

## A Call to Separation and Unity: D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones and “Evangelical Unity”

by Mark Sidwell\*

**F**undamentalism has been predominantly an American phenomenon. In one sense, this statement is simply a historical fact. In another sense, however, there is a suggestion of limitation, that is, that fundamentalism is simply the culmination of certain cultural and ideological forces in a certain time and place. One cannot deny that fundamentalism has characteristics deriving from its historical circumstances in North America. But if it is indeed a movement adhering to truths transcendent of all ages, as it claims, there should logically be some parallel movements reflecting at least a similar approach to the Bible and to Christian practice. Are there indeed situations in which qualities characteristic of fundamentalism are displayed in different cultural settings? To answer this question, one must first decide what these characteristic qualities are.

Unquestionably, a central concern of fundamentalism has been its steadfast opposition to theological liberalism. After vain attempts to purge the major denominations of liberalism in the fundamentalist-modernist controversy, American fundamentalists began a pattern of withdrawal and independence from liberalism. This question became particularly pointed in the 1950s when the new evangelicalism expressly challenged the tendency toward separatism. The result of that controversy was an even greater stress on separation from all ties with liberalism.<sup>1</sup> Since opposition to liberalism and some form of separation from liberalism are major concerns of fundamentalism, it would be instructive to study other people and movements who are not connected to the American fundamentalist movement but who came to the same or similar conclusions about the practice of separation; doing so would lend

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<sup>1</sup>I briefly discuss the various forms that separation took within the history of American fundamentalism in *The Dividing Line: Understanding and Applying Biblical Separation* (Greenville, S.C.: Bob Jones University Press, 1998), pp. 73–84.

weight to the contention that separation is not just a culturally derived tenet of fundamentalism. One such parallel is found in the career of British minister D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones. His criticism both of liberalism and of cooperation with liberalism climaxed with a controversial separatist call when he gave his address "Evangelical Unity" to the Evangelical Alliance's National Assembly of Evangelicals on October 18, 1966. That address, its background, and its results provide a study of the question of separation in a British context.

### MILITANT ORTHODOXY IN BRITAIN

Despite the characterization of fundamentalism as primarily an American movement, historians do not necessarily reject use of the term *fundamentalist* in a British context. George Marsden cogently argues that fundamentalism is a distinctly American phenomenon. Yet he does not deny the existence of fundamentalism outside of the United States but simply contends that "almost nowhere else did this type of Protestant response to modernity have such a conspicuous and pervasive role in the national culture"; one major exception he notes to this pattern is Northern Ireland.<sup>2</sup> He does not object to using the term *fundamentalist* in the British context but says that British evangelicalism differs from American fundamentalism "in two major respects: (1) a lack of widespread militancy, but instead Keswick-type emphases on noncontroversialist piety; (2) a lack of general impact on the churches and the culture."<sup>3</sup>

Ian Rennie, on the other hand, sees more of a full-blown fundamentalism in Britain and views it as a native movement arising from British church history, not simply a borrowing from America grafted onto British church life. He does differentiate the British and American movements, however, characterizing American fundamentalists as adopting an offensive strategy whereas the British tended toward a defensive strategy.<sup>4</sup> David Bebbington is somewhere between these views. He denies that British evangelicalism can be identified wholly with fundamentalism (probably a valid point), but he does see the emergence of a British brand of fundamentalism within British evangelicalism, noting, "It

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<sup>2</sup>George Marsden, "Fundamentalism as an American Phenomenon," in *Reckoning with the Past*, ed. D. G. Hart (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), p. 304; this article originally appeared in *Church History* 46 (June 1977): 215-32.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 312.

<sup>4</sup>Ian Rennie, "Fundamentalism and the Varieties of North Atlantic Evangelicalism," in *Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies of Popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles, and Beyond 1700-1900*, ed. Mark A. Noll, David W. Bebbington, and George A. Rawlyk (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 333-50.

is...quite mistaken to hold (as it sometimes has been held) that Britain escaped a Fundamentalist controversy.”<sup>5</sup>

Nonetheless, it is inappropriate to apply the term *fundamentalist* uniformly to all men and movements in Great Britain who opposed liberalism. The phrase “militant orthodoxy” may better serve as a descriptive term. There was perhaps not a coherent fundamentalist movement in Britain; that is a point for further debate. But there were individuals, incidents, and smaller movements that reflected a militantly orthodox approach to resisting liberalism and even advocating forms of separation.

Undoubtedly one of the prime—and earliest—examples of militant orthodoxy among British Nonconformists, or Free Churches (non-Anglicans), was the stand of Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834–92) in the downgrade controversy.<sup>6</sup> Even before fundamentalism arose in North America, Spurgeon conducted a battle against encroaching liberalism within Britain’s Baptist Union. He warned against this “downgrade” of orthodox teaching, and in 1887 withdrew his own membership from the union. He declared, “To pursue union at the expense of truth is treason to the Lord Jesus,” and “*Fellowship with known and vital error is participation in sin.*”<sup>7</sup> This bitter fight exhausted Spur-

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<sup>5</sup>David Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992), p. 182; his discussions of the fundamentalist subset of British evangelicalism are found on pp. 88–91, 181–228, and 275–76. See also his “Evangelicalism in Its Settings: The British and American Movements since 1940,” in *Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies of Popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles, and Beyond 1700–1900*, pp. 365–88; and “Evangelicalism in Modern Britain and America: A Comparison,” in *Amazing Grace: Evangelicalism in Australia, Britain, Canada, and the United States*, ed. George A. Rawlyk and Mark A. Noll (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), pp. 183–212. Bebbington contends, however, that fundamentalism is basically a nineteenth-century innovation. He does so by selecting doctrines for which he believes he can demonstrate a recent origin (e.g., inerrancy and premillennialism) and downplaying concerns about doctrines of unquestioned antiquity, such as the deity of Christ.

<sup>6</sup>There are several useful works on the downgrade controversy. For primary sources, see Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *The “Down Grade” Controversy* (Pasadena, TX: Pilgrim Publications, n.d.), a compilation of the major articles from Spurgeon’s *Sword and Trowel* dealing with the controversy; Susannah Spurgeon and Joseph Harrald, ed., *C. H. Spurgeon’s Autobiography* (1899; reprint, Pasadena, TX: Pilgrim Publications, 1992), 4:253–64 (vols. 3 and 4 are bound together as vol. 2 in this edition); Iain H. Murray, ed., *Letters of Charles Haddon Spurgeon* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1992), pp. 179–97. For secondary works, see Iain H. Murray, *The Forgotten Spurgeon*, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1973); R. J. Sheehan, *C. H. Spurgeon and the Modern Church* (London: Grace Publications, 1985); and Lewis Drummond, *Spurgeon: Prince of Preachers* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1992), pp. 661–716.

<sup>7</sup>C. H. Spurgeon, “A Fragment upon the Down-Grade Controversy,” *Sword and Trowel*, November 1887, pp. 558, 559. In the second quotation, the italics are in the original.

geon and may have contributed to his early death. He pursued almost a lone course in his withdrawal, but later militants were to cite his example.<sup>8</sup>

A successor of sorts to Spurgeon was English evangelical E. J. Poole-Connor (1872–1962).<sup>9</sup> He attempted to foster a British-style fundamentalism, helping found the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches (FIEC) in 1922 and the British Evangelical Council (BEC) in 1952, two organizations that would play a role in Lloyd-Jones's struggles in the 1960s. The FIEC, Poole-Connor said, was an attempt to draw together independent churches for fellowship with one another and to provide an organization with which denominational churches could unite if they left their denominations in protest over liberalism. "Many were of the opinion that if some such union as was proposed was formed, with a strong 'Fundamentalist' basis," he wrote, "it would not only lessen the sense of isolation which many experience, but would also strengthen their hands in combating the danger of Modernism."<sup>10</sup> David Bebbington describes the FIEC as "the chief separatist organization" in Britain but adds that it "was only tiny, and the great majority of evangelicals were in the denominations with long pedigrees."<sup>11</sup> The BEC was likewise separatist in orientation as an alliance of churches "united in their opposition to that form of ecumencity represented by the World Council of Churches."<sup>12</sup>

The province of Northern Ireland (Ulster) has also been the site of militant orthodoxy, although not always in connection with events in England. A great inspiration to militancy there was evangelist W. P.

