Theological Research Toward Church Growth:
A Denominational Model

Matt Queen

Introduction

Proponents of the Church Growth Movement pride themselves in their use of research for the purpose of maximum church growth. C. Peter Wagner lists research as one of six exclusive principles upon which the Movement was founded.[1] While much of this research stems from sociological science, the Church Growth Movement also incorporates theological research. The incorporation of these two fields of research grows out of the same orientation; therefore, harmony between the two should be integrated in the total process of research.[2] Whereas some of America's denominations have accomplished great strides in pursuit of church growth through sociological research, deficiencies in theological research remain. For this reason, great importance lies in the responsibility of denominations to engage in theological research for church growth.

Such theological research is being conducted in Southern Baptist evangelism.[3] This is due, in part, to the formation of the North American Mission Board,[4] which exists "to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ, start New Testament congregations, minister to persons in the name of Christ, and assist churches in the United States and Canada in effectively performing these func-

tions."[5] Among all of its duties, the NAMB also serves the SBC with personal evangelism programs for North American SBC churches. In its three-year existence the NAMB has accomplished this by servicing previous HMB personal evangelism programs.

The methods, not the message, of the gospel's proclamation can change as believers communicate it to every culture. NAMB President Bob Reccord has said that as the NAMB enters the twenty-first century, it seeks to design personal evangelism programs that will more efficiently communicate the gospel to the contemporary culture.[6] The adoption of new personal evangelism programs calls for the NAMB to clearly define what Southern Baptists have understood the kerygmatic message of Scripture to be, thus adapting new methodologies to present the gospel clearly to everyone.

This article assesses how both Scripture and theologians define the kerygma. In addition, it theologically analyzes the kerygmatic message communicated from the following three Southern Baptist evangelistic strategies: *Continuing Witness Training* (*CWT*), *Here's Hope: Share Jesus Now* (*HH*); and the LifeWay[7]-NAMB partnership of a recent educational evangelism program: *FAITH: Evangelism Through the Sunday School* (*FAITH*).[8] The study concludes with evaluative recommendations concerning the implementation of theological research for the purpose of producing real church growth. The importance of this specific model proves imperative as the message of the gospel is "the [primary] element which lies at the heart of all [the Church's] functions,"[9] namely that of evangelism.

The Kerygmatic Message: Toward A Biblical And Theological Definition

The Biblical Terminology and Concept of the Gospel

When referring to either a formula or the essential elements of the Christian gospel message, theologians commonly use the term *kerygma*. Within the New Testament, three Greek roots ευαγγελιον, μαρτυρειν, and κηρυγμα relate to the concept of

the Christian gospel message. The textual meaning of each of these three Greek roots proves most helpful in understanding the biblical concept of the gospel.

The biblical text predominately makes use of the Greek noun ευαγγελιον (*euaggelion*) some seventy times, more times than it uses either κηρυγμα or μαρτυριον. The term usually translates as "good news." This is derived from a combination of two Greek words, ευ meaning "good" and αγγελιον referring to "message" or "news." Millard Erickson believes it "apparent when Paul uses [*euaggelion*] as the direct object of a verb of speaking or hearing, [that] he has in view a particular content, a particular body of facts."[10] This term, therefore, becomes a primary biblical reference to the basic tenets of the gospel.

Scripture uses μαρτυρειν (*marturein*) as another term that connects with the basic understanding of the gospel message in the New Testament. *Marturein* means "to bear witness" to an event.[11] This term serves as a derivative of martyr and its meaning shares similarities with that of martyr. The event, or message, that bears a witness in the context of Scripture connects *marturion* with the conceptualized message of the good news. This biblical focus of *marturion*, therefore, confers its attention to the message, or event, of the gospel.

The New Testament makes use of a third term κηρυγμα (*kerygma*) fewer than ten times as a noun and a little over fifty times as a verb (κηρυσσο, or *kerusso*). Much less frequent in the New Testament than *euaggelion*, theologians of the past refer to the content of the gospel by the terminological use of *kerygma*.[12] The original meaning of *kerygma* pertains to a proclaimed event by a herald. Biblically, this term relates to the proclaimed message of God's good news to mankind by His witnesses.

