the willingness of the members to be workers and witnesses, becoming part of the unpaid lay-ministry. Finally he cited the dependence of the members upon the leading of the Holy Spirit.<sup>49</sup>

#### Spiritism

It is impossible to affirm how many spiritualists

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<sup>47</sup>Read, New Patterns in Brazil, 40-44.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 42.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., 44.

are in Brazil today. A Catholic publication of 1972 estimated that 90 percent of Brazilians at that time were Spiritualists.<sup>50</sup> Although there are no accurate data, it is estimated that 80 to 90 percent of Roman Catholics in Brazil are today practitioners of some sort of Spiritism. In fact, the number of them is very high and they are distributed into two very distinct, mutually opposed and hostile types: Kardecists and Umbandists.<sup>51</sup>

### Kardecism

Hippolyte Leon Denizard Rivail, a Parisian school-teacher and translator of science books, lived from 1804 until 1869. In 1855 he began to receive messages from a spirit who identified himself as Allan Kardec.<sup>52</sup> Kardec's first book Le Livre des Esprits (The Book of the Spirits) was published in Portuguese already on April 18, 1857.<sup>53</sup> In 1884 the Federação Espírita do Brasil (Spiritualist Federation of Brazil) was formed, and in 1952, by the Pacto Áureo (Golden Pact) the societies affiliated with the

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<sup>50</sup> Esther Pressel, "Umbanda Trance and Possession In Sao Paulo, Brazil," Trance, Healing, and Hallucination, ed. F. D. Goodman, J. H. Henney, and E. Pressel (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1974), 121.

<sup>51</sup> Boaventura Kloppenburg, "The Prevalence of Spiritism in Brazil," The Religious Dimension in the New Latin America, ed. John Joseph Cousinsine (Notre Dame, IN: Fides Publishers, 1966), 78.

<sup>52</sup> Diana de Groat Brown, Umbanda Religion and Politics in Urban Brazil (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1986) 15.

<sup>53</sup> Kloppenburg, "Prevalence of Spiritism," 79.

Federação Espírita do Brasil and adopted officially the doctrines contained in Allan Kardec's works Le Livre des esprits contenant les principes de la doctrine spirite and Le Livre des mediums.<sup>54</sup>

Kardecism appeals mainly to the educated sectors of Brazilian society. Kardecists are found among "teachers, members of the liberal professions, the police and the military, the civil service, commerce and other white collar workers."<sup>55</sup> What characterizes Kardecism most of all is its belief in the communication between disincarnate spirits and the living. Also great emphasis is given to reincarnation, healing, and works of charity. Kardecism also teaches that illness, suffering and hardship are effects of the individuals' own past lives.<sup>56</sup> Kardecism believes that God exists, but He is very distant from man. He is a hidden God, whose essence can only faintly be reached. In turn, it believes that there are good and bad guide spirits, and that Jesus was the highest incarnated spirit. It also accepts a plurality of worlds. Each one of them represents a step in the process of enlightenment of the spirits. The Earth is one of the lowest steps in

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<sup>54</sup>Martin Gerber, Religionen in Brasilien (Berlin: Colloquium Verlag, 1970), 100.

<sup>55</sup>Diana Brown, Umbanda, 16.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., 17-19.

the scale for perfection.<sup>57</sup> Diana Brown affirmed:

Earthly incarnations provide spirits with a succession of opportunities to further their own spiritual progress through study and good works. By the law of Karma, according to which every act has its inevitable consequences, a worthy life leads to reincarnation in a more spiritually evolved human form, while an immoral or wasteful life retards the process and necessitates expiation, usually through reincarnation as a sufferer from the very immoralities and ignorance that were formerly perpetuated against others. Spirits that have passed beyond the stage of reincarnating in earthly lives continue their upward progress by returning to earth to enter and possess the bodies of specially trained mediums and provide moral instruction and spiritual healing to those who attend Kardecists rituals.<sup>58</sup>

The Kardecist's sessions customarily take place in the evening. In these sessions the mediums become possessed by a variety of spirits. Through the mediums the spirits communicate with those who attend the session.

Diana Brown describes a session as follows:

Customarily there is an area with seats where other members and visitors, many of whom have come to receive spiritual healing, may sit and watch and wait their turn. The spirits deliver messages from beyond the grave, give passes (the laying on of hands), and vibrações (spiritual vibrations), both of which are forms of spiritual healing derived from Mesmerism [hypnotic induction] and serving to conduct beneficial fluids and forces into the individual and to draw out negative forces. The spirits also offer moral instruction to mortals and to suffering spirits (espíritos sofredores), who through their ignorance or low level of evolution may persecute mortals, often unintentionally, and cause them illness and harm.<sup>59</sup>

Although previously mentioned, it is worthwhile to

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<sup>57</sup>Martin Gerbert, Religionen in Brasilien, 49-50.

<sup>58</sup>Diana Brown, Umbanda, 19-20.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., 20.



repeat that charity is one of the cornerstones of Kardecism in Brazil. Medical, dental, and psychiatric treatment; orphanages; and the distribution of food and clothing are some aspects of the charity done in Kardecists centers. These benevolent works and the spiritual healing through the activities of individual "curing mediums" have provided a tremendous avenue for the diffusion of Kardecist principles to those who are the recipients of their charity.

### Umbanda

According to Boaventura Kloppenburg, the roots of Umbanda can be found in Brazil's beginning. The slaves who were brought from Africa became Christians by compulsion. Ostensibly, they were Catholics, but they retained their African beliefs.<sup>40</sup> While the plantation owners honored the Catholic saints on special days, the African slaves celebrated the worship of their own deities. For example: while the white man honored Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary, the slave worshiped Oxalá, the sky spirit, and Yemanjá, the spirit of the sea.

During the latter part of slavery in Brazil, and after emancipation of slaves in 1888, this syncretistic religion began to be practiced more openly. However, it did not have an unified name or practice at that time. It was called Batuque in Pará and Rio Grande do Sul, Macumba in

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<sup>40</sup>Kloppenburg, "Prevalence of Spiritism," 82.

Rio de Janeiro, Xangô in Pernambuco, Catimbó in the Northeast, Nagô in Maranhão, Pajelança in Amazonia,<sup>61</sup> and Candomblé in Bahia. Of these religious cults mentioned above, Macumba is known as the immediate predecessor of Umbanda,<sup>62</sup> which is also a blend of African, Catholic and Kardecist practices.<sup>63</sup>

According to Diana Brown, the beginnings of Umbanda went back to the 1920s

when a group of middle sector Kardecists turned to Afro-Brazilian religions as the basis for establishing a religion . . . which they worked to define, codify, organize, and built into a form, social and political as well as ritual, that had not existed before.<sup>64</sup>

She also said that Umbanda began with an illness and a prophecy, involving Zélio de Moraes, who became paralyzed around 1920. His father took him to the Brazilian Spiritualist Federation in Rio. There Zélio was visited by the spirit of a Jesuit priest who revealed to him that his illness was spiritual and the sign of a special mission. Diana Brown also affirmed that the spirit of the Jesuit revealed to Zelio that

he was to be the founder of a new religion, a true Brazilian religion dedicated to the worship and propitiation of Brazilian spirits: Caboclos (spirits of Brazilian Indians) and Pretos Velhos (spirits of Africans enslaved in Brazil). This new religion would

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<sup>61</sup>Ibid., 81.

<sup>62</sup>Esther Pressel, "Umbanda Trance," 122.

<sup>63</sup>Diana Brown, Umbanda, 36.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid.

restore these spirits to the positions of respect and veneration denied them by Kardecists [who forbade their entry in their rituals]. The Jesuit spirit also revealed to Zélio that he would shortly receive a visitation from his own special spiritual mentor, who would give him further instructions and direct his future activities.<sup>65</sup>

Soon Zélio was cured and received the visit of a spirit who identified himself as O Caboclo das Sete Encruzilhadas (The Caboclo of the Seven Crossroads) and directed him to organize the Umbanda which in the 1970s had an estimated 10 to 20 million adherents<sup>66</sup> and whose precise number, although unknown at the moment, is increasing day by day.

Umbanda believes in spirits and in spirit possession as a means to make direct contact with the spirit world. It believes in Olorum (God), a distant creator, who presides over the world. Below him, the other inhabitants are organized into a complex hierarchical system based on the number seven. There is a vertical division into As Sete Linhas de Umbanda (The Seven Lines of Umbanda) whose leaders are powerful, most of them having dual identities as Orixás (African deities) and Catholic holy figures. Of the legion of spirits found in Umbanda, four of them appear with regularity at Umbanda Centers. They can be either male or female and come to possess both male and female mediums. The Caboclo spirits possess the mediums once each week and are appreciated for their advice about obtaining and

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<sup>65</sup>Ibid., 39.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., 2.

maintaining a job. They like to puff on a cigar and to drink beer. The Pretos Velhos, regarded as spirits of dead Afro-Brazilian slaves, have the special gift of dealing with familial difficulties or love affairs. Furthermore, their knowledge of herbal remedies is useful in the treatment of the most difficult illnesses. They like to sip red wine and smoke a pipe. The criança spirit (child spirit) usually appears only once each month, and approaches the audience asking for sweets and soft drinks. One can ask the child spirit for help in illness or personal problem, but it seems not to be specialized like the other spirits are. The fourth type of spirit is the Exú and his feminine counterpart, the Pomba Gira. Customarily Umbanda portrays the male Exús as devil figures, painted red, with horns and grasping tridents, whereas females, also in red, are scantily and provocatively dressed to resemble temptresses. Exús are often referred as the Devil, Satan, Lucifer; Pomba Gira as Jezabel.

The Exús are experts in breaking up marriages and crushing business competitors. They are not welcomed to the public ceremonies. If they appear among the clients, they are exorcised. They are the object of ritual homage at crossroads. The offerings given to them are known as despachos, and are composed of assemblages of candles, cachaça (a Brazilian liquor of sugar cane), cigars, and sometimes sacrificed black chickens. If the despacho

(dispatch) is given to Pomba Gira, then an expensive perfume is included. Sometimes, however, many Umbanda Centers include ceremonies focused on Exú with the sacrifice of black goats, fowls and toads. These ceremonies are then associated with the practice of black magic.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>67</sup>Ibid., 53-78. See also Esther Pressel, "Umbanda Trance," 134-138.

