

AN ETHICAL BASIS OF WITNESS TO THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

A COMPENDIUM OF THOUGHT

By Moishe Rosen

Executive Director, Jews for Jesus

Presented to

The North American Jewish Mission Leaders of
The Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism

Meeting at

Dallas, Texas

April 10-11, 1985

AN ETHICAL BASIS OF WITNESS TO THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

A COMPENDIUM OF THOUGHT

By Moishe Rosen

To say that most Jews are not looking for Christ would be an understatement. Right or wrong, they believe there is a Jewish position regarding Jesus. That position is, "Don't you believe in him. It's all right for the goyim, for the Gentiles, but it's wrong for a Jew to believe in Jesus." Of course there is no official position, although rabbis throughout history have promulgated the idea that belief in Jesus of Nazareth as the Jewish Messiah is wrong. But moving beyond this basic denial, this personal and public rejection of Y'shua, they have reserved their greatest wrath for those who would effectively proclaim Jesus as Messiah to the Jewish public. Rather than choosing to grapple with the question of whether or not Jesus is the Messiah, these rabbis choose to avoid the true issue of the message and vilify the messengers. They spray a torrent of sanctimonious charges on the missionaries, evangelists, and ministers of Messianic congregations. "Fraudulent, deceptive, perverters of the truth, subverters of the young and the weak, seducers of the religiously ignorant" are some of the terms flung about. Such abusive name-calling has served to make some Jews wary of the message of the Messiah, undercut Christian support of Jewish evangelism, and generally discourage those who are involved in the field of Jewish evangelism.

The late Saul Alinsky, professor of communications at Columbia University, said, "Make the enemy live up to their own book of rules. You can kill them with this, for they can no more obey their own rules than the Christian church can live up to Christianity." (1) Whether we like it or not, the Jewish community looks upon those of us who believe that Christ is the only way of salvation as being "enemies." This is a hard truth we must live with, but it is, nevertheless, truth.

An even harder truth is found in Romans 11:28 when the Apostle Paul says, "From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God's choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers" (NASB). Most Christians are absolutely ambivalent when it comes to a verse like this. Because of their desire to love others, they find it hard to see those Jewish people who reject Christ in an adversary relationship to God. Nevertheless, this scripture passage cannot be explained away. There are those who think one can be a follower of Moses and a rejecter of Jesus, but Y'shua told us, "If you had believed Moses and the prophets, then you would have believed me."

Even so, we cannot accept the enemy-ship of the Jewish people. But we must recognize that they will see us as such. In an attempt to defend themselves and their own position of unbelief, the rabbis will try to turn others against us. We should not fall into the danger, however, of presuming that every charge of ethical misconduct is utterly without base. Our adversaries show a great deal of glee when we fail to measure up to our own standards. We must not, by our conduct, give them ammunition to besmirch the name of Jesus, for every small mistake we make will be amplified and distorted by our opposition.

How then can we arrive at an ethical basis of witness to the Jewish community?

"Ethics" has been defined as follows: "1. the study of standards of conduct and moral judgment; moral philosophy. 2. a treatise on this study; a book about morals. 3. the system or code of morals of a particular philosopher, religion, group, profession, etc."(2)

For our purposes, this paper will look at ethics as standards of conduct in witnessing, or proclaiming the gospel to those who do not yet believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the Living God. How far can and should we go in using the powers of persuasion with unbelievers? Can we witness while maintaining a respect for the dignity of the individual and freedom of choice? When does contextualization become manipulation? Is it "fair" to use the same symbols which other groups use, when we understand and interpret those symbols differently?

What should be our basis as evangelical Christians for determining ethics? Certainly scriptural principles must be our ultimate standard.

One of the foremost New Testament witnesses to the risen Christ, the apostle Paul, is known for his statements that the gospel "is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16) and also "to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews" (1 Corinthians 9:20). What guidelines did he use in wielding the gospel as the power of God, and in identifying with those to whom he proclaimed it?

Paul told the Corinthian believers,

but we have renounced the things hidden because of shame, not walking in craftiness or adulterating the word of God, but by the manifestation

of truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, 'Light shall shine out of darkness,' is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassing greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves (2 Corinthians 4:2-7).

To the Christians in Thessalonica Paul wrote,

For our exhortation does not come from error or impurity or by way of deceit; but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men but God, who examines our hearts. For we never came with flattering speech, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed--God is witness--nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, even though as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority. But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children. Having thus a fond affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us (1 Thessalonians 2:3-8).

Further instruction was given when the Lord admonished His people in Exodus 20:16, "'You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.'"

So scripture makes it clear that in our witnessing to the power and salvation of God we are not to assume that the end justifies the means. Rather, we are to guard against manipulation, selfishness, or means of persuasion that show disrespect for men and women who are created in the image of God and given the freedom and responsibility of making choices. Rather than pushing full steam ahead, we are to be gentle handlers of information so powerful that its impact holds the potential to be eternally life-changing.

Paul's words provide us with an outline for ethical constraints:

1. The gospel should not be preached in such a way as to only please men, but in such a way as to please God.
2. Proclamation must not involve flattery.
3. The gospel should not be presented in such a way as to satisfy the greed of the proclaimer...
4. ...nor to bring glory to the proclaimer.
5. Godly proclamation does not always insist on its rights.
6. It is gentle.
7. It springs from holy affection.
8. Its basis is love.

How can we apply these principles to Jewish evangelism? How will biblical ethics come into play as we proclaim the Jewish Messiah to a Jewish community which is postured against us?

Any evangelical ministry to Jewish people which has met with any success at all has probably encountered opposition from the Jewish community. You may have been called fraudulent, deceptive, or brain-washing cultists. Jewish publications have had much to say about what they perceive to be the unethical behavior and false claims of those of us who call ourselves Jewish Christians, Hebrew Christians, Messianic Jews, or Jews for Jesus.

An editorial entitled "Conning for converts" which appeared in the Los Angeles Jewish Community Bulletin on January 10, 1985, made the following statements:

The L.A. Jewish community continues to be concerned about the growing problem of the insidiously underhanded proselytization of Jews....we condemn the deceptive and fraudulent practices employed by certain Christian missionary groups in their zeal to win converts. Of paramount concern to the Jewish community is the claim of certain Christian missionaries that they represent a legitimate Jewish tradition. So-called "Jews for Jesus," "Messianic Jews," "Hebrew Christians," and other such groups, in claiming to be part of the Jewish community, first, misrepresent themselves as another branch of Judaism alongside the Orthodox, Conservative, Reform and Reconstructionist branches; second, some of their leaders misrepresent themselves as rightfully ordained Jewish "rabbis"; they deceptively call their places of worship "synagogues"; and they misquote and misinterpret traditional Jewish sources to support their beliefs.

...These deceitful practices which distort Judaism in order to convert Jews is a moral issue of great concern, not only to the Jewish community, but to society at large. We call upon all fair-minded Americans to condemn deception in the name of religion and neither to support nor sponsor such organizations.

A reader of the Indianapolis News, Marcia Goldstone, wrote a letter to the editor of that newspaper which appeared in a January 1984 edition of the newspaper (day not available) under the title "Religious subterfuge." Reacting to a full-page advertisement placed in the paper by Jews for Jesus during the Christmas/Hanukkah season, the reader wrote:

Jews for Jesus pretends to observe established Jewish forms of worship by lighting sabbath candles, wearing skullcaps and celebrating Passover seders. But in their hands, each of these sacred Jewish acts and symbols is perverted and distorted. Each is given a new, Christological meaning and negates or distorts or ignores its actual origins and real significance. In addition to offending Jews, this denigration of the Jew and his religion gives direct aid and comfort to the anti-Semites and others in our society who are hostile to the Jewish community.

