of community as it relates to discipleship. The next article in the series will show that natural social networks which caused the church to readily form communities of believers in the first century rarely exist in modern society today.

Works Cited

Dissertation Abstracts
Andrews University, Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: The Stairway to Heaven: A Critique of the Evangelical Gospel Presentation in North America

Name of researcher: Paul Brent Dybdahl

Adviser: Nancy J. Vyhmeister, Ed.D.

Date completed: January 2004

This study focuses on the so-called “plan of salvation” or “gospel presentation” that evangelical Christians in the United States present to seekers who want to know how to be saved. There are currently three dominant presentations that are widely employed and emulated. The authors of each are well-known: D. James Kennedy, Bill Bright, and Billy Graham.

The major portion of my study involves a two-stage critique of these dominant evangelical gospel presentations: first, from the perspective provided by communication theory, and second, by comparing the presentations of Kennedy, Bright, and Graham with conversion accounts...

My research indicates that the dominant evangelical gospel presentation, developed in the 1960s, largely ignores the insights provided by communication theory in that it fails to adequately understand the contemporary American audience it attempts to reach. In short, it does not communicate with maximum effectiveness.

I also demonstrate that the conversion accounts in Luke-Acts present a way of salvation that is quite different from, and in some cases, contradictory to the evangelical plan of salvation in America. I then use these Lukan conversion accounts as a basis for suggesting how evangelicals might better present the way of salvation to North Americans today.

Andrews University, Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: A Critique of the Urban Mission of the Church in the Light of an Emerging Postmodern Condition

Name of researcher: Kleber de Oliveira Gonçalves

Adviser: Bruce Campbell Moyer, STD

Date completed: January 2005

The world is becoming an urban society. The urban expansion witnessed during the twentieth century and continuing into the twenty-first century is unprecedented in

the history of the human civilization. Simultaneously, the Western world faces the paradigm shift from the modern era to a postmodern condition. Both movements have remarkable implications for the mission of the church in urbanized, postmodernizing societies. Shaped by the modern worldview, the church is now further ostracized by the postmodern condition.

While the literature of urban mission has grown in the past few years, very little consideration has been given to the particular issues and implications of urban mission in the context of modernity. Thus, this study addresses the relationship between the urban mission of the church and the emergence of the postmodern condition.

This investigation of urban mission in the light of the postmodern ethos is based on the historical, philosophical, sociological, and cultural analyses of the modern and the postmodern eras provided in chapters 2 and 3, respectively. Chapter 4 explores the relationship between the urban mission of the church and the postmodern condition primarily by locating the emergence of postmodernism in the context of urbanization and globalization. Some urban missiological implications and suggested principles for reaching the postmodern mind in the urban context are drawn from the findings of this research and are presented in chapter 5.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the centralizing power of the city—added to the pervasive influence of a global market—makes the urban environment the locus of the postmodern condition. Consequently, the challenges and opportunities for urban mission have never been greater. In spite of the