CHAPTER IV  
RELEVANT FACTS IN THE HISTORY OF THE IELB

The Foundation of the IELB

Germans compose the fifth largest group of immigrants that Brazil absorbed through its almost five centuries of history. Only immigrants from Italy, Portugal, Spain and Japan came in larger numbers to Brazil than Germans.<sup>1</sup> The beginning of the German immigration dated officially from 1824, when "124 persons, peasants, artisans, merchants, and their families, plus a Protestant minister" arrived on the banks of the Rio dos Sinos (River of the Bells) at São Leopoldo, in Rio Grande do Sul. By the end of the same century, between 150,000 and 200,000 German immigrants and their descendants resided in Rio Grande do Sul. Among the incentives that the Brazilian government offered to the immigrants at that time were free passage, seeds, animals and implements.<sup>2</sup>

The first German immigrants brought a pastor, the

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<sup>1</sup>Thomas Lynn Smith, Brazil: People and Institutions (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1946), 273.

<sup>2</sup>Frederick C. Luebke, Germans in Brazil (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1987), 8-9.

Rev. J. G. Ehlers of Hamburg,<sup>3</sup> when they arrived in São Leopoldo on July 25, 1824.<sup>4</sup> At that time the Lutherans were not allowed to build churches with the standard insignia such as crosses and spires.<sup>5</sup> Also a Protestant marriage had no legality in Brazil, and was treated as concubinage. The government of Prussia, the large state from which a substantial number of the immigrants originated, instructed its minister to Brazil to negotiate for the introduction of civil marriage. Because their efforts were in vain, in 1859 the Prussian government began to discourage emigration to Brazil. Prussia also encouraged other German states to join in a united effort to convince Brazil on the following four points:

- (1) to recognize the legality of Protestant marriage,
- (2) to guarantee inheritance rights of immigrants and their children,
- (3) to grant Protestants equal rights with Catholics to erect their own churches and schools, and
- (4) to end the parceria system [a sharecropping arrangement that perpetuated land monopoly].<sup>6</sup>

As a result from this kind of pressure, a new law in 1863 gave Protestant clergymen permission to perform civil marriage ceremonies. Nothing else was done until 1890 when

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<sup>3</sup>Mario L. Rehfeldt, "The First Fifty Years Of The Igreja Evangélica Luterana Do Brasil, The Brazilian District Of The Missouri Synod" (S.T.M. thesis, Concordia Seminary, 1962), 13.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid, 8.

<sup>5</sup>Luebke, Germans in Brazil, 9.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid, 11.

the new Republican Constitution was promulgated. This constitution declared that complete religious equality should be assured to each habitant of the country. Article seventy-two, section three, of that Constitution reads:

All persons and religious confessions may exercise mode of worship publicly and freely, forming associations for this purpose and acquiring property the provision of the common law being observed."<sup>7</sup>

At the beginning, there was a lack of pastors among the immigrants. Therefore, in many places Lutherans elected one from among themselves to be responsible for their spiritual life. Some of them worked faithfully. But sometimes it happened that a person would appear in a colony, claiming to be a clergyman, and then turn out to be a rogue who was exploiting the settlers for his own advantage.<sup>8</sup> Hermann Borchard, the first pastor officially sent from Germany to Brazil, described the situation of some of the pseudo-pastors in 1865:

Der eine ist ein fortgejagter Schulmeister aus Deutschland, der als Trinker und Spieler beruechtigt ist, der andere ein durchgegangener Unteroffizier aus Preussen, dem im Trinken keiner gleichkommt, der dritte ein Bierwirt aus Porto Alegre, der dort mehrfach Bankerott machte und, da er seinen Lebensunterhalt nicht anders finden konnte, Pastor wurde, der vierte ein uebel beruechtigtes Subjekt, das weder lesen noch schreiben kann, ein anderer, der nicht geradezu den schlechtesten gehoerte, war Bedienter bei einem Grafen; ein anderer Gehilfe bei einem Feldmesser

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<sup>7</sup>Rehfeldt, "The First Fifty Years," 21.

<sup>8</sup>Luebke, Germans in Brazil, 37.



und wieder ein anderes seiner Profession nach Schneider.<sup>9</sup>

Pastor Hermann Borchard, who was sent to Brazil by the Prussian State Church in 1864,<sup>10</sup> tried to found a Lutheran Synod in Brazil in 1868. But he did not attain his goal.<sup>11</sup> Some years later, under the leadership of Wilhelm Rotermund, the Synod of Rio Grande do Sul was formed in May 19, 1886.<sup>12</sup> This Synod is known as the first step to the establishment of the Igreja Evangélica de Confissão Luterana no Brasil (Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil) which is the largest Lutheran body of Brazil.

One of the founders of the Synod of Rio Grande do Sul was the Rev. Johan Friedrich Brutschin,<sup>13</sup> a graduate of St. Crischona Anstalt in Basel, Switzerland.<sup>14</sup> He arrived in Brazil in 1867. The next year he worked as pastor at Dois Irmãos, where he remained until 1890. That year

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<sup>9</sup>Hundert Jahre Deutschtum in Rio Grande do Sul, herausgegeben vom Verband deutschen Vereine Porto Alegre (Porto Alegre, RS, Brasil: Typografia do Centro, 1924), 62.

<sup>10</sup>Luebke, Germans in Brazil, 40.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 42.

<sup>12</sup>Rudolf Becker, "O Sínodo Rio-Grandense no Século XX," in Enciclopédia Rio-Grandense, vol. 4: O Rio Grande Atual, ed. Klaus Becker (Canoas, RS: Editora Regional, 1957), 238.

<sup>13</sup>Rehfeldt, "The First Fifty Years," 17.

<sup>14</sup>Walter A. Baepler, A Century of Grace (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1947), 244.

Brutschin moved to Novo Hamburgo, where he started a private school. At this time he probably left the Synod of Rio Grande do Sul. According to Carlos H. Warth, a former Lutheran pastor in Novo Hamburgo, the reason for such an action was due probably to the fact that he did not want to remain in a Synod that was not Lutheran in character.<sup>15</sup> From Novo Hamburgo he served the congregation of Estância Velha which called him in 1891. At the same time he also began to serve those who formed a Congregation in São Leopoldo, after a disagreement with Dr. Rotermund.<sup>16</sup>

The LC-MS, in the ninth delegate convention which took place in April 1899 at Holy Cross Church in Saint Louis,<sup>17</sup> decided to start the work among German immigrants in South America, especially in Brazil and Argentina. The convention also charged the General Board for Home Missions and the president of the Synod with the responsibility of making their decisions known to the congregations. Finally, they were given the right to collect the necessary funds for this enterprise from the congregations of the Synod. The entire paragraph of the proceedings of the LC-MS reads:

Beschlossen, dass das Gesuch, unsere Synode wolle nunmehr auch in Südamerika, sonderlich in Brasilien und Argentinien das Werk der Innere Mission in Angriff

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<sup>15</sup>Carlos H. Warth, "Igreja Evangélica Luterana," in Enciclopédia Rio-Grandense, vol. 4: O Rio Grande Atual, ed. Klaus Becker (Canoas, RS: Editora Regional, 1957), 238.

<sup>16</sup>Rehfeldt, "The First Fifty Years," 19.

<sup>17</sup>Warth, "Igreja Luterana," 239.

nehmen, da die Verhältnisse daselbst gegenwartig sehr günstig lagen, in die Hände der Allgemeinen Commission für Innere Mission gelegt werde mit dem Auftrag, dass sie - die Allgemeine Commission - dieser Sache ihre besondere Aufmerksamkeit schenke und je nach Befund der Sachlage nach bestem Ermessen händele. Sollte die Commission unter Zuratheziehungen des Allgemeinen Präses zu der Ueberzeugung gelangen, es sei jetzt an der Zeit, die Innere Mission in Südamerica zu beginnen, so soll sie solches zur Kenntniss unserer Gemeinden bringen und zugleich um die nothigen Geldmittel bitten, letztere aber scharf gesondert von den Geldern der bisherigen Kasse für innere Mission halten.<sup>1e</sup>

The Board had its meeting and then the members discovered that there was a German Pastor in Brazil who was willing to help the LC-MS. It was also discovered that this man, because he was sick, intended to return to Germany, and therefore he was asking to the LC-MS to send a pastor to Brazil who could continue his work. This Pastor in Brazil was Brutschin, and his request moved the Board, together with Dr. Pieper the president of the Synod, to make a decision. As a result of this meeting the Board affirmed:

. . . hier ist auch der direct Ruf an uns ergangen: "Kommt herüber und helft uns!" Die Commission hielt mit dem ehrwürdigen Herrn Allgemeinen Präses und mit früheren Gliedern dieser Commission eine Verathung und Besprechung. Das resultat war: "Ja, jetzt ist es Zeit, jetzt können und dürfen wir uns nicht länger der

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<sup>1e</sup>Vierundzwanzigster Synodal-Bericht der Allgemeinen deutschen evangelisch-lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und anderen Staaten, versammelt als Neunte Delegaten-Synode zu Saint Louis, Missouri, im Jahre 1899 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1899), 68-69.

Pflicht der Liebe entziehen, den Deutschen Brasiliens das Evangelium zu bringen.<sup>19</sup>

Acting on its decision, the Commission appealed to all the congregations of the Synod through Der Lutheraner in order to receive the necessary funds for the beginning of the work. Two months later, a short note was published in Der Lutheraner, which stated:

Der Kasierer des Oestlichen Districts sandte kürzlich in einer Sendung über 2.000 Dollars für Südamerika. So wird nun die Commission unverzüglich Schritte thun, der Beschluss der Delegaten-Synode auszuführen."<sup>20</sup>

The next step which was taken was the sending of Pastor C. J. Broders to Brazil as an observer of the mission field. On March 30, 1900, he arrived in Novo Hamburgo, Rio Grande do Sul. On April 9, 1900, he wrote his first letter to the Board for Home Missions. In this letter he reported that Brutschin had decided to join the LC-MS. In Der Lutheraner of July 10, 1900, it was stated that "Herr P. J. F. Brutschin in Neu-Hamburg, Rio Grande do Sul, Brasilien, hat sich zur Aufnahme in unsere Synode gemeldet."<sup>21</sup> Because Brutschin's health was better, he decided to continue to work in the congregation of Estancia

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<sup>19</sup>L. Lochner, Karl Schmidt, and C. A. Eseman: "Sollen wir in Südamerika, sonderlich in Brasilien, das Werk der Inneren Mission in Angriff nehmen?" Der Lutheraner (28 November 1899): 218.