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<sup>8</sup>See, e.g., Sheehan, *Spurgeon*, pp. 80–122.

<sup>9</sup>On Poole-Connor, see D. G. Fountain, *E. J. Poole-Connor: Contender for the Faith* (Worthing, Eng.: Henry E. Walter, 1966); and Sheehan, *Spurgeon*, pp. 86–90. Also note the autobiographical section in E. J. Poole-Connor, *Evangelical Unity*, 2nd ed. (London: The Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches, 1942), pp. 174–88. The views of Poole-Connor are well illustrated in his chief work, *Evangelicalism in England* (London: The Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches, 1951).

<sup>10</sup>Quoted in Fountain, *E. J. Poole-Connor*, p. 125.

<sup>11</sup>Bebbington, "Evangelicalism in Its Settings," p. 371.

<sup>12</sup>Quoted from the introductory form to the British Evangelical Council, in Sheehan, *Spurgeon*, p. 90. Iain Murray says the BEC officially formed in 1953. A year before that, he says, it had initially entered Carl McIntire's International Council of Christian Churches, "but their perception of the direction which that movement was taking had led to their early withdrawal and to a separate organization." (Iain H. Murray, *David Martyn Lloyd-Jones: The Fight of Faith 1939–1981* [Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1990], p. 531fn.)

Nicholson (1876–1959).<sup>13</sup> He is best remembered for the remarkable provincial awakening that took place under his preaching in the 1920s during the civil disturbances that accompanied the division of Ireland into the Irish Free State and the British province of Northern Ireland. Not only did Nicholson preach with great effect, but he also excoriated the liberalism that was beginning to infiltrate Ulster's Free Churches. Significantly, Nicholson had been exposed to American fundamentalism prior to this revival. Before returning to his homeland for these great campaigns, Nicholson had worked in the campaigns of J. Wilbur Chapman and served as a staff evangelist for R. A. Torrey's Bible Institute of Los Angeles. Rennie notes, "Few people combined British conservative evangelicalism and American fundamentalism more completely than did Nicholson. In many ways he was an Irish Billy Sunday, a sailor instead of a ballplayer, a man of the people with remarkable histrionic gifts."<sup>14</sup>

Nicholson's campaigns may have marked the beginning of a phase of militancy in Ulster Protestantism, but they were not the end. A successor of sorts was Ian Paisley (b. 1926), one of the rare British evangelicals who actively embraced the label *fundamentalist*. Paisley gained national, and even international, renown beginning in the 1960s for his opposition to Catholicism and his fierce resistance to the idea of uniting Northern Ireland with the Republic of Ireland. However, his Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster was born and grew originally in opposition to Protestant liberalism. One can best characterize Paisley's ideology as opposition to apostasy from Protestant orthodoxy. Such a position naturally leads to rejection of Catholicism, but the initial concern of Paisley and his denomination was the rejection of Protestant liberalism. Paisley later established close ties with North American fundamentalists and lent his support to furthering international fundamentalism through organizations such as the World Congress of Fundamentalists.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>On Nicholson, see Stanley Barnes, *All for Jesus: The Life of W. P. Nicholson* (Belfast: Ambassador, 1996); Mark Sidwell, "W. P. Nicholson and the Rise of Ulster Fundamentalism," *Biblical Viewpoint* 27 (April 1994): 93–104; and S. W. Murray, *W. P. Nicholson: Flame for God in Ulster* (Belfast: The Presbyterian Fellowship, 1973).

<sup>14</sup>Rennie, "Fundamentalism and Varieties of North Atlantic Evangelicalism," p. 342.

<sup>15</sup>The best scholarly work on Paisley and his movement is Steve Bruce, *God Save Ulster! The Religion and Politics of Paisleyism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986); Bruce discusses the idea of Paisley as Nicholson's successor on p. 35. Particularly helpful on the founding of the Free Presbyterian Church is Ian Paisley, "The Inside Story: The History of the Free Presbyterian Church," *The Revivalist*, April 1996, pp. 7–12; May 1996, pp. 11–14; June 1996, pp. 12–16; July–August 1996, pp. 13–18. See also the biography of John Wylie, a close associate of Paisley in the early years of the Free Church, in Alan

Rennie and Bebbington cite many other men and movements that could be added to these as examples of militant orthodoxy in Britain. As stated before, they do not comprise some sort of coherent fundamentalist movement, but they do illustrate that Lloyd-Jones's separatist call of 1966 was by no means entirely alien to the British church situation.

#### D. MARTYN LLOYD-JONES, PURITAN EVANGELICAL

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones was born in Wales in 1899.<sup>16</sup> He studied medicine in England and won a position at the prestigious St. Bartholomew's Hospital in London, popularly known as "Bart's." When Lloyd-Jones was often later referred to as "the Doctor," it was quite literally true. He was, however, converted while working at Bart's and then caused a minor stir by resigning his position in order to enter the ministry. From 1926 to 1938 he ministered in a Calvinistic Methodist church in Aberavon in Wales. After Lloyd-Jones enjoyed a remarkable ministry there, G. Campbell Morgan persuaded him to come as Morgan's assistant at the Westminster Chapel in London in 1938, and he later succeeded Morgan, serving as pastor to the congregation from 1943 to 1968.

The Doctor had no formal seminary training, but his reading of theology was deep and constant. Above all, he treasured Puritan theology. Bebbington has aptly labeled Lloyd-Jones's approach to theology and Christian life as "Neo-Puritanism,"<sup>17</sup> a study and interpretation of Puritans not as authorities in themselves but as reflections of an approach to Christianity that Lloyd-Jones found thoroughly biblical. He is often credited with reviving interest in Puritanism through his preaching, the Puritan conferences he sponsored,<sup>18</sup> and his support for the

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Cairns, *Prophet with Honor* (Belfast: Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church, n.d.).

<sup>16</sup>The standard biography of Lloyd-Jones is found in two volumes by Iain Murray: *David Martyn Lloyd-Jones: The First Forty Years 1899–1939* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1982); and *David Martyn Lloyd-Jones: The Fight of Faith 1939–1981*, already cited. A valuable primary source is Iain H. Murray, ed., *D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones: Letters 1919–1981* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1994). A helpful sketch by his grandson is found in Christopher Catherwood, *Five Evangelical Leaders* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1984), pp. 51–109. Another useful work, edited by Catherwood, is *Martyn Lloyd-Jones: Chosen by God* (Westchester, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1986); this anthology provides a variety of reminiscences of Lloyd-Jones by family, friends, and associates.

<sup>17</sup>Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, pp. 261–62.

<sup>18</sup>See D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *The Puritans: Their Origins and Successors* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1987) for his addresses and for the history of his Puritan Conferences in the introduction (pp. vii–xiii). See particularly "Puritanism and Its Origins" (pp. 237–59) for Lloyd-Jones's view of the Puritans and their influence on him.

printing of Puritan works and modern works with a Puritan viewpoint, especially those published through the Banner of Truth Trust.<sup>19</sup>

Among those works being published were his own. Early in his ministry, Lloyd-Jones dedicated himself to expository preaching, and the power of his message transferred effectively to the printed page. Readers eager for a more theological approach to Christianity eagerly snapped up his *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount*, his large series on Romans and Ephesians, and numerous other works based on his sermons. Nor was his influence limited to his readers or his congregation. Through his involvement with the Inter-Varsity Fellowship, he conveyed his passionate orthodoxy to Christian students in Britain's colleges and universities. Beyond that, through the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students, he touched students around the world, on the continent of Europe but also in Third World nations. For ministers, Lloyd-Jones sponsored the Westminster Ministers' Fraternal, or Fellowship. Meeting one Monday each month, the Fraternal was a time for ministers to talk over their problems, ask questions, and receive advice through discussions usually led by the Doctor. By the 1960s, when the separatist controversy was to force its reorganization, the Fellowship had grown to an attendance of some four hundred ministers. He had unquestionably become one of the most influential evangelical leaders in Britain.

