

**KEY ISSUES FOR PASTORS AND CHURCH LEADERS**  
**AS CHRISTIANITY MOVES DEEPER INTO THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY**

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*From 1910 to 2010 and on*

The plan and central purpose for this book, as for many conferences and other books that will be appearing in 2010, arises from the awareness that the World Missionary Conference which took place in Edinburgh in June 1910, thanks not least to the long and careful preparation which had been given to it, produced results that were both surprisingly profound and optimistic about the future of Christian mission. This chapter, well aware of major problems ahead, nonetheless hopes to suggest perspectives that can point to no less profound and in the long run hopeful obedience of the total Christian community in the very different world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century

Overall, the twentieth century was a horribly violent and wasteful period in many respects – just think of the Soviet gulags, the Nazi concentration camps, the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, let alone all the other horrors of two world wars and the subsequent conflicts that have damaged so much of humanity and of nature in nations such as Algeria, Vietnam, Congo, Nicaragua, Bosnia, Iraq ... In recent years Nelson Mandela and Barack Obama have perhaps stood out as persons with a wideness of heart and concern for their fellow human beings around the entire world, but the new century was hardly able to begin in 2000 with a sense of high optimism about the future of the planet.

At the same time, and in significant part because of the results of that Edinburgh conference, the 20<sup>th</sup> century has seen much unpredictable yet most welcome advance in regard to the effectiveness

of Christian mission, as of movement towards the unity to which all Christians are called in the one body of their one Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Edinburgh 1910 was a key factor in inspiring Archbishop Nathan Söderblom to plan what became the Universal Christian Conference for Life and Work, at Stockholm in August 1925, dealing above all with the need to banish war as an acceptable means of settling disputes. Two years later – thanks above all to Bishop Charles Brent's vision at Edinburgh of a united church – the first World Conference on Faith and Order, looking into the many theological questions over which the churches had become divided over the centuries, met in Lausanne in August 1927. These two movements were brought together in 1937, at their respective second major conferences, to agree to form a World Council of Churches. The Provisional Committee for that met in 1938 and 1939 but had to wait until after the Second World War before the founding Assembly of the WCC could be held in Amsterdam in August 1948. The International Missionary Council, established in the 1920s in direct follow-through of the Edinburgh Conference's main aims, was slower to take up the opportunity of joining in the new Council, but voted to do so in 1958 and was joyfully accepted into a partnership of the three great movements at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Assembly of the WCC in New Delhi in 1961.

Over the rest of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the WCC expanded greatly in its membership, especially with the acceptance of the Russian Orthodox Church and its sisters of Rumania and Bulgaria at the New Delhi Assembly in 1961, and from then on with many new churches in the countries of the South. It also grew noticeably in its unique role in world affairs, for instance in being able to make a major impact on South Africa, with its support for the overthrow of apartheid. Meanwhile the Roman Catholic Church had held its Second Vatican Council, revealing itself as a much more open and collaborative church than it had earlier seemed to be, even if later papal decisions have sometimes seemed to hark back to earlier models.

In the first years of the new century a quiet but remarkably effective series of meetings under the title of 'Global Christian Forum' have succeeded in bringing together representatives of both the major historical 'families' of churches (Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant) and of the thousands of newly springing up churches including the Pentecostals and the African Initiated Churches. In terms of church membership there has been since 1980 an astonishing growth in China of both people pressing into the churches, Protestant or Catholic, as of university students and academics taking a keen and profound interest in the teachings and practices of Christianity.<sup>1</sup> So even if many churches in Europe seem to be dwindling in numbers and more than a little stuck in their ways, this is far from the case in other continents.

***Precisely what do we mean by 'ecumenical' ?***

Over what has by now become a relatively long career in the organisations known as 'ecumenical', i.e. those that aim to serve the coming unity of the one Church of Christianity, I have myself increasingly grown aware of two easily overlooked, yet each in its own way absolutely crucial factors in this whole scene.