<sup>20</sup>"Innere Mission in Südamerika," Der Lutheraner (9 January 1900): 8.

<sup>21</sup>G. J. Wegener, "Bekanntmachung," Der Lutheraner (10 July 1900): 221.

Velha. Therefore Pastor Broders began to make some mission trips in the state of Rio Grande do Sul.<sup>22</sup>

The first impressions that Broders had of the mission field were not good. In fact, he had to say that the state of Rio Grande do Sul was not a good place to begin the missionary work.<sup>23</sup> However, before he was ready to go back to America, he went to the south of the state for a last look at the Brazilian situation. There, in the city of Pelotas, he discovered that in the village of São Pedro there were many persons interested in the establishment of a Lutheran Congregation. Broders then went to the house of Mr. Gowert, who was well read in the Scriptures. Gowert examined Broder's Biblical knowledge, and having been convinced that he was a real pastor and not a pseudo-pastor, helped Broders to organize an Evangelical Lutheran Congregation.<sup>24</sup> On July 1, 1900, the first Lutheran congregation of the LC-MS was founded in Brazil: The Comunidade Evangélica Luterana São João.<sup>25</sup> Before Broders went back to the United States, a call for a pastor was sent to the Mission Board of the LC-MS. This request resulted in the arrival of Pastor William Mahler in March

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<sup>22</sup>Warth, "Igreja Luterana," 241-242.

<sup>23</sup>L. Fuerbringer, "Wie steht es mit unserer Mission in Brasilien?" Der Lutheraner (7 August 1900): 245.

<sup>24</sup>Warth, "Igreja Luterana," 241-244.

<sup>25</sup>Horst Kuchenbecker, "Ide por todo o Brasil," Mensagem Luterana (January-February 1980): 38.

1901, as the first resident pastor of the LC-MS in Brazil.<sup>26</sup> He was followed in the same year by the pastors A. Vogel, H. Stiemke and J. Hartmeister.<sup>27</sup>

Under God's blessings, the work continued to grow. In 1904 L. Lochner, the president of the Board for Home Missions, made an inspection visit to the mission field. Under his guidance the General Conference of pastors and lay delegates was convened in Rincão São Pedro, Rio Grande do Sul, on June 23-27, 1904. The primary goal was the formation of the Brazilian District of the LC-MS. On June 24, 1904, in the second session, the Rev. J. Hartmeister proposed that the congregations and the Evangelical Lutheran pastors form a separate District Synod of the Missouri Synod. His proposal was voted and accepted by the eight pastors, one teacher, and seven lay-delegates who were present. The first officers elected by Der Brasilianische District der deutschen evangelisch-lutherischen Synode von Missouri Ohio und andern Staaten, which is known today as the Igreja Evangélica Luterana do Brasil (IELB), were the Rev. W. Mahler, president; the Rev. H. Klein, vice-president; the Rev. R. Kern, secretary; and Mr. Wilke, treasurer.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Baepler, A Century, 246.

<sup>27</sup>Warth, "Igreja Luterana," 244.

<sup>28</sup>Rehfeldt, "The First Fifty Years," 62-65.

The Founding of the Evangelical Lutheran  
Congregation in Porto Alegre

Pastor William Mahler, the first called pastor to the mission field of Brazil, left New York on February 20, 1901. His destination was São Pedro, Pelotas, Rio Grande do Sul, where he would work as the pastor of the pioneer congregation,<sup>29</sup> and also as the Director of Mission.<sup>30</sup>

During the time when Mahler was working in São Pedro, a member of his congregation had moved to Rincão dos Vales, near Cruz Alta, Rio Grande do Sul. This man requested that Mahler visit him. Therefore Mahler made his first missionary trip through Rio Grande do Sul. On this occasion he visited Rincão São Pedro, near Santa Maria. He also met Pastor Brutschin for the first time in Novo Hamburgo, and visited Porto Alegre, the capital city of the state. His interest in starting a school and a congregation in Porto Alegre was awakened by a waiter whom he met there. Shortly after Mahler's return to São Pedro, he received a letter with the request to begin missionary work in Porto Alegre.<sup>31</sup> But 1901 passed without work beginning there.

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<sup>29</sup>L. Lochner, "Brasilien," Der Lutheraner (19 March 1901): 87.

<sup>30</sup>L. Lochner, "Unsere Mission in Brasilien," Der Lutheraner (1 October 1901): 307.

<sup>31</sup>W. Mahler, 25 Jahre unter dem Suedlichen Kreuze. Schilderung der 25 Jaehrigen Taetigkeit der Ev. Luth. Kirche (Missourisynode) in Suedamerika, ed. Otto H. Beer (Porto Alegre, RS: Casa Publicadora Concordia, 1925), 20-30.

It was almost one year later, on September 29, 1902, that Mahler moved to Porto Alegre with his family. There he put into practice the advice of Broders who had written in October 1900: "Ja, wollen wir überhaupt hier missionieren, so müssen wir besonders die Schule dazu verwerten."<sup>32</sup> Mahler's method was very simple, but very effective. Knowing the lack of schools for the children, he decided that the mission should begin with the establishment of a school. His thought was that children would bring their parents into the church. He was right. He rented a building, and with nine children he began classes. At the end of the first week there were eighteen students. The first worship service was celebrated with sixteen adults present. The second service was attended by 84 hearers, among them 47 adults. Six weeks later, on December 7, 1902, a Congregation was organized under the name: Deutsche evangelisch-lutherische Gemeinde zu Porto Alegre, today known as Comunidade Evangélica Luterana Cristo.<sup>33</sup>

The establishment of this first congregation in Porto Alegre was essential for the development of the IELB. It brought the Church to the most important geographic, economic, political, and cultural center of Rio Grande do Sul: the Capital. From there the Church could spread the

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid., 25.

<sup>33</sup>W. Mahler, "Aus Brasilien," Der Lutheraner (17 February 1903): 52-53.



gospel more easily to other regions of the state, and of course, to all Brazil. Like Paul, who sought to establish the missionary work in important cities of the Roman Empire, the first pastor of the LC-MS in Brazil knew of the great importance of larger centers for the development of the church.

### The Seminário Concórdia

Pastor J. Hartmeister, in his report about the beginning of the Seminário Concórdia, the school which was established for the training of Lutheran Pastors in Brazil before the founding of the Church itself as a Synod, affirmed:

The will to train an indigenous ministry in Brazil went with us from the Seminary in St. Louis. We had before us the example of the fathers in Perry County, Missouri. Most of us had seen the venerable log cabin at Altenburg, which was then standing in a pasture and was pointed out to us as the first College of the Missouri Synod. From church history under A. L. Graebner we had learned by the example of the Sweden on the Delaware that a Church without an indigenous ministry is doomed to extinction. We had come to Brazil to plant the church of the pure doctrine. If our work was to succeed, we needed a school for the training of native church workers.<sup>34</sup>

These were the introductory words of Pastor J. Hartmeister in his report about the beginning of the Seminário Concórdia, the school which was established for the training of Lutheran Pastors in Brazil before the

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<sup>34</sup>J. Hartmeister, "The Sowing of a Mustard Seed," Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly, 22 (January 1950): 166.

founding of the Church itself as a Synod. His words show the concern for the future of the Lutheran Church in Brazil, and he pointed out prophetically that the success of the work would depend basically on the establishment of a "School of Prophets."

In a report in Der Lutheraner of January 19, 1904, some advantages were presented for the establishment of the Institute of Bom Jesus, Rio Grande do Sul. It was mentioned that if Brazilian teachers and pastors could be prepared in Brazil, the LC-MS would have fewer bills to pay for missionary trips. Furthermore, a native ministry would lead to the establishment of a self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating church. The article stated:

Zweck und Ziel dieses Unternehmens ist: begabten jungen Leuten so viel theologischen und wissenschaftlichen Unterricht zu geben, dass sie als Lehrer oder Prediger der Kirche in ihrem eigenen Lande dienen können. Ein Zweifaches stand dabei vor Augen: zunächst die hohen Reisekosten für auswärtige Arbeiter in Zukunft zu sparen, sodann (und das ist der Hauptpunkt), die Heilige Kirche mit hier geborenen und aufwachsenden Dienern zu versorgen, dass also die Kirche so zu sagen, aus sich selbst wachse und erstärke. Dann erst, wenn die heilige Kirche selbst ihre Lehrer und Prediger ausbildet, kann sie hoffen, einmal selbständig und vom Ausland unabhängig zu werden. Ein gesundes Kind will doch zuletzt selbst stehen und gehen lernen.<sup>35</sup>

During the period of April 20-22, 1903, a pastoral conference took place in São Lourenço do Sul, Rio Grande do

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<sup>35</sup>L. Fuerbringer, "Unsere Brüder in Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, 2 (January 1904): 23.

Sul. The pastors who were present at this conference discussed the necessity of the training of a Brazilian ministry. At the end of the meeting they decided that an institute for the training of teachers and pastors should be built in Bom Jesus, Rio Grande do Sul.<sup>36</sup> Pastor Mahler remained there and on Sunday, April 26, 1903, after the service, he presented the resolution of the conference to the congregation. Although the members in Bom Jesus were not enthusiastic about the idea, they approved the project.

