

INCARNATIONAL THEOLOGY FOR A MISSIONARY CHURCH

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The heading of Chapter 5 of *Mission-shaped church* is 'theology for a missionary church.' The purpose of that chapter is two-fold:

- i. 'to ensure that any fresh expressions of church...are undergirded by an adequate ecclesiology [doctrine of the Church].'¹
- ii. 'to suggest some theological principles that should influence all decisions about the shape of the Church of England at this time of missionary opportunity.'²

So in this Chapter of the book we expect an adequate theological basis for the church at mission. It includes the incarnation as a basic principle of God's mission and therefore of our mission.

This focus is of central importance to the book,³ and is also a common emphasis in Anglican self-understanding. I will tackle this topic under four headings:

1. Incarnation fundamental to mission.
2. The doctrine of incarnation in this book.
3. Incarnation in Anglican self-understanding.
4. Key features of an adequate Anglican view of incarnational mission.

1. Incarnation fundamental to mission.

The Report clarifies its emphasis on incarnation and mission, in the section headed 'the work of Christ –incarnation, cross and resurrection.' It claims that as incarnation was fundamental to God's mission in the world, so incarnation is fundamental to the church's mission in the world. In the words of *Ad Gentes* of Vatican Two,

If the church is to be in a position to offer all men the mystery of salvation and the life brought by God, then it must implant itself among all these groups in the same way that Christ by his incarnation committed himself to the particular social and cultural circumstances of the men among whom he lived.⁴

¹ The Report cheerfully assumes that traditional expressions of church have an adequate theological undergirding.

² Maidstone, + Graham, ed. [2005], *Mission-shaped church*, Brookvale: Willow, p. 84

³ It is found as one of the five key values for missionary churches, *Mission-shaped church*, p. 81

⁴ *Mission-shaped church*, p. 87

The primary significance of the incarnation was that Christ was incarnate in the human race, rather than in particular social and cultural circumstances, however, as a secondary implication, the point has some power. Though we should remember that those 'particular social and cultural circumstances' were not without specific and unique theological significance, namely, the existence of God's people, a chosen race, a priestly kingdom and a holy nation. So there is not an exact parallel between Christ's relationship with Israel, and our relationship with any social group.

However the main point still stands. Mission is incarnational in that it must relate deeply and thoughtfully with its host culture. The Report describes the incarnational principle as one of the five values for missionary churches.

A missionary church seeks to shape itself in relation to the culture in which it is located or to which it is called.⁵

This value was of course exemplified in the Reformation desire to translate the Bible into the language of the people. For language is one of the most important and obvious expressions of the culture of a people.

There was great opposition to the translation of the Scriptures into the vernacular. Francis Turretin, defending the principle of such translation, quoted Arboreus, who wrote, 'the translation of the Scriptures into the vernacular is one source of heresies.'⁶ In today's world, where translated Scriptures are more common in Christian churches, the contrast is with other religions.

In Judaism, there is some reluctance to use translated Scriptures. In the Medieval Tractate of the Scribes, we read: 'Five elders wrote the Law in Greek for King Tolmai [Ptolemy]; and that day was a hard day for Israel, like the day on which Israel made the golden calf.'⁷

For Islam, the Koran or Qur'an is a Heavenly Book, that is a book kept in heaven, a 'treasured book', a 'preserved tablet' and Muhammad received a terrestrial edition of this heavenly scripture, dictated to him by the angel Gabriel.⁸ The Qur'an is to be preached, 'in a clear Arabic tongue,'⁹ and is taught in Arabic, whatever the native language of those who learn. I well remember seeing little boys in an Islamic school in Pakistan, learning to recite Qur'an in Arabic. To learn means to learn to recite from memory: 'The Qur'an is learnt by heart, in Arabic.'¹⁰

⁵ *Mission-shaped church*, p. 81

⁶ Turretin, Francis, [1992], *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, vol. 1, tr. G. M. Giger, Phillipsburg: P&R, p. 123

⁷ Nida, Eugene, [1964], *Towards a Science of Translating*, Leiden: E. J. Brill, p. 2

⁸ Widengren, Geo, 'Holy Book and Holy Tradition in Islam', in, Bruce, F.F., and Rupp, E.G., eds., [1968], *Holy Book and Holy Tradition*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, pp. 212, 214