Sufficient to say, Scripture contains a message of good news that the Apostles conveyed to their first century contemporaries. Although other terms may refer to the gospel message, the New Testament contains three elementary Greek roots to describe it. These terms, *euaggelion*, *marturein*, and *kerygma* are primary to the biblical concept of the gospel message. Michael Green gives a very concise summation of these terms and

their relationship to the message of the gospel when he writes, "the gospel is good news; it is proclamation; it is witness."[13]

Tracing the Historical Understanding of Kerygma by Prominent Theologians

Numerous theologians have expressed their understandings of the kerygma and their understandings seem to fall under one of two views. The first of these holds that the historical events of the kerygma are essential to the content of the kerygmatic message. The other view advocates a stance against the kerygmatic message as becoming dogmatic and fixed. The later view has proven to deny innerantist views of the Bible but has greatly influenced many theologians historically on this topic. For those reasons, this view will be discussed, although it will be much briefer than the former view. The following information in this section seeks to convey a concise sampling of those understandings and neither serves as an exhaustive overview[14] nor a critique of them.

Martin Dibelius was the first to examine the formulation of the kerygmatic message of the early church. He saw that the kerygma did, in fact, compile a formula of "a short outline or summary of the Christian message…which reminded the young Christian of his faith and which gave a teacher guidance for his instruction."[15] C. H. Dodd followed Dibelius in 1936 with the publication of the watershed book on the kerygma, *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments*. In it Dodd concluded a six-fold formula of the kerygma:

> 1) the age of fulfillment has dawned; 2) this has taken place through the ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus; 3) by virtue of the resurrection, Jesus has been exalted to the right hand of God; 4) the Holy Spirit in the Church is the sign of Christ's present power and glory; 5) The Messianic Age will shortly reach its consummation in the return of Christ; and 6) the kerygma always closes with an appeal for repentance, the offer of forgiveness and of the Holy Spirit, and the promise of salvation.[16]

Other theologians align themselves with Dodd in forming an event-oriented formula of the kerygma. Roland Allen sees five elements of the kerygma: 1) an appeal to the past; 2) a statement of facts; 3) an answer to the inevitable objection; 4) an appeal to the spiritual needs of men; and 5) a grave warning.[17] These are all based upon the theological doctrines of "God the Father, the Creator; Jesus, the Son, the Redeemer, the Saviour [sic]; and a doctrine of the Holy Spirit, the indwelling source of strength.[18] A. M. Hunter draws "three heads" that the kerygma of the New Testament Church 1) claims the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy; 2) historically exposits Jesus' life, death, resurrection, and exaltation; and 3) includes a summons to repent and accept the forgiveness of sins in Jesus.[19] Floyd V. Filson sees four essentials to the kerygma: 1) God has begun to fulfill his promises; 2) the promised new age of God's effective rule has begun; 3) the fulfillment has come, and this new age has begun through the work of God in the historical Jesus; and 4) the message of God's gracious and powerful action in history is an offer of forgiveness, and it leads to a call to repent and believe.[20] Most recently, Michael Green disagrees with the forced fixation proposed by Dodd; nevertheless, he determines that the gospel of the early church "united in its witness to Jesus, varied in its presentation of his relevance to the varied needs of the listeners, and urgent in the demand for decision."[21]

Rudolf Bultmann proclaimed a view of the kerygma much different from that of Dodd and those holding to the importance of the kerygmatic formulation. Bultmann attempted to demythologize the historical events of Scripture relating to the gospel (Christ's life, death, and resurrection). This meant "theology must undertake the task of stripping the kerygma from its mythical framework."[22] The mythical framework to which Bultmann refers encompasses the views and setting of the community of faith that compiled biblical material. The content of mythological views and events furthered that community's element of faith.[23]

C. F. Evans, another prominent theologian in the discussion, appears heavily influenced by Bultmann. By surveying the Acts

sermons, he views the kerygmatic components in the speeches as merely Luke's own literary device.[24] This came in response to his difficulties between them and their contexts. One may ask if there can be harmony between these apparent
theological views of the kerygma. William Baird attempts to reconcile them by explaining that Dodd and Bultmann argue different stances. He says that Dodd understands the gospel as "a formula of facts and doctrines about God's action in Christ" and that Bultmann sees it as "God's powerful act in which Christ is dynamically present calling men to a decision of faith."[25]