First, that what we are centrally concerned about is an 'ecumenical *movement*', where what matters is that the people forming it and acting within it are contributing to a *movement*, not an organisation, nor a community, nor even a church – all three too liable to understand itself as over against other comparable bodies. Rather, the ecumenical movement is a phenomenon of friends seeking to worship, obey and above all move on together, and to encourage others to move on with them, into a new and more hopeful future. Since this is the future which belongs primarily to God, the God we have come to know in Jesus of Nazareth, no one living today can ever be sure precisely where this will lead, nor even precisely what are the right things to be done at any particular moment. Yet those involved in this movement can feel reasonably confident that their actions together will prove

to be of real significance for the overall witness and service of the Body of Christ to the world of today and tomorrow.

For, secondly, this is a movement in which the all-important *leadership* is that which comes not from earthly leaders but from God the Holy Spirit. This stands in direct relationship to what abounded among the first apostles, to their own amazement on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit took over their cautious lives and got them out on the streets sharing their experience with whoever was passing by. They communicated the sheer joy and excitement of knowing that Jesus had conquered death, returned to live among them for a short while, and then had been seen taken up, like Elijah, to sit in triumph at the right hand of God, creator and father of all. From that day on they continued to witness to that same commitment by lives transformed, where the marks of authenticity were the 'fruits of the spirit' – love, joy and peace. Now as then, it is never easy for anyone to be totally confident that her / his ideas are entirely owed to the Holy Spirit, yet in the long run it is the very 'success' – or otherwise – of those ideas and gestures and advances that in the long run witness – or fail to – to the source they basically came from.

And so I have found myself defining the ecumenical movement in this way:

*the movement, under the leading of God the Holy Spirit, to explore and live out the wholeness and integrity of the Church of Jesus Christ, in her service of the wholeness and integrity of our one world, as created by God the Father.*

This will remain a life-long challenge for anyone preparing for service within the church, only possible under the guidance of the Spirit and in partnership with countless others.

### ***The World Ahead in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century***

To mark the beginning of the new century, the late Professor Adrian Hastings, in one of his last

writings, published in *The Tablet* (a UK Roman Catholic weekly) of 8 January 2000 an article '**Beware Apocalypse**' which was a remarkably far-sighted vision of what we and our children and grandchildren may soon find ourselves facing. 'Almost everything that has mattered hitherto will get worse and worse, though millions of people may remain mesmerised by the glossy image of a controlled virtual reality all around. Babies born at the start of the new millennium will be faced in their sixties, if not before, with a crisis in human history so unprecedented that it is hard even now to imagine it.'

He picked out as 'the most uncontrollable factor' that of 'global warming', with rises in sea level which may wipe out 'most of Bangladesh, the Netherlands, Florida, the Mississippi Delta, the English Fens and much else. (...) Expenditure, often ineffective, on raising sea defences will escalate astronomically. (...) The whole ecological balance of the world will have changed, and the weather everywhere will become increasingly erratic and violent, with a great increase in wind force. (...) Nowhere will be unaffected, but Africa, already the most fragile of continents in human terms will be the worst hit. (...) The continent as a whole will become ever drier and hotter, leading to prolonged collapses in the rural economy and ever more frequent famines. Economic misery and political anarchy will go hand in hand, each fuelling the other. (...)'

'Almost all the major problems of the twenty-first century will be basically global and only able to be handled effectively by strong global government, yet the world is entering this century with a United Nations organisation which has been steadily weakened for decades. (...) Multinational corporations will endeavour to force their will on the world by a ruthless policy of takeovers, by controlling the media, by the corruption of politicians, by the paying of scientists to serve their ends through the commercial funding of academe whereby unhelpful scientific research can be quietly deprived of finance to continue. (...) The challenge to American hegemony from China will fuel a

new race for power and add to the difficulty of shaping instruments of world government or plotting global policies which can be generally seen as fair. Europe, which, possibly alone, could perform the role of global mediator and provide an imaginative leadership that is not just self-seeking, is likely to remain hamstrung by its own internal divisions and its relationship with a highly unstable Russia.'