⁹ Widengren, 'Book in Islam', p. 213

¹⁰ Widengren, 'Book in Islam', p. 231

Christians have a different view of the Bible. Martin Luther, a leader in modern translation of the Bible, combined belief in its verbal inspiration with a great commitment to its translation, and a subtle understanding of some basic rules of translation, such as shifts of word order, the introduction of connectives and other additions to clarify meaning, suppression of untranslatable terms, shifts between metaphors and non-metaphors, and careful attention to accuracy and textual variants.¹¹ Why should we have a translated Bible? In the words of Edward Fitzgerald, 'A live sparrow is better than a stuffed eagle.'¹²

Some have believed that the translated Bible should not be used. John Smyth, pastor of the English church in Amsterdam in 1608, held that every translation however good, was bound to contain errors, and so by definition could not be used. If God had spoken in Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic, then those were the languages in which he should be heard.¹³ The early Christians may have thought it possible to translate the Bible because many of them used a translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew into Greek, called the Septuagint,¹⁴ and because they lived in a world in which most people were multi-lingual at least a basic level.

The translation of the Scriptures is a practical and obvious example of the need to enculturate Christianity. It is one of the scandals of the Anglican Church of Australia that there is still no original Aboriginal language or dialect with the complete Bible. The Anglican Church of Australia has left it to voluntary societies such the Church Missionary Society, the Bible Society and the Wycliffe Bible Translators to do the hard and expensive work of translation. So much for our commitment to incarnated and enculturated Christianity. We have not yet managed to achieve this fundamental task.

Here is another feature of enculturation. It is one of the ironies of effectively enculturated Christianity that it is so easily blind to that enculturation, and so blind to the need to adapt to a new missionary culture, or to adapt to the changes in its own host culture. I can think of several parishes in Melbourne who adapted their style and mission entirely effectively in the 1930's, and still persist in the same model of ministry, with decreasing effectiveness, and diminishing congregations made up of the remains of those who were members in the 1930s. One of the tests of those forms of Christianity which have effectively enculturated in Australia in the 1980s and 1990s is what they will be doing in 2010. The price of success in one generation is often failure in the next. In the words of Dean Inge, 'Whoever marries the spirit of this age will find himself a widower in the next.'

Here are two rules which summarise what I have been asserting.

¹¹ Nida, *Science of Translating*, p. 15

¹² As quoted in Nida, *Science of Translating*, 2

¹³ Nicolson, Adam, [2004], *Power and Glory – Jacobean England and the Making of the King James Bible*, London: Harper Perennial, p. 181

¹⁴ They might also have been influenced by the translation of Jesus' teaching from Aramaic to Greek, if he did indeed usually teach in Aramaic. Sevenster, J. N., [1968], *Do you know Greek?* Leiden: Brill, argued that Jesus usually taught in Greek, not Aramaic.

- a. The more unaware you are of your own culture, the more difficulty you will have working in any other culture.
- b. The more unaware you are of the ways in which you exemplify your own culture, the more you will force people from other cultures to adopt your culture.

I believe that incarnation is fundamental to mission, though that does not mean that the word 'incarnation' can be used to justify policies, actions, or theologies without further qualification. There is a bad use of the incarnation as a principle of mission, as there is also a good use.

2. The doctrine of incarnation in this Report

While I am delighted to find that this Report wants good theology to undergird missionary practice, and that it recognises that the work of Christ, the incarnation, cross and resurrection of Christ is fundamental to Christianity and so fundamental to mission, I must admit to being disappointed by its three pages on this topic. It asserts some good points, but it is what is not said that disappoints me.

i. The incarnation.

As I have already pointed out, its statement on 'the incarnation, a world to enter' makes the point that 'God in Christ entered the world, taking on a specific cultural identity.'¹⁵ While this is true, it is not the main point of the incarnation, which is that the Son of God took on our universal humanity. And if the specific cultural identity of Christ's people is to be asserted, then their unique role as the people of God needs to be acknowledged.

ii. The cross.

The section headed 'the cross- a world to counter' is especially important. The positive point that it is making is true, which is that Christ loving identification with his culture was matched by his costly counter-cultural stance within it. Costly counter-cultural stances have not always been expressed within Anglicanism, especially where it has been the established religion.

However it is what is missing that alarms me. For there is no indication that the cross achieved anything: it is merely cited as an example of a costly counter-cultural stance. While the *imitatio Christi*, the imitation of Christ as our example, is certainly an aspect of New Testament teaching on the sufferings and death of Christ, it is scarcely adequate as a description of 'the work of Christ.' Irenaeus' comment, 'Christ became that we are in order that we might become what he is' is a statement of the work of Christ, and only secondarily an example of mission for Paul and for ourselves.

