January 2005

The need for a Biblical theology of holistic mission

Wagner Kuhn

Andrews University

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/world-mission-pubs

Part of the Missions and World Christianity Commons, and the Practical Theology Commons

Recommended Citation

http://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/world-mission-pubs/12

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the World Mission at Digital Commons @ Andrews University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Publications by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Andrews University. For more information, please contact repository@andrews.edu.
Thank you for your interest in the

Seventh-day Adventist Missions Resources
Digital Library

Andrews University Digital Library

Please honor the copyright of this document by not duplicating or distributing additional copies in any form without the author’s express written permission. Thanks for your cooperation.
Chapter 8

* * *

THE NEED FOR A BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF HOLISTIC MISSION

WAGNER KUHN

This author discusses the importance and the need for a solid biblical theology of mission for holistic ministries. This is a task needed for the Christian church in general, but it is of special necessity for the Adventist Church and its relief and development agency (ADRA) in particular. A well-defined theology of holistic ministries is significant in view of the fact that both individual church members as well as church institutions are socially responsible toward their neighbors.

In December 2001, representatives of both ADRA and the Seventh-day Adventist Church in one of the Central Asian countries met with the chairman of the State Committee of Religious Affairs to provide him with an overview of the work and activities of the church and ADRA in that country. The government representative was very pleased to know that ADRA was heavily involved with development programs that helped hundreds of thousands of refugees, Internally Displaced People (IDPs), and other vulnerable citizens. To our surprise, he questioned what the local Adventist Church and its members were doing on behalf of the social problems of their communities. He wanted
to know how the local Adventist Church and its members understand and put into practice their social responsibility as Christians.

The government official understood that development is not only a task that needed to be undertaken by ADRA, but that it is a task that also needs to be carried out by the local Adventist Church and its members.

Christian holistic and transformational development is first and foremost an individual responsibility, but of equal proportion it is also a responsibility of the Christian Church as a whole.

It is of great importance for Adventist church members in particular and the church in general to understand the issues related to holistic development in the context of Christian mission and ministry. Theological and biblical principles set forth in the Scriptures must be rightly understood and effectively put into practice.

The need for theologians, missiologists, and Christian development professionals is to establish a biblical foundation of holistic mission. Certainly it is a difficult task, but nevertheless it must be pursued. This task gets more complicated when one tries to define what "mission" is in today's context.

What is mission in a biblical context? Is it merely the proclamation of the gospel and the establishment of churches? Or does it also refer to relieving human beings of suffering and misery? How is holistic development work, as part of God's mission, exemplified in the New Testament? Does the Old Testament have principles to guide the church in implementing holistic ministries and transformational development programs?

These and other questions do not allow for simple answers. A word of caution is required. The Bible needs to be the fundamental authority for a theology of holistic mission, in developing an approach that is based on Christian principles.

Before turning to the Bible, let us examine a few definitions of mission. Arthur Glasser and Donald McGavran, for example, defined mission as carrying the gospel across cultural boundaries to those who owe no allegiance to Jesus Christ, and encouraging them to accept Him as Lord and Savior and become responsible members of His church, working, as the Holy Spirit leads, at both evangelism and justice, at making God's will done on earth as it is done in heaven (Glasser and McGavran 1983:26).

The members of the Editorial Committee of the American Society of Missiology Series describe mission as "a passage over the boundary between
faith in Jesus Christ and its absence” (Bosch 1991:xiii). Others have defined mission as

The set of beliefs, theories, and aims of a particular sending body of the Christian world that determines the character, purpose, organization, strategy and action to evangelize the unreached world for Christ and to minister holistically to its needs (Kaiser 2000:84).

These definitions do not limit mission merely to the proclamation of the gospel. They also encompass also services rendered toward the promotion of the physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being of people.

The Bible as the Source of a Mission Theology

The Bible is the primary book on which a theology of mission can be built. As the Word of God, the Bible reveals God’s character (more uniquely and objectively in Jesus Christ), His purposes, and His plan for humankind’s eternal redemption.

As such, it clearly defines the mission of God and the mission of the church, including how the local church and its individual members should understand it and carry it out. For example, the Bible shows that the mission of God is the salvation of humankind (John 3:16). The Bible also indicates what my responsibility toward God, creation, self, and my neighbor should be (Matthew 22:37-40). Scripture provides a balanced and complete package of principles, concepts, and practices on which to build a holistic theology of mission.