Only in his short last paragraph does he suggest possible responses to this frightening prospect: 'First, to do all in our power to bring the world's leadership to its senses while something can still be done to limit the scale of the disaster. Secondly, to recognise that global catastrophe is in the judgment of hard realism very likely to come upon us and, therefore, to prepare ourselves and small communities of sanity and faith to live undesperingly within it. Even inside a concentration camp or on the deck of the Titanic there is a Gospel to preach and a pattern of behaviour reflective of that Gospel. There is little time to lose in preparing ourselves mentally for Christian life in the very hardest of times.'

Already less than 10 years later I am amazed how much of his vision has already become true. Let no one suggest that he was exaggerating, even if he would have been the first to welcome any signs that he had over-emphasised the dangers.

Alongside that, already in its first decade the 21<sup>st</sup> century has begun to face almost all Christians with two further specific challenges. These may at first sight look rather different, yet they also interact deeply with climate change and with one another.

The first, though there is no significance in this order, is that arising from *the presence in virtually every major city in our world of believers belonging to several of the major 'world faiths'*. Our

Muslim, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, Bahai and other fellow-believers in a divine purpose for our lives and for the world as a whole, are no longer only to be found in the nation of their origin, just as Christians are no longer limited to the land in which Jesus Christ lived. Christians can no longer expect live purely in 'our own' community, but rather in a world where members of the other world faiths are present alongside us and deserving of no less mutual awareness and respect from Christians than Christians will wish to be shown by them. Diversity and 'differences – whether of gender, ethnicity, class, able-bodiedness or religion – are no cause for fear, hatred and conflict, rather as sources of enrichment'<sup>iii</sup>.

The second is all that has started to arise – and there is no doubt much more yet to be discerned – out of the appalling economic 'crash' that began in 2007 in the USA, spread rapidly to European nations and then to virtually all nations that are caught up in international trade and economic transfers. We are at present having to face up, throughout the world, to ***a decisively new stage in setting economic goals and expectations***. We are having to learn, in the richer areas painfully but of the highest importance, that sheer economic and financial competition for its own sake is extremely damaging to the human 'flourishing' of those trapped in its tangles. We all, of whatever background and tradition, urgently need to be developing simpler, more locally based and above all more collaborative patterns of behaviour and exchanges, financial and other, with whoever are our neighbours.

These new patterns must now be seen in the same context as the hugely urgent need ***to respond to the vast challenges of climate change***, as sketched by Hastings in the passages quoted above, and which have come over the horizon of scientific and social awareness more quickly and with more urgent demands even than Hastings was spelling out in early 2000. The great majority of scientists are now warning us that the our dependence, since the start of the industrial revolution, on fossil

fuels as our major source of energy is raising the global temperature at a speed which is threatening the very sustainability of life on the planet. Yet the G20 leaders' meeting in April 2009, for instance, gave as good as no attention to this dimension. That shows how unthinkingly we have let ourselves and our leaders be governed by a seriously unrealistic set of aims and expectations. It is of the highest urgency that Christians, by all means in alliance with many others, play as full a part as we can in opening up new possibilities for understanding God's purposes for the planet, and finding new ways of putting these into practice, e.g. in the limitation of carbon emissions and many other significant reductions in what we humans demand of the natural environment to which we owe the very possibility of being alive.

### ***Challenges that contribute to the larger whole***

Space prevents me from going further into the many details that will emerge as we dig deeper into each of these three challenges. But what I need to emphasise here is that ***they belong together***.

Yes, they have rather different origins in the human history of our time, and face Christians with specific demands which will not necessarily recall the other two as we try to find ways of responding creatively. But it is obvious, for instance, that the challenges of climate change belong to the entire world, to the planet as a whole, and therefore that it cannot just be a question of finding responses that Christians by ourselves can adopt. Whatever useful steps we become aware of deserve to be shared with our Jewish and Muslim neighbours, just as ways of behaving that they may discover within their obedience may – indeed should – prove no less significant to Christians. Similarly, ways of ordering our economic patterns and expectations that are more conducive to collaborative patterns – and in the West also to much simpler lifestyles – as to the fairer distribution of resources, need to be developed in relation to the impact of climate change, and in partnership with whoever among the other faith communities and across humanity's many diverse cultures can



come up with valuable practices and approaches. So, in your studies, whether, for example, of pastoral theology, of ethics, or of leadership in congregations and synods, try to keep in mind all three of these major challenges, in effective relation to each other and to the total situation facing humankind.