Under the leadership of Pastor Hartmeister, an old barn was remodeled. On October 27, 1903, the Instituto was opened. Three students were there: Emil Wille, Heinrich Drews and Ewald Hirschmann. Some weeks later a fourth student arrived: Franz Hoffmann. On March 2, 1904, after a two month trip on foot, by horse, and on ship, Adolf Flor arrived in Bom Jesus.<sup>37</sup> Unfortunately, the financial situation and also the illness of Mrs. Hartmeister necessitated the return of pastor Hartmeister to America. The institute was closed and was not reopened until 1907, but this time in Porto Alegre.<sup>38</sup> In 1908 the name of the

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<sup>36</sup>Hartmeister, "The Sowing of a Mustard Seed," (April 1950): 31. At the conference were present pastors F. Brandt of Morro Redondo, R. Mueller of São Pedro, H. Stiemke of Santa Eulália, A. Vogel of Santa Coleta, J. Hartmeister of Bom Jesus, and W. Mahler of Porto Alegre.

<sup>37</sup>Hartmeister, "The Sowing of a Mustard Seed," (January 1950): 171-172.

<sup>38</sup>Hartmeister, "The Sowing of a Mustard Seed," (April 1950): 29-31.

institute was changed. Since then it has been known as Seminário Concórdia. Presently the Seminário Concórdia is located in São Leopoldo, Rio Grande do Sul, the place to which it was transferred in 1984.<sup>39</sup>

In 1988 Martinho Sonntag, the principal of the Seminário Concórdia revealed in a interview that graduates of the Brazilian Lutheran Seminary are working not only in Brazil, but also in Argentina, Paraguai, America, Venezuela, Portugal, Germany, Belgium and France. He also said that this is the most significant fact of the 85-year history of the Seminário Concórdia.<sup>40</sup>

There is no doubt that the establishment of the Seminário Concórdia played a vital role in the development of the IELB. The requirement for pastors was real. The LC-MS was not able to provide them at that time. Furthermore, many pastors of the LC-MS did not stay in Brazil for a long time. Therefore many congregations could not be served by a Lutheran pastor during long periods of time, which, in consequence, brought much harm to the work. Also the lack of knowledge of the Portuguese language by the pastors who came to Brazil as missionaries was a hindrance. The Brazilians who lived outside the German nucleus, were generally not reached because the missionaries

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<sup>39</sup>Martinho Sonntag, "85 Anos de Seminário Concórdia. Nossa Responsabilidade: Continuar esta obra," Mensageiro Luterano (October 1988): 11.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., 11-13.

were not versed in Portuguese. Therefore, the establishment of the Seminário Concórdia became a blessing. It started to graduate pastors who knew not only German, but also the language of the largest number of the inhabitants of the country. Furthermore, those native pastors usually intended to remain in Brazil without the interest of going to another country, where the living conditions might be much better.

#### The Instituto Concórdia de São Paulo

The Instituto Concórdia de São Paulo (Concordia Institute of Sao Paulo) made several geographical moves in its history. It started in São João Grande, Colatina, in the State of Espírito Santo, on August 22, 1948. Four years later, on September 7, 1952, the Institute was moved to Baixo Guandú, also in Espírito Santo. From there it was transferred to Rio de Janeiro in 1957. Ten years later, it was moved more to the south to São Paulo. Six years later, in 1973, it was closed.<sup>41</sup> During the National Convention of 1982, the IELB resolved to create a second theological seminary in São Paulo. Therefore the doors were opened again, and on March 6, 1983, the opening service was celebrated. The Rev. Dr. Rudi Zimmer, a 1971 graduate was

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<sup>41</sup>Paulo Flor, "Instituto Concórdia de São Paulo: Suas lutas e vitórias," Vox Concordiana 2 (1988): 6-12.

installed as its first president.<sup>42</sup>

Today the Escola Superior de Teologia do Instituto Concórdia de São Paulo (Superior School of Theology of the Concordia Institute of São Paulo) is preparing students through the program of Theological Education by Extension, as well as resident ministerial students. Professor Erni W. Seibert noted two characteristics of this sort of education: 1) The student learns mostly by an auto-didactic method; 2) The student immediately puts in practice what he is learning there where he is living and working.<sup>43</sup> The program of Theological Education by Extension has been successful in Brazil. There are presently 38 students enrolled.<sup>44</sup>

The seminary of São Paulo is also offering the Curso de Diaconia em Educação Cristã (Diaconate Course in Christian Education) for lay people. This course is intended to prepare leaders to serve in Sunday Schools, to instruct confirmands, and to lead Bible classes.<sup>45</sup>

Because of its location in the most commercial and cultural center of Latin America, the Escola Superior

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<sup>42</sup>Leopoldo Heimann, "Igreja Abre Segundo Seminário Teológico," Mensagem Luterano (May 1983): 6.

<sup>43</sup>Erni W. Seibert, "A Educação Teológica ao Alcance de todos," Mensagem Luterano (November 1987): 11.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., 13.

<sup>45</sup>"Em São Paulo, Curso de Diaconia em Educação Cristã." Mensagem Luterano (May 1987): 26.

de Teologia do Instituto Concórdia de São Paulo is likely to become a special blessing for the IELB. Because every day São Paulo receives many migrants from every region of Brazil, the Escola Superior de Teologia can offer its students the opportunity of maintaining contact with the different cultures of the country. Thereby the IELB will have well-prepared teachers and pastors for an effective communication of the Gospel for the culturally-varied Brazilians.

#### Publications

Because the publications of the IELB are important instruments for maintaining a Confessional Lutheran Church in Brazil, some of them will be mentioned here.

The first number of the Evangelisch-Lutherisches Kirchenblatt fuer Sued-Amerika was published on November 1, 1903. According to the proceedings of the national convention of the LC-MS in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1902, the reasons for publishing this magazine in Brazil were twofold. The first reason was to present the Lutheran doctrine and church practice of the LC-MS. The second was to defend the Lutheran pastors who were working in Brazil from the attacks which they were suffering from some Brazilian periodicals.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>Fünfundzwanzigster Synodal-Bericht der Allgemeinen deutschen evangelisch-lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten, versammelt als Zehnte Delegaten-synode zu Milwaukee, Wis., im Jahre 1902 (St.

In October 1917, the Brazilian government forbade publications in the German language in the country. The same happened later, during World War II. Therefore, the magazine Das Kirchenblatt suffered two interruptions during the course of its existence: the first from October 1917, to October 1919, and the second from the beginning of 1942 until the end of 1946.<sup>47</sup> Because there are still many Lutherans who know German very well in Brazil, the magazine Das Kirchenblatt continues to be published.

With the advent of the World War I, the IELB started to publish a Magazine in Portuguese. The Mensageiro Cristão was published for the first time on December 25, 1917.<sup>48</sup> In the next year, on May 15, 1918, the name was changed to Mensageiro Luterano. The Mensageiro Luterano has been published without interruption up to today. It is the monthly magazine of the Lutheran family in Brazil, with special sections for the Departments of Laymen, Women, Youth and Sunday School. During the time of its existence the Mensageiro Luterano has helped to inform readers about the work of the IELB, has stimulated Lutherans to more effective evangelism, and especially has

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Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1902), 69.

<sup>47</sup>Warth, "Igreja Luterana," 260-261.

<sup>48</sup>Elroi Reimnitz, "The Mission Enterprise of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod in Brazil: The Course of the Past and the Prospects of the Future of the Igreja Evangélica Luterana do Brasil" (Th. D. diss., Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 1975), 131.



instructed the members of the IELB in the sound doctrine of the Bible and the Lutheran Confessions.

450 years after the public reading of The Book of Concord, in June 1980, the biblical truths which are expounded in the Lutheran Confessions were presented for the first time in the Portuguese language in Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul. The translation from the original work was done by the Rev. Arnaldo Schüller, and it is the result of the efforts of the Comissão Interluterana de Literatura (The Inter-Lutheran Commission of Literature) which represents the IECLB and the IELB in Brazil.<sup>49</sup>

The edition of The Book of Concord in Portuguese was in fact a necessity. Until 1980, The Book of Concord was not accessible for the majority of the Lutherans of Brazil. Among the Lutheran Pastors of the IELB the Concordia Triglotta, published by the Concordia Publishing House, was well known. But, until then, most of the laity had contact with only some parts of The Book of Concord which had been translated and published in Portuguese separately, such as Luther's Catechisms, the Augsburg Confession, the Apology and the Ecumenical Creeds.

After the publication of The Book of Concord in Portuguese, the interest of the members of the IELB grew in studying of the Lutheran Confessions. This book is,

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<sup>49</sup>Heidy Gerhardt, "Ato Público Das Igrejas Luteranas," Mensagem Luterana (August 1980): 4-5.

without doubt the second most precious tool (after the Bible) of the IELB for the defense and spread of the heart of the Gospel which is the preaching "that man can obtain remission of sins, not because of their merits, but freely for Christ's sake, through faith in Christ."<sup>50</sup>

### Social Work

In August 1932, Pastor August Gedrat arrived in Brazil. He came from Germany to be the pastor of a small congregation in the village of Moreira, Gramado, RS. When he was visiting a poor family of his congregation whose father had left the house, the lonely mother asked him to receive one of her seven children into his house and to take care of her. Pastor Gedrat accepted the child, and so started the Instituto Santíssima Trindade (Holy Trinity Institute).<sup>51</sup> In 1938 the number of children who received shelter in Pastor Gedrat's house had increased to fifteen. Because Pastor Gedrat could no longer support the work alone, he asked for the help of the IELB at its convention of 1943. Therefore, the Associação Amigos dos Órfãos (Friends Association of the Orphans) was founded during the convention. Later, on December 10, 1946, the Association changed its name to Associação Evangélica Luterana de

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<sup>50</sup>F. Bente ed., Concordia Triglotta (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), 5-7.

<sup>51</sup>Horst Kuchenbecker, "Trigésimo Aniversário da AELB," Mensageiro Luterano (January 1977): 5.