Lloyd-Jones never took the title *fundamentalist*, and it would be inaccurate to identify him with that movement. Yet such was his opposition to liberalism and his call to separation in 1966 that one of his defenders feels constrained to say, "American readers must not imagine that Lloyd-Jones was a militant fundamentalist of the sort they are familiar with."<sup>20</sup> Indeed, Lloyd-Jones had reservations about the pattern of North American fundamentalism. While preaching in Toronto, Canada, in 1932, Lloyd-Jones encountered T. T. Shields (1873–1955), pastor of the Jarvis Street Baptist Church in that city and probably the leading Canadian fundamentalist of that time. Shields had heard Lloyd-Jones on the radio and was eager to meet him. The account of their meeting, as recounted by Lloyd-Jones, is rather extraordinary. The Welsh pastor related to the Canadian that he was troubled by the ceaselessly controversial aspect of Shields's ministry. Lloyd-Jones said, "You can make mincemeat of the liberals and still be in trouble in your own soul." Shields argued, "Do you know, every time I indulge in what you call one of these 'dog-fights' the sales of the *Gospel Witness* go right up.

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<sup>19</sup>See Iain Murray, "The Story of the Banner of Truth Trust," *Banner of Truth*, November 1993 (special edition), pp. 15–23.

<sup>20</sup>Raymond Lanning, "Dr. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones: The Doctor," in *More Than Conquerors*, ed. John Woodbridge (Chicago: Moody, 1992), p. 209.

What about that?" Lloyd-Jones replied, "I have always observed that if there is a dog-fight a crowd gathers, I'm not surprised. People like that sort of thing." According to Lloyd-Jones, he closed the conversation by saying, "Dr. Shields, you used to be known as the Canadian Spurgeon, and you were. You are an outstanding man, in intellect, in preaching gift, in every other respect, but...in the early twenties you suddenly changed and became negatory and denunciatory. I feel it has ruined your ministry. Why don't you come back! Drop all this, preach the gospel to people positively and win them!" Shields did not change his approach, but he maintained a respect for the other man. He later urged Lloyd-Jones to return to Canada in 1933 and supply Shield's pulpit in his absence.<sup>21</sup>

But if this anecdote makes Lloyd-Jones sound less than militant in style, there is other evidence that indicates a firmness of his convictions. As early as 1947, for example, Lloyd-Jones proposed that the Westminster Chapel leave the Congregational Union because of its liberalism,<sup>22</sup> although the church did not actually follow that path until twenty years later. There may have been some evolution in Lloyd-Jones's views. Leith Samuel, a president of the FIEC, says that early in his career Lloyd-Jones would share a platform with nonevangelicals, such as William Temple, the archbishop of Canterbury. But, reports Samuel, when a student executive in the Inter-Varsity Fellowship (of which Lloyd-Jones was the national president at the time) said he found this sort of association difficult to defend to others, Lloyd-Jones ceased to practice it. Samuel adds that the Doctor "became one of Britain's leading critics of the idea that you can get anywhere with a doctrinally-mixed platform."<sup>23</sup>

Lloyd-Jones told a conference of the Inter-Varsity Fellowship in 1952, "I am by nature a pacific person, who does not like controversy and all that often has to go with a whole-hearted contention for a matter of theological principle."<sup>24</sup> But nevertheless he went on to say, "I...want

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<sup>21</sup>This account is related in Murray, *The First Forty Years*, pp. 271–73, 283. Lloyd-Jones also recounts this incident without mentioning Shields's name in *Preaching and Preachers* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971), pp. 259–61, although he warns immediately afterward of the danger of being too irenic in preaching. He also mentions the incident in a letter to Ron Riseborough, 19 March 1980, Murray, ed., *Letters*, pp. 228–29. This letter is particularly interesting in illustrating his distaste for the more strident militancy of North American fundamentalism as represented by Shields and Presbyterian Carl McIntire.

<sup>22</sup>Murray, ed., *Letters*, p. 141.

<sup>23</sup>Leith Samuel, "A Man Under the Word," *Chosen by God*, pp. 192–93.

<sup>24</sup>D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, "Maintaining the Evangelical Faith Today," in *Knowing the Times: Addresses Delivered on Various Occasions 1942–1977* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1989), p. 38.

to show why I believe, as I do, that we must more vigorously than ever stand to our job and refuse to surrender any single part of what is vital to the full evangelical faith as recorded in the Holy Scriptures.”<sup>25</sup>

### OPPOSITION TO BILLY GRAHAM

Lloyd-Jones’s concept of not surrendering the evangelical faith is evident in his attitude toward American evangelist Billy Graham and even more in his views on the ecumenical movement. Lloyd-Jones preceded many American fundamentalists in his criticism of the methodology of Graham, although his rationale was not identical to that of the American critics. Some of the Doctor’s opposition arose from his theological viewpoint. Robert Horn maintains that Lloyd-Jones, who took the matter of revival very seriously, rejected the “triumphalism” expressed from the platform of Graham’s campaigns that God was going to send a revival.<sup>26</sup> His Calvinism also caused him to look askance at the alleged Arminianism of Graham’s system of public invitations.

Lloyd-Jones expressed all of his reservations in an interview with Carl Henry published in 1980. Henry asked why he was distant to modern evangelism and in particular why his church did not support the Billy Graham crusades. Lloyd-Jones replied that he “believed nothing but a revival—a visitation of the Holy Spirit, in distinction from an evangelistic campaign” was the answer to the modern situation, adding, “It seems to me that the campaign approach trusts ultimately in techniques rather than in the power of the Spirit.”<sup>27</sup> He told Henry that Graham had invited him to chair the 1963 Congress on Evangelism. “I said I’d make a bargain: if he would stop the general sponsorship of his campaigns—stop having liberals and Roman Catholics on the platform—and drop the invitation system, I would wholeheartedly support him and chair the congress...but he didn’t accept these conditions.”<sup>28</sup>

Lloyd-Jones clearly stated to Henry his views about the presence of liberals on Graham’s platform, such as the participation of John Bonnell of New York’s Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in the British campaigns:

Graham certainly preaches the gospel. I would never criticize him on that

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 39.

<sup>26</sup>Robert Horn, “His Place in Evangelism,” *Chosen by God*, p. 21.

<sup>27</sup>“Martyn Lloyd-Jones: From Buckingham to Westminster,” interview by Carl F. H. Henry, *Christianity Today*, 8 February 1980, p. 29.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

score. What I have criticized, for example, is that in the Glasgow campaign he had John Sutherland Bonnell address the ministers' meetings. I challenged that. Graham replied, "You know, I have more fellowship with John Sutherland Bonnell than with many evangelical ministers." I replied, "Now it may be that Bonnell is a nicer chap than Lloyd-Jones—I'll not argue that. But real fellowship is something else: I can genuinely fellowship only with someone who holds the same basic truths that I do."<sup>29</sup>

## THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

Billy Graham, however, was not as large a problem for Lloyd-Jones as was the ecumenical movement. Indeed, that movement was a key problem for British evangelicals in general. It may be that as control of the major denominations and their agencies was the issue that precipitated the fundamentalist-modernist controversy in America, dividing the movement between those who would separate from the denominations and those who stay in, so the question of how evangelicals should relate to the ecumenical movement created a divide in British evangelicalism.

For many British Christians, including Lloyd-Jones, the term *evangelicalism* had a definite historic meaning. The word *evangelical* comes from the Greek word for "gospel" and in the Reformation had been used as a synonym for *Protestant*.<sup>30</sup> For Lloyd-Jones and conservatives like him, the word did not denote simply a party or a particular theological emphasis; rather it was the full faith of the Reformation as expressed in England by the reformers, the Puritans, and evangelical leaders such as Whitefield and the Wesleys. Bishop J. C. Ryle in the nineteenth century reflected this view when he described his faith as "unadulterated, old-fashioned Evangelical theology," which he said was the theology of "the Apostolic Christians, the Reformers, the best English Churchmen for the last three hundred years, and the best Evangelical Christians of the present day."<sup>31</sup> Behind this concept lay the idea that the Church of England and the Free Churches, through their creeds and history, were

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid., pp. 29, 32.