*So, what about the many separate churches and their unity in Christ ?*

Does this awareness of three major, world-wide and profound challenges to humanity mean that the ecumenical movement, in its service of the 'wholeness and integrity of our one world' is giving up on the goal of the comparable wholeness and integrity of the one Church of Christ ? Not at all, though it will undoubtedly be wholesome if concerns for reform and renewal of the many divided churches are always seen as within, and so as deliberately hoping to better serve, God's purposes for the world and humanity as a single whole.

It is in this light that the World Council of Churches, as the 'flagship' of the total ecumenical movement, even if it lays no claim to automatic pre-eminence, deserves to be judged for the coherence and quality of its work. Throughout its first century it has struggled no less hard in the fields of 'faith and order' and of 'world mission and evangelism' to discover ways of overcoming doctrinal and organisational quarrels between the separated churches, as of exploring new paths of more united obedience and renewal, whether at local, national or world-wide levels. Since the 1930s the first aim defined in the WCC's constitution has been this:

The primary purpose of the fellowship of churches in the World Council of Churches is to call one another to visible unity in one faith and in one eucharistic fellowship, expressed in worship and common life in Christ, through witness and service to the world, and to advance towards that unity in order that the world may believe.

Much advance within that aim has been achieved, yet always with at least two major obstacles.

One is the gap, in theology and Christian obedience, in the churches no less than in politics and world affairs, between theory and practice. The WCC has again and again known imaginative and apparently meaningful agreements reached by thinkers from divided churches in its conferences, yet which, when taken back to the member churches, find the authorities there all too often unwilling to agree to put them into practice.

The other, even more difficult to overcome, from the evidence to date, is the way in which the churches which consider themselves 'older' than those who, as the former see it, break away and form 'new' churches, find it almost impossible to loosen their understandings and disciplines to accept those 'younger' churches as equally belonging to Christ, and so equally acceptable as partners as their own long-standing members. This has long been the case with the way the Orthodox churches behave towards almost all others, even the Roman Catholic Church, especially when this does something new in one of their 'own' nations. But it is no less true of the Roman Catholic Church as it regards and responds to whatever may come from Protestant churches, and hardly less so for the 'historic' Protestant churches which remain distressingly slow to offer real understanding and partnership to the thousands of newer churches which have sprung up by fresh initiatives and with their own leaders over the last century. One cannot deny that all too often the 'new' churches are themselves slow to approach the 'older' in charity and expectation, but this is no excuse for the 'older' not to offer friendship.

In this connection the Global Christian Forums<sup>iii</sup> that I mentioned earlier have made a highly significant, and to my knowledge totally new contribution. They have so arranged their meetings that at least half the available programme time is spent in small groups, where seven or eight

people, each from a different church tradition and experience, take it in turn to present, and then respond to questions, over at least a couple of hours, a) how s/he became a Christian, b) what moved her/him to take the decisive step beyond what they had previously believed, and c) what it means today for her/him to act as a Christian in face of the great challenges to faith. These conversations, with each member of the group being carefully questioned at length, have again and again resulted in a degree of mutual respect, often of admiration and almost always of understanding and acceptance as a fellow-Christian, which is new and surprising to many of those involved but which simply cannot be denied. This of course leaves the members of churches whose disciplines forbid the practice of accepting members of other churches, for instance as fellow-communicants at the Lord's table, in real and painful difficulty, already in the meeting and still more when reporting back to their own 'authorities' afterwards. Still, as I write, there is little sign of significant loosening up in the disciplines of the 'historic' churches. Yet one cannot but hope that this pattern, as it becomes more widely and frequently followed, will lead to break-throughs in the dividing and separating disciplines, such as we have seldom experienced in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Again, this is not the place to go into any detail about the many advances and potential new advances and discoveries that the ecumenical movement has been able to make so far. The three large volumes of *A History of the Ecumenical Movement*, the first covering the years from 1517 – 1948, the second 1948 – 1968, and the third 1968 – 2000, now available from WCC Publications<sup>iv</sup>, will provide no shortage of topics to be researched and discussed within the years of initial training for any church in today's world. They show, for instance, how much easier it is to experiment in the practice of friendship and in informal collaboration than to change the long-fixed rules for policy towards other churches. The website of the Global Christian Forum, which will no doubt itself go through further stages of development and partnership with other bodies in the years ahead, will undoubtedly remain a vital tool for further exploration of what is becoming possible.