Theological Elements of the Kerygma for a Comparison with the SBC's Personal Evangelism Programs

Theologians in the schools of Dodd and Bultmann have viewed the kerygmatic message differently. As this study relates to an appraisal of the kerygmatic message of Southern Baptists as derived from five of their prominent personal evangelism programs, the demythological views held by Bultmannians prove to be irrelevant as Southern Baptists deny those views. On the other hand, the kerygmatic formulas/elements of those holding to a doctrinal, event-oriented kerygma appear to lack an exclusively specific, biblical, and theological content for a modern kerygmatic presentation.

A survey of some prominent historical formulas of the kerygma by the early Church highlights the need for the composition of a biblical and theological definition to adequately appraise the kerygmatic message contained in SBC personal evangelism programs. Although he attributes them to Paul, Millard Erickson summarizes the essential points of the gospel as "Jesus Christ's status as the Son of God, his genuine humanity, his death for our sins, his burial, resurrection, subsequent appearances, and future coming in judgement."[26] This summation extends much of the content of men like Dodd, Allen, and Hunter but still seems to be somewhat insufficient for this study. This author, therefore, on the basis of those biblical and theological components with the addition of others, submits the following five elements as a concise biblical and theological formula of the kerygma: 1) Christol-

ogy, as the kerygma
proclaims the nature, incarnation, and person of Jesus Christ; 2)
Hamartology, as the kerygma reveals man's sin and God's
wrath/judgement of sin; 3) Soteriology, as the kerygma appeals
to the death and resurrection events of Jesus Christ and their
implications of a penal substitutionary atonement; 4) Repentance
and Faith, as the kerygma demands a response for a trans-
formed life and immediate (in the sense of chronology) personal
relationship with Jesus Christ; and 5) Eschatology of Eternal
Destinies, as the salvific work of the kerygma destines souls to
heaven, while rejection of that salvific work damns souls to hell.

An Evaluative Study Of Three Sbc Personal Evangelism
Programs Toward The Kerymatic Message Of Southern Baptists

An Overview of Continuing Witness Training

Ronald W. Johnson, former HMB Editor of the Evangelism
section, has defined Continuing Witness Training as "an appren-
ticeship approach to leaning to share the gospel message."[27]
Due to the popularity and effectiveness of James Kennedy's
Evangelism Explosion, Southern Baptists responded with the
piloting of CWT seminars, involving 165 churches of thirty state
conventions in 1982.[28] Although it is a younger program than
WIN, CWT holds the primary presence of this section because of
its tremendous success and notoriety. In 1987, Roy Fish said
CWT has probably been "the most successful of the training pro-
grams in evangelism among Southern Baptists up to the present
time."[29] Fish describes the general approach of the program as
simple. He explains, "a leader, usually the pastor, becomes 'cer-
tified' by intensive training at a regional center. He or she can
then begin training the laity on a local church level. They are in
turn certified, and they can thus train others that then leads to
their certification—and on and on."[30]

Besides the structure of CWT as a personal evangelism pro-
gram, its gospel tract, entitled *Eternal Life*, culminates a method-
ological approach to communicate the kerygma. The elements
contained within the tract are essential to understanding the ker-

ygmatic message and in response are to be theologically evaluated. *Eternal Life* begins with two multi-purpose questions that serve as a "hook," as well as a diagnostic litmus, for its readers. The body of the tract contains four elemental truths of the kerygma:

1. God's purpose is that we have eternal life.
2. Our need is to understand our problem.
3. God's provision is Jesus Christ
4. Our response is to receive Jesus.[31]

The concluding pages of the tract relate to discipleship components for those who make a positive response to the kerygma.

The NAMB has recently made plans to replace CWT by developing new training and equipping tools for Southern Baptists to intentionally share the good news of Jesus Christ.[32] As this rebuilding of CWT takes place, the NAMB must reevaluate the theological aspects of the kerygma contained in *Eternal Life*. As previously mentioned, the writer maintains that the kerygma contains five essential theological aspects (Christology, Hamartology, Repentance & Faith, Soteriology, and Eternal Destiny). The following table shows the kerygmatic content of *Eternal Life* tract as it relates to those five theological aspects.