<sup>30</sup>On the history and use of the word *evangelical*, see Alister McGrath, *Evangelicalism and the Future of Christianity* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995), pp. 19–23; and Sidwell, *The Dividing Line*, pp. 113–14.

<sup>31</sup>John Charles Ryle, *Old Paths* (1877; reprint, Cambridge: J. Clarke, 1972), p. vii. See also Ryle's introduction to his *Light from Old Times* (London: Chas. J. Thynne, 1902), pp. xvii–xxix. E. J. Poole-Connor expresses this viewpoint in his *Evangelicalism in England*. See as well J. I. Packer, "Fundamentalism" and *the Word of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1958), pp. 38–40. Robert Sheehan summarizes the position that, for British evangelicals historically, "their church was officially and constitutionally evangelical and that modernism and Catholicism were hybrid, enemy incursions into the church which ought to be opposed" (*C. H. Spurgeon and the Modern Church*, p. 110).

evangelical churches. There might be liberals or Anglo-Catholics in their midst, but these were interlopers who did not represent the true nature of the body. There was never any idea that the evangelical faith (in this sense) would be less than the ideal for British Christians and for their denominations.

The ecumenical movement changed this situation. Rather than simply tolerating the nonevangelicals in their churches, British evangelicals now found themselves asked to proceed into union with other bodies on less than an evangelical basis, sometimes much less. Would these evangelicals accommodate themselves to a broader base of church fellowship? If not, what were their options? protest only? secession? Lloyd-Jones was to look at the situation and choose the controversial option of secession—but a secession that would proceed to true Christian unity. Paradoxically, as he weighed separation, this matter of Christian unity was to become even more central to his thought in the 1950s and 1960s.

At the heart of Lloyd-Jones's disagreement with the ecumenical movement was his refusal to see liberalism and Catholicism as genuinely Christian. "He differed with ecumenism on its fundamental principle," writes Iain Murray, "namely, that all dialogue should proceed on the understanding that it was between fellow *Christians*."<sup>32</sup> He had no hopes for the ecumenical movement. G. N. M. Collins, a professor at the college of the Free Church of Scotland, recounts an incident from an informal meeting of ministers with Lloyd-Jones when he was visiting Scotland. One minister cited the ecumenical movement as a sign of hope for the future. The Doctor demurred—

"But surely," persisted his questioner, "when so many churches are coming together in a World Council of Churches, revival must be on the way."

"You seem to be arguing," came the reply, "that if you succeed in bringing together a sufficient number of dead bodies they will come alive!"<sup>33</sup>

As Iain Murray points out, Lloyd-Jones's opposition to the ecumenical movement was not grounded in ignorance. According to Murray's account, Billy Graham's acceptance of liberals in his campaigns caused liberals to think they could join forces with British evangelicals.<sup>34</sup> This line of thought resulted in a series of ecumenical discussions sponsored by the British Council of Churches in an effort to

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<sup>32</sup>Murray, *Fight of Faith*, p. 427.

<sup>33</sup>G. N. M. Collins, "The Friend," *Chosen by God*, pp. 262–63.

<sup>34</sup>Murray, *Fight of Faith*, p. 313.

promote cooperative evangelism. Leith Samuel of the FIEC, who also participated in these talks of the “Group with Differing Biblical Pre-suppositions,” told Lloyd-Jones they should start with Scripture as the first topic. The Doctor replied, “No, we’ll leave that till last. They think it is the only thing that divides us. We must show them it isn’t. We part from them on nearly every fundamental doctrine.”<sup>35</sup> Murray quotes Lloyd-Jones as saying to the chairman of the first of these discussions—after being told that the view of the Scriptures was the only difference between them—“I entirely disagree with you. I don’t think we agree about *any* of the cardinal doctrines.”<sup>36</sup>

The talks failed to achieve any liberal-evangelical cooperation, but they led Lloyd-Jones to deliver “The Basis for Christian Unity,” his major statement of opposition to the ecumenical movement combined with the outlines of his desire for evangelical unity. Delivered to his Westminster Fellowship in 1962 and first published that same year, the address reflected the lessons he had learned from the ecumenical discussions.

Taking as his texts the very proof texts used by the ecumenical movement, John 17 and Ephesians 4, he argued,

Unity is not something which exists, or of which you can speak, in and of itself. It is always the consequence of our belief and acceptance of this great and glorious doctrine of God who has provided in His Son the way of salvation, and who mediates it to us through the operation of the Holy Spirit. That is the basis and the nature of Christian unity. It must never be thought of except in terms of this great background, this essential doctrine.<sup>37</sup>

Unity is not a matter of “arriving” at something that did not exist before but rather “perfecting” something that already exists.<sup>38</sup> “We must never start with it [unity],” he said, “but always remember the order stated so clearly in Acts 2:42, where fellowship follows doctrine.”<sup>39</sup> The Doctor contended for a strong doctrinal basis for unity, a basis including the fall, the sinfulness and helplessness of man, and the person and work of Christ, especially His substitutionary atonement. This stand reflected his

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<sup>35</sup>Samuel, “A Man Under the Word,” *Chosen by God*, p. 199.

<sup>36</sup>Murray, *Fight of Faith*, p. 314; the full account of these discussions is found on pp. 313–20.

<sup>37</sup>D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, “The Basis of Christian Unity,” in *Knowing the Times*, p. 140.

<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 142.

<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 159.

minimum for fellowship: “If men do not accept that, they are not brethren and we can have no dialogue with them. We are to preach to such and to evangelize them.”<sup>40</sup>

### BUILDING TO A CLIMAX

As “The Basis for Christian Unity” indicates, the ecumenical movement, the Graham campaigns, the discussions with liberals—all of these matters led Lloyd-Jones to think through carefully the balancing ideas of militancy for his faith and unity among believers. To understand Lloyd-Jones’s position, one must keep both points in mind. At the same time that he was arguing against the unity taught by the ecumenical movement, he was advocating unity among genuine Christians. In 1962 at a memorial service for E. J. Poole-Connor, the Doctor said,

His burning desire was for Evangelical Unity. Is it to come, I wonder? Are we to see the day when Evangelicals instead of being scattered, diluted and more or less nullified in their witness in the various denominations will all become one, and stand together for the faith once delivered to the saints?<sup>41</sup>

Yet the matter of separation was not far from his mind. J. I. Packer reports that Lloyd-Jones once told him privately that he had been thinking that evangelical withdrawal from the major denominations would be necessary ever since J. Gresham Machen had been expelled by the Presbyterian Church in the USA in 1936.<sup>42</sup>

The Doctor began to outline a means by which both concerns, separation and unity, could be addressed. He presented these thoughts to his Westminster Fellowship on June 19, 1963, in an address later titled “Consider Your Ways’: The Outline of New Strategy.”<sup>43</sup> Surveying the situation in contemporary Christianity, he asked what was to be done. He did not find any inspiration from the new evangelical movement in the United States, “which, while still claiming the name evangelical, is adopting positions, and prepared to make concessions, which evangelicals, until years ago, were not prepared even to consider,” that is, concessions “towards the early chapters of Genesis, towards the flood, indeed, even towards the whole question of miracles.”<sup>44</sup> He added that switch-

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<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 161.

<sup>41</sup>Quoted in Fountain, *E. J. Poole-Connor*, p. 211.

<sup>42</sup>J. I. Packer, “A Kind of Puritan,” in *Chosen of God*, pp. 44–45.

<sup>43</sup>D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, “Consider Your Ways’: The Outline of New Strategy,” in *Knowing the Times*, pp. 164–97.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., p. 167.

ing denominations was not the answer “because precisely the same position exists in one major denomination as in another.”<sup>45</sup>

Faced with higher criticism, Darwinism, and Marxism in earlier generations, Lloyd-Jones said, “Our forefathers, our grandfathers in particular, decided to meet this by forming movements. They did not meet it on the church level. They decided that the thing to do was to form movements in which like-minded believers could come together, movements and societies in which they could find the fellowship they could not find in their churches, in which they could strengthen one another’s faith and make protests against what was happening.”<sup>46</sup> This methodology he now considered bankrupt.