Beneficência (Evangelical Lutheran Benevolent Association), and received juridical stature.<sup>52</sup> Today the Instituto Santíssima Trindade of Moreira shelters an orphanage and also an asylum. The assistance work started by Rev. Gedrat was in fact the starting point of the involvement of the IELB in social ministry. Today, besides the service which is provided in the orphanage and asylum of Moreira and by other similar associations in the IELB, special work has been done through several of the Centros Integrados de Missão also known as CIMS (Integrated Mission Centers). These CIMS were created by the Social Board of the IELB in 1981 with two objectives: 1) To do the chief task of the Christian Church according to Jesus' words: "Go, make disciples of all nations," and 2) To develop a program of social work which can help the needy population in their basic needs, with special attention in the areas of education, vocational and professional orientation, basic sanitation, community development, and health.<sup>53</sup>

The CIM of Terezina, Piauí, in the Northeast of Brazil, offers free lodging for poor Lutheran and non-Lutheran persons who must go to the capital of that state for medical treatment. It also distributes 3,000 liters milk to 100 needy families each month. Courses on cooking,

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<sup>52</sup>Warth, "Igreja Luterana," 263-264.

<sup>53</sup>Bruno Rieth, "Rosiane, 13 meses, 4 quilos, desnutrida, apática..." Mensageiro Luterano (December 1987): 11.

painting, sewing are also offered. Devotions are held, and biblical slides or Christian movies are shown.<sup>54</sup>

The CIM of Belém do Pará has an agreement with the Federal University of Pará which involves professors and students in giving assistance to the needy population of the area of Guamá.<sup>55</sup> The CIM of Anastácio in Mato Grosso do Sul had in 1986 an average of fifty medical consultations each day. All of the clients also received spiritual orientation through devotions, personal counseling, and literature. Pastor José E. dos Santos, who worked there for many years, affirmed that many of those who invited him to visit them in their houses, later were won to the Church.<sup>56</sup>

Pastor Bruno Rieth declared that, in 1986, five years after the founding of the CIMs, there were 4,487 children and adults enrolled in many different courses, and 57,143 people had received some sort of care. Also, through their mission efforts, 255 new converts came to the IELB during that year.<sup>57</sup>

Another important facet of the social work of the IELB is the work done among the deaf, through the CEDA. The

<sup>54</sup>Arnaldo Koller, "Piauí, a força de um jovem trabalho," Mensageiro Luterano (November 1987): 15-16.

<sup>55</sup>A. Romais, "Serviço Social, Educação e Missão," Mensageiro Luterano (November 1984): 22.

<sup>56</sup>José Euclides dos Santos to Egon Martim Seibert, ALS, 17 June, 1986.

<sup>57</sup>Rieth, "Rosiane, 13 meses," 11.

CEDA or the Escola Especial Concórdia - Centro Educacional para Deficientes Auditivos (Concordia School for the Deaf - Educational Center for the Hearing Impaired) was founded on September 5, 1966, by Dr. Martim C. Warth and his wife, Mrs. Naomi H. Warth.<sup>58</sup> Twenty-two years later, the CEDA has its own facilities and an enrolment of 265 students, offering a Parents Education program, Preschool, Elementary and High School education.<sup>59</sup>

The work of the CEDA spread out to other places in Brazil. Through its outreach program it assisted in the founding of many schools/classes/missions to the deaf throughout Brazil: Vila Maripá, in Paraná; Sapiranga and Santa Rosa in Rio Grande do Sul; Recife, in Pernambuco and Porto Velho, in Rondonia. Beatriz C. W. Raymann, the principal of the CEDA, said:

Concordia School for the Deaf believes that it is offering high quality education in an environment that is nurturing to the deaf student. The school believes that through education of the very best quality, in a global sense, changes can occur socially, altering living conditions and offering more dignity to people once their survival and basic needs are taken care of.

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<sup>58</sup>Beatriz C. W. Raymann, "A little bit of information about Escola Especial Concórdia - Centro Educacional para Deficientes Auditivos." Private unpublished memorandum prepared for the Centro Educacional para Deficientes Auditivos, dated September 1987. The CEDA started as a class for religious education for three Lutheran brothers, Sérgio, Ester, and Ede Paula Linden, at the auditorium of the school of the Concordia Congregation in Porto Alegre, RS.

<sup>59</sup>Beatriz C. W. Raymann, "Escola Especial Concórdia - Centro Educacional para Deficientes Auditivos." Private unpublished memorandum prepared for the Centro Educacional para Deficientes Auditivos, dated October 1988, 1.

The school aims to see the students grow emotionally and affectively, so that they can make a positive difference in their world, and so that students are confident in their abilities to make meaningful relationships occur. Lastly, the basic fundamental issue, Concordia School for the Deaf in Porto Alegre, Brazil, which is a Lutheran School, is committed to offer Christian education so that the students may grow spiritually.<sup>60</sup>

The goal of the school is to give the students and their parents the opportunity for spiritual growth. To date, approximately fifty people have been received through conversion in the IELB through the work of the CEDA.<sup>61</sup>

#### The IELB and the Mass-media

Lutheran Radio broadcasting began in Brazil in 1929. On May 26, 1929, Rodolpho Hasse, through the Rádio Clube do Brasil of Rio de Janeiro, delivered the first message. In 1947 A Hora Luterana - A Voz da Cruz (The Lutheran Hour - The Voice of the Cross) became a branch of the Lutheran Hour of the International Laymen League, through the direction of Dr. Rodolpho Hasse in Brazil.<sup>62</sup>

The first office of the Hora Luterana was the sacristy of the Igreja Evangélica Luterana da Paz of Rio de Janeiro. In 1969 the office was moved to São Paulo and the Rev. Dr. Johannes Gedrat was called to be its General

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<sup>60</sup>Ibid., 3.

<sup>61</sup>Beatriz C. W. Raymann. Telephone Interview, 16 December 1988.

<sup>62</sup>Leopoldo Heimann, "Dados e fatos históricos do Brasil," Mensagem Luterana (January-February 1980): 49.

Director.<sup>63</sup>

The Hora Luterana - A Voz da Cruz gives special attention to radio broadcasting. For sixty radio stations scattered throughout Brazil, it produces fifteen minute, five minute and one minute programs. Furthermore it supplies dozens of recorded programs and written messages to be read to congregations and districts of the IELB. The positive results of this investment of time and money are abundant. Congregations were started all over Brazil, and also overseas through the broadcasting of the Gospel of Jesus through the Hora Luterana. Ken Peterson testifies that noteworthy are the missionary congregations of Recife in Pernambuco, São Luiz in Maranhão, Floriano in Piauí, Fortaleza in Ceará, Campina Grande in Paraíba, Belém in Pará, Manaus in Amazonas, and many others which are the direct result of the work of the Hora Luterana.<sup>64</sup>

Television is another channel for the promulgation of the gospel that the IELB is utilizing. The first program, A Hora (The Hour), was presented by the Rev. Edgar Tilp through "TV Alto Uruguai - RBS of Erechim," Rio Grande do Sul, on May 7, 1976. For four years it was the only program of the IELB.<sup>65</sup> Since 1980 an increasing

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<sup>63</sup>"A IELB no Rádio e na TV," Mensageiro Luterano (August 1984): 9.

<sup>64</sup>Ken Peterson to Egon M. Seibert, 3 February 1989.

<sup>65</sup>"A IELB no Rádio e na TV," 11.

interest has developed among many congregations and circuits of the IELB with regard to the use of TV. Knowing that Brazilians spend a lot of their daily time in the front of a TV, many circuits of the IELB have produced their own TV programs. In 1984, there were eight different programs in the states of Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina, Paraná and Espírito Santo, with a total of 93 minutes of weekly programming.<sup>66</sup> However, this amount of programming is small considering the size of the country and that cities like Sao Paulo with its seventeen million inhabitants, and Rio de Janeiro with nine million, do not receive the precious message of the Gospel through TV.

#### Universidade Luterana Do Brasil

In the December 11, 1900, issue of Der Lutheraner, Pastor Broders, the founder of the first Lutheran Congregation and School of the IELB in Brazil, wrote of his work as an observer for the LC-MS. Specifically, Rev. Broders called the LC-MS's Board of Mission's attention to his work in the school. For him, the school was a tool for missionary work. He affirmed: "Die Ehrw. Commission ersieht hieraus, dass ich beflissen bin durch die christliche Kinderschule tüchtig Mission zu treiben." And he concluded: "Ja, wollen wir überhaupt hier missioniren, so

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<sup>66</sup>Ibid., 8.



müssen wir besonders die Schule dazu verwerthen."<sup>47</sup>

The Lutheran Schools during the existence of the IELB have played an important role in the formation of the leaders of the Church. Furthermore, the Lutheran Schools have in fact opened many doors for the preaching of the gospel. It is not possible to know how many were led to faith during the 88 years of the Lutheran Church in Brazil through the schools. But the truth remains that the Lutheran Schools continue to be an open door for the mission work. At the end of 1987 there were 104 schools in the IELB, including kindergartens, high schools, colleges and the two seminaries. The total enrollment at that time was 34,464, of which 25,604 were not Lutherans.<sup>48</sup> This number shows how great a mission opportunity God has given to the IELB through the Lutheran Schools.

The IELB, through the Comunidade Evangélica Luterana São Paulo of Canoas, RS, is also involved in a very special work in the area of education. In 1972 this congregation created the Faculdades Canoenses with the Department of Business Administration. In the late 1970s, three new departments were added: Architecture and Urbanism, Accounting and Social Sciences. In 1979 the Comunidade

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<sup>47</sup>L. Lochner, "Vorläufige Mittheilung über unsere Mission in Brasilien," Der Lutheraner (11 December 1900): 390.

<sup>48</sup>"Estabelecimentos Luteranos de Ensino," Lar Cristão 1988, 141-148.

Evangélica Luterana São Paulo started to plan the creation of a Lutheran University. Therefore, a forty hectare lot was bought in the district of São Luíz, Canoas, RS. In the early 1980s three new departments were authorized by the Conselho Federal de Educação (Federal Council of Education): Psychology, Obstetrics/Nursery, and Agricultural Engineering. On December 3, 1987, the Conselho Federal de Educação approved the creation of the ULBRA (Universidade Luterana do Brasil - Lutheran University of Brazil), and on January 12, 1988, the President of Brazil, Mr. José Sarney, signed the Decree number 95.623 which authorizes the functioning of the ULBRA from 1988. Along with the presidential decree, another was given authorizing the establishment of eight additional departments: Pedagogics, Economics, Languages, Chemistry, Biology, Mathematics, and Arts Education.<sup>69</sup>

Pastor Ruben E. Becker, the one who conceived the ULBRA and its first president, affirmed that the original planning was for a capacity of 20,000 students.<sup>70</sup> That almost 20,000 students will be studying in the coming years in the ULBRA brings a great and new responsibility to the IELB: The proclamation of the gospel to the University's students. Pastor Darlei Guenter, Pro-Rector for Community

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<sup>69</sup>Astomiro Romais, "Universidade já é realidade," Mensagem Luterano (February-March 1988): 7-10.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., 9.