Many thoughtful Christians understand and deplore the harmful and deceptive practices of the Jews for Jesus. In 1977, the Long Island

Council of Churches accused Jews for Jesus of "engaging in subterfuge and dishonesty."

As a people that has known more than its share of religious discrimination, American Jews cherish our nation's commitment to religious liberty and respect the right of others to share their faith. But the tactics of the Jews for Jesus seem to us to violate the commitment to ethics and honesty which we, Jews and Christians alike, share as part of our Biblical heritage.

That month's edition of the Stark Jewish News of Canton, Ohio, included a "Background Report" on Jews for Jesus in response to the same advertising effort. The report included the following statements:

While using Jewish trappings and practices to lure Jews into the group, and cautiously stating their connection with Christianity, Jews for Jesus simultaneously seeks to align itself with the fundamentalist Christian church.

...Leaders of the organized Jewish and Christian communities, alike, have criticized the Jews for Jesus theology, an admixture of rabbinic Judaism with Christian tenets. This negates the uniqueness, and denies the legitimacy, of both faiths.

In addition to the repudiations by all segments of the Jewish community, many Christian leaders, as well, have condemned the tactics of Jews for Jesus as harmful, deceptive, and divisive.

And the Boston Jewish Times ran a "Holiday Message to the 'Jews for Jesus'" by M. Abu-Tor in a column called "From Behind the Curtain" in its December 27, 1984, issue. It said:

...Finally, the "Jews for Jesus" are offensive and counterproductive to effective and mutually respectful relations between Jews and Christians in this country and elsewhere because of their blatant a-historicism. Almost all of European Jewry was destroyed, less than 50 years ago, in the heart of Christendom. Even Moishe Rosen, the erstwhile leader of the "Jews for Jesus," would not have been spared. It is ironic that in the case of the incarceration of the Jews of Warsaw into the ghetto in mid-1941, that the Nazi occupiers deemed it effective to have Jewish-Christians serve on the police force. "Jews for Jesus," despite

their best of intentions, will always be utilized by forces that are hostile to Jewish existence, spiritual or physical. It is time for Christians to exert their pressures on this group not to offend further the small Jewish community in the United States, a community dedicated not only to survival after the Holocaust, but to carrying on the faith that has survived thousands of years of Christian oppression and indeed did inspire Jesus to preach civility and kindness to all peoples.

...In this season of brotherly love, I would hope that the "Jews for Jesus" spend their time and money following the message of Jesus' teacher, Rabbi Hillel who said: "What is despicable to you, do not practice on your neighbor."

START, a new South African Jewish newspaper, (September 1984, Vol. 1, No. 1)

reported on a meeting conducted by a Jews for Jesus musical group. Headlined "Hitler would have laughed," the article stated:

...The group sings of the Christian belief in Jesus as Lord, of faith, goodness and love.

The strange thing is that some of the verses are in Hebrew and certain biblical quotes are from Isaiah, a prophet of the Children of Israel.

...The evening becomes almost outrageous...when they conclude the programme by blessing the gentile audience with the traditional Jewish benediction in Hebrew: "May the Lord bless you and keep you. May He cause His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you, and may He grant you peace!"

The bitter irony of this presentation under the silent patronage of a huge cross, was lost on the entranced audience standing with bowed heads to receive the blessing!

"Jews for Jesus" is a religious philosophy whereby Jews accept Jesus as the Jewish Messiah. They see it as their ultimate obligation to missionise Jewish people and to direct them to a belief in Jesus....to evangelize Jews, to confront and challenge them with the New Testament and the teachings of Jesus.

...Forty years ago, six million Jewish souls were butchered because of their religious identity...."Jews for Jesus" is a fraudulent and highly manipulative philosophy....The deception is subtle--retention of one's Jewish identity coupled with a belief in the merciful and caring Christ; being Jewish and believing in Jesus.

..."Jews for Jesus" is a threat to the Jewish people; it is a threat to survival.

Gershon Winkler, a column writer for a New York Jewish publication, The Messenger, called it "deceptive" for Jesus for Jesus to hold a Yom Kippur service.

How should we as evangelical Christians view the Jewish community's charges that we are being deceptive, unethical and fraudulent when we proclaim to Jews and Gentiles alike the good news that the Messiah has come, and his name is Jesus? Should we automatically assume that they are misjudging us?

It is important to distinguish between statements of "You're wrong" and "You're being unethical." The Jewish community's disagreement with what we proclaim and how we proclaim it does not warrant claims of unethical behavior. Indeed, the Jewish community claims that evangelism in and of itself is unethical behavior. We must obey Jesus, the Jewish Messiah, who said go into all the world. Preaching the gospel to the Jewish people is an act of obedience to the Savior.

But neither should we assume that because some Jewish leaders are blind to or deny the connection between the Old Testament scriptures and the New Testament, between the prophecies of a Messiah and their fulfillment in Jesus, that we are therefore being ethical no matter how we proclaim the message of salvation. And while we may not accept the Jewish community's standards for what is ethical or unethical behavior as relates to evangelism, while we may not accept their pre-suppositions for determining who is and who isn't a Jew, we must think through how to apply biblically ethical standards in our witness to the Jewish community.

THE USE OF JEWISH SYMBOLS

The use of Jewish symbols and terminology in our worship and evangelism has become an issue in this regard. Are we "perverting and distorting" Jewish forms of worship by lighting sabbath candles or celebrating Passover seders, as Jewish leaders have charged?

Each faith community has the right to adopt those symbols which they feel will signify religious meaning to themselves and by which they want to be identified to others. But a faith group cannot "own" any symbol unless they can have it legally trademarked, patented or copyrighted.

Those rabbis and Jewish community leaders who charge unethical conduct for the misappropriation of Jewish symbols do so according to their understanding, which can be described in the following way:

1. They believe that they have a proprietary interest in and are somehow the custodians or arbiters of how those symbols can be used.
2. They believe that Judaism and Christianity are mutually exclusive of one another, and hence any Christian use of a Jewish symbol is inappropriate.
3. They believe that the intention to associate is the intention to deceive.

Since Judaism came into existence before Christianity, according to the rabbis, they allege that the Christian use of Jewish symbols to associate Jewishness and Christianity is fraudulent and deceptive.

But no Christian can agree that the New Testament faith is complete without the Old Testament and its attendant Jewishness. To the Christian, such symbolic

personages as Abraham and Moses were and are worshippers of Jesus. It is axiomatic among Christians speaking of the testaments that the New is in the Old concealed; the Old is in the New revealed.

The fact that rabbinic theology does not allow for this, does not mean that merely the use of Old Testament symbols is fraudulent and deceptive, but that the very existence of the Christian religion is fraudulent and deceptive.

As the Sunday School song goes, "Every promise in the book is mine, every word, every chapter, every line." This might not be the best of hermeneutics, but it is common Christian sentiment. And the whole book of Hebrews seems to be devoted to showing that the promises of the Old Testament belong to the New Testament believer. Galatians 3:14 would seem to indicate that the blessings of Abraham were intended for the non-Jews who might through Christ receive the promise.

If religious symbols are not under the specific ownership of any one group, then, how should we view them? Dr. Roger Greenway, Professor of Urban Missions at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, commented on this subject for the purposes of this presentation:

"I tend to think that symbols are generally neutral and all religions have them. So does Christianity, of course, and Christians differ as to their usefulness or even their legitimacy. Some traditions have a high useage of symbolism and others avoid it. The question has to do with Jewish symbols. I think the question behind the question is, 'What is the connotation, what does the symbol stand for?'

(Dr. Greenway, continued:)

"It boils down to the perception that one conveys. Isn't that the area where the criticism comes when a believer in Y'shua continues to use a Jewish symbol? The perceptual conflict arises because to the traditional Jewish person, the Messianic Jew is by his new faith giving up his legitimate right to use a symbol which to the traditional Jewish person belongs exclusively to a Jew who does not believe in Jesus.