Stephen Sykes had a clearer appreciation of the centre of the incarnation when he wrote,

¹⁵ *Mission-shaped church*, p. 87

[T]he public commitment of the Anglican is to the full doctrine of the Holy Trinity, as Articles 1 to 5 of the Thirty-Nine Articles make plain...the incarnation and atonement are likewise taught within this trinitarian context. The centrality of the atoning work of Christ becomes evident in the BCP Order of Holy Communion. God is addressed as follows:

...who of thy tender mercy didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there [by his one oblation of himself once offered] a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world.¹⁶

Or again, 'The heart of the matter may be spoken of as the paschal mystery ['Christ our Passover is sacrificed for; therefore let us keep the feast].¹⁷ Or again,

'What is it then that holds Anglicans together? First and primarily, we must focus on the gracious, reconciling and unifying act of God in Jesus Christ.'¹⁸

As Sykes explains, the Book of Common Prayer, the Thirty-nine Articles and the Ordering of Bishops, Priests and Deacons constitute 'the inheritance of faith' [Canon C. 15] of the Church of England, and therefore define the nature of being in communion with Canterbury, and therefore the meaning of what it is to be Anglican¹⁹. Of course these documents are also definitive for Australian Anglicans, as our Fundamental Declarations and Ruling Principles make clear.

The reply may be that this doctrine of the work of Christ is assumed, and did not need to be restated. However, as a friend of mine often reminds me, 'It goes without saying so it needs to be said.' The Biblical notion of 'remembering' shows the value of the constant repetition of the saving acts of God. Furthermore, the Report claims to give 'theological principles that should influence all decisions about the shape of the Church of England.'²⁰ How bizarre to omit any doctrine of the Atonement when writing about the work of Christ on the cross!

The sacrifice of Christ is both atonement and example, not one without the other. 1 Peter makes both claims in these words:

For it is to this that you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps...He himself bore our sins in his body on the

¹⁶ S. W. Sykes, in Bunting, Ian, ed. [1996], *Celebrating the Anglican Way*, London: Hodder and Stoughton, pp. 28, 29

¹⁷ Sykes in *Celebrating*, p. 23.

¹⁸ Sykes in *Celebrating*, p. 31.

¹⁹ Sykes in *Celebrating*, p. 23.

²⁰ *Mission-shaped church*, p. 84

cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed [1 Peter 2:21,24].

However, I agree with the Report when it claims that the cost of the incarnation has been neglected. Incarnation cost Christ, and incarnation will cost us. It has perhaps been a diminished doctrine of sin, and an optimistic doctrine of humanity which has meant that in some cases incarnation has been an easy option of identification with current social and cultural contexts. This leads us to the next point.

iii. Resurrection.

Again, the distinction between the unique power of Christ's resurrection and our finding fresh energy is missing. It is not the case that to liken any example of hope restored after failure or disappointment to the resurrection of Christ give true honour to Christ. Furthermore, when the New Testament applies the power of Christ's resurrection to the life of believers, it does so in terms of death to sin, and life in righteousness, as we have just seen in 1 Peter.²¹ How curious to have a section headed 'the work of Christ, incarnation, cross and resurrection' without a sound doctrine of sin, atonement, and righteousness.

A doctrine and practice of mission which does not do justice to the atonement and reconciliation achieved by the work of Christ in his death and resurrection is doomed to fail.

Here is the doctrine of the atoning work of Christ expressed in the Homily for Good Friday.

Christ put himself between God's deserved wrath and our sin, and rent that *obligation* wherein we were in danger to God, and paid our debt. Our debt was a great deal too great for us to have paid; and without payment God the Father could never be at one with us: neither was it possible to be loosed from this debt by our own ability. It pleased therefore him to be the payer thereof, and to discharge us quite... If God hateth sin so much, that he would allow neither man nor angel for the redemption thereof, but only the death of his only and wellbeloved Son, who will not stand in fear thereof?... So pleasant was this sacrifice and oblation of his Son's death, which he so obediently and innocently suffered, that he would take it for the only and full amends for all the sins of the world... For in this standeth the continual pardon of our daily offences, in this resteth our justification, in this we be allowed, in this is purchased the everlasting health of all our souls; yea, *there is none other thing that can be named under heaven to save our souls*, but this only work of Christ's precious offering of his body upon the altar of the cross.²²

New shapes without this old substance will not participate in the Christ-honouring mission of God in the world.