Matters, explained in an interview that two courses in history of the religions are offered in the first year. These courses are required for all students of the University. In History of Religions I, the student makes a comparative study between Christianity and the great religions of the world. In History of Religions II the student has the opportunity to compare the doctrines of the Lutheran Church with the chief Christian and non-Christian religions of Brazil. Furthermore, the students have interviews with religious authorities and make practical observations of the religions in their own social context, reporting their experiences to the classmates.<sup>71</sup>

Pastor Broders may not have been a prophet when he said that the schools should be used to evangelize Brazil, but his wisdom must be recognized. Mission through the school was the most promising way to develop the Lutheran Church during his time in Brazil. Today, the mission activity through the schools, high schools, colleges, and university continues to be one of the most promising ways to spread the gospel of Jesus in Brazil.

#### Missionary Expansion of the IELB in Brazil

Until 1917 the work of the missionaries was done almost exclusively in the German language.<sup>72</sup> With the

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<sup>71</sup>Ibid., 10.

<sup>72</sup>Warth, "Igreja Luterana," 248.

prohibition of the use of German for worship during the World War I, the IELB suddenly was compelled to use the vernacular language, Portuguese. Although the prohibition at that time seemed to be a bad thing, now it can be seen as a blessing. Until then, the IELB had been working almost entirely with German immigrants or their descendants, but then realized that the work among people with other cultural background was also necessary. Therefore the IELB started missionary work among Luso-Brazilians, people of Portuguese origin, who sometimes had Indian or Black blood. On October 30, 1918, pastor Rodolpho Hasse arrived in Lagoa Vermelha, Rio Grande do Sul, to begin the Luso-Brazilian mission.<sup>73</sup> Unfortunately, the missionary efforts in this little town were not successful. Eleven years later, the last resident pastor, the Rev. Octacílio Schueller left the place, and no IELB pastor ever succeeded him.

In spite of the failure of the Luso Mission in Lagoa Vermelha, missionary work has had success in Brazil. In 1920 the Rev. August Drews began to preach the gospel in Portuguese among black people in Solidez, a village of Canguçu, near to Pelotas. At first the Black people had their services apart from the white. Later, on December

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<sup>73</sup>R. Hasse, "Unsere Lusomission," 25 Jahre Unter dem Suedlichen Kreuze. Schilderung der 25 Jaehrigen Taetigkeit der Ev. Luth. Kirche (Missourisynode) in Suedamerika, ed. Otto H. Beer (Porto Alegre, RS: Casa Publicadora Concórdia, 1925), 122.

10, 1927, the Blacks organized their own congregation in Manoel dos Regos, another village of Canguçu. The first black pastor of the IELB was a son of this congregation, the Rev. João José Alves, who began the missionary work in Pelotas downtown and also in São Lourenço do Sul downtown. Today the Lutheran Congregation of Manoel dos Regos is a mixed congregation, without racial discrimination.<sup>74</sup>

Since 1921 the missionary efforts of the IELB have taken the Church northward. One after the other, almost all the states of Brazil have been reached. In 1921, Santa Catarina received the first resident pastor, the Rev. A. R. Lange. In the same year the Rev. G. J. Beck became the first pastor of Paraná. In 1929, Pastor R. Hasse visited São Paulo as an observer. On September 27, 1931, the Rev. H. Klenke was installed as the first resident pastor in the city of São Paulo. Rev. A. Meyer held the first Lutheran service in Rio de Janeiro in 1925. In 1930, Rev. R. Hasse became its first resident pastor.

In 1929, R. Hasse made a missionary trip to Espírito Santo. As a result, on September of the same year Pastor Emilio Schmidt accepted the call of the parish of Rapadura. In 1951, Bahia (where the Rev. H. C. Schwan, former president of the LC-MS, worked from 1843 to 1850 at the time when he came from Germany) received the first pastor

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<sup>74</sup>Herbert Weiduschadt and Egidio Gruen, "Durante os cultos . . . um preto velho," Mensageiro Luterano (May 1988): 15-16.

of the IELB in the person of the Rev. N. Welzel. In 1950, R. Hasse visited Recife, the capital city of Pernambuco. In the next year the Board of Mission sent the Rev. Arnaldo Schueler as missionary to this state.

In Minas Gerais, in 1933, many dissidents of an Evangelical Congregation asked for the services of a Lutheran pastor. The Rev. R. Hasse visited the city of Teófilo Otoni, and led the organization of a Lutheran Congregation which called the Rev. L. Zimmer as its first pastor. In 1951, Pastor R. Hasse went to the state of Goias. There he organized three small congregations among the descendents of German immigrants in Anápolis, Ceres and Goiânia. During four years he served them occasionally. In 1955, the Rev. M. C. Doege was installed as the first pastor in this large state of the Union.<sup>75</sup>

During the building of Brasília, the capital of Brazil, Pastor M. C. Doege began to work among the builders of the future city in 1955, in the so called Núcleo Bandeirantes. In 1958, a Lutheran Congregation was founded there.<sup>76</sup> Not until 1966 did the first resident pastor arrive, the Rev. Herbert Hoerlle. Mato Grosso received some settlers from the South in 1957. Among them was a pastor, the Rev. Balduino Krebs. He began to serve them as

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<sup>75</sup>Kuchenbecker, "Ide por todo o Brasil," 38-40.

<sup>76</sup>"Muitos virão do Norte," Mensageiro Luterano (January-February 1978): 8.

their pastor. In 1971, the Board of Mission sent pastors Egon Eidam and Evaldo Maron to Cuiabá, the capital, as missionaries to that state. Today this state is divided in two, and the IELB is working in both sections.

Pastors Eidam and Maron went to Rondonia in 1971 on a missionary trip. On March 28, in the front of the house of a settler, Mr. Alfredo Stree, they led a service which was attended by 109 people. In August of the same year a congregation was organized, and in 1973 the Rev. Evaldo Maron was installed as their first resident pastor. The Rev. R. Hasse made several visits during 1955 to the state of Pará. He also visited Belém, the capital, where he found many people interested in the doctrine of the Lutheran Church. But only in 1969 did the first resident pastor arrive, the American missionary, Rev. M. Wetzstein, who organized a congregation in the same year.<sup>77</sup> The city of Imperatriz, in Maranhão, was visited in 1972 by Missionaries Wetzstein and Wille.<sup>78</sup> In 1976, Pastor A. Bierhals arrived there as the first resident pastor of the state.

In Piauí, the work began through a listener to the Lutheran Hour, who asked for the address of the nearest Lutheran Congregation which he could visit. He made a trip of almost 800 kilometers to find a Lutheran pastor. On June 1977, Pastors Alvin Bierhals and Laudir da Rosa led the first service in the house of Mr. Pedro Tomaz da Silva.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>77</sup>Ibid., 13.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., 20.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., 28.

In 1978, Pastor Arnaldo Koller was installed as the first pastor of that state in the city of Floriano.<sup>80</sup> Also in 1978 Pastor Paulo Hasse was given the task of making contact with several listeners of the Hora Luterana in Fortaleza, Ceará, from the Mission Board of the IELB. In the following year Pastors Eiter Schneider and Leonardo Neitzel were sent to work there.

The Rev. Martinho Lutero Hoffmann went to Maceió in 1981 to visit one of the members of his congregation, who moved to this city, in the state of Alagoas. Today Pastor João C. Tomm is working there and serving a congregation with 66 baptized members. In 1969, many listeners of the Lutheran Hour requested the visit of a Lutheran pastor in Campina Grande, Paraíba. The Rev. Geraldo Stanke visited that city and started the missionary work in this state. In Natal, Rio Grande do Norte, the missionary work began in 1986, and the first pastor, Rev. Itamar E. Schlender, is still working there. In Boa Vista, Roraima, the IELB started to work in the year of 1984. The Rev. Arno Schropfer started the mission work in Manaus, Amazonas, in 1984. In Rio Branco, Acre, the work was began by Rev. Vilmar Zilki in 1988. Only in the state of Amapá the IELB has not

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<sup>80</sup>H. Kuchenbecker, "A Igreja está presente em quase todos os Estados do Brasil," Mensageiro Luterano (June 1979): 7.



been working until now.<sup>e1</sup>

Missionary Work "International"

On November 4, 1904, Pastor Matthesius, who was working in Urdinarrain, Entre Rios, Argentina, wrote a letter to the Rev. W. Mahler, president of the IELB, asking for help.<sup>e2</sup> They exchanged letters for several months. Finally, in June 1905, Pastor Mahler decided to make an exploratory trip to Argentina. On June 25, the Congregation of Entre Rios decided in a meeting to ask for a pastor affiliated with the LC-MS.<sup>e3</sup> Pastor Mahler then returned to Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, and the call was directed through the Board of Mission to Pastor H. Wittrock of Rincão dos Vales, Cruz Alta, Rio Grande do Sul.

During the next fifteen years until 1920, the mission work in Argentina was directed through the Board of Mission of the IELB. On January 7, 1920, the first Board of Missions of the Lutheran Church of Argentina met. Since then, the work has been carried on through the direction of the Lutheran Church of Argentina.<sup>e5</sup>

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<sup>e1</sup>Daltro Kautzmann to Egon Martim Seibert, 22 December 1988.

<sup>e2</sup>A. T. Kramer, S. H. Beckmann, and Jakob Fehlauer, eds. 50 Jahre Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche in Argentinien (Buenos Aires, 1955), 17.

<sup>e3</sup>Ibid., 19.      <sup>e4</sup>Ibid., 54-55.

<sup>e5</sup>"Igrejas e Missões Luteranas no exterior," Lar Cristão 1980, 110.

