

SUMMARIES – JOURNAL OF MISSION THEOLOGY 13/2010

LARS AEJMELAEUS

Resurrection and Witness in the New Testament

Belief in the resurrection of Jesus gave birth to Christianity. It provided to Christianity, from its inception, its basic conviction, which separated Christianity from mainstream Judaism and from all other religions. Belief in the resurrection was primarily based on the revelatory experiences of many people. The nature of the revelations and the circumstances in which they occurred differed. An assignment, however, was always associated with them: the victory of Jesus was to be proclaimed to other people. In light of the NT, the assurance of Jesus' victory and the mission are like the two sides of a coin, inseparable from each other. The connection between the obligation to witness and the basic experiences that gave birth to faith explains, for its own part, the rapid spread of Christianity over much territory within the first Christian generations.

REIJO ARKKILA

Edinburgh and Mission of Lutheran Evangelical
Revival Movement of Finland

Japan missionary Siiri Uusitalo of Lutheran Evangelical Association of Finland (LEAF) participated in the Edinburgh mission conference in 1910. She wrote articles about the meeting to the mission papers of Leaf. Otherwise there were no direct impulses from Edinburgh in the work of LEAF. But Edinburgh emphasized the task to take the gospel to all parts of the world. To this challenge LEAF and its sister organisation Sleaf have been answering in many ways. Leaf has continued the work in Japan which was started in 1900. In the 1960s both missions started the work in Africa, where Kenya has been an important field. There has been some work and contacts with Zambia, Malawi, Cameroun and Sudan in Africa. Papua New Guinea work started in 1979. Leaf has contacts also with South Korea and Brazil. With Ingrian Finns there have been contacts already during the time of the Soviet Union. Now Leaf is working in Russia and Estonia. The main mission theological emphasis is that the message bought the full salvation in the work of Jesus Christ.

HEIDI HIRVONEN

Challenges and Possibilities of Christian-Muslim Dialogue

The major challenge of Christian-Muslim dialogue appears to be the tension between loyalty to one's own convictions and taking into account the particular self-understanding of the other. While this tension may be ultimately unsolvable, it is obvious that linking dialogue tightly to missionary motivations or certain theological agenda imposed on the others is not conducive for better mutual understanding. The two religions' particular views on such central theological themes as divine revelation, concept of God, and human condition and ultimate destiny cannot be reconciled, but there are diverse means to facilitate mutual understanding on them, such as increasing mutual knowledge, questioning certain traditional condemnations, showing theological parallels between the two religions, and transcending doctrinal disagreements by stressing common religious

experience or ethical concerns. As for basic ethical principles, Christians' alienation from the Islamic law appears as the most significant challenge to mutual understanding, while neighbourly love and the golden rule of ethics offer a fruitful basis for further dialogue.

MATTI KORPIAHO

The Finnish Mission Council (FMC) as a Fruit of Edinburgh
1910 Mission Conference and Main Features of Its 90 Years
History

Inspired by The Edinburgh Mission Conference 1910 The Finnish Mission Council (FMC) was established in 1919 to serve as a joint co-operative organ for the Finnish missionary societies. With International Partners FMC has in a noticeable way supported the co-workers and leadership of its member organizations by providing information about global mission, developing missionary training and member care for the missionaries. When FMC celebrated its 90th year anniversary in 2009 it consisted of a network of 31 active member organizations and churches co-operating for the global mission task.

MARKKU KOTILA

Foremothers of Edinburgh and her Daughters:

Bible Society Movement and Ecumenical Co-Operation

The modern Bible Society movement came into being in the midst of the British evangelical missionary revival in late 18th and early 19th century. The British and Foreign Bible Society was founded in 1804 to meet the Bible need worldwide. The work reached very soon countries like China, India and USA. As early as 1812 a Bible Society was established also in Finland. Parallel to 20th century ecumenical movement the year 1946 saw Bible Societies coming together as United Bible Societies, a new coordinating body for common work. A door to new level of cooperation with the Catholic Church opened through the Dei Verbum document of Vatican II. Deeper collaboration with Orthodox and Oriental Churches was reached as part of the Post-Soviet developments.

The Second Mission Conference in Edinburgh in June 2010 is expected to have a remarkable effect on the missiological thinking of Christian Churches.

The Mission Strategy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland was drafted prior to the Conference. It addresses needs which are similar to those which led to the organizing of the first Edinburgh Conference one hundred years ago. The many actors in mission should have a vision pointing in the same direction.

VELI-MATTI KÄRKKÄINEN

Mission and the Encounter with the Religious Other

The purpose of this essay is to outline some key principles and values for the purposes of encounter between religions in light of the contemporary theology of religions. The central thesis argues that a trinitarian approach best serves the purposes of Christian theology of religions and mission. An authentic trinitarian approach, on the one hand, makes it possible to maintain true Christian identity and, on the other hand, facilitates mutual learning and authentic witness in a religious encounter.