"In the Gentile Christian tradition there are all kinds of conflict over what symbols can be used and what should be avoided. When we think of other religions, generally the converts from Islam or Buddhism or whatever would be very reluctant to continue to use any symbolism.

"Let me give some rather bizarre illustrations. In Sri Lanka, for example, converts from Buddhism refuse to use any national, native, indigenous tunes which in any way they still associate, sometimes nonsensically, with their Buddhist past. In Korea you have the same thing with colors. There are certain colors which Korean Christians tell me that Christians can't use. They look at me and say, 'You can't use a Buddhist color.'

"The same thing is true in some Asian countries where all of western music and particularly Christian music is accepted by Christians, but no national tunes--none--can be used. The Christian missionary comes in and he says, 'Why don't you use this indigenous music and put Christian lyrics to it?' They say, 'No, you can't do that, because that's pagan music.' An extreme example of that is in some cultures where you use quarter (tones) instead of half (steps) and (whole steps) as you have in the Western scale. The Indian sitar, for example,

(Dr. Greenway, continued:)

has a certain tonal scale. And there are oriental Christians who say you cannot put Christian music to such tunes because that is all pagan; that's the old religion and it's all symbolic. They'll go on to explain why the quarter (tone) is non-Christian and the half (tone) is Christian.

"It's a perceptual problem. Why can't I as a Gentile believer accept the Old Testament as also my book and identify myself as a son of Abraham, as the New Testament says we can, as we're children of God and sons and daughters of Abraham by faith? Can I use that symbolism? I think we can. But I also am sensitive to the perceptual problem that Jewish people may feel, which perhaps as a Gentile I cannot enter into.

"I tend to think that any symbol, any symbolism in general, that does not deny or conflict with a biblical doctrine or teaching is neutral.

"But even sometimes what is theologically justifiable may not be practically the thing to do. The apostle Paul makes that distinction too. He says, 'All things are legitimate for me, but there are things I don't do.'

"You have to ask yourself, 'Are you advancing the gospel and honoring the Lord by using (a symbol) and using it as a conversation point with your non-believing Jewish neighbor? Do you honor the gospel more by bowing to his contention on the issue? --Particularly when you may feel that he is picking this issue in order to basically deny the gospel, and you should not bow to it? Is that the issue as you see it?"

Dr. Greenway also addressed the question of whether or not it is ethical to "re-interpret" a Jewish symbol or ritual to give it Christological implications.

"Why not?" said Dr. Greenway. "The symbol in itself is not anything, is it? One can pour into it what he wishes, can he not?" Dr. Greenway concluded.

Although we may believe in such freedom of use, we must face a painful fact. That fact is that no leader in the Jewish community is in a position where he can admit any legitimacy to the Messianic Jewish movement or the work of Jewish evangelism. But once we've faced the fact that no matter how ethically we behave, our fellow Jews will continue to complain about our ethics, we must then also realize that our obligation as Christians requires us to carry on our work in an ethical manner. In short, our reason for an ethical practice is not to placate the opposition but to position us within the will of God. When it comes to the use of certain symbols, the key question must be, "Does this honestly and honorably represent our position in Y'shua?"

We cannot allow ourselves to use Jewish symbols in a way which infers that we are just Jews who happen to believe in Y'shua. If the rabbis were right that one couldn't be Jewish and believe in Jesus and we were forced to make such a choice, would we say, "We don't believe in Jesus because we are Jews," or "We are no longer Jews because we believe in Jesus"? Our faith in Him is something which determines our eternal destiny. Our Jewishness is merely temporal. By all means, we are entitled to use Jewish symbols and those things which make a person to be Jewish. But we must use such items in a Christian way which is in concordance with New Testament teaching.

Terminology presents problems similar to symbolism. The term "Messianic Judaism" seems to be misunderstood by everyone except those who consider them-

selves to be Messianic Jews. One rabbi told me his objection to the term. He said, "I am a Messianic Jew because I believe that the Messiah will yet come. You are a Messianic Christian because you share their faith, not mine. How can you say that it is Messianic Judaism when you accept those who are uncircumcised? You make a mockery of the term Judaism."

On the other hand, a Christian leader said to me, "By naming yourselves 'Messianic Jews,' it seems to me that there is something of the nature of denial which makes me uncomfortable. To say that your religion is Messianic Judaism is to tell me that you are something other than Christian, and I can't determine whether you mean more or less."

Nevertheless, I don't feel that those who insist that they are Messianic Jews are guilty, in any sense, of deceit. They have shown themselves altogether willing to explain--even eager to explain--what they mean by the term "Messianic Judaism."

In a monograph done by Dr. David Stern while he was a student at Fuller Theological Seminary in 1972, he suggested the use of the term "Yeshuaic Judaism" to describe our position. Perhaps it would have been better if those who were looking for a new name and description would have adopted that, inasmuch as it describes whom we serve.

I personally believe that Messianic Judaism is a valid term. But it is a term which is hard to defend, and it takes so much explaining that I wonder if it is worth it. Some of the statements about Messianic Judaism, for example those regarding the meaning of the law in the life of a Jewish believer, are so ambi-

guous that they cause more consternation than understanding. And I personally am put off by the kind of negativism involved in self-definition which requires a person to make so much exception to explain what seem to be secondary differences in understanding.

In trying to understand my own calling, while it is true that I desire to preserve my heritage, I don't feel called to promote a movement as being primary. I feel that God has called me to the task of proclamation, and how I succeed or fail in preserving my heritage is only tangentially relevant to that proclamation.

ETHICS AND PERSUASION

We are obligated to proclaim the truth. Our Messiah said, "Go ye...and preach the gospel." More than that, our obligation extends to the means by which we proclaim it. Our behavior must be loving, appropriate to the persons we are addressing, and ethical. When we consider proclamation of the gospel, we must also choose how to proclaim it. Biblical truth must be proclaimed in a biblical way.

Emory A. Griffin in The Mind Changers: The Art of Christian Persuasion entitles one chapter "An Ethic for the Christian Persuader." He uses 1 Thessalonians 2:3-8 to point out that "God has much to say about our attempts at influence apart from their success or failure."(3)

We must, in any persuasive effort, preserve the hearer's right to honestly and honorably choose. Anything designed to manipulate that choice or to condition a

person to choose what we want them to choose is a violation of their freedom.

Griffin sums up the ethical standard when he simply states, "Any persuasive effort which restricts another's freedom to choose for or against Jesus Christ is wrong." (4)

Griffin uses the example of a sincere lover tenderly wooing the affections of an undecided young girl: (5)

This is the ethical Christian persuader. He lovingly pleads his case while carefully respecting the rights of his beloved. Note that he must always respect the other's right to freely choose, to say no. Jesus let the rich young ruler walk away.

Christian ethical thinkers have usually seen biblical ethics as involving two requirements--love and justice. Love is concerned with the consequences of an act upon the other person.

...Justice is concerned with universal obligations--the oughts of life. The just persuader cares about the rightness or wrongness of his attempts of influence. "Is it ever right to lie?" or "Is it wrong to use emotional appeals?" are questions of justice.

But there are false lovers as well as true lovers, Griffin points out. Seven different types of lovers are named to symbolize typical ethical abuses in Christian persuasion. Following are excerpts from each category: (6)

1. THE NON-LOVER is he who does not try to persuade....He is perhaps more unethical than the false lover because he has shown that he doesn't care about his own beliefs or the other person.
2. THE FLIRT...is in love with himself, or in love with love. He is out to make as many conquests as he can. The Christian flirt is the evangelist who is more concerned about getting another scalp for his belt than he is for the welfare of his hearer....The 1974 International Congress on World Evangelization has confessed in its Lausanne Covenant that evangelicals have "become unduly preoccupied with statistics." The emphasis here is on success and not on the person whom Christ calls us to serve.