“As evangelicals we have criticized those in the churches who have been in error,” he said, “we have denounced them drastically; we have even at times said that they are not Christian in their teaching; but still we acknowledge them as members and officials and dignitaries in the churches to which we belong.” The Doctor suggested that such a stance “more or less nullifies our criticism,” leading observers to say, “Ah well, they talk very powerfully but what do they do?”<sup>47</sup>

The answer he proposed was to take the battle out of the realm of movements and bring it back into the arena of the church:

The church consists of those who believe the truth, who are born again, who are regenerate, the new men and women in Christ Jesus, and who gather together for worship, fellowship, mutual edification, for the propagation of the gospel and upbuilding, and so on: that is the church. Therefore all of us who are agreed about the essentials and fundamentals of the Christian faith should constitute the church. We should be one, because we are agreed about the faith, we are agreed about the sacraments, we are agreed about the need of discipline.... On what grounds are we separated from one another in the matter of church affiliation and alignment?<sup>48</sup>

He considered it “the sin of schism” when those “who are agreed about the fundamental things...are divided and separated” but at the same time they “are joined to people who often deny the truth.”<sup>49</sup>

Do you not think the time has arrived when we must say quite openly that these people who reject revelation and who seem to cast doubt on a per-

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<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 170.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 171.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., p. 173.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., p. 187.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., pp. 187–88.

sonal God, the deity of Christ, the miraculous, the atonement, and the resurrection—the physical resurrection—do you not think the time has arrived when we must say quite plainly that they are not Christians, and that we do not belong to them, that we regard them as enemies of the truth and of the faith? We must repudiate them; but how can you repudiate them if you belong to them?<sup>50</sup>

Explicitly, Lloyd-Jones questioned the traditional position that evangelical creeds make evangelical churches:

We have got to examine the argument which says that as long as the standards are correct then all is well, the church is not apostate. Is it right to say that, when the majority no longer believe in those standards but openly ridicule them and express their disagreement with them? Is that a valid position for us to take up, especially when it is accompanied by an utter lack of discipline, so that men, in the name of the church, can deny the essentials of the faith and nothing happens?<sup>51</sup>

While mapping out a grand strategy, Lloyd-Jones was also having to devote time to tactical matters. He wanted to proceed cautiously. “I have all along felt that it is wrong simply to call men out [of a denomination] without having thought the matter right through,” he wrote. “In any case these matters are never to be done in cold blood, there must always be some very definite leading and sense of constraint.”<sup>52</sup> He rejected the inclusive policies of Anglican evangelicals such as J. I. Packer. He wrote to Philip Edgcumbe Hughes, “Some of us cannot understand this attitude to make accommodations for the ‘The Anglo-Catholic conscience,’ for that is surely to make accommodation for ‘another Gospel which is not a Gospel.’”<sup>53</sup> He also confided to Hughes some of his frustrations: “It is to me nothing less than tragic that evangelicals do not see that they have a unique opportunity at the present time if they but stood together. They still fondly imagine that they can infiltrate the various bodies to which they belong and win them over.”<sup>54</sup>

Even among his allies, Lloyd-Jones had to sell his ideas about practicing evangelical unity on a church level. Iain Murray reports how at a conference in 1965 he and John Murray of Westminster Theological Seminary both argued, with Lloyd-Jones present, against any confes-

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<sup>50</sup>Ibid., p. 191.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., p. 195.

<sup>52</sup>To C. M. Hilton Day, 12 April 1965, Murray, ed., *Letters*, pp. 164–65.

<sup>53</sup>To Philip Edgcumbe Hughes, 12 December 1965, Murray, ed., *Letters*, p. 167.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 168.

sional union with Arminians.<sup>55</sup> It was this attitude that the Doctor addressed in a 1965 Westminster Fellowship meeting. Delineating the different groups he saw within evangelicalism, he mentioned those who were already out of compromised denominations but were so committed to a certain position (e.g., Calvinism, mode of baptism) that they were not interested in uniting with evangelicals who disagreed with them on these matters.<sup>56</sup> He challenged them, “Remember your priorities! When the whole house is on fire you don’t argue about the best room in the house. We are fighting for the *whole* evangelical faith.... If we do this we are going to be atomized and destroyed one by one.”<sup>57</sup>

Even at the Puritan Conference at the end of 1965, historical discussion informed the contemporary situation. Speaking on “Ecclesiola in Ecclesia” (the idea of “little churches within the church”), Lloyd-Jones observed,

Some may feel, perhaps, that this is the idea that we ought to adopt as evangelical people at this present time. If there is going to be a great world church does not this teaching and this idea indicate to us that we as evangelicals should be the nucleus, the “ecclesiola” in the great world “ecclesia”? Many believe that we should “stay in” in order to infiltrate and influence in an evangelical direction—“In it to win it,” as someone has put it.<sup>58</sup>

He replied that the true idea of *ecclesiola in ecclesia* allowed no place for union with unbelievers, concluding that “there is no case for the argument that we can borrow from this idea of the ‘ecclesiola in ecclesia’ support for the idea that we can remain the same general ‘world church’ with men who are not only heretics but who are notorious opponents of the truth of God as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord as we see it.”<sup>59</sup>

Weighing the argument that if you separate now “you will have to do exactly the same thing again in a hundred years or so,” he said,

Who ever claimed that we are in a position to legislate for the church in perpetuity? We are only responsible for the church in our own day and generation. Of course you may have to go on doing this. We pray that you do not have to; but in any case the question for us is, what are we doing, how are we facing our position, and the challenge of our present position? What our grandchildren may do is not our responsibility; but we are re-

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<sup>55</sup>Murray, *Fight of Faith*, p. 500.

<sup>56</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 503–4.

<sup>57</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 505.

<sup>58</sup>D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, “Ecclesiola in Ecclesia,” in *The Puritans*, pp. 144–45.

<sup>59</sup>*Ibid.*

sponsible for what is happening now.<sup>60</sup>

As this address shows, his ideas were clearly coalescing, and he was ready to offer his challenge to British evangelicalism.

### “EVANGELICAL UNITY”

Lloyd-Jones was by no means hiding these views. In fact, they seemed to be stirring up some comment. The Evangelical Alliance had been debating the idea of forming a separatist evangelical church—but not with great zeal. The Alliance, however, invited Lloyd-Jones to present his ideas in the opening session of their national assembly (October 18–20, 1966). Murray says the Alliance on the whole was not sympathetic to Lloyd-Jones’s ideas but were willing to have the Doctor give the opening address in order to launch the discussion that would follow over the next two days; Murray speculates that they hoped to demonstrate that there was little support for a separatist position.<sup>61</sup> It is unlikely that many, if anyone, anticipated what would be the result of that evening of October 18, 1966.

In that address, later titled “Evangelical Unity: An Appeal,”<sup>62</sup> Lloyd-Jones reviewed the arguments he had been advancing in the previous few years. Evangelicals, he said, responded to movements such as Anglo-Catholicism and modernism by forming organizations such as the Evangelical Alliance, under whose auspices they were all now meeting. He did not criticize them for this, for “as a temporary measure, as a temporary expedient, what they did was fully justified.”<sup>63</sup> But that expedient—alliances, movements, societies—was no longer sufficient. He continued,

I am here to suggest that we find ourselves in a new situation, which has very largely been caused by the arising and arrival among us of what is known as the ecumenical movement. This began in 1910 but has become an urgent problem for us as evangelicals, especially since 1948 when the first World Council of Churches met at Amsterdam. The essence of my case tonight is that this movement, as I see it, has presented us with an entirely new situation. I want to put it to you that we are confronted by a situation today such as has not been the case since the Protestant Reforma-

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<sup>60</sup>Ibid., p. 146.

<sup>61</sup>On the background of this meeting, see Murray, *Fight of Faith*, pp. 508–9, 522–23.