Table 1. A Theological Appraisal of the Kerygmatic Content of *Eternal Life*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Christology								x	x						x	-	-	-	-
Hamartology					x	x	x								x	-	-	-	-
Soteriology			?	?				x	x						x	-	-	-	-
Repentance & Faith										x	x	x	x	?	x	-	-	-	-
Eternal Destiny	x	x		x	x		x								x	-	-	-	-

X= This page contains kerygmatic elements of this theological doctrine.

?= This page may contain kerygmatic elements of this theological doctrine. For this reason the page ratio will include a second number in ( ).

-= Pages with this denotation are not essential for determining the kerygmatic message of each tract in this study.

Although they contain pertinent information on follow-up, new believer helps, and additional instructions for new believers, they themselves are not kerygmatic in nature.

This chart gives a wholesome theological evaluation of the doctrinal emphases of the *Eternal Life* tract. Of fifteen applicable pages, the chart reveals the following page ratio of doctrinal emphases within *Eternal Life*: Christology 3/15; Hamartology 4/15; Soteriology 3(5)/15; Repentance & Faith 5(6)/15; and Eternal Destiny 6/15. The chart, therefore, interestingly reveals a strong emphasis on Repentance & Faith and Eternal Destiny, and a moderate emphasis on Christology, Soteriology, and Hamartology.

An Overview of Here's Hope: Share Jesus Now

In its beginning the HMB made its primary methodology of evangelism the mode of revivalism.[33] Later a new methodology emerged that emphasized personal evangelism over revival meetings. *Here's Hope: Share Jesus Now* reflects a combination methodology of both the old and the new approaches of historic Southern Baptist evangelism. HH incorporates both personal evangelism and revival meetings.[34] HH also challenges believers to share the gospel sixty times in sixty days with *Here's Hope* Roman Road witnessing booklets. In 1995 the HMB sold 2.5 million of these booklets.[35]

HH, like the previous two evangelism programs, contains highlighted points that weave together the kerygmatic message of hope. These four points follow:

1. The first stop on the road to hope is power.
2. The second stop on the road to hope is change.
3. The third stop on the road to hope is God's love.
4. The fourth stop on the road to hope is your commit-

ment.[36]

Its content differs substantially from that of the tracts previously mentioned. For example, it contains fewer explanatory comments of the kerygmatic message and replaces them with the use of more Scripture, specifically verses from Romans. On the other hand, this booklet devotes four of its twelve pages to discipleship and follow-up material, which commonly appear in each of the three tracts surveyed in this study.

Along with the other tracts, the *Here's Hope* Roman Road booklet serves as an example of a methodological pamphlet of the Southern Baptist kerygma. The following table demonstrates how the main theological doctrines contained in *Here's Hope* Roman Road relate to the five doctrinal elements essential to the proclamation of the kerygmatic message.

Table 2. A Theological Appraisal of the Kerygmatic Content of *Here's Hope* Roman Road

PAGE NUMBERS OF THE TRACT

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Christology	-	-	?				x	-	-		-
Hamartology	-	-		x	x		x	-	-		-
Soteriology	-	-			x		x	-	-	x	-
Repentance & Faith	-	-		x		x	x	-	-	x	-
Eternal Destiny	-	-					x	-	-	x	-

X= This page contains kerygmatic elements of this theological doctrine.

?= This page may contain kerygmatic elements of this theological doctrine. For this reason the page ratio will include a second number in ( ).

-= Pages with this denotation are not essential for determining the kerygmatic message of each tract in this study.

Although they contain pertinent information on "hooking" the reader's attention, follow-up, new believer helps, and additional instructions for new believers, they themselves are not kerygmatic in nature.

The resulting ratio emphases of each cell from the total relative cells of *Here's Hope* Roman Road reads as follows: Christology 1(2)/6; Hamartology 3/6; Soteriology 3/6; Repentance & Faith

4/6; and Eternal Destiny 2/6. This shows a lack of emphasis up-on Christology and Eternal Destiny, a balanced emphasis upon Hamartology and Soteriology, and a strong emphasis upon Repentance & Faith.