Such a biblical theology outlines the function and mission of the church, which includes gospel proclamation, teaching, Christian witness, individual and corporate worship, holistic development, transformational ministries, discipleship, nurture, and other services toward human beings. Whenever implemented through the power of the Holy Spirit, such mission will not only include the responsibility of preaching but also living out the gospel. The purpose of this biblical theology of mission is to analyze what the Bible says about subjects related to the mission of God as well as to act as an instrument by which to measure when imbalances occur.

Since the mission of the church is part of and integrated with the mission of God, the function of a biblical theology of mission will help to prioritize the work of the church. This mission priority will not be limited to preaching the gospel, but will encompass all necessary efforts for fallen human beings to be
restored in the image of God. In this way, a true biblical model of mission will be holistic because it will focus on the central theme of God's salvation and restoration of the human race and all of His creation (see White 1903:123-27).

The ultimate function of a biblical theology of mission will demonstrate that God's revelation in Jesus Christ has a missionary dimension, and this missionary dimension has its best example in the person of Jesus Christ (Bosch 1980:47-49). To reflect and exemplify Christ's self-sacrificing love and character in words and deeds is the ultimate demonstration and function of a biblical theology of mission.

The Need of a Biblical Theology of Mission

The title of Ronald J. Sider's book, One-Sided Christianity? (1993), poses an interesting question. Is there more than one side to Christian ministry? Apparently for Sider, Christian mission appears to be one-sided, in that the church focuses its attention exclusively on evangelism, forgetting other ministries, or that the church's only priority and preoccupation are with social services. In doing only one or the other, the church is losing its balance and priorities, becomes hampered, loses its vigor, and fails to fulfill its mission.

The need to establish a theology of mission is especially vital for Seventh-day Adventists. Over the years, Adventists have stressed the preaching of the gospel, Christ's imminent Second Coming, and the Seventh-day Sabbath. In doing so, they have neglected such topics as Christian living and the churches' involvement in their communities. This was done not because Adventists did not understand the importance of a holistic view of the gospel, but because the overemphasis on a particular set of teachings somehow led to the neglect of other parts.

There are several places and areas in church ministry and mission that require a clear and balanced biblical understanding of mission. There is a need for a more balanced curriculum in our seminaries, where pastors, teachers, and missionaries will be reminded that theology and ministry include ministering to the whole person. Other institutions of higher learning, such as teacher training schools and medical schools, also need to teach their students a biblical theology of mission that leads them to be involved in the spiritual, social, and physical restoration process.
For Christian Welfare and Relief Work

The church needs a theology of mission in the area of welfare and relief work, because much of the ministry of Jesus was devoted to the healing and sustenance of the poor, the sick, and the destitute. Most of what he did was directly related to welfare, relief, and development work. Jesus’ example should be important for the church to follow. Indeed, His examples are clear, sufficient, and all-encompassing. A theology of such a holistic mission would help the church in interpreting and applying His words as well as His deeds.

People in the church have argued that Jesus never spent any money on welfare, relief, and community development activities. It is true that most of His works of compassion and relief activities were of a miraculous nature, such as the feeding of the multitudes (Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:30-44; Luke 9:10-17). But they were an important part of His ministry, and He used these miracles to teach His disciples important mission principles. On the other hand, we see that the apostle Paul did not hesitate to accept offerings from the members of the church in Antioch to be given to the members living in Judea (Acts 11:29). These two examples show us that there is a need for all three acts of mercy—preaching, miracles, and money. Furthermore, these examples show us that there are biblical guidelines in the implementation of welfare and relief activities. The Bible validates both individual and corporate relief efforts that require money and charity but makes it clear that a spiritual concern motivates all of these activities.

The Christian church must understand that evangelism and compassionate relief service and holistic development belong together in the mission of God (see Stott 1975:27). This central principle justifies Christian welfare, relief, and transformational development because it is part of a biblical theology of mission. This theology of mission emphasizes the restoration of body and mind without neglect of the spirit. It teaches us why welfare and relief are necessary and how they should be carried out.

Jesus makes it clear that only those of His followers who have shown a loving character to those in need will be rewarded at His Second Coming.