(Griffin, continued:)

3. THE SEDUCER often appeals to irrelevant desires for success, money, popularity, or an easy life in order to accomplish his ends....The "testimony" has become a mainstay of Christian persuasion. The typical testimony is told by the successful businessman, beauty queen, or sports hero. The story line usually consists of how rotten things were, of becoming a Christian, and of how great things are now....The gospel does not promise these things. In fact, the weight of Scripture suggests that we shouldn't anticipate the world's honors and goods as a result of our faith. It's also unrealistic (and unjust) to promise that "Every day with Jesus is sweeter than the day before."

...The religious seducer is immoral because he maneuvers the listener into making a decision for the wrong reasons...by presenting only part of the gospel. Perhaps he portrays the strictness of God's law without stressing the love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ. Or he might emphasize the glories of personal salvation without mentioning the gospel's demands for social justice.

Another way to encourage the right decision for the wrong reason is to pair Christianity with something attractive to the listener. Americanism, the youth culture, or even the messenger himself have often been used to appeal to persons who would otherwise have no interest in being associated with the faith.

...Soliciting money can easily be the act of the seducer....I question the ethics of overcharging for the expenses of a Christian growth seminar and subsequently spending the excess money for a different purpose. The practice used by many radio ministers of offering special gifts to entice contributions seems equally seductive.

4. THE RAPIST....It does seem that there is an increasing disregard for the other person's choice in these (last) three types....Force can be psychological as well as physical....Highly charged emotional situations fit this category, for they render the participant virtually helpless to resist the suggestion of the leader. ...crowded revivals singing seventeen choruses of "Just As I Am" or late night campfire say-so meetings can remove the element of conscious choice.

I believe that there's a special danger inherent for those who work with kids. Historically, many Christian clubs and camps have used high pressure tactics to obtain a decision for Christ. The average preadolescent is not equipped to withstand the positive incentive of counselor approval or the negative force of group condemnation.

5. THE SMOTHER LOVER. The smother lover loves you to death. He loves you so much that he won't take no for an answer. We often think of

(Griffin, continued:)

unrequited love as an act of beauty and devotion, but his persistence in the face of a clear-cut rejection is unjust and can be downright obnoxious.

The smotherer's injustice lies in his refusal to respect the free choice of another human....A Christian leader will often smother his followers by not giving them enough room to breathe.

6. THE LEGALISTIC LOVER...lacks love. He persuades purely out of a sense of obligation or duty. He is the preacher who presents the weekly altar call even though there's not an unbeliever in the congregation.

The legalistic persuader refuses to look at the total needs of man. While presenting the words of personal salvation, he chooses to ignore the very real human needs for food, peace, dignity, or accomplishment.

7. THE TRUE LOVER. The true lover is he who is both loving and just. He is the persuader who cares more about the welfare of the other person than he does about his own ego. He makes his appeal in a manner that respects the human rights of other people. Although saddened, he's willing to let the other person say no. The New Testament presents a picture of Paul as the true lover.

...We can use our Lord Jesus Christ as a model of what our behavior should be. I'm impressed by the beautiful mix of justice and love which he achieved with the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4).

The issue of scriptural guidelines for the use of godly persuasion was further addressed by Dr. Edwin Hollatz, Dean of the Graduate School of Communications at Wheaton College in Wheaton, Ill., in an interview for this compendium. "The foundational principle," said Dr. Hollatz, "is that which is given in the statements of Christ Himself with regard to our loving our neighbor as ourselves, and treating our neighbor as we would want to be treated."

Speaking of "neighbor" as "the persuadee," Dr. Hollatz encourages us to see this person "as someone who is made in the image of God, someone who has the full investment of potential and that which ultimately God has built into the very fabric of human nature. So then, we must respect each individual for his own integrity and dignity. We should not try to persuade them in a way other than we would like to be persuaded, or in a manner that is not an honorable and appropriate way for someone who is made in the image of God.

"With that as a foundation, a second very important principle is, God has given to man the freedom of choice and God does not require that anyone accept Jesus Christ as Savior. This is a very deliberate and thoughtful decision that each individual reaches for himself. Since God treats us this way, we should treat others in the same way.

"We can boil it down to a very basic single statement. Anything that denies the persuadee his freedom of choice is unethical and is really against the basic integrity that God Himself operates from and has invested in human beings," Dr. Hollatz concluded.

A good example of this is a paper recently distributed by the Executive Reports Corporation of Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey. The 6-page paper comes with a

reply card attached for ordering more material and carries the lengthy title, "A Confidential Report on How to Use Proven "People Power" Strategies to Get Your Way with an Uncooperative Employee, Stubborn Colleague, Difficult Customer, Even When Reasoning or Demanding Won't Work!"

"This Confidential Report instantly explains what to say or do to get what you're after in virtually every type of situation..." the cover page proclaims. The letter promises that the advertised strategies will "show how easy it is to get others to secretly do your bidding, without their knowing it!"

"Get the specific reactions you want," the appeal continues. "...Others feel that what you want them to do is really their idea! Think what this power can mean to you!...You could get your ideas accepted immediately."

The writer further entices, "Let me show you how to automatically translate any specific reaction you seek into specific, irresistible appeals to the other person's underlying, uncontrollable self-interest and emotions....discover how to phrase and 'angle' what you say in a way that crowds out any other thoughts or objections...appealing to 'selfish' interests that will make others secretly do your bidding!

"...You'll see...key ways to find out what the other person wants to hear and how to use it to 'clinch' your case....powerful, ready-to-use strategies that enable you to call the shots in a world controlled by manipulation! You'll be able to lead people into the world of illusion....weave enticing visions of power, money and love....use silent power commands to brand people's minds and emotions."

And there's more: "...how to use the symbolic loyalty of others to inspire blind faith in you....how to use people's fear of the unknown to gain power over them....silent power commands....turning others' hidden weaknesses to your advantage....control others with 'push button' efficiency....make people cater to your every whim....make the other person say 'yes' instead of 'no' and voluntarily do what you want, without even realizing it!...Send today for no-risk copy!"

In other words, the letter is advertising the opportunity to learn unethical, manipulative methods of persuasion. But we must maintain proper motivating factors for appealing to people in our evangelistic persuasion. "When you are working with an individual," said Dr. Hollatz, "and you can bring him to an awareness of an unmet need and then show him how that need can be met, that is a very reasonable and proper thing to do. It does not in any way diminish that individual's freedom of choice.

"I do not see that as manipulation. I see it essentially as information--helping an individual to discover," said Dr. Hollatz.

"One very important operational factor is this: I think this kind of interpersonal contact and communication is what should take place between people that know each other--not a kind of being confronted by someone out of the blue that you've never met before....I think it requires a very significant element of interpersonal involvement and friendship cultivation.

"I recognize that in these days of mass evangelism, you do have another dimension, but that's the kind of thing that usually begins with a certain sense of

(Dr. Hollatz, continued:)

build-up and providing a proper atmosphere. If someone does not make a decision at the end of an hour or hour-and-a-half meeting, that doesn't bother me. I think you should never look at, 'This is your only chance.'

"It's not the kind of thing where you clobber the individual over the head with it, and you do it in the space of a half-hour and then you press for the decision. Not at all."

Dr. Hollatz also addressed the question of counter persuasion, or deprogramming, as some people refer to it. "If an individual has with full deliberation, without being manipulated, with his integrity as an autonomous, authoritative individual who has freedom of choice--if that individual had no constraints put on him to reach a certain decision, then it is valid for what we might identify as 'the opposition' or 'the enemy' to likewise do the same. But again, it must be from that standpoint of respecting the individual's freedom of choice.