<sup>62</sup>D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, “Evangelical Unity: An Appeal,” in *Knowing the Times*, pp. 246–57.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., p. 248.

tion. There was a great upheaval in the sixteenth century. Since then, in spite of change and movements here and there, the position has remained more or less static, but it is so no longer. Something entirely new has come among us, affecting all the major denominations throughout the world. These denominations are telling us plainly and openly that they are prepared to reconsider their whole position. They are prepared to throw everything into the melting pot, in order that a new world church might come out of it.<sup>64</sup>

He contended that evangelicals had not done enough to protest the unscriptural tendencies in the ecumenical movement. "Why is this? As I see it, there is only one answer: it is because we, as evangelicals, are divided among ourselves, and scattered about in the various major denominations. We are small groups in these, and therefore we are weak and ineffective."<sup>65</sup> And what would be the place of evangelicals in the coming ecumenical church? "Are we content with just being an evangelical wing in a territorial church that will eventually include, and must, if it is to be a truly national and ecumenical church, the Roman Catholic Church?... Are you content with a kind of paper church, with a formula that people interpret in their own way, you being just an evangelical wing in this comprehensive, national, territorial church?"<sup>66</sup>

A true church holds to central Christian beliefs, to "true doctrine." He enumerated some of these beliefs: "the Scripture as the infallible Word of God; our assertion of the unique deity of the Lord Jesus Christ—yes, His virgin birth; the miraculous and supernatural; His atoning, sacrificial, substitutionary death; His literal, physical resurrection; the person of the Holy Spirit and His work. These are the doctrines which are essential to salvation."<sup>67</sup> He rejected the older evangelical idea that as long as a church's creed is correct, the church is all right:

I am sorry, I cannot accept the view that the church consists of articles or of a confession of faith. A church does not consist of the Thirty-Nine Articles. A church does not consist of the Westminster Confession of Faith.... A church consists of *living people*.... You can have a paper constitution with a majority in that church denying that very constitution. That is no longer a church as I see it.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>64</sup>Ibid.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., p. 250.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., p. 251.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., p. 252.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid.

In the face of this serious situation, evangelicals needed to consider seriously the idea of withdrawing from their denominations and uniting in fellowship based upon true doctrine and the genuine regeneration of its members. Lloyd-Jones exhorted,

My friends, we are not only the guardians and custodians of the faith of the Bible; we are the modern representatives and successors of the glorious men who fought this same fight, the good fight of faith, in centuries past. Surely, as evangelicals, we ought to feel this appeal. We are standing in the position of the Protestant reformers.... We are the modern representatives of these men, and of the Puritans, the Covenanters, the early Methodists, and others. Can you not see the opportunity?<sup>69</sup>

He came to his conclusion, laying out a final appeal:

And who knows but that the ecumenical movement may be something for which, in years to come, we shall thank God because it has made us face our problems on the church level instead of on the level of movements, and really brought us together as a fellowship, or an association, of evangelical churches. May God speed the day.<sup>70</sup>

If Lloyd-Jones's address was not exactly what the Evangelical Alliance expected, even less anticipated was the response of the chairman of that evening's session. John Stott, pastor of the prestigious All Souls Anglican Church in London and one of the leading Anglican evangelicals in Britain, unexpectedly arose to take exception to the Doctor's comments. "I believe history is against what Dr. Lloyd-Jones has said.... Scripture is against him.... I hope no one will act precipitately.... We are all concerned with the same ultimate issues and the glory of God."<sup>71</sup> Murray adds that after the meeting that Stott "murmured apologetically that he was afraid that some of the Anglican clergy might have left their churches the next morning had he said nothing more."<sup>72</sup>

"The atmosphere was electric," recalls Robert Horn. "None of us had seen an occasion like it—the two leading Evangelicals of the day differing in public over a matter of such practical importance."<sup>73</sup> Later,

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<sup>69</sup>Ibid., p. 255.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., p. 257.

<sup>71</sup>Murray, *Fight of Faith*, p. 525.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., p. 526.

<sup>73</sup>Horn, "His Place in Evangelicalism," in *Chosen of God*, p. 22. Horn supports Murray in noting that the committee in charge of the session knew ahead of time what Lloyd-Jones was to speak on. Horn's overall account of this controversy is found on pp. 22–28.

Stott recounted his view of the event:

I was in the chair and, when he had finished his address, felt it right to disassociate myself from his position. I did so in the hope of dissuading some ministers from writing precipitate letters of resignation before the matter had been discussed (as it was to be) in the following days. But later I called on Dr. Lloyd-Jones to apologize—not for what I said (which I still believe) but for misusing the chair and almost turning the meeting (as he put it) into a “debate.” He told me that he had scarcely restrained himself from answering me and developing the debate.<sup>74</sup>

It is not clear whether Stott or Lloyd-Jones or anyone else present was aware of the fact, but a divide had been reached in British evangelicalism.

### AFTERMATH

In a New Year’s letter to his congregation for 1967, Lloyd-Jones reviewed events from the 1966 religious scene in Britain that disturbed him. Although he noted with approval the refusal of his congregation to join the newly forming Congregational Church of England (one step toward greater ecumenical unity with other churches), he recalled how the year saw a Roman Catholic preaching in Westminster Abbey and the archbishop of Canterbury paying a visit to the pope. He pointed out how all the churches in Westminster except theirs and a Baptist church had participated in a march to a Catholic cathedral for a joint service.

It was in the light of all this that I made an appeal, at a meeting held in the Westminster Central Hall in October, to all truly Evangelical people in all the denominations to come together and to form local independent Evangelical churches which should be in a loose fellowship together in order that the world might hear and see a living witness to the truth to the Gospel.<sup>75</sup>

He had already taken the first steps to advance that dream.

When his Westminster Fellowship met on November 28, 1966, Lloyd-Jones said of the Evangelical Alliance meeting, “The issue has been settled: there is a fundamental cleavage among us. There are two positions: first, those who believe in staying in and, second, those who see no purpose in doing that. There is the division. It is unmistakable. The same cleavage is here in this Fellowship.”<sup>76</sup> To avoid strife, he dis-

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<sup>74</sup>John Stott, “An Appreciation,” *Chosen by God*, p. 207.

<sup>75</sup>To the Members of the Westminster Chapel, 1 January 1967, Murray, ed., *Letters*, pp. 172–73.

<sup>76</sup>Quoted in Murray, *Fight of Faith*, p. 529.

banded the Westminster Fellowship and reconstituted it. In 1967 the reorganized Westminster Fellowship met and drew up a "Statement of Principles," among which were that members were "grieved with what appears to us to be compromise on the part of many Evangelicals in the doctrinally mixed denominations" and that there was "no hope whatsoever of winning such doctrinally mixed denominations to an evangelical position."<sup>77</sup> The statement called on evangelicals to unite "on an uncompromising Gospel basis" that entailed opposition to the ecumenical movement with a move toward formation "of a fellowship of evangelical churches." Those who might still be in denominations associated with the World Council of Churches could participate only if they "agreed that separation from such denominations is inevitable."<sup>78</sup> He expounded more fully on this last point in a letter: "I am sorry to find that the impression seems to have been given...that only men who were prepared to leave their denominations immediately could attend the new Fellowship. That is certainly not my idea. I feel that the only people who should be excluded from it are those who are convinced denomination-ists and who feel that evangelicals must always stay in the larger bodies."<sup>79</sup>

Having left the Congregationalists, the Westminster Chapel joined the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches. Even this move was but a means to an end, for joining the FIEC enabled the church also to join the British Evangelical Council. It was this body, an alliance of denominations, that Lloyd-Jones saw as a possible vehicle for a united evangelical witness. In 1967 the BEC's annual conference met at Westminster Chapel. It drew a crowd of two to three thousand, compared to the mere forty members it had drawn the year before.<sup>80</sup>

Yet the promise of this conference was never realized in a widespread withdrawal of evangelicals from their denominations or in the formation of a united evangelical denomination. Instead there was a scattered withdrawal that resulted in only limited cooperation among the separatists. Probably part of the reason was that Lloyd-Jones was not precise in what he wanted or expected. Murray says that although some of his friends were talking about a "United Evangelical Church," the Doctor himself was not so definite.<sup>81</sup> He definitely wanted a stand

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<sup>77</sup>Ibid., p. 536.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., p. 537.