  An Overview of FAITH: Evangelism Through the Sunday School

After having used *Evangelism Explosion* for three years, First Baptist, Daytona, Florida, under the leadership of their pastor Bobby Welch, culminated their own program of evangelism twenty-five years ago. Due to their Sunday School and Baptist needs, the church's ministry shifted to a blend between Sunday School and evangelism training. They referred to this ministry endeavor Evangelism and Sunday School, or E/S.[37] As E/S became more successful, LifeWay Christian Resources, formerly the Sunday School Board, began the necessary process to adopt it as an educational evangelism program.

January 1998 marked a major contemporary strategy for SBC personal evangelism programs. "FAITH: Evangelism Through the Sunday School launch[ed] at First Baptist, Daytona, Florida, where 28 originator churches were trained in FAITH."[38] At the 1999 Southern Baptist Convention meeting, LifeWay reported that through September 30, 1998, 1,592 churches had participated in the FAITH evangelism strategy.[39]

The FAITH presentation of the gospel contains three major parts. The first part of the FAITH presentation contains introductory aspects that assess one's interests and religious involvement. These aspects lead to a key question, "In your opinion, what do you understand it takes for a person to go to heaven?" If the response of the other person is works based, negative, or unclear, a transition statement leads into the gospel presentation.

The presentation part of FAITH is an outline and not in the form of a tract. This outline contains FAITH's kerygmatic components. These components begin with the letters F-A-I-T-H, forming an acrostic script of the gospel. These acrostic components are:

1. *F* stands for Forgiveness.
2. *A* stands for Available. God's forgiveness is available for all, but not automatic.
3. *I* stands for Impossible. It is impossible for God to allow sin into heaven. This is because God is holy and just and man is sinful.
4. *T* stands for Turn. One must turn from their sin to Jesus Christ.
5. *H* stands for Heaven. Heaven means eternal life for here and the hereafter.[40]

The remainder of the gospel presentation invites unbelievers to accept Christ and insures them of that decision through the use of a discipleship pamphlet, *A Step of FAITH*. This appeal comes in the form of a question, "Understanding what we have shared, would you like to receive this forgiveness by trusting Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior?" The following chart demonstrates the use and frequency of kerygmatic elements in FAITH's key question, its acrostic points of presentation, and its question of invitation.

Table 3. A Theological Appraisal of the Kerygmatic Content of the
          FAITH Presentation

COMPONENTS O F T H E PRESENTATION

	Key Question	F	A	I	T	H	Invite Question
Christology				x			
Hamartology			x	x			
Soteriology		x	x				
Repentance & Faith					x		x
Eternal Destiny	x					x	

X= This component contains kerygmatic elements of this theological doctrine.

The result ratio of kerygmatic emphases of *FAITH*'s Presentation Outline reveals the following: Christology 1/7; Hamartology 2/7; Soteriology 2/7; Repentance & Faith 2/7; and Eternal Desti-

ny 2/7. This shows a lack of emphasis upon Christology, with a balanced emphasis upon Hamartology, Soteriology, Repentance & Faith, and Eternal Destiny.

Conclusion: Final Evaluation And Recommendations

The staff of the NAMB intends to take a step away from the evangelism programs they have serviced the past and step forward into a program of their own.[41] As the NAMB begins the creation of these new programs, the twenty-first century forecasts a great impetus of real church growth for Southern Baptists through personal evangelism. For this reason, great importance lies in the task of defining Southern Baptists' understanding of a biblically and theologically sound kerygma.

Thom Rainer has suggested five evangelistic methods that result in real church growth.[42] He lists "a new look at evangelism training" as one of these steps. He affirms the place of such programs in growing churches with the understanding that evangelism training proves most effective among persons with whom trainees have developed a relationship.[43] One recommendation drawn from this study appears radically different from the traditional Southern Baptist practice of evangelism training. Past Southern Baptist evangelism programs have prescribed learners with scripts for presenting the gospel. Such an educational technique aids lay people who are inexperienced in sharing their faith. Having taken that into consideration, formatted scripts of the gospel have the potential to exclude some people from being presented the gospel. Donald McGavran offers the following example:

> In Japan, because of universal literacy and advanced education, evangelism through literature should be effective in church multiplication, providing tracts and gospel messages fit the Japanese population. Of course, they must be thoroughly biblical. They must set forth Jesus Christ, the sole Savior and Lord, by whom alone men and women come to the Father. Yet even if the literature is biblical and sets forth Jesus Christ faithfully, if it does

so in an American manner, it will be read—if at all—with dull eyes.[44]

One the other hand, this writer proposes that the fundamental elements of the gospel replace prescribed scripts for more evangelistically mature lay people. Such a plan could see the evangelistically mature laity sharing the essential components of the gospel, while adapting them to each gospel encounter. This proposal, however, calls for the creation of a new evangelism program that teaches the kerygmatic elements of the gospel, rather than a scripted format. Such a program could build every semester with the incorporation of significant Scriptures and relative illustrations. Most Southern Baptist personal evangelism programs and their scripts change about every ten years. The adoption of this proposed program would provide benefits the laity. A few worthy of mentioning include:

1. adaptation of the gospel to meet the specific interests of an individual
2. diversity of presenting the unchanging gospel in varying situations
3. a more conversational presentation of the gospel that forces the laity to listen to the other person, rather than recalling of the next point they will present
4. an alternative for laity who find it hard to memorize.

Rainer also states, "Rethinking evangelism methodology does not mean compromising theology." In fact, this rethinking should in no way confuse methodology for theology.[45] One other recommendation of this study calls for the adoption of an official definition by Southern Baptists of the kerygma. The *Baptist Faith and Message* serves as the doctrinal statement of faith for all Southern Baptists. While it defines the most essential theological convictions of Southern Baptists, no specific statement defining the elements contained within the gospel message are found the *Baptist Faith and Message*. Such a statement would safeguard the evangelistic enterprise against kerygmatic definitions that merit little theological or biblical precedence (i. e. liberation theology, pluralism, and the social gospel). This statement would

also assist Southern Baptists as they create and develop personal evangelism programs to implement true and biblical church growth.

As denominations seek to conduct research that will lead to maximum church growth, the incorporation of theological research must not be neglected. As evidenced by this research model, theological data reveal to a denomination as much information about itself as does sociological research about the unchurched. Such results can only aid denominations in their quest for church growth as innovative methodology balances with verifiable theological integrity.

Writer

Queen, Matthew B. Address: 2437 Zebulon Road, Zebulon NC 27597. Title: Ph. D. Student. Matt earned degrees at Mars Hill College in 1996 (B. A.), Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1999 (M. Div.), and is currently enrolled at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary as a Ph. D. student in Applied Theology. Mr. Queen is a Minister of Youth and Music, a Teaching Fellow, and a member of both the American Society for Church Growth and the Evangelical Theological Society.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Allen, Roland. *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours*. London: World Dominion Press, 1930.

Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention. "Home Mission Board Report." Nashville:

Executive Committee, SBC, 1982.

_____. 1995.

_____. "North American Mission Board Report." 1998.

_____. 1999.

Baird, William. "What is the Kerygma? A Study of 1 Corinthians 15: 3-8 and Galatians 1: 11-17." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 76 (September 1957): 181-191.

Braaten, Carl E., and Roy A. Harrisville, eds. and translators. *Kerygma and History: A Symposium on the Theology of Ru-*

dolf Bultmann. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962.

Bultmann, Rudolf, Ernst Lohmeyer, Julius Schniewind, Helmut Thielicke, and Austin Farrer. *Kerygma and Myth: A Theological Debate,* 2d ed. Edited by Hans Werner Bartsch and Reginald H. Fuller. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1961.

Bultmann, Rudolf. *Theology of the New Testament*, vol. 1. Translated by Kendrick Grobel. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951.

Dibelius, Martin. *From Tradition to Gospel*. Translated from the revised second edition of *Die Formgeschichte des Evangeliums* by Bertram Lee Woolf. Greenwood: Attic Press, 1971.

Dodd, C. H. *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments*. Hodder & Stoughton, 1936. Reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1980.

Drummond, Lewis A. *The Word of the Cross: A Contemporary Theology of Evangelism*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992.

Erickson, Millard. Christian Theology. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1985.