In 1952, the Rev. R. Hasse, then president of the IELB and director of the Lutheran Hour in Brazil, arrived in Portugal with the intention of introducing the Lutheran Hour in that country. He also inquired if it would be possible to begin a missionary work there. Nothing was accomplished with respect to the Lutheran Hour, but Pastor Hasse returned to Brazil with the opinion that missionary work should be successful if started. Therefore the 32nd National Convention of the IELB resolved in 1954 that the time had come to begin work in Portugal. Unfortunately, the lack of pastors in Brazil necessitated the postponement of this enterprise.<sup>66</sup>

In 1956, Dr. Hasse resumed his visits to Portugal. Then he began to prepare Mr. José Canhoto Godinho, a Portuguese, for the missionary work.<sup>67</sup> In March 7, 1958, Mr. José Canhoto Godinho led the first Lutheran service in Lisboa. On May 28, 1959, the Igreja Evangélica Luterana Portuguesa (IELP) was founded. Godinho, after passing a colloquy program, was ordained and installed in August 3, 1963, as the first pastor of the IELP. He worked until 1967, when he resigned from the ministry.<sup>68</sup>

In March 1968, Pastor Paulo Kerte Jung arrived in

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<sup>66</sup>L. Heimann, "A Missão de Portugal é a nossa missão," Mensagem Luterana (January-February 1980): 41.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid.

<sup>68</sup>Leopoldo Heimann, "Portugal, Qual é o teu futuro?" Mensagem Luterana (May 1974): 10.

Portugal as the first missionary from Brazil. In January, 1969, the work of the Lutheran Hour began. Today there are three Brazilian pastors working there: Rev. Paulo Weirich, Rev. Tealmo Percheron, and Rev. Adalberto Hiller. According to the statistics of 1987, the IELP has 95 baptized members.<sup>89</sup>

In Paraguai the work of Brazilian pastors began on June 18, 1971, when the pastors Rev. Uberaldo de Oliveira and Rev. Nestor Huebner led the first service in Colonia Mbaracayu. After this first service, the Rev. Uberaldo continued to serve the Brazilian mission work in Paraguai until 1975. In January 1975, the Board of Mission sent the Rev. Ernani Berwig as a missionary to Paraguai to serve five preaching points. While the IELB was working in Paraguai near the border with Brazil, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Argentina (hereafter IELA) was also working in Paraguai. Their first contact was made in 1923, through Pastor Hubner. In November 1934, the Mission Board of the IELA sent Pastors J. Fehlauer and G. Reuter on a missionary trip to determine the possibility of starting the work in Paraguai. During their trip they met several Lutherans who had arrived from Brazil. In a place called Jesus they conducted a service which was attended by almost sixty persons. As a result, in the next year Pastor Dilley was installed in Jesus as the first Lutheran pastor of the

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<sup>89</sup>"Igrejas e Missões Luteranas no Exterior," 111.

IELA in Paraguai.

Both Churches, the IELA and the IELB were interested that the work in Paraguai should flourish. Therefore, many meetings were held between their Boards of Mission and the pastors and delegates of the congregations in Paraguai. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Paraguai (IELPA), was officially founded on March 12-13, 1983.<sup>º</sup> In 1987, the IELPA had 3,000 baptized members distributed in six parishes which were served by seven pastors, six of whom are Brazilian pastors.<sup>¹</sup>

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<sup>º</sup>Leopoldo Heimann, "Nasce a Igreja Evangélica Luterana do Paraguai," Mensageiro Luterano (September 1983): 4-10.

<sup>¹</sup>"Igrejas e Missões Luteranas no Exterior," 109-112.

## CONCLUSION

According to the evidence presented earlier in this thesis, the three-self mission approach has its foundation in the Scriptures. Specifically, the New Testament shows that there are clear evidences that newly founded congregations should be self-governing, having their own elders and making their own decisions. Secondly, it indicates that those churches should be self-supporting; that means that they should financially maintain the work done in their midst. Finally, the New Testament also makes clear that the apostolic churches should be self-propagating, spreading the gospel of Jesus through the testimony of their members.

Although the three-self principle is biblical, the New Testament never explicitly states the absolute necessity of its implementation from the very beginning of a mission endeavor. For example, although Paul had taught that those who preach the gospel should make their living from the gospel, sometimes he himself was not supported by the churches where he was working. Paul did not feel embarrassed when he had to work, nor when he received support for his livelihood from congregations other than those with

whom he was working.

Sometimes, when mission work is begun at a certain location, too much emphasis may be placed on self-support. The impression can be given that the principal goal of the mission work is to do much with little money. It is true that if some money can be saved in any specific mission field, more can be applied in another. However, one must recognize the potential problems of trying to do too much with too little. Sometimes, when the goal is the saving of money, a faster development in the missionary sphere can be hindered. For example, when the writer was the first resident pastor in Dom Pedrito, Rio Grande do Sul, a small city near the frontier of Brazil with Uruguai, he utilized many rooms of his rented apartment as a place of worship for nearly two years. Despite many missionary visits, the people of that place refused to come to his house. It was only after the construction of a special room for worship that the first fruits began to appear. On the basis of this and similar experiences of other pastors of the IELB, it is the researcher's opinion that the work could have been much more fruitful if the sending church had supplied the necessary provisions for the establishment of a mission church at the very outset of the work. Because the Church did not have the necessary financial resources in its beginning stages, the work could not be developed properly.

It is true that self-governing, self-supporting, and

self-propagating churches can be established from the very beginning. But prudence and common sense should be key factors in the establishment of a missionary field. Big structures are not always best; however, extremely modest buildings at the beginning may at times be a hindrance to the well-paced development of a new congregation.

William A. Smalley held the opinion that self-support is a good principle for a church. But he also felt that, in some situations, it may be impossible to apply it. He wrote:

Self-support is, wherever economically possible, really the soundest method of church economics. It is healthy for the church and for the mission, but there certainly are situations in which it is not possible, or where it is not advisable, where self-support can make church growth nearly impossible, and in such situations its presence [sic] does not necessarily imply the lack of an indigenous church.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Won Yong Ji, who during a long period of his life dealt with the implantation of the Lutheran Church in his homeland, Korea, expressed his concerns about the mode of applying the indigenous principles in a 1958 document entitled "Indigenous Mission Program." In this document he wrote about his suggested way of applying the indigenous principles to the work that the LC-MS was preparing to begin in Korea. Dr. Ji agreed with the plan whose objective was the implantation of an indigenous church in

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<sup>1</sup>William A. Smalley, "Cultural Implications of an Indigenous Church," Readings in Dynamic Indigenicity, ed. Charles H. Kraft and Tom N. Wisley (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1979), 33.

Korea.<sup>2</sup> This plan, in his thinking should be viewed as a goal which could be reached in the future, and therefore he affirmed:

If the "indigenous" mission plan were to refer to the ultimate GOAL of mission toward which we ought to strive, gradually step by step, I would fully agree. Nevertheless, if it were to mean an already "advanced state" of a church mission, I could hardly go along. The explanation is simple. According to my humble judgement and estimation, the latter view seems unreasonable, unrealistic, impracticable, and inconsistent with the principle itself.<sup>3</sup>

Many parents want to help their children toward such goals as self-expression, self-reliance, self-management, and self-support in the course of time, but not right away at infancy. So also Dr. Ji felt it could not be expected of the members of an infant mission congregation that they support all the work of their church from the very beginning. He said:

These are certainly the goals which the new Christian people eventually achieve and are now striving toward, but not right away from the start. First of all, they have to be nurtured, instructed, indoctrinated, and lifted up for the work of God's Kingdom.<sup>4</sup>

There is no doubt that it is necessary to show the new converts that there is an objective from the very beginning: To establish in their midst a self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating church. There is no doubt that it is necessary to educate people in stewardship

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<sup>2</sup>Won Yong Ji, A History of Lutheranism in Korea (St. Louis: Concordia Seminary, 1988), 316.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 313.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 314.



and to train them to such a degree that all these goals can be achieved one day. But the establishment of an indigenous church will happen gradually, step by step.

Dr. Ji affirmed in 1958:

I heartily agree with and subscribe the program of "indigenous" (or "national") mission program, provided this is to mean that our ultimate goal is to establish an indigenous Korean national Lutheran Church. We have not now attained it, but will gradually achieve it, with the help of God, in the course of time.<sup>5</sup>

Like Dr. Ji, the writer also believes that the self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating principles should be seen primarily as goals which, through God's grace, the church will reach in the course of time. Therefore, he thinks that the three-self mission principles can be applied, not precipitously nor arbitrarily, but with patience, firmness and sound sense. And although the IELB has not yet fully achieved all these goals, it is proceeding properly to reach them in the future.

Since January 25, 1980, the IELB has no longer been the Brazilian District of the LC-MS. On that day Dr. J. A. O. Preus and Dr. Edward Westcott, respectively as President and Director of the Board of Missions of the LC-MS, and Dr. Johannes H. Gedrat, as President of the IELB, signed a document, approved by both church bodies, in which the IELB was recognized as a partner-church of the LC-MS. Through this document, the IELB finally attained its administrative

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 315-316.

independence,<sup>6</sup> and from then could be called a self-governing church. Every four years the IELB, through the representatives of its congregations, elects the officers of the Synod composed of a president, three vice-presidents, one secretary and a vice-secretary, one treasurer and a vice-treasurer.<sup>7</sup>

The IELB can also be called a self-propagating church. Achievement of this goal is demonstrated by the establishment of the Seminário Concordia, which is presently situated in São Leopoldo, RS, and, more recently, the establishment of the Escola Superior de Teologia of the Instituto Concórdia of São Paulo. Both Seminaries are preparing and graduating those pastors who are carrying the gospel of Jesus, step by step, to the Brazilian people. In addition the IELB, as a self-propagating church, is located in all states of Brazil with the exception of Amapa, and as a self-propagating church, it is sending missionaries to work overseas, in countries such as France, Belgium, Portugal, United States, Paraguai, Argentina and Venezuela. But in spite of its success in being a self-propagating

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<sup>6</sup>Leopoldo Heimann, "Igreja adquire independência administrativa," Mensagem Luterano (April 1980): 8.