Then the King will say to those on his right, “Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me” (Matthew 25:34-36).
For Transformational Development

Sometimes the relief that occurs through the development process requires external assistance as in the case of emergency aid and relief. Often such work originates outside of those in need. Even for this type of work Scripture provides us with biblical examples and theological principles.7

God’s plan of restoration and transformation originated from the outside. Christ’s incarnation demonstrated how God took the initiative to restore and save the lost and fallen human race. The Son of God did not stay in the safe immunity of His heaven, remote from human sin and tragedy. He actually entered our world. He emptied Himself to serve (Philippians 2:5-8). He took our nature, lived our life, endured our temptations, experienced our sorrows, felt our hurts, bore our sins, and died our death. He penetrated deeply into our humanness. He never stayed aloof from the people He might be expected to avoid. He made friends with the dropouts of society. He even touched the untouchables. He could not have become more one with us than He did. It was the total identification of love (John 3:16). His incarnation was not a superficial touchdown, but He became one of us (yet He remained Himself). He remained human without ceasing to be God. Now He sends us into the world, as the Father sent Him into the world (John 17:18; 20:21). In this way our mission is to be modeled on His.

Indeed, all authentic mission is incarnational mission. It demands identification without loss of identity. It means entering other people’s worlds, as Christ entered ours, though without compromising our Christian convictions, values, or standards. The apostle Paul is a good example. Although he was free, he made himself everybody’s slave (1 Corinthians 9:19-22). That is the principle of incarnation, and that is the principle of mission. It is identification with people where they are.

The Bible and Christian history offer many examples which can help us in establishing a theology of mission and relief activities. There are many laws and regulations in the Old Testament (see Attachment 1), as well as examples and instructions in the New Testament,8 that show us how God wants us to work for the relief of human misery and that demonstrate the right interpretation of the gospel of Christ.

The apostle Paul encouraged the practice of holistic development by urging church members to do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers (Galatians 6:10). But he also had a broader view of
compassion to include even our enemies. He reminds us that "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink" (Romans 12:20). He also affirmed the principles that all should work with their own hands, live a quiet life, not depend or be a burden on others, and never interfere in the affairs of others. Idleness should not exist among believers, but rather they should work hard. In doing so, the believers would possess dignity, would be self-reliant, and would become respected citizens of their communities (1 Thessalonians 4:11-12; 2 Thessalonians 3:7-8).  

Ellen G. White wrote that "the Savior ministered to both the soul and the body. The gospel which He taught was a message of spiritual life and of physical restoration" (1905:111). It was "by giving His life for the life of men" that "He would restore in humanity the image of God. He would lift us up from the dust, reshape the character after the pattern of His own character, and make it beautiful with His own glory" (504). This is without any doubt what we can refer to as the holistic gospel of Jesus Christ—a gospel that is able to heal and to save, to protect and restore—transforming human beings into heirs of God's Kingdom. This is the work that must be done through the power of God's Spirit so that many poor, sick, and needy persons might receive the graces of this holistic gospel of Christ and be transformed into His likeness.  

The Importance of a Biblical Theology That Includes Holistic and Transformational Development  

The search for a balance between evangelism and social ministries has always been at the forefront of the evangelical debate, especially when it comes to defining the mission of the church and prioritizing its implementation. There are those who advocate merely the preaching of the gospel. They have argued that since the gospel is powerful, it is enough to transform the condition of humans and thereby make social ministries secondary or irrelevant. (Unfortunately, there are still many economically poor and socially marginalized Christians.) Others will argue that what is needed is “action by Christians along with all people of goodwill to tackle the terrible problems of the nation, to free the oppressed, heal the sick, and bring hope to the hopeless” (Newbigin 1989:136).

Holistic transformation is the ultimate purpose of Christian development. But for this transformation to occur, both the divine power and the human will must cooperate. Jesus showed us the way by loving and identifying Himself
with us even unto death. His mission was to bring complete restoration to men and women. "He came to give them health and peace and perfection of character. . . . From Him flowed a stream of healing power, and in body and mind and soul men were made whole" (White 1905:17).

Development that is holistic is more than just an infusion of innovations or changes in behaviors, traditions, or worldviews; it is a transformation of the whole person which affects the whole community. It is a transformation of both the poor as well as the non-poor. All need to be transformed and saved by God's redeeming grace.

The debate on what is acceptable mission for the church will not stop, and there will always be those who argue one way or the other. This makes it even more urgent to develop a theology of holistic ministries for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It is also important for ADRA, the development and relief agency of the Adventist Church, to have a biblical foundation for its humanitarian and developmental activities. Without it, both the church and ADRA will remain divided and in contention as they implement their work.