### ***How can theological education deal with these huge subjects ?***

Since I myself have spent so little of my career in theological education – having never been a candidate for ordination, and only for less than 3 academic years a tutor in a theological college – I do not feel qualified to go into detail about possible programmes within theological education today and tomorrow. But I will reflect here on two areas which surely deserve to play vital parts in any projects and programmes intended to enable careful exploration of these large questions.

First, since people often ask me what they can **read** to deepen their awareness of the challenges I have spoken about, here are some suggestions based on books and papers that have greatly helped me in recent years:

1. The present Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, has a remarkable gift for expressing in fresh ways the central Christian teachings and approaches to major challenges. His sermon in York Minster on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2009, '*Renewing the Face of the Earth: Human Responsibility and the Environment*' (to be found, with many others, at [www.archbishopofcanterbury.org](http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org) ) and his address to the Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Porto Alegre, Brazil, in February 2006, '*Christian Identity and Religious Plurality*'<sup>vi</sup> are superb overviews of what can seem highly complex matters, yet which point out ways of approaching these areas of question and of obedience that will encourage and enliven any Christian reader.

2. In relation to 'other faiths' : Christopher Lamb's *Belief in a Mixed Society*<sup>vi</sup> shows how Christians, in as 'mixed' a society as Britain had already by 1985 become, can live alongside people with rather different expectations than those we traditional British usually presuppose, and so gradually learn to soften and adapt our own practices in relation to them. An important text alike for

its social and its theological depths. Farid Esack's *Qur'an, Liberation & Pluralism – An Islamic Perspective of Interreligious Solidarity against Oppression*<sup>vii</sup> is a fresh and open-minded approach to these crucial dimensions of living together with people of other faiths, showing how the Qur'an can offer vital qualities and expectations if only we will pay attention to it in its original contexts, not just to how some Muslims and some Christians use it today for their own polemic purposes.

3. In relation to the huge questions about our customary economic practices, a recent lecture by the Dutch theologian, Bob Goudzwaard, on '*Underlying Causes of the Global Economic Crisis*', given to a conference called by Churches Together in Britain & Ireland in January 2009, with its analysis of 'the empire of money' for its own sake, rather than that of the human beings using it, suggests many practical ways of follow-through. It can be downloaded from [www.ctbi.org.uk](http://www.ctbi.org.uk). So too the 2008 publication *A Green New Deal - Joined up policies to solve the triple crunch of the credit crisis, climate change and high oil prices*<sup>viii</sup>, [using President Roosevelt's](#) model from the 1929 crisis for approaching our current dilemmas, offers an invaluable and in the end relatively clear, even simple way ahead, if only we can clear our minds and hearts of the confusing and selfish patterns of the 1970s and 80s.

Among longer books, *real world economic outlook – the legacy of globalization: debt and deflation*<sup>ix</sup>, edited by ann pettifor and janet bush, is a most useful survey of the needs of different areas in the world, along with an analysis of why reforms are so difficult for many of them. Its title stands in deliberate opposition to the supposedly 'normal' analyses of the International Monetary Fund in its annual 'World Economic Outlook'. Bishop Peter Selby's *Grace and Mortgage – The Language of Faith and the Debt of the World*<sup>x</sup> is as clear a Christian, theological approach as I know to all the complexities of finance and financial patterns in the contemporary world. *The Spirit Level: Why more equal societies almost always do better* by Richard Wilkinson and Kate

Pickett<sup>xi</sup> begins with a factual approach to the way different societies produce different levels of economic distance between the most 'successful' of their members and the least 'successful'. The book then shows how these different levels of 'gap' between richest and poorest influence the patterns of achievement and flourishing, let alone happiness, across the whole spectrum of areas of living, emphasising that the smaller the gap, the easier it will prove for richer and poorer to live together and to discover ways of encouraging and fulfilling the aims and contributions of all citizens for the common life.