<sup>7</sup>"Eleições," Mensagem Luterano (February-March 1986), 41. In the convention of 1986 the IELB elected the actual directory: Rev. Dr. Johannes Gedrat, president; Rev. Leopoldo Heimann, 1st vice-president; Rev. Ricardo Schadt, 2nd vice-president; Rev. José Solon Hoffmann, 3rd vice-president; Rev. Elmer Flor, secretary; Mr. Anselmo Schuller, vice-secretary; Mr. Geraldo Seifert, treasurer; Mr. Arnfredo Reschke, vice-treasurer.

church, the IELB still has much more to do in the area of mission.

Although offerings have increased in recent years, the IELB is still not a self-supporting church. It is a fact that Brazil is passing through a bad economic situation with an inflation of 816.05 percent per year. Nevertheless, it is commonly accepted that the members of the IELB could provide much more financial support. Because a good segment of the members of the IELB have not yet discovered the privilege of taking active part in the support of their own church, the LC-MS has been supporting both Seminaries and most of the new mission fields of the North and Northeast of Brazil.

The IELB has large challenges to address, especially in the self-propagating and self-supporting areas. Therefore, with a view to some of the weaknesses of the IELB and several success factors of other Christian and non-Christian religions in Brazil, this writer proposes some steps which might help the IELB better to achieve the goal of becoming a more efficient church in the self-propagating and self-supporting areas.

- 1) The IELB needs to be awakened to its primary purpose which is to do mission. Through sermons and Bible studies its members need to be reminded that they are God's chosen people through whom He wills His praises declared to the world.

2) The IELB needs to be encouraged to pray more fervently two of the petitions of the Lord's Prayer: "Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."<sup>8</sup> There are two reasons for such fervent prayer: a) all success in mission work depends on God's blessings; and b) experience has shown that people who pray in behalf of missions are more willing to do and promote mission work.

3) The IELB needs a reform in its liturgical chant and hymns. In 1984, two years before the publication of the new Portuguese hymnal, the Rev. Leo Fuhr pointed to the fact that the IELB needed hymns and a liturgical chant with Brazilian roots, which would express the culture of Brazil rather than that of a foreign nation.<sup>9</sup> In 1986, after many years of expectation, the IELB finally published its new hymnal. Many of the Lutherans were disappointed when they saw that the liturgy and the hymns continued to be in the same style of those in the old hymnal and different from the musical "taste" of most Brazilians.<sup>10</sup> The Pentecostals with their simple hymns accompanied by instruments other than an organ, such as guitar, accordion and drums, come closer to the heart of the Brazilians. However, the IELB

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<sup>8</sup>Matthew 6:10 (NIV).

<sup>9</sup>Leo Fuhr, "Opinião," Mensageiro Luterano (November 1984): 33.

<sup>10</sup>Ilse Evers Gans, "Novo Hinário," Mensageiro Luterano (May 1987): 2. Ilse Gans was one of many readers of the Mensageiro Luterano who criticized the new hymnal.

continues to insist upon hymns which do not express the cultural values and the soul of the majority of the Brazilian people. There is no doubt, the IELB continues to need a reform in its liturgical chant and hymns; not in doctrine, of course, but in form.

4) The IELB needs more instruction in the area of Stewardship. If a clear distinction between Law and Gospel will be given in the Stewardship instruction, certainly the members of the IELB will improve their offerings and promote, through God's grace, a self-supporting church.

5) The IELB needs pastors who are prepared for mission work. In 1986, three seminars were promoted by the Board of Mission for all pastors and missionaries who were supported partially or totally by the IELB's central administration. At the conclusion of the three seminars a common opinion surfaced: Pastors involved directly with mission work had not received adequate preparation for it.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, in addition to the theoretical studies relating to the Theology of Missions, Missionary Methods and Brazilian reality, the students should have practical training which will provide them with the opportunity to learn and discuss with their instructors the best way to approach people with the gospel of Jesus.

6) The IELB needs Evangelism boards in each of its

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<sup>11</sup>Geraldo Stanke, "Seminarios de reciclagem," Elo Informativo (June 1986): 5-10.

congregations with the responsibility to encourage, prepare and lead members a) to have a better understanding of the universal priesthood of all believers; b) to learn who, what, where, how, and why to do mission work; and c) to form Bible study groups in strategic places where the congregation is located.

One of the significant problems for many pastors of the IELB is the size of their parishes. Many of them have four or more congregations to serve. It is impossible for them to do good work. Therefore, if congregations could have a corps of well-prepared members in the above mentioned areas, the pastors would have much more time to do the work that the Lord is expecting of them.

7) The IELB needs more literature, especially in the area of evangelism.

8) The IELB needs to learn how to use effectively its existing network of schools for missionary work. For the achievement of such a goal, those who are responsible for evangelism in the Lutheran schools, should gather for discussing strategies and methods. The same should be done with regard to the Sunday schools.

9) The IELB needs men who know how to communicate the gospel through the mass media. Although the IELB has done remarkable mission work through the Hora Luterana - A Voz da Cruz, it has no pastor with special training in communication through mass media in its headquarters. It

would be helpful for the radio work if the office of the Lutheran Hour in Brazil could call and give special training to a pastor in this area.

10) The IELB needs to be a church with more human warmth, which receives with gentleness those who come to participate in its services. The Rev. Dieter J. Jagnow, in his article "O 'calor' que abre portas" ("The Warmth that Opens Doors") recognizes that many members of the IELB have failed in the expression of warmth to other people. He admits that the growth of the IELB does not depend on the warmth of its members. But on the other hand, he said that it is a useful tool for the opening of new doors for the preaching of the gospel.<sup>12</sup>

Related to "warmth" is a characteristic of the early church: its ardent love. Works of charity sprouted spontaneously to the point that sometimes early Christians sold their properties to help the poor (Acts 2:45). Even the poor among new converts pleaded urgently to the apostles for the privilege of sharing in this service (2 Cor. 8:1-5). According to Edward Green, this Christian love that the pagans saw must have been a powerful adjunct to the preaching of the gospel.<sup>13</sup> And it was, because the Lord himself recommended in his sermon of the mountain:

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<sup>12</sup>Dieter J. Jagnow, "O calor que abre portas," Mensagem Luterana (November 1986): 13.

<sup>13</sup>Edward M. B. Green, Evangelism in the Early Church (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1970), 180-183.

". . . let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."<sup>14</sup>

Step by step, the IELB is seeing the need for diaconal work in Brazil. Furthermore, it is recognizing this to be an open door for mission work. It is an area in which Christians have much to do in Brazil because of the high number of the poor. The IELB is challenged by the growing number of homeless, orphans, unemployed, aged, handicapped, alcoholics, drug abusers, prisoners, and so forth. Being motivated by the love of God in and through Jesus Christ, its members should confess such love in their lives. A positive way to do it would be the establishment of boards for diaconal ministry in each congregation of the IELB to implement the works of love.

11) The IELB needs to involve its members in the work of the Lord. In most of the Lutheran congregations there is a lack of involvement of lay people in the work of the church, especially the participation of new converts. Too often they are welcomed to the church, invited to take part in the ministries and departments, but not given responsibilities to perform. Pastor Gerhard Grasel, talking about the reasons for the growth of sects, points to their method of involving the new members in the active work of the church. He noted that the sects know how to make new members feel that they are needed. Assigning

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<sup>14</sup>Matthew 5:16 (NIV).



tasks to the members so they know that they are important and needed is without doubt one of the urgent duties of the IELB.<sup>15</sup>

To plant self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating churches was the goal of men like Rufus Anderson, Henry Venn, and John Livingston Nevius. The first missionaries of the LC-MS who went to Brazil almost 89 years ago had a similar objective. These principles can still remain as goals for the IELB today. They are biblical, encouraging Christians to act.

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<sup>15</sup>Gerhard Grasel, "Por que crescem as seitas?" Mensageiro Luterano (August 1986): 35.

## APPENDIX

### TRANSLATION OF GERMAN QUOTATIONS

#### From Chapter IV

Quotation number 9, page 72: "One of them is an expelled school teacher from Germany, who is known as a drunkard and a gambler. Another was a Prussian Army officer of whom it is said that no one can drink as much as he. The third was a beer seller out of Porto Alegre, who went bankrupt in different ways. Since he could not find anything to sustain his livelihood, he became a pastor. The fourth one is a subject who was judged to be evil by others, and can neither read nor write. Another one who really does not belong to the worst group was a servant for a count. Another one was the helper of a person who measures the fields, and another one was a taylor."

Quotation number 18, page 75: "It was resolved that our Synod should begin to take a hold of the work of home missions especially in Brazil and Argentina because the conditions there are favorable. It should be placed in the hands of the general commission for home missions with specific instructions to pay special attention to this matter and act according to their best judgment. Should the commission become convinced after counsel from the president of Synod, that it is now time to begin the home mission in South America, they should bring this information to the congregations and ask for the necessary money and set it aside for this specific purpose."

Quotation number 19, page 75: ". . . here is also a direct call given to us: "Come over and help us!" The commission had a meeting with the President of the Synod and former members of the commission. The result of the meeting was: "Yes, now it is time, now we can not hold back any longer our duty of love to bring the Gospel to the Germans of Brazil."

Quotation number 20, page 76: "The treasurer of the Eastern District remitted over 2,000 dollars for South Amer-

ica. Now the commission can take the necessary steps immediately to carry out the decision of the convention."

Quotation number 32, page 80: "Yes, if we really want to do mission work here, then we need to value our schools for that purpose."

Quotation number 35, page 82: "The purpose and goal of this understanding is to give theological and scientific instruction to so many gifted young people so that they can serve the church as pastor and teacher in their own country. The second reason that comes to mind is to save future expensive travel costs for workers outside (the Usa). The main point is that the holy church prepare servants who were born and grew up here, so that one could say that the church grows and is strong of itself. Only then, as the holy church prepares its own pastors and teachers, can it hope to be self-supporting and not dependent on [the mother church]. A healthy child finally learns to stand and walk by itself."

Quotation number 67, page 97: "The commission can see that I am trying to do mission work through the Christian School. . . Yes, if we really want to do mission work here, then we need to value our schools for that purpose."

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