"Some of the deprogramming efforts and methods are just as pernicious and just as injurious to one's own personal dignity as the accusation that is being made on the other side. Two wrongs never make a right. The one thing that I have as a God-given right as a human being is to exert my freedom of choice and to choose to believe whatever I want to believe," Dr. Hollatz concluded.

But as we consider the ethics of persuasion, we do well to remember that persuasion need not always be a part of proclamation. Although opponents of the gospel might call the work of evangelism "proselytizing," the discipleship process includes the proclamation of Christ, and provision for instruction for

those who respond to proclamation. That instruction is to be edifying and encouraging. However, the whole concept of persuasion presumes that the stated facts are being disputed.

The sermons in the book of Acts not only proclaim Christ, but offer scriptural and experiential evidence to support proclamation. However, this section is presented in an objective manner without any sense of contest. Yet, when others contended against the apostles, they gave an answer for their faith. And when the highest religious authorities in Judea forbade Peter and the apostles to teach or preach in the name of Jesus, Peter's answer was clear:

Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge; for we cannot stop speaking what we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:19-20).

COMMUNICATION AND CONTEXTUALIZATION

How can we communicate the gospel to those who will hear? Obviously, Paul was a communicator. He knew the message he wanted to proclaim, and he made a point of knowing and respecting the people to whom he was proclaiming it. He was aware of who they were and what they believed before he pushed ahead with proclaiming what he believed in a way that showed an understanding for how it fit into their context of living.

"Contextualization" has become one of the bywords in discussions of the missionary approach or the evangelization of other cultures. But in our efforts to contextualize the gospel, or present it in a way that makes it understandable to a certain culture, are we in danger of unethical behavior?

Dr. David Hesselgrave, Professor of World Mission at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois, wished me to convey to the Jewish evangelism leaders some thoughts on this subject. "Theology is God-oriented," he said, "and communication theory is respondent-oriented. One says, 'What does God say about this and where do I get my legitimization for what I am doing, my authority for what I am doing?' The other says, 'What does my respondent understand by what I am doing and what I'm saying?' That is the essence of communication theory. I have to understand what is going on, how the message is being de-coded. Communication theory is respondent sensitive, so I have to read that. That doesn't mean that I have to accept what is being read, but I have to understand what is being read, what is being understood by what I say and do.

"Then I can ask the ethical question, 'What am I to do in the light of what God has required of me, and what my respondents understand of me?' That's contextualization. Where we're having trouble is in the vortex between communication theory and theology. What is happening is that culture is coming in. Is culture the arbiter of what we have in the Scripture and the arbiter of what we will do as we missionize, as we attempt to communicate the gospel? If culture becomes too determinative, then the very nature of the revelation itself, of biblical revelation, is vitally affected.

"So the next issue is the ethical issue. That's the one we talk about when we talk about contextualizations that are kind of a risky, contemporary sort--that try to go farther than just outward dress or eating food, or putting their language in a dynamic, equivalent translation, for example, or a participation in their rituals or rites or symbols that goes beyond what what we have tradi-

(Dr. Hesselgrave, continued:)

tionally attempted. Then we get into another question. Not just is it theologically permissible, is it communicationally understandable, but now is it ethical? Have I gone further than Scripture would indicate?

"The apparatus for making ethical decisions has to be, first of all, theological. 'What does God expect me to do? And what are the parameters that I have in biblical principles and precedents? How far did Paul go, and how was that read in his day? How was it responded to?' And so on," Dr. Hesselgrave said.

Can contextualization become deception? Dr. Marvin Mayers, Dean of the School of Intercultural Studies at Biola University in La Mirada, Calif., commented on this for the purposes of this presentation:

"It's deception whenever the one doing contextualization is not above board," said Dr. Mayers. "It's not paying attention to who the person is. In that case contextualization is for the sake of the one contextualizing and against the one who is in the culture of contextualization. There is a very fine line between the ethical contextualization and the unethical," Dr. Mayers concluded.

The issue of contextualization includes the "integrity of terms" or of using words which hold a certain meaning in a given culture. For example, the word "rabbi" carries a certain meaning in the Jewish community. There are some Jewish Christian ministers who call themselves rabbis but do not have rabbinical training and have not received ordination from a Jewish seminary. Often they justify their use of the title "rabbi" by saying, "It means teacher. And if I call myself minister, it's going to turn the Jewish people off, so I'm going to

contextualize the gospel and use the term of religious leadership of the Jewish community. I'm going to call myself rabbi. I'm not being unethical, I'm merely using good missionary principles."

Dr. Mayers does not believe that such people have a right to the term rabbi. "This isn't good missionary principle," he said. "One of the problems you face is that terminology is culture-specific. Even though there is a kind of equivalence between rabbi and teacher, it's really not the same. That's a superficial equivalent. Rabbi means far more than teacher. Rabbi means a very specific kind of teacher who has had a very specific kind of training and who has a specific kind of ministry."

Dr. Mayers uses the term "functional equivalent" to describe a term that can be acceptable--or carry an accurate meaning--for both the person who uses it and the person who hears it used.

"One of the things that you work with constantly is the functional equivalent when you are working at cross-cultural boundaries," he said. "The cross-cultural equivalent is more or less the same in terms of meaning, but where you have highly prescribed meaning, then you have to be very careful about the use of the functional equivalent that it is, in fact, a full functional equivalent."

"For example, within the context of how the term 'Bible' is used, the Bible has such a constrained, carefully delineated meaning that to call the Koran the Bible or to call Mary Baker Eddy's material the Bible would be to violate this concept of functional equivalent. They are not functional equivalents, you see, they're different. They're not complete equivalents."

(Dr. Mayers, continued:)

"The problem with people working with these cross-cultural tools is that it's easy to think something is a functional equivalent, but it's really not, because of the constraints of the term or concept. I would not want a rabbi coming into Protestant evangelical churches and saying he was a minister, because he's not a minister. Because he has rabbi training, he has training that is very distinctive from the training of a minister. If he also goes on to seminary and gets ordained within a Presbyterian church or a Baptist church, for example, then he could legitimately call himself a minister.

"This is working back the other way now. A person who is a pastor can call himself a pastor, but that is reprehensible in the Jewish community. It would be better if he could call himself by some neutral term that the Jewish people had respect for, but not try and call himself a rabbi, because then they would react negatively to this as someone who is trying to come in and sell them a bushel of lies.

"...I almost think the term 'spiritual leader' is a little too heady. I wonder if you don't have some kind of term or concept that means a facilitator, a person who encourages, a person who is available to help meet spiritual needs within the Jewish community. A term like spiritual leader might aspire higher than a rabbi.

"If you have a Christian minister who has been trained in all of the functional equivalents of a rabbi and, in fact, a rabbi would respect him in terms of all of this--whether he has gotten the full documentation or not and the full ordination--if the Jewish rabbis would respect him as someone who has their

(Dr. Mayers, continued:)

equivalent education, they you have no problem going into that community and calling that evangelical a rabbi.

"But most of the people who will be going into the Jewish community and want to call themselves rabbis will not, in fact, be respected by the rabbis as equivalents to them. That's your trap. If the rabbis do not respect these people who are coming into their community and calling themselves rabbis, then you've got this tremendous credibility gap. The people begin to pick this up and they don't respect the new 'rabbis.'

"That's the risk that you're running--that you're always suspect and your message as a whole before the large group will be suspect."

Dr. Mayers also addressed the principle given by Paul, "to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law..." (1 Corinthians 9:20). Is it possible to do this without being phony?