SIMO PEURA

The Mission Strategies of Edinburgh and the ELCF

The first part of this article deals with the missiological strategy of the first Edinburgh Conference in 1910. In its interpretation of the world, the conference was a child of its own era. The ecumenical movement in its organized form was not yet visible, resulting in a very sketchy understanding of the relationship between the universal Church of Christ and the local Churches. However, there has been progress in the intervening hundred years, and many of the goals have been reached.

Edinburgh 2010 was a comprehensive meeting by representation. The conference speeches explored the need for a global mission paradigm, as well as the need to see mission as a spiritual transformation of the heart and the world. Yet in the Conference declaration, it is possible to see difficulties in speaking about the Church and identifying its nature. A new emphasis is the vision about the mission of God's love. The Mission Strategy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland contains many of the same emphases which have surfaced in the international debate on mission. The renewal of the spiritual life of the Church and carrying global responsibilities are deeply intertwined.

JUHANI PÖRSTI

Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church

Reinforces its Missionary Task

The recent history of Estonia has seen immense changes in relations between the churches and society. In particular, a trend that began at the end of the 19th century has contributed to the appearance of many new ideological and religious influences. With respect to the causes of change which have most violently shaken the social status and activities of the churches, I make special reference to the following: relations between the nationalist movement (ethnic Estonians) and Baltic Germans, the ideological and atheistic religious policy of Soviet Estonia, the rise of secularism and non-Christian religions and the appearance of the old Estonian nature religion.

The position of traditional Christianity was also shaken by developments within the Christian churches. Many members of the Lutheran Church joined the Orthodox Church and the Free Churches.

The moulding effect of these causes of change can be seen particularly clearly in the Estonian Lutheran Church. In the mid-1930s over 70% of the population still belonged to the Lutheran Church. Since then there has been a continuous decrease in membership, which also badly affected the financial support of the parishes. Estonian independence (1991) momentarily raised the financial support of the Church, which has since declined by approximately 10% per annum.

The loss of members of the Lutheran Church has been paralleled by another opposite trend. In the period 1991–2007 church attendance took a sharp upswing and almost doubled. At the same time the Church has paid constant attention to reinforcing its missionary task. The Church plans to set up a separate mission work foundation and to send at least three missionaries annually to areas of work abroad. The Church Mission Centre is developing the Church's missionary

work in co-operation with many foreign agencies, including Finnish missionary organisations.

The increasing shortage of resources has spurred missiological discussion within the Church and led to greater emphasis on related practical activities. In 2009 the Church Mission Centre also initiated a plan, the aim of which is to concentrate on the main areas of parish work, especially children's and youth work.

At the same time the Mission Centre began preparatory work for the Church's missionary strategy, which is due to be published at the beginning of 2011.

JAAKKO RUSAMA

Unity and Mission: Edinburgh 1910 Promoting the Unity of the Church

The article describes the views on the preconditions and possibilities of the unity of the Church as presented at the World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh, 1910. One of the Commissions at the Conference concentrated specifically on ecumenical questions and on the questions which emphasize the unity among Christians. They were regarded important issues when the missionary agencies worked for the establishment of the one church of Christ in the whole world and especially in the non-Christian countries. It was felt that the duty of Christians was to evangelize the whole world and therefore unity was interpreted to be an instrument for that cause. Separated churches and the division of the Christian church were seen as a hindrance in Christian witness. In the article there is a closer look at the unity models as drafted by the participants. The work on these models continued for several decades in the international ecumenical movement.

TIMO VASKO

Edinburgh II: Witnessing to Christ Today

In this article I deal with missiological work and the history of the outcomes of ecumenism, starting from Edinburgh 1910 until 2010. This centennial of mission history is the center of much interest. The festive year afforded the possibility to probe and examine the mission problems of the last century. An ecumenically broad-based world mission conference was held in Edinburgh, 2-6 June 2010. In the same year, on different continents, in various countries, there were arranged conferences and symposia touching upon local mission, also in Finland. I focus on the phases and results of the research processes, especially those concerning 2010. I participated in Edinburgh II. Here I examine the materials and significance of this historic meeting, and draw conclusions for the Finnish ecumenical environment. In conjunction with the Symposium in Helsinki, October 2010, in my memorandum I analyze the comprehensive contents of Lausanne III, Cape Town 2010.

AULI VÄHÄKANGAS

Pastoral Challenges gave rise to Missiological Anthropology

The world missionary conference held at Edinburgh in 1910 discussed the need of missionaries' anthropological knowledge. This need was especially connected with the encounter with local cultures and with various pastoral problems which

confused the missionaries. Later on responding to this need resulted in creating a new branch of missiology, missiological anthropology which is not commonly known in Finland and not much of its research has been published in Finnish. Missiological anthropology is just now during the one hundred year jubilee of Edinburgh conference current not only because of its historical background but also due to the today's needs. The relationship between the Gospel and culture is as a burning issue to third world Christians but the context and the actual pastoral challenges have partly changed from those of a hundred years ago. This article begins by introducing briefly various definitions and history of missiological anthropology. Thereafter, some of the biggest challenges within this field are dealt with through my own research among the Lutherans in Northern Tanzania. The article is concluded with discussing the future prospects of missiological anthropology in the Nordic countries as well as in the global South.