**For the Christian Church in General**

Such a biblical theology of holistic mission is important for the Christian church in general, because it will help them to understand how to implement the examples that Jesus gave us when He "cured many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind" (Luke 7:21).

This theology will bring together the totality of instructions and examples in the Bible and will aim to integrate all aspects of mission by addressing the whole person and providing the basis for individual and community transformation.  

**For the Adventist Church**

Currently, there is a discussion among some of the leaders and theologians in the Adventist Church regarding the legitimacy of relief and development activities, not because these activities have no value, but because most of these activities are carried out without the specific intent to preach the gospel.

Critics point out that ADRA, as well as other entities of the church, such as the health-care system and hundreds of church-operated schools, do not "contribute" to the "soul-winning" effort of the church. They further point out that these schools are far more preoccupied with implementing a curriculum...
that is imposed on them by the boards of education or government require­ments than with a biblically centered and holistic curriculum. What legitimacy do these institutions and their work have in the mission of the church?

A number of meetings have taken place within the Adventist Church to answer this and related questions, particularly for the legitimacy of ADRA in the context of the mission of the church. In October 1997 a historic event took place in the headquarters of the Adventist Church in Silver Spring, Maryland, when a group of church administrators, theologians, and social ministries practitioners met for two days to discuss the role of social ministries in the work and witness of the church. It was probably the first event of its kind in our church (see ADRA 1997:iii-iv). Other meetings have followed in Asia (2001) and in Europe (2002). These meetings were important because for decades many church leaders, academics, and even social ministries practitioners were caught in the middle of the debate of how to relate evangelism to social (relief and development) work and vice versa. Unfortunately, these meetings have not brought forth a clearly defined position on this matter, partly because ADRA merely talked to itself.

A biblical theology of holistic ministry is important for the Adventist Church because it would help the church find a balance in its evangelistic and witnessing approach. It would help the church as a whole to understand that the gospel of Christ is not a social gospel, as some would argue, and that preaching salvation cannot be done in a vacuum without considering people's temporal needs. A holistic ministry will attempt to respond to the needs of people at all levels. The church and its members need to practice what they preach. As the Bible says, “Our people must learn to devote themselves to doing what is good, in order that they may provide for daily necessities and not live unproductive lives” (Titus 3:14).

The balance between word and deed and between being and doing is always at the forefront of the discussion when it comes to holistic ministries as carried out by the church. It is for this same reason that ADRA regularly needs to review its mandate, its purpose, and its operating principles, but this has to be done in the context of a biblical mandate (that is, a theology of mission).

For ADRA in Particular

Furthermore, ADRA needs a very well-defined and clearly stated biblical theology of holistic ministries in order to understand its mission and to articu-
The Need for a Biblical Theology of Holistic Mission

late its purpose. Although ADRA has attempted to include a discussion of its mission in its Operations Manual (c. 1996), it has done so without engaging its whole staff in a discussion of a biblical mandate for doing development and relief work. It is this lack of a theological foundation that makes ADRA vulnerable among many church leaders and members in the pews. ADRA (as well as the Adventist Church) needs to develop a biblical (systematic) theology of development (or biblical social responsibility) over a mere discussion of biblical incidents.

In many countries, programs are implemented with little consideration as to whether these activities are part of a holistic ministry of the church. Often the church does not know what ADRA is doing, and ADRA cannot explain why and exactly how it does implement such activities. That becomes more problematic when donors want ADRA to implement programs that are not part of ADRA’s portfolio or when programs conflict with the church’s purpose or theology of mission. This has created a tension between the church and ADRA, which sees the implementation of mere “humanitarian” programs as not part of the mission of the church.

The importance of a well-defined and clearly formulated biblical theology of holistic ministries for ADRA is far more important than its strategy and methodology in winning donors’ confidence and grant-funding. It is important because in the very center of the donors’ ability and willingness to grant ADRA their money is their perception of what ADRA does and is. This perception is directly related to ADRA’s own understanding of its mission, purposes, and operating principles, as well as its theology of holistic ministries and the way it carries out its activities.

Summary

A biblical perspective of mission would help us understand that evangelism and social concern are the hands and feet of one body—the body of Christ. Holistic development ministries are necessary to carry the gospel of God in the wisdom and strength of the Spirit and in the love and grace of Jesus Christ.