"That's the functional equivalent principle right there," said Dr. Mayers. "You can only do it by, in fact, becoming to the Jew as a Jew. You see, what many people want to do is have an easy entrance into the Jewish community or into another cultural community. They don't want to pay their dues. What Paul is saying is that he is willing to pay his dues, and if he's going to be with the Jews, he's going to pay the dues that the Jews demand. And if he's going to the Gentiles, he's going to pay the dues that the Gentiles demand. You can only come through as valid, as legitimate, when you're willing to pay the dues. You can't have an easy entrance.

(Dr. Mayers, continued:)

"The dues are taking on the burden of the lifestyle--adapting, going through the rites and rituals of that culture, within the context of your new birth, within the context of your new conscience," Dr. Mayers concluded.

But another type of opposition can follow. Other cultures and areas of mission activity run into the same type of opposition as Jewish Christian outreaches, whereby if we are sensitive and adapt and become as Jews, even taking on the lifestyle, the community turns around and says, "You're liars, you're deceivers, you're unethical because you're trying to be what you're really not. All you want to do is convert us."

Responding to this, Dr. Mayers said, "This is why I start with what I call the prior question of trust. Is what I'm doing, thinking or saying building trust or undermining trust? Is what I'm doing, thinking or saying potential for building trust or potential for undermining trust?"

"When you penetrate the traditional society, you can't penetrate it in a day, you can't penetrate it in a year. People have to see your life. This is the problem we've been facing with Muslim evangelism. We want to hit and run. We want to go in and establish something in just a few days and months and years--have a full-blown program.

"But the Arab situation, just like the Jewish situation, is rooted in a traditional society with deeply ingrained beliefs and practices and even attitudes towards people such as strangers. You don't get in right away. And you can keep your up-front, hard-hitting, sparkling kind of presentation for effective use where you have it, but you may have to start a whole different arm of

(Dr. Mayers, continued:)

penetration within the Jewish community per se. --Which takes longer time-- roots into deeper roots within the Jewish community," said Dr. Mayers.

When asked if he thought it was possible for a missionary or mission group to build trust in a community while being completely up-front about what they are ultimately trying to do, Dr. Mayers used Wycliffe as an example.

"Wycliffe is pulling this off. They go in completely up-front. We are interested in getting people reading the Scriptures and knowing the God of the Scriptures--up-front. Latin America is strongly Catholic and politically is anti-everything that the gospel stands for in one sense. It's an antagonistic community, not a neutral community.

"But Wycliffe has pulled it off. They have gone into antagonistic communities, they have been up-front about what they are there for--so people can read the Scriptures and know the God of the Scriptures. They haven't gone in to make people become Protestants, what-have-you, but it's been a legitimate statement of the gospel.

"In the process they have built trust with people. One of the things they have done in every country in which they've had no continuing trouble, and even in some countries where they've had some trouble, is to go in and immediately establish a board of reference. This board of reference is only high status people in the Latin community. They (Wycliffe) adapt to the demands of that antagonistic community.

"What I'm saying is, is there some functional equivalent for you to go into the Jewish community and find a basis for trust and confidence?

(Dr. Mayers, continued:)

"I know someone who has done it in a Moslem community that is so antagonistic, they've thrown everybody out but this one person. He was a medical doctor, and the people that were there in a number of missions were all thrown out. Only he was allowed to stay because they saw that he had something--a quality, a personness, a skill that they could use--he had proven this to them. They tossed out people with the same skill.

"He is an evangelical. His ministry is based around salvation experience through Christ, but he handled himself so well within that context.

"What I'm talking about is infiltrating small communities rather than infiltrating the whole thing all at once.

"Another mission group went into the Philippines, and they were reaching the students in the universities. Students would accept the Lord and be encouraged by their Christian leaders to share their faith with their parents when they went home over vacation. They were having a high incidence of these young people coming back and having nothing more to do either with the gospel or with them.

"My question is, why encourage them to make their faith known to their parents at that point? I have no objection to making it known in time. But we get influenced by this Hollywood miracle-ism and being up-front in the Western way, which is to tell immediately what has happened. You've had a conversion, now tell everybody what's happened.

"But if those people could have been encouraged to go to their homes, spend time rebuilding the trust and confidence of the parents to the child, and let their

(Dr. Mayers, continued:)

parents see that something fresh and vital has happened, then in good time there would be plenty of time for the children to share what they had come into.

"You've got to have specific attacks, approaches, strategies in keeping with the various subcultures of Judaism. You've got to build the kinds of strategies that can meet each specific demand of subculture. Some will be moving slower and some will be moving faster. Some will have to go very, very deep and some can be very shallow and superficial.

"In developing a code of ethics for missionaries working cross-culturally, before I ask any other question, I'd ask this question of trust: (1) Is what I'm doing, thinking, or saying building trust or undermining it? (2) Before I began to try to understand the ethical nature of the mentality, I would understand the community. (3) Whenever I began to discover that my purposes and my ways were in some way contradictory to what that community is, perceives itself to be, anticipates itself to be, I would yield.

"In our contemporary Western culture, we're trained to confront. We're trained to press, we're trained to be assertive, but we're not trained to yield. And if you approach the gospel through a theology of yielding, you begin to see that at very critical times leaders--ministers to others--yielded at very significant times until it was possible for a positive response to come about.

"And one of the things that I think groups like yours have to do is develop a theology of yielding--when you can yield to others. And by yielding, I think you will make tremendous advances," Dr. Mayers concluded.

INTEGRITY OF WITNESS

As we consider contextualization and the means by which we can communicate the gospel to a specific culture in a biblical way, we find ourselves dealing with questions of integrity. Sometimes there is a fine line between sensitivity and deception. Do we ever become unethical in our zeal to acquaint the Jewish people with their Messiah, the Passover Lamb who atoned for their sins? Where contextualization is used as a method of being sensitive, can it border on deception?

We can see an illustration of this question in the way that evangelistic programs are sometimes presented. Occasionally Jewish Christians or Jewish missions will have a program and call it an Israel Appreciation Night, for example. Jewish people come thinking it's an Israel Appreciation Night, but the true goal of the Christians who present the program is evangelism.

Dr. Hollatz offered this advice: "Make sure that's the real substance (Israel appreciation), and when people think about that particular gathering, that's what it was. Use that strictly for pre-evangelism, as a way of finding out some people who are interested, and just mention by way of passing, 'we are Messianic Jews and have much in common with you; we'd like to share something with regard to the value of Israel and what Israel is doing'--and simply with that identification let it be Israel appreciation. They know who you are, but you're not moving any further than that."

Another example is a Christian event held at a large university. A group was going to show a film about Israel and have a Jewish Christian missionary speak.

They advertised it as, "Come, hear a film about Israel with a discussion by (name)." The speaker was told to provide an evangelistic discussion, and the film was a Christian film. There was no mention that it was a Christian event.

Dr. Greenway commented, "I feel uncomfortable with any kind of advertisement to an evangelistic event--that's the purpose of it. We wouldn't be doing those things if we did not have evangelism as our purpose. We're not in the travel business, or just promoting Israel as such. I think if, for example, the sign were to have identified (the speaker) as a Messianic Jew, then it would have sent the clear signal as to probably what this was about. I think we open ourselves to a lot of serious charges of manipulation, coercion, deception and worse.

"The ethics of evangelism is a broad subject. One of the things I believe we have to maintain ethically is, on the one hand, reciprocity. Evangelism is a two-way street, and when I seek to present my faith to another person in the hope that he will come to understand it and eventually accept it for himself, I have to also be willing to let him try to convince me. That, to me, is a principle of reciprocity which we have to maintain. When we affirm the right to evangelize, we must also affirm that right for the other person.