<sup>79</sup>To David N. Samuel, 10 December 1966, Murray, ed., *Letters*, p. 171.

<sup>80</sup>Murray, *Fight of Faith*, p. 549.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid., p. 511.

against accommodationist tendencies resulting from the ecumenical movement. Writing to Philip Edgcumbe Hughes after reading a manuscript by Hughes dealing with Calvin on the idea of secession, he said,

I...feel that the only real logical conclusion to arrive at from your tremendous climax is "Come out from among them and be ye separate" (Rev. 18.4). That is the only way, surely, in which we can make a truly effective protest against what is happening. Merely to pass resolutions and raise objections and then to abide by majority decisions is being proved to be valueless.<sup>82</sup>

But on the other hand, the form this protest was to take was not specified. J. I. Packer says Lloyd-Jones never had a plan for what was to happen at this separation: "I once asked him whether he was not really saying that we should all join the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches; he replied that that would not do, but did not say why not, nor what the alternative was, save that something new was called for."<sup>83</sup>

A major factor toward the diffusion of the separatist witness was his desire not to take leadership of the movement. Like Spurgeon after the downgrade controversy, he did not wish to be the leader of a secession himself. At the first meeting of the Westminster Fellowship following the "Evangelical Unity" address, he said, "I am not going to organize anything. I have no personal interest. If I had wanted to start a denomination I would not have left it till now." He saw his role as being more limited: "All I can do is help. I am not going to organize, lead, or suggest anything. I trust I shall be a helper."<sup>84</sup>

It may be that his proposed united evangelical movement was simply too unstable. Many were not willing to abandon dearly held doctrinal distinctives in order to enter a united evangelical church, as will be seen later. Horn reports as well that those who separated expected blessing and growth to follow their actions. When that blessing and growth did not occur, they became discouraged and tended to subdivide.<sup>85</sup>

It may even be that some on Lloyd-Jones's side were not fully convinced of his principles. *Christianity Today* reported in 1980 that Lloyd-Jones was helping shape the Reformed wing of Britain's Baptists in a tremendous way through his personal example and support. It quoted Andrew Anderson of Bristol as saying that Lloyd-Jones had "an amazing influence by his willingness to travel and preach," and the article added

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<sup>82</sup>To Philip Edgcumbe Hughes, 11 April 1967, Murray, ed., *Letters*, p. 174.

<sup>83</sup>Packer, "A Kind of Puritan," *Chosen of God*, p. 49.

<sup>84</sup>Murray, *Fight of Faith*, p. 530.

<sup>85</sup>Horn, "His Place in Evangelism," *Chosen by God*, p. 27.

that the Doctor would "preach in the smallest of chapels to assist a man faithful to Reformed principles." Yet even some in this loyal and grateful group were so concerned about "isolationism" resulting from Lloyd-Jones's stand that they were consciously participating in conferences not only in Baptist Union circles but even in Catholic seminaries.<sup>86</sup>

Meanwhile, those who had clearly rejected Lloyd-Jones's call were moving in the opposite direction. In April 1967 the first National Evangelical Anglican Congress was held at Keele University. The Keele Congress marked a definite commitment to inclusivism by most Anglican evangelicals, including John Stott and Lloyd-Jones's long-time friend J. I. Packer. Among the speakers was Michael Ramsey, the Anglo-Catholic Archbishop of Canterbury. "When the Archbishop had lectured the evangelicals at that Congress on their need of greater openness towards Anglo-Catholics and liberals there had not been the slightest whisper of disagreement. No chairman's dissociation from a speaker's remarks was heard then!" notes Iain Murray dryly.<sup>87</sup> At the Keele Congress, evangelicals disavowed secession and affirmed their loyalty to the Anglican Church. Three years later saw the release of *Growing into Union* (1970), a work arguing for a single united Church in England. Two authors were Anglo-Catholics and two were evangelicals, one of whom was Packer.<sup>88</sup>

Lloyd-Jones's grandson Christopher Catherwood says his grandfather could brook no cooperation with Catholicism, even in Anglican dress. The Keele convention, with its call to remain within denominations and reform them, "to be yoked together with others in the Church who deny the very elements of Christian faith," the Doctor called "mid-summer madness."<sup>89</sup> Commenting on Keele in 1971, he said that "now you find evangelical Anglicans taking an active part in the ecumenical movement, and they are as concerned as anybody else about church un-

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<sup>86</sup>Wayne A. Detzler, "Britons Wed Baptist Ecclesiology with Reformed Theology," *Christianity Today*, 4 April 1980, p. 50. Lloyd-Jones was not sympathetic toward overtures to the Baptist Union. In 1973 he turned down an invitation to preach in a Baptist church, saying "I am in trouble over the whole matter of an evangelical church still belonging to the Baptist Union. That is of course for you to decide, but as I am very pledged to support those who have left the Baptist Union I feel that I would be unfair to them to give the impression that this is an indifferent matter." (To Alan Francis, 22 October 1972, Murray, ed., *Letters*, p. 183.)

<sup>87</sup>Murray, *Fight of Faith*, p. 554.

<sup>88</sup>For more on this book and Lloyd-Jones's reaction to it, see Murray, *Fight of Faith*, p. 656-57.

<sup>89</sup>Catherwood, *Five Evangelical Leaders*, p. 87.

ion with bodies that are not at all evangelical.”<sup>90</sup>

The majority of evangelical Anglicans were moving in a different direction from Lloyd-Jones and were no longer listening to him. Horn says that the Doctor’s influence “was diminished in mixed denominational circles. He had trodden on too many toes (or pricked too many consciences?).”<sup>91</sup> More negatively, Packer, who endured a public break with Lloyd-Jones, says the separatist call “diminished the Doctor’s overall influence in England, which was at least a pity and perhaps a tragedy.”<sup>92</sup> Packer wonders whether Lloyd-Jones expected to fail but really sought mainly to leave a testimony that would be appreciated afterward.<sup>93</sup> At any rate, Packer concludes that “the 15 years of separatist drumbeating does appear in retrospect as something of a scorched-earth era in English evangelical life.”<sup>94</sup>

But to those who would listen to him, Lloyd-Jones offered help. Catherwood notes that many in the Free Churches heeded him and they formed his closest circle of associates during his final years while Anglicans by and large rejected the idea of separation.<sup>95</sup> Lloyd-Jones had often spoken of God working through a remnant,<sup>96</sup> and he seemed to consider service to such a remnant in no way a demeaning service.

### EVALUATING A HERITAGE

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones died on March 1, 1981. After his passing, the significance of his separatist call was debated. His grandson Christopher Catherwood became perhaps the primary apologist in downplaying Lloyd-Jones’s call in “Evangelical Unity” and rehabilitating his reputation for the evangelical mainstream. Catherwood notes, for example, that the Doctor’s opposition to inclusivist bodies was not absolute, pointing to how he maintained ties to the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students, which included Anglicans and those belonging to

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<sup>90</sup>D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, “What Is an Evangelical?” in *Knowing the Times*, p. 314.

<sup>91</sup>Horn, “His Place in Evangelicalism,” *Chosen of God*, pp. 25–26.

<sup>92</sup>Packer, “A Kind of Puritan,” *Chosen of God*, p. 46.

<sup>93</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 50.

<sup>94</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 56.

<sup>95</sup>Catherwood, *Five Evangelical Leaders*, p. 89.