Accordingly, this biblical perspective must demonstrate that those who are engaged in ministries of compassion toward the sick, the poor, orphans, widows, and the oppressed must understand that their work, both in word and deeds, is a work of redemption and transformation. It not only provides food or medicines, implements programs that aim to educate the communities, or
A Man with a Vision: Mission

offers loans so the poor can better their own lives; it is much more. Holistic development ministries are part of the biblical gospel that needs to be lived out individually today in our churches and communities to contribute to the total restoration of human beings.

Moreover, understanding that evangelism and holistic development belong together in the mission of God is central for the Christian church because it will justify Christian welfare relief and development. Such a theology of mission will emphasize the restoration of body and mind, but without neglecting the spirit.

**Attachment 1: Old Testament Laws and Regulations**

"Do not mistreat an alien or oppress him, for you were aliens in Egypt" (Exodus 22:21; see also Exodus 23:9). "Do not take advantage of a widow or an orphan" (Exodus 22:22; see also Deuteronomy 10:17-19; 26:12-13). "If you lend money to one of my people among you who is needy, do not be like a moneylender; charge him no interest" (Exodus 22:25). "Do not deny justice to your poor people in their lawsuits" (Exodus 23:6). "For six years you are to sow your fields and harvest your crops, but during the seventh year let the land lie unplowed and unused. Then the poor among your people may get food from it, and the wild animals may eat what they leave. Do the same with your vineyard and your olive grove" (Exodus 23:10-11; see also Leviticus 19:9-15; Deuteronomy 14:28-29; 15:7-11; 24:14-15, 19-22). "If the man is poor, do not go to sleep with his pledge in your possession" (Deuteronomy 24:12; see also Leviticus 25:25-28, 35-43; Deuteronomy 24:13-21). "Do not deprive the alien or the fatherless of justice, or take the cloak of the widow as a pledge" (Deuteronomy 24:17; see also Leviticus 19:33-34; Deuteronomy 24:18-21; 26:12-13). "Cursed is the man who withholds justice from the alien, the fatherless or the widow" (Deuteronomy 27:19; see also Leviticus 19:13-15). "He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap; he seats them with princes, with the princes of their people. He settles the barren woman in her home as a happy mother of children" (Psalm 113:7-9).

There are major social concerns in the Old Testament (see The Holy Bible [NIV] 1983:223). Personhood: everyone's person is to be secure (Exodus 20:13; Exodus 21:16-21, 26-31; Leviticus 19:14; Deuteronomy 5:17; 24:7; 27:18. False accusation: everyone is to be secure against slander and false accusation
The Need for a Biblical Theology of Holistic Mission

Woman: no woman is to be taken advantage of within her subordinate status in society (Exodus 21:7-11, 20, 26-32; 22:16-17; Deuteronomy 21:10-14; 22:13-30; 24:1-5). Punishment: punishment for wrongdoing shall not be excessive so that the culprit is dehumanized (Deuteronomy 25:1-5). Dignity: every Israelite's dignity and right to be God's freedman and servant are to be honored and safeguarded (Exodus 21:2, 5-6; Leviticus 25; Deuteronomy 15:12-18). Inheritance: Every Israelite's inheritance in the Promised Land is to be secure (Leviticus 25; Numbers 27:5-7; 36:1-9; Deuteronomy 25:5-10). Property: Everyone's property is to be secure (Exodus 20:15; Exodus 21:33-36; 22:1-15; 23:4-5; Leviticus 19:35-36; Deuteronomy 5:19; 22:1-4; 25:13-15). Fruit of labor: All are to receive the fruit of their labors (Leviticus 19:13; Deuteronomy 24:14; 25:4). Fruit of the ground: Everyone is to share the fruit of the ground (Exodus 23:10-11; Leviticus 19:9-10; 23:22; 25:3-55; Deuteronomy 14:28-29; 24:19-21). Rest on Sabbath: Everyone, down to the humblest servant and the resident alien, is to share in the weekly rest of God's Sabbath (Exodus 20:8-11; Exodus 23:12; Deuteronomy 5:12-15). Marriage: the marriage relationship is to be kept inviolate (Exodus 20:14; Deuteronomy 5:18; see also Leviticus 18:6-23; 20:10-21; Deuteronomy 22:13-30). Exploitation: No one, however disabled, impoverished, or powerless, is to be oppressed or exploited (Exodus 22:21-27; Leviticus 19:14, 33-34; 25:35-36; Deuteronomy 23:19; 24:6, 12-15, 17; 27:18). Fair trial: Every person is to have free access to the courts and is to be afforded a fair trial (Exodus 23:6, 8; Leviticus 19:15; Deuteronomy 1:17; 10:17-18; 16:18-20; 17:8-13; 19:15-21). Social order: Every person's God-given place in the social order is to be honored (Exodus 20:12; 21:15, 17; 22:28; Leviticus 19:3, 32; 20:9; Deuteronomy 5:16; 17:8-13; 21:15-21; 27:16). Law: No one shall be above the law, not even the king (Deuteronomy 17:18-20). Animals: Concern for the welfare of other creatures is to be extended to the animal world (Exodus 23:5, 11; Leviticus 25:7; Deuteronomy 22:4, 6-7; 25:4).