"Secondly," said Dr. Greenway, "I think that coercive forms of evangelism come in a lot of forms and shapes. In the way we deal with people in evangelism, we must be very careful to respect them as persons, to not in any way try to coerce them, deceive them, manipulate them, or use them as objects of our effort. That

(Dr. Greenway, continued:)

includes, it seems to me, even the 'bait' we present to get them to come and hear our message.

"We have to be very, very careful that they understand that they are not going to be coerced or tricked, but they are going to hear what we intend to say. This comes into play in foreign missions right now. A couple of boards are going big into this neutral turf approach to evangelistic contact with unsaved people. They rent a restaurant, maybe a hotel banquet hall, they invite some big-name speaker on somewhat of a neutral subject. Then the people get there, get this free dinner and ZAM! they hear the gospel.

"I know one man who stalked out of a meeting like that and said, 'I feel like I've just been raped!' Something made me say, 'Yeah, I think you were, because you were baited here by a dinner and a big-name speaker and then as soon as you got in, the doors were shut, the meal was downed and you got a religious presentation.'"

Dr. Greenway also clarified that this is not the same as when a Jewish Christian goes into a Jewish Christian meeting knowing what it is, then walks out and says that he was "raped." "Then he is being unethical," Dr. Greenway said, "because he is charging us with the kind of unethical proselytism which we are not guilty of."

Dr. Greenway also commented on the use of the advertising media to present the gospel by using Jewish-oriented graphics and snappy writing: "I think that to use the media such as New York Times, Time magazine, that sort of thing is perfectly legitimate. Those are simply platforms--very public platforms. The

(Dr. Greenway, continued:)

people you're trying to reach are reading those media. Of course, they have the right to run an ad the following day if they want to counter your ad with an ad of their own. That's part of being in a free society.

"I don't think the sense of 'Madison Avenue' really enters here. Respecting them as persons free to accept or reject is the important thing we must maintain.

"There's a lot of chauvinism, triumphalism, in evangelism at large--a disregard, a lack of humility, a lack of respect for people as God's image-bearers in missions. I mean the kind of Pattons--the blood and guts kind of aggressiveness. Maybe you haven't mingled a lot with foreign mission types, but they're there--Iwo Jima types--very often. I have a lot of that in myself, too, without much respect for people as people. That leads to the use of 'the ends justify the means' in the methodology you use, and I just feel that that day is past. I think during the colonialistic period that was very acceptable, because no one really respected the natives anyway. But I don't think that was right, and it certainly runs into problems today," Dr. Greenway concluded.

"Milk and Cookies Evangelism"

As we consider integrity in our proclamation of the gospel, we must also relate it to our witness to children. For example, a Christian might invite the neighborhood kids in for milk and cookies and then give them a gospel story. This "milk and cookies evangelism," as it is sometimes called, has raised questions of deception.

Dr. Greenway also addressed this issue. "I think that there is something very dangerous about that....anything that in any way subtly undermines the authority of parents over children. I think we have to honor that the children are under the parents' authority. I should not think that any church, or even I as a Christian neighbor, should try to do anything religiously to my neighbor's child without respecting the authority of the parents. I strongly believe in child evangelism, but I don't believe in undercutting, undermining, ignoring, doing an end run around the rightful authority of the parents, because that's a biblical principle.

"It's extremely important, and I would say that to every pastor and every church. Don't, in your outreach program, try to bring in children. If one does show up, make sure the parents understand the child is there, the child is being exposed to Christian teaching and that they are there with parental consent," Dr. Greenway advised.

Making Promises

Evangelistic integrity must also extend to the promises we make, lest we become the seducing type of "false lovers" which Griffin warns against in his book. An incident that happened while I was living in Los Angeles some time ago can help to illustrate this. A Mrs. Schochot called and made an appointment with me. I went to her home. She was under treatment for cancer. A neighbor had told her that if she would receive Christ, God would heal her of cancer. She wanted to know when she could be baptized. I tried to explain that she couldn't become a Christian to be healed of cancer, but because she knew it was true. She said

she would know if it were true if she were healed of cancer. She was willing to agree to any baptismal formula. I felt this was not an honest response to honest proclamation. A minister did baptize her. You think I'm going to say she died of cancer. But she hadn't by the time I left L.A. some time later.

Dr. Hollatz provided us with some thoughts on the subject of the promises we make to people about the Christian life: "I don't think we can in any way go beyond what the full context of the New Testament gives. I think Peter's epistles are very instructive at this level with regard to suffering, persecution. Not all of your problems are going to be solved.

"Here's where I think a great deal of injustice and, shall I say, even counter-productive claims are being made for the gospel. People are finding that their illness is not cured, their home situation is still bad, they may still be out of a job, all of these things, so that you can't look at Christianity as being that kind of instant cure for all of your problems. And preachers or evangelists or personal workers who go about making these kinds of claims, I think, are way off-base and are really contrary to Scripture," Dr. Hollatz concluded.

STANDING TOGETHER IN UNITY OF PURPOSE

It's not enough to be right about the gospel. We need to be right about the gospel in the right way. And since we have opposition, we do well not to give them cause to accuse us. As we deal with the inevitable accusations of unethical behavior and lack of integrity which are aimed at us by Jewish community leaders, we must be careful.

We don't communicate with unbelievers the same way as with believers.

For the sake of those Jews who might consider the gospel, we missionaries must keep a unified front and affirm the ministry of one another. For example, about two and half years ago I got a call from an unsaved Jew in Philadelphia. He started telling me terrible things that the leaders of a Jewish Christian group there had said about Jews for Jesus. I stuck to my principles and affirmed those Jewish Christian leaders. Later I found out that the man who called was an anti-missionary. In situations like this, the point is not that we affirm one another, but that we affirm the legitimacy of purpose and stand together with others who have the same purpose.

There is a danger that we might present Jewish opposition in such a way as to give fuel to the anti-Semites.

There is a movement afoot of ecumenical dialogue between evangelicals and Jews. Dr. Paul Pierson, Dean of the School of World Missions at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California, offered these comments for Jewish evangelical leaders:

"We have to ask a very serious and careful question about the goals of dialogue. If the underlying agenda of dialogue is a way to mutually affirm each other and imply that each faith is valid, then evangelicals have to reject that. If dialogue is a way of hearing and understanding people and their genuine concerns, of course, there is validity to it.

"Dialogue can be useful to an evangelical by helping an evangelical to realize his or her lack of sensitivity to many key issues that people are struggling

with, misperceptions about the gospel and about Jesus Christ. Dialogue could be an entree to evangelistic witness, but it could never be a substitute for it. So in one case we're talking about dialogue that's an end in itself, and in the other case we're talking about dialogue as the first step in a methodology.

"I think that at the appropriate point Christians should let the other people know that he or she believes that Christ is uniquely the way of salvation," Dr. Pierson concluded.

CONCLUSION

As believers in Y'shua, we know that it is our task to carry the gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth. But in our zeal to fulfill that commission, we must remember that there is a right way and a wrong way to bear a testimony for Jesus Christ. The effort we extend on behalf of the Savior will ultimately be evaluated before the judgment seat of Christ.

Our model for ethical witnessing is, of course, Jesus Christ, who was perfect from the very essence of His soul to the farthest extent of His every undertaken task. We follow Him because we cannot surpass Him. Through twenty centuries of technological advance, there has been no improvement on the virtue of Jesus Christ.

Jesus has already given us the directive to go into all the world, so there is no room for ethical consideration as to whether or not we should carry the message in general throughout the whole earth. If we would be "doers of the word and not hearers only," we must plan a program of evangelism. Every soul is entitled to hear the gospel once and presented in a way that can be understood.

But what is an ethical testimony? An ethical testimony is the continual act of proclaiming Christ to others in such a manner that they can understand and accept Him if they so desire, and in such a way that the deeds and attitudes of the speaker confirm the statements made concerning Christ.