4. On Climate Change and the whole environmental area of question, much is now being published. Here are four which have struck me as unusually useful. *The River Runs Black – The Environmental Challenge to China's Future* by Elizabeth Economy<sup>xii</sup> is a detailed, academic study of the patterns of water use and misuse in China at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Chinese government has clearly by now understood the damage it has let happen to many of its sources of fresh and clean water, so that a huge effort to improve things is under way. Yet this study remains a vital pointer to what almost every nation on earth now needs to give high priority to. Michael Northcott's *A Moral Climate – the ethics of global warming*<sup>xiii</sup> is a rich tapestry in which each chapter knits together, in often surprising ways, different areas of living and thinking, yet which in the end offers an unusually promising and even joyful Christian approach to this easily fearsome topic. Alastair McIntosh's *Hell and High Water: Climate Change, Hope and the Human Condition*<sup>xiv</sup> brings together a useful summary of the scientific findings on climate change with a personal story of his growing discoveries about the dominant culture of violence, and the motivational manipulation of marketing, leading to an unusually profound, spiritual and holistic approach to human living and the promise of mending our horribly broken world. Still more recent, Jonathan Porritt's 72-page report of March 2009 to and on behalf of the Forum for the Future, entitled '*living within our means: avoiding the ultimate recession*'<sup>xv</sup>(), is an attractive,

synthetic and deliberately practical study of both the causes of the 'end of capitalism as we know it' and the ways of moving ahead into a deliberately 'sustainable' approach. Already in 2005 Porritt had published a much bigger book: *Capitalism as if the world matters*<sup>xvi</sup>, which most usefully distinguishes between five different sorts of capital – natural, human, social, manufactured and financial.

Precisely because these three areas of concern are bound to remain high in our agendas throughout the 21<sup>st</sup> century, with many, many more important and far-reaching books and other materials to come, it is vital that all those preparing for Christian leadership in any form acquire as part of their 'basic' training a reliable grounding into on the one hand the realities and complexities of each and all of these, along, on the other, with a strong understanding of the relation between Christian faith and contemporary social dilemmas. As with many questions about the total span of human living, future clergy should be strongly encouraged to recognise how vital the witness and leadership of several of their lay members and friends, not least those with professional positions involving expertise in these areas, will prove for the total Christian community. Clergy and laity are *together* responsible for preaching the Good News on every possible occasion, so it's not a matter of one giving way to the other. Rather of friendships and partnerships becoming profound enough for either clergy or lay to seek out the most appropriate minds and voices and advice as each new particular situation or need arises. So I hope that virtually all programmes of theological education can enable all students to meet, as speakers, as members of working groups, as visitors who can become friends, persons with specific experience and expertise in matters to do with the three challenges set out above.

### ***Key practical steps***

Beyond these brief pointers, I finish with two simple, yet surprisingly far-reaching suggestions of

practical steps that absolutely anyone in training for Christian membership and leadership can and should follow. The more programmes of theological education can deliberately provide opportunities and set aside time and energy for these, the better alike for those who teach and those who study.

First, *seek out one or more people from whom you are separated (perhaps belonging to a Christian church different from your own, or to a different faith community, or of a different culture or nationality) and do all that you can to make friends with her/him/them.* In this, be sure to practise the pattern of listening before speaking and only speaking yourself when asked to do so. Respect the person(s) from the first contact onward as 'other', not a copy of what you are. And as you grow into friendship, make sure to ask her/him/them to tell you about their beliefs and their struggles with obedience before ever taking any time to tell them of yours ! Learn that you will grow more surely into obedience to the God who is creator of all and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, if you can do so in deep friendship and reconciliation with at least one person whose background and opinions you would earlier have hardly thought it right to explore. The same disciplines can also apply to seeking reconciliation between hostile political attitudes, or peoples who were formerly enemies in war or oppression, of both of which tomorrow's world will probably still have all too many examples.