Eternal Life Tract. NIV. Alpharetta: North American Mission Board, 1997.

_____. [tract on-line.] Available from http://www.thegoodnews.org/EternalLifeBooks/ niv/niv_1.html. Accessed 30 September 1999; Internet.

Evans, C. F. "The Kerygma." *The Journal of Theological Studies* 7 (April 1956): 25-41.

FAITH: Evangelism through the Sunday School Outline. Nashville: LifeWay Christian Resources, 1998.

Filson, Floyd V. *Jesus Christ the Risen Lord*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1956.

Fish, Roy J. "Evangelism in Southern Baptist History." *Baptist History and Heritage* 22 (January 1987): 2-4.

Green, Michael. *Evangelism in the Early Church*. Hodder & Stoughton, 1970. Reprint, Guildford: Eagle, 1995.

Here's Hope: Adult Roman Road Booklet. NIV. Atlanta: Home Mission Board, Personal Evangelism Department, 1994.

Hunter, Archibald M. *The Message of the New Testament*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1944.

Johnson, Ronald W. "A History of the Evangelism Section of the Home Mission Board." In "An Evaluation of the Home Mission Board Programs of Evangelism in Local Churches." D. Min. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1988.

McGavran, Donald A. *Understanding Church Growth*, 3d rev. ed. Edited by C. Peter Wagner. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990.

McLarry, Newman R. *Handbook on Evangelism: A Program of Evangelism for Southern Baptists*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1965.

The North American Mission Board. Accessed 18 September 1999. Available from http://www.namb.net; Internet.

Poe, Harry L. *The Gospel and Its Meaning: A Theology for Evangelism and Church Growth*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996.

Rainer, Thom S. *The Book of Church Growth: History, Theology, and Principles*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1993.

Reccord, Bob, President of the North American Mission Board. Interview by author, 27 September 1999, Phone. Tape recording.

Reid, Alvin L. "The Effect of the Jesus Movement on Evangelism in the Southern Baptist Convention." *Baptist History and Heritage* 30 (January 1995): 41-52.

Thompson, Claude H. *Theology of the Kerygma: A Study in Primitive Preaching*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1962.

Towns, Elmer. ed., "Church Growth: Social Science." In *Evangelism and Church Growth: A Practical Encyclopedia*. Ventura: Regal Books, 1995.

Wagner, C. Peter. "Church Growth: More than a Man, a Magazine, a School, a Book." *Christianity Today* 18 (December 1970), 11-14.

Welch, Bobby H. *Evangelism Through the Sunday School: A Journey of FAITH*. Nashville: LifeWay Press, 1997.

Yarbrough, John, Vice-President, Evangelization, The North American Mission Board. Interview by author, 4 October

1999, Phone.

NOTES

1. C. Peter Wagner, "Church Growth: More than a Man, a Maga-zine, a School, a Book," *Christianity Today* 18 (December 1970), 14.

2. Elmer Towns, ed., "Church Growth: Social Science," in *Evange-lism and Church Growth: A Practical Encyclopedia* (Ventura: Regal Books, 1995), 81.

3. The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) is the largest non-Catholic denomination in America, with over 16 million members. While this article examines the SBC, the findings can be used in a comparable manner for other Evangelical groups in the United States.

4. The North American Mission Board is the result of a 1997 re-structure in the Southern Baptist Convention that combined its agencies of the Home Mission Board, Brotherhood Commission, and the Radio and Television Commission. It will be referred to as the NAMB in the remainder of this paper. Also, the Southern Baptist Convention will be referred to as the SBC and the Home Mission Board as the HMB.

5. The North American Mission Board. Accessed 18 September 1999. Available from http://www.namb.net; Internet.

6. Bob Reccord, President of the North American Mission Board, in-terview by author, 27

September 1999, phone tape recording.

7. LifeWay refers to LifeWay Christian Resources, the result of a 1997 restructuring of the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

8. Although other SBC evangelism programs could have been cho-sen for this study, reasons for the selection of these particular programs include: CWT existing as the most widely used and popular of all SBC evangelism programs to date; HH serving as a culmination of revival and personal evangelism, the two ways that SBC evangelism has been methodologically implemented historically; and FAITH becoming the first educational evangelism program partnership of the NAMB with another SBC entity (LifeWay).

9. Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1985), 1059.

10. Erickson, 1062.

11. Michael Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church* (Hodder & Stoughton, 1970; reprint, Guildford: Eagle, 1995), 56 (page citations are

to the reprint edition).

12. Due to *euaggelion*'s numerous references in Scripture, it appears that a biblical theology of the gospel would be referred to as the *euaggelic* message, rather than the *kerygmatic* message. The writer intends in the near future to further explore this topic, in hopes of adequately proposing the adoption of *euaggelion* over *kerygma*, when referring to the gospel message.

13. Green, 56.

14. For exhaustive surveys of how the kerygma has been understood by past theologians, see Green, 71-79; Claude H. Thompson, *Theology of the Kerygma: A Study in Primitive Preaching* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1962); and Harry L. Poe, *The Gospel and Its Meaning: A Theology for Evangelism and Church Growth* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996), 20-55.

15. Martin Dibelius, *From Tradition to Gospel*, translated from the revised 2 ed. of *Die Formgeschichte des Evangeliums* by Bertram Lee Woolf (Greenwood: Attic Press, 1971), 19.

16. C. H. Dodd, *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments* (Hodder & Stoughton, 1936; reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1980), 21-23. (page citations are to the reprint edition).

17. Roland Allen, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours* (London: World Dominion Press, 1930), 84-85.

18. Ibid., 113.

19. Archibald M. Hunter, *The Message of the New Testament* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1944), 29-30.

20. Floyd V. Filson, *Jesus Christ the Risen Lord* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1956), 41-52.

21. Green, 79.

22. Rudolf Bultmann, Ernst Lohmeyer, Julius Schniewind, Helmut Thielicke, and Austin Farrer, *Kerygma and Myth: A Theological Debate,* 2d ed. edited by Hans Werner Bartsch and

Reginald H. Fuller (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1961), 3.

23. For an extensive synopsis of Bultmann's views concerning de-mythologizing, see Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, vol. 1. translated by Kendrick Grobel. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951) and Carl E. Braaten and Roy A. Harrisville, eds. and translators. *Kerygma and History: A Symposium on the Theology of Rudolf Bultmann* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962).

24. See C. F. Evans, "The Kerygma." *The Journal of Theological Studies* 7 (April 1956): 25-41.

25. William Baird, "What is the Kerygma? A Study of 1 Corinthians

15: 3-8 and Galatians 1: 11-17." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 76 (September 1957): 183.

26. Erickson, 1063.

27. Ronald W. Johnson, "A History of the Evangelism Section of the Home Mission Board" in "An Evaluation of the Home Mission Board Programs of Evangelism in Local

Churches" (D. Min. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1988), 15.

28. *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention*, "Home Mission Board Report." (Nashville: Executive Committee, SBC, 1982), 122.

29. Roy J. Fish, "Evangelism in Southern Baptist History," *Baptist History and Heritage* 22 (January 1987): 3.

30. Ibid.

31. *Eternal Life* Tract, NIV (Alpharetta: North American Mission Board, 1997), 4, 6, 8, 10.

32. *Annual* (1998), 218.

33. See Johnson, 3-13.

34. *Annual* (1995), 237.

35. Ibid., 238.

36. *Here's Hope: Adult Roman Road Booklet*, NIV (Atlanta: Home Mission Board, Personal Evangelism Department, 1994) 3, 4, 5, 6.

37. Bobby H Welch, *Evangelism through the Sunday School: A Journey of FAITH*. (Nashville: LifeWay Press, 1997), 26.

38. *Annual*, (1999), 240.

39. Ibid.

40. *FAITH: Evangelism Through the Sunday School* Outline, (Nashville: LifeWay Christian Resources, 1998).

41. John Yarbrough, Vice-President, Evangelization, The North American Mission Board, interview by author, 4 October 1999, Phone.

42. Thom S. Rainer, *The Book of Church Growth: History, Theology, and Principles*. (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1993), 221-222.

43. Ibid., 22.

44. Donald A. McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*, 3d rev. ed. edited by C. Peter

Wagner (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990), 93.

45. Rainer, 223.