:

An unethical testimony is a statement or action on behalf of a Christian which, whether by content or manner, misrepresents Christ or creates a false impression in the mind of the hearer and observer. The false statements made by non-Christian cults are not an unethical witness, since their end is not to attract men to Christ, but to call men into the ranks of their organization.

The content of our testimony might be as small as one scripture verse, or a whole biblical exposition with exhortations, but the testimonial must have for its goal the Savior. Persuasion is useful but not essential to a testimonial, and unless a person is willing to be persuaded, no argument will convince him.

The key to ethical witnessing is love. If we witness in love, we cannot offend, even though we might make many errors. Many people violate that which is considered correct, but do so with good intentions and love, and God honors and blesses their witness.

All of our ethical system must be built on scripture, not on contemporary notions of proper behavior or good communications strategy. We must see for ourselves that much of the condemnation of our ethical behavior from the Jewish community is defensive. Nevertheless, there are those areas where we need to take heed that we are conducting ourselves honestly and that our behavior is not a reproach to the name of our Lord. Scripture tells us to give offense to none,

to the Jew, to the Greek, to the church of God. We must recognize that when the offense of the cross is involved, there is little we can do to placate those who are offended. They will not be satisfied by anything less than the removal of any effective testimony to the Jewish community.

But, on the other hand, we need to examine carefully, openly and prayerfully any charge of unethical conduct in the light of scripture. We must strive to walk worthy of the high calling in Y'shua. We must do this with the knowledge that through the Holy Spirit we are being strengthened to stand for the Lord, and through God-honoring proclamation, a growing remnant of the lost sheep of the house of Israel shall be gathered.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Alinsky, Saul D., Rules for Radicals--A Practical Primer for Realistic Radicals, Random House, Inc., New York, 1971, page 128.

The late Saul Alinsky was a past Professor of Communications at Columbia University in New York. He is considered to be the father of many modern, young political activists.

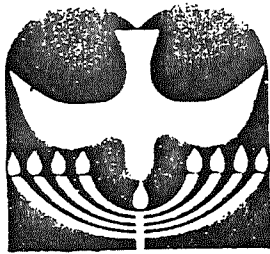
2. Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary, Unabridged, Second Edition, The World Publishing Co., 1966, p. 627.
3. Griffin, Emory A., The Mind Changers: The Art of Christian Persuasion, Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, Ill., 1976, p. 27.
4. Griffin, op. cit., p. 28.
5. Griffin, op. cit., pp. 30-31.
6. Griffin, op. cit., pp. 32-40.

All Scripture quotations are taken from the New American Standard Bible, A.J. Holman Company, Division of J.B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia and New York, 1977 The Lockman Foundation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Much help was received for the preparation of this paper from my associate, Mitchell Glaser, who conducted personal interviews with Dr. Roger Greenway, Dr. David Hesselgrave, Dr. Edwin Hollatz, Dr. Marvin Mayers and Dr. Paul Pierson during these past few weeks.

The rewrite and redaction of this paper was prepared by Miss Nancy Boerman. And the material gathered will be used further in training lectures for the staff of Jews for Jesus.



BETH MESSIAH SYNAGOGUE

בֵּית מֶשִׁיחַ

A Charter Member of the Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations

APRIL 1985

NISAN/IYAR 5745

From Rabbi Rosenfarb:

"Pesach" (Passover) is a very special holiday in the Jewish yearly life cycle. It is one of the three major feasts which demanded the males of Israel to come up to Jerusalem to "appear before the L-rd." Interestingly, the Rabbis of the Talmud required three things for this visit to have been performed properly: our presence, our sacrifice, and our joyfulness.

How significant that our sacrifice, the "chaggigah" as it was called, was designated as a peace-offering unto the L-rd. And, further, how significant that a peace-offering should mediate between our presence and our joy in ancient Jewish thought. It is no wonder that G-d has built His Redemption theme on this type of intercessory process. It is no wonder that G-d provided Yeshua, His own Pesach-Chaggigah to bring our presence into His joy for us.

Peace and joy produce one another. The key to their relationship lies in the message of the Pesach Lamb of G-d. Our shackles cast off and burdens turned to peace, we praise G-d for His joy of freedom.

As is the tradition of our heritage, we will recline at the Pesach Seder table this month. Reclining as a symbol of being free men and women, let us remember that our freedom was bought, with G-d's Chaggigah. This Pesach, with our families about us, we will remember how G-d, then and now, has bridged our presence with joy through His sacrifice.

"Through faith he (Moses) kept Pesach" (Heb. 11:28).
Shalom u-berecha

In Messiah Yeshuah... have a wonderful month!

BETH MESSIAH SYNAGOGUE

THIRTEEN ARTICLES OF FAITH

WE BELIEVE

1. That the Bible, composed of both the Old Covenant (Tenach) and the New Covenant (Brit Hadasha) is the only infallible and authoritative Word of God. (II Timothy 3:16)
2. That God is "Echad", as declared in the Shema (Deut. 6:4): "A united one" or "compound unity" eternally existent in three Persons as expressed in Isaiah 48:16-17.
3. In the Deity of Yeshua HaMashiach (Jesus, the Messiah) and that He is the "Seed of the Woman" as God promised in Genesis 3:15 and that His virgin-birth was to be a sign to Israel of His Messiahship as stated in Isaiah 7:14. (Isaiah 9:6,7)
4. In Messiah's life, His miracles yesterday and today, His vicarious and sacrificial death as our atonement, His bodily resurrection, His appearance thereafter in Jerusalem, His ascension, His personal future return for believers in Yeshua, both living and dead, and His future establishment of His kingdom on earth.
5. That the only means of being cleansed from sin is by grace, through faith in the shed sacrificial blood of Yeshua HaMashiach and that re-generation by the Spirit of God is absolutely essential for personal salvation. (Lev. 17:11, Eph. 2:8)
6. In the present ministry of the Holy Spirit (Ruach HaKodesh) by whose indwelling the believer is enabled to live a godly life. (Ez. 36:26,27)
7. That the promise of the Father, as contained in Acts 1:4-8 and the gifts of the Ruach HaKodesh, as foretold by Jewish prophets (e.g. Joel 2:27-29 and Isaiah 28:11,12), fulfilled in (Acts 10:44-48), and as taught by the anointed Jewish apostle, Paul, are for believers today. (I Cor. 12:4-10)

8. That Jews according to the flesh (descendants of Abraham through Isaac, whether through the blood line of the mother or of the father) who place their faith in Israel's Messiah Yeshua have not disowned or separated themselves from their race and Judaic heritage, but remain sons and daughters of Israel. (Romans 2:28,29) Gentiles who place their faith in Israel's Messiah Yeshua are also, spiritually, sons and daughters of Israel. (Galatians 3:28,29)
9. In the resurrection of both saved and lost, the one to everlasting life and the other to eternal separation from God, the latter being consigned to a state of everlasting punishment. (Daniel 12:2; Matt. 25:46)
10. That the middle wall of partition which in times past separated Jews and Gentiles has been broken down, the enmity between them eradicated by the Messiah Yeshua. (Ephesians 2:12-14)
11. That the New Covenant body of the Lord is composed of both Jews and Gentiles who have accepted Yeshua HaMashiach as the Promised Redeemer and that now they are to worship TOGETHER in the House of God. (I Cor. 12:13, Hebrews 10:25)
12. In the partaking of the communal elements of the matzah (unleavened bread) and the wine, as instituted by Yeshua HaMashiach at His last Passover Seder, that the elements are symbolic of the Lord's death and His resurrection. (I Cor. 11:23-34)
13. In the immersion of believers (Mikveh), as commanded by the Scriptures, as an outward sign of an inward salvation experience, symbolizing the death of the old man and the resurrection unto newness of life. (Matt. 3:16, 28:18-20)