Second, ensure that any commitment that you enter into with such friend(s) is one *that promises worthwhile service of the wider community around,* at any and every level, not only to your fellow-believers, good as they can and will be as allies in what the Spirit is encouraging you to explore and do for the 'common good'. Whatever we do as Christians, in worship no less than in social work, is for the sake of the wider and whole community of human beings and of created nature. The three new challenges laid out above will no doubt deserve our priority and obedience



for significant lengths of this new century, so even when you set out to deal with rather smaller concerns, don't forget that the 'wholeness and integrity of our one world, as created by God the Father' deserves always to be kept in mind, as the basic and overall reality we are called in Christ to serve.

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- i About which I wrote 'The Astonishing Popularity of Christian Faith in Today's China' in *Keston Newsletter* no. 8, 2009, pp.1-8.
- ii The quotation is from 'Strangers and Citizens', a lecture by Barbara Einhorn, Professor of Gender Studies at Sussex University, UK, in June 2009.
- iii Details and public materials are available from [www.globalchristianforum.org](http://www.globalchristianforum.org)
- iv Under the overall title, the volume covering 1517 (the date of Luther's pinning his 95 theses to the door of Wittenberg Cathedral, in announcement of the next session of academic discussion) to 1948 was edited by Ruth Rouse and Stephen Neill, first published by SPCK, London, in 1954, in a second, revised edition in 1967, and then in the common present format from WCC Publications, Geneva, in 1993, pp.870, ISBN 2-8254-0871-9, at US\$ 48.00. The second, entitled 'The Ecumenical Advance', edited by Harold E. Fey, covering 1948 – 1968 and the four first Assemblies of the WCC, was published in 1970 and 1993, pp.592, ISBN 2-8254-0872-7, at US\$34.00; the third, covering 1968 – 2000, and edited by John Briggs, Mercy Amba Oduyoye and Georges Tssetsis is ISBN 2-8254-1355-0, pp.697, at US\$ 75.00.
- v Printed in *The Ecumenical Review* for January/April 2006, Vol 58, no. 1-2, available from the WCC at 150 route de Ferney, CH- 1211 GENEVA 2, Switzerland, pp. 69-75.
- vi Tring, Belleville and Sydney, Lion Publishing plc., 1985, pp.160, ISBN 0-85648-210-2, then £ 3.95.
- vii Oxford: One World Publications, 1997, pp.288, ISBN 1-85168-121-3, £ 14.99 when first published.
- viii London: New Economics Foundation, pp.44, ISBN 978-1-904882-35-0, £ 10 by post, but available for downloading from [www.neweconomics.org](http://www.neweconomics.org).
- ix Basingstoke, Hampshire and New York, USA: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, pp. xxxviii & 232, £ 16.99, ISBN 1-4039-1975-7, ppbk.
- x London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1997, pp 191, ISBN 0-232-52170-0, then £ 10.95
- xi London: Allen Lane, £ 20.00, 2009, ISBN 978-1-846-14039-6
- xii Ithaca, USA and London: Cornell University Press, 2004, pp.337, ISBN 0-8014-8978-4, ppbk originally US\$ 17.95
- xiii London: Darton, Longman & Todd, in association with Christian Aid, 2007, pp.336, ppbk, ISBN 978-232-52668-4, £ 12.95
- xiv Edinburgh: Birlinn Ltd., 2008, ppbk, pp.289. ISBN 978-1-84158-622-9, £ 8.99
- xv Details available on [www.forumforthefuture.org](http://www.forumforthefuture.org)
- xvi London and Sterling, VA, USA: Earthscan, ISBN-13: 978-1-84407-192-0, pp 336, hardback £ 35.00, 2007 ppbk. £ 18.99