<sup>96</sup>See, e.g., “Maintaining the Evangelical Faith Today,” p. 44; and “The Basis for Christian Unity,” pp. 162–63.

state Lutheran churches on the continent.<sup>97</sup> He values the idealism of his grandfather’s call: “His vision of a united Evangelical Church, with the Gospel of Jesus Christ at its centre, was a great and glorious one. To him the division of Evangelicals into different groups was tragic.”<sup>98</sup> Catherwood accurately captures the essence of the Lloyd-Jones’s message: “come out so that you may come in.”<sup>99</sup>

But at the same time, Catherwood feels compelled to speak out for the Anglican side, saying that “the Doctor’s Welshness prevented him from appreciating fully the deep loyalty to the Church of *England* that bound the Anglicans to their denomination. They wanted to stay in it, as they hoped, to rescue it.”<sup>100</sup> “He could not understand how they failed to see the Biblical logic of his appeal; they could not fathom how he, who had worked so closely with his fellow Evangelicals in the mixed denominations for over forty years, was now seemingly going back on all he had stood for during that time.”<sup>101</sup> Still, Catherwood clearly understands his grandfather’s concerns: “For the Doctor...the Church was built on doctrine alone—and tradition, or national affection, were unimportant.”<sup>102</sup>

Iain Murray, a friend and former colleague, established his authority to interpret Lloyd-Jones by his massive and authoritative two-volume biography. He defends Lloyd-Jones against the charge that he had changed his position in calling for separation. Rather, it was other evangelicals who had changed by abandoning the historic evangelical position and by embracing alliance with false teaching. This reversal was itself the result of change, the changed circumstances that the ecumenical movement had introduced to British church life. But although agreeing with the Doctor in general, Murray faults him on some points. He believes that Lloyd-Jones’s grounds for secession were too vague and subjective; they depended more on interpreting the current church situation than on elucidating and applying clear biblical principles. Lloyd-Jones seemed, Murray says, to be stressing the necessity of attachment to some visible evangelical body or association beyond a local church or otherwise believers in such a situation were guilty of schism. Then, too,

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<sup>97</sup>Catherwood, *Five Evangelical Leaders*, p. 91.

<sup>98</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 87–88.

<sup>99</sup>Christopher Catherwood, “Afterword,” *Chosen by God*, p. 277.

<sup>100</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>101</sup>Catherwood, *Five Evangelical Leaders*, p. 88.

<sup>102</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 89.

Murray thinks perhaps circumstances moved too quickly to accommodate the Doctor's position, that matters after the 1966 call went beyond anyone's power to control and resulted in a situation that no one wanted. As for the apparently small gains, Murray observes that the Doctor thought secession by itself was no solution and that revival and renewal by the Holy Spirit was the real answer that Lloyd-Jones sought—but could not, by his own theology, produce himself. In conclusion, Murray says the Doctor hated controversy but thought the controversy necessary to reclaim the truth.<sup>103</sup>

Some otherwise sympathetic British observers view Lloyd-Jones's separatist call as too broad. Robert Sheehan, a Reformed Baptist influential in Strict Baptist circles, faults not only Lloyd-Jones but also Poole-Connor for implying that it is wrong for evangelicals to hold tenaciously to nonessential teachings such as Calvinism or Baptist distinctives. Such a position works a hardship of those with strongly confessional standards, such as Presbyterians and many Baptists. "Perhaps it is time," Sheehan suggests, "for us to abandon the prevailing idea that the local church should be a *'pot-pourri'* and to return to the idea of local churches holding fast their beliefs yet respecting the integrity of other evangelical churches."<sup>104</sup> Any idea of a single "Evangelical church" was unworkable if distinctives were to be respected and preserved.

There have also been those who have faulted Lloyd-Jones for stopping short. Among those helping Lloyd-Jones at the time of his separatist call was Peter Masters, a former member of Westminster Chapel who was then a pastor publishing *The Evangelical Times* to support the movement. In 1971 he became pastor of Spurgeon's old church, the Metropolitan Tabernacle, now much reduced in size. Masters pulled the church back out of the Baptist Union, which it had rejoined after Spurgeon's death, and began to pursue a militantly orthodox line.<sup>105</sup> He agrees with Sheehan in seeing the necessity of preserving theological and denominational distinctives and in faulting Lloyd-Jones's position on that point. Beyond that, however, he questions whether the idea of a single "Evangelical denomination" is even scriptural and, in particular, believes the British Evangelical Council completely unequal to the

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<sup>103</sup>Summarized from Murray, *Fight of Faith*, pp. 553–67.

<sup>104</sup>Sheehan, *Spurgeon*, pp. 118–19. For more information on Sheehan, see Geoffrey Gobbett, "Pastor Robert J. Sheehan 1951–1997," *Banner of Truth*, August/September 1997, p. 19.

<sup>105</sup>In 1955, when the Metropolitan Tabernacle was temporarily without a pastor, the church officers led a successful effort to bring the church back into the Baptist Union. See Eric W. Hayden, *A Centennial History of Spurgeon's Tabernacle*, American Edition (Pasadena, TX: Pilgrim Publications, 1971), pp. 90–91, 110–11.

task.<sup>106</sup> Sheehan characterizes Masters as going beyond Lloyd-Jones, Poole-Connor, and even Spurgeon in arguing that evangelicals may not have even private fellowship with compromised evangelicals.<sup>107</sup> It is of no little significance that in 1995 Masters published a booklet called *Are We Fundamentalists?* in which he argues that the "new-style evangelicals" such as Stott and Packer have departed from historic British evangelicalism. Perhaps it is time, he suggests, to adopt the term *fundamentalist* to represent the "old-style" British evangelicalism that is rapidly eroding.<sup>108</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Summarizing the thought and actions of a complex man in a complicated situation is not an enviable task. There is always the risk of distortion. It is better, at least in this case, to let the man speak for himself and the reader to judge. An incident toward the end of Lloyd-Jones's ministry illustrates both the objective nature and subjective style of Lloyd-Jones's separatism. In fact, it provides an appropriate "bookend" to the Doctor's encounter with T. T. Shields in the 1930s, revealing something of his attitude toward American fundamentalism and demonstrating that, in some ways, his position had changed little.

In 1970 Lloyd-Jones invited Charles Woodbridge, an American Presbyterian and fundamentalist, to address the Westminster Fraternal. He had never met Woodbridge before but was willing to have him come to speak on the new evangelicalism in the United States, a topic on which the American had spoken and written.<sup>109</sup> Iain Murray, who was present, says the audience was surprised at "the force and seeming belligerence" of Woodbridge's address and his statement that he would say what he had to say and did not care whom he offended. Murray reports that "there was something refreshing about this boldness," but he knew it clashed with Lloyd-Jones's approach.

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<sup>106</sup>Peter Masters, "Reality in Evangelical Unity," *Sword and Trowel*, September/October, 1980, pp. 2–6.

<sup>107</sup>Sheehan, *Spurgeon*, pp. 114–15.

<sup>108</sup>Peter Masters, *Are We Fundamentalists?* (London: Sword and Trowel, 1995.) Despite his later, sometimes pointed disagreements with Lloyd-Jones, in this work Masters identifies the Doctor as "a mighty contender for the fundamentals, taking a magnificent stand at the end of the 1950s in calling God's people out of ecumenism" and includes him as one of the "true fundamentalists—powerful protectors and champions of those foundational truths essential to salvation and to the survival of the Christian faith" (p. 9).

<sup>109</sup>See Charles Woodbridge, *The New Evangelicalism* (Greenville, S.C.: Bob Jones University Press, 1969).

In the discussion that followed, the Doctor told Woodbridge, "You and I have arrived at the same position in different ways. On the general position we are agreed. The difference between us concerns *how* we bring men to that position." He went on to cite Paul's desire to be all things to all men (1 Cor 9:19–22) and said,

I would have thought it bad teaching to speak as though this country was the same as America. I say that in love. Some men are antagonized rather than attracted.... I do not disagree with what is said but with the presentation. We rejoice in God's servant and in his clear understanding.... One of the greatest struggles of my life has been to realize the different character of nations. We need to pay attention to this in order that the message may have the maximum effect.

Woodbridge interrupted Lloyd-Jones to ask anyone who was "antagonized" to raise his hand. The Doctor replied, "No, there is no question of anyone being antagonized. We are all concerned about the same thing."<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>110</sup>The incident is recounted in Murray, *Fight of Faith*, pp. 680–82. Murray reports that in the afternoon session, after speaking with Lloyd-Jones privately, Woodbridge was much milder in tone and demeanor. If Woodbridge was won over, however, it was only temporarily. In meeting with a group of fundamentalists in America after this trip, Woodbridge reportedly said that he had ignored an invitation to meet with the Doctor again before leaving Europe; he summed up his opinion of Lloyd-Jones not with words but with the simple, dismissive gesture of washing his hands of the British preacher.