Attachment 2:
Teachings in the New Testament


Notes

1 This article has been adapted in part from the writer’s doctoral dissertation (see Kuhn 2004:14-25).

2 “Holism” is the belief or theory that reality (things or people) is made up of organic or unified wholes that are greater than the simple sum of their parts. The term “holistic” has to do with holism, and as such it emphasizes the importance of the whole and the interdependency of its parts.

3 Development in this study has to do mostly with Christian holistic transformation, with Christian education, and with God’s purpose of redeeming, healing, saving, and transforming individuals and communities into His likeness—fully restoring in humankind His image that was corrupted by the Fall. Transformational development is not the preaching of the gospel (or evangelism); nevertheless, since it treats the whole human being, it will also try to meet the spiritual needs of the person. Moreover, holistic development has to do with the contextualization and adaptation of Christ’s ministries through an integral (whole) and balanced approach to mission, which brings about physical, mental, social, and spiritual transformation and well-being to the individual and the community.

4 The terms “development,” “welfare relief,” “holistic development,” “Christian holistic transformation,” “transformational development,” “Christian development,” and “holistic Christian mission,” will be used interchangeably throughout this article. The term used most frequently is “holistic development.”

5 For this study, the word “mission” is used mostly in connection with the overall mission of God in saving, redeeming, and restoring humankind. This mission is carried out or accomplished by God’s designated instruments, be they His Son (Jesus Christ), His chosen people, His prophets or apostles, His community of believers (church), or individuals who are committed to His mission. It can also encompass holistic ministries as one of its parts, but it is not limited to this aspect of service only. The usage of the term “holistic development” is more specific and related to the concepts and practice of welfare relief, social services, charity and humanitarian
work, and transformational development. It has to do with all aspects of the person: physical, mental, social, and spiritual.

6 Much material has been published about this issue in the evangelical Christian world within the past half century; however, little has been written in the context of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and more specifically within the context and work of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA).

7 Before God expelled Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, He came to their rescue and provided them with garments of skin to relieve them of their shame and nakedness (Genesis 3:21). It is the first time in the history of humanity that relief was needed and thus immediately provided. This relief was an emergency relief, but it would last forever. It was and still is based on God's eternal promise (Genesis 3:15).

8 Teachings such as the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), the Final Judgment as outlined in Matthew 25:31-46, and James's definition of true religion (1:27) are examples for ADRA and the Adventist Church today. There are dozens of teachings as well as examples and miracles of Jesus (see Attachment 2 for further New Testament examples).

9 It is also important to note that the early Christian community was characterized by true fellowship. They had decided to abide in unity with Christ and with each other, having everything in common (Acts 2:42-44). It was because of this true fellowship that "there were no needy persons among them" (Acts 4:34); thus the act of sharing their possessions was what made it possible for the new believers to meet the needs of those who were in distress (Acts 4:32-47).

10 Roelf S. Kuitse writes that God's "mission is sharing faith with others"; it "is acting in love toward the neighbor who is in need of our help and support" (1993:120).

11 Vinay Samuel, who uses the word "transformation" in connection with the definition of mission, states that "Transformation is to enable God's vision of society to be actualized in all relationships, social, economic, and spiritual, so that God's will may be reflected in human society and his love be experienced by all communities, especially the poor" (Samuel and Sugden 1999:ii).

12 It is important to note that health care as it is referred to here is quite different from medical ministry, or medical missionary work.
Chapter 8


---

**Chapter 9**