²¹ See also Romans 6, 8, Ephesians 4: 17-5:20, Colossians 3:1-17

²² *The Book of Homilies*, [1864], 'An Homily for Good Friday', London: SPCK, pp. 439-442

iv. Incarnation in Anglican self-understanding.

We should see that the Report's claim that God's mission is incarnational comes within an historical context of Anglican self-understanding. For it is frequently claimed that the heart of Anglicanism is the doctrine of the Incarnation.

In my opinion this is more a tribute to the pervasive influence over the last 100 years of the authors of *Lux Mundi* of 1889, than it is a substantiated interpretation of nearly 2000 years of theology within and beyond *Ecclesia Anglicana*.

In fact the move from Atonement to Incarnation made by the authors of *Lux Mundi* was an attempt to craft a new interpretation of Christianity and Anglicanism. This new interpretation was described in the sub-title of the first edition of *Lux Mundi*, that it was the 'founding document of liberal Catholicism in the Church of England.'²³

At the time Canon H. P. Liddon of St Paul's Cathedral London, a pupil of Pusey, and a Tractarian, noted one of the significant differences between his faith and that of the *Lux Mundi* school: 'There is a difference between the new and the old Churchmanship...the new...expects more from sinful humanity.'²⁴ The *Lux Mundi* school were more generally criticized because, as A. M. Ramsey commented, 'in their intense concentration upon the Incarnation as the key to the understanding of the world, these writers and their subsequent followers were minimizing the Cross, the divine judgement and the eschatological element in the Gospel'²⁵.

Certainly Anglican history covers a wider range than the merely incarnational. For example, John Donne's focus was clearly on the death of Christ, despite the claim of John Booty that his theology was incarnational.²⁶

It seems evident to me that some of weaknesses of the *Lux Mundi* school and movement are evident in *Mission-shaped church*, to its disadvantage. These include an inadequate recognition of sin, and the total absence of any theology of the atonement.

Furthermore, to focus on the incarnation without the support of the doctrine of the Trinity easily leads to the Arianism reflected in some Anglican theology the 1970s and 80s. We must be thankful that the doctrine of the Trinity has recently re-emerged to popularity within Anglicanism.

²³ Morgan, Robert, ed., [1989], Bristol: Bristol Classical Press, *The Religion of the Incarnation: Anglican Essays in Commemoration of Lux Mundi*, p. xi

²⁴ Rowell, in Morgan, ed., *The Religion of the Incarnation*, p. 209

²⁵ Ramsey, Arthur Michael, [1960], *From Gore to Temple: The Development of Anglican Theology between Lux Mundi and the end of the second World War*, London: Longmans, p. 9.

²⁶ Booty, John ed., [1990], *John Donne: Selections from Divine Poems, Sermons, Devotions and Prayers*, The Classics of Western Spirituality, New York: Paulist Press.

Trinitarian faith lies at the heart of Anglicanism, and this Trinitarian faith protects the central doctrines of incarnation of the Son of God, the centrality of his atoning work on the cross, and his resurrection from among the dead.²⁷ This Gospel is at the heart of the message of the Scriptures, and this Gospel too is the meaning of the two Gospel sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Anglican theology is Gospel theology. No Mission without Gospel, and no Gospel without the atonement and reconciliation achieved by Christ's death and resurrection.

The Australian Baptist theologian Ross Langmead recently published a study of Incarnational Missiology. He identifies various types of incarnational missionary theologies: Anabaptist, Radical Evangelical, Liberation Theology, Moltmann's view of Christ's anticipatory presence, Roman Catholic, World Council of Churches, and Eastern Orthodoxy.

It is illuminating to read his critique of Anglican incarnational missiology.

- i. It has a more optimistic view of the world, and in one version it emphasizes the continuity between God's immanence and the incarnation. This can mean that incarnation becomes nothing more than a particular expression of immanence. Of course this paradoxically reduces the theological value of the incarnation.
- ii. It tends to neglect the cross. It reflects a more optimistic view of the world, and the hope of a gradual evolution for the cosmos. It looks past the harshness of human experience to a serene and immanent God. It is less convincing after Auschwitz, Hiroshima and Vietnam.
- iii. Its view of the church as the extension of the incarnation can lead to an unhelpful ecclesiocentricity.
- iv. It tends to affirm all that is good in human society, and so is then less able to critique the power structures which support it as a church of the establishment.²⁸

Another relevant critique is that for some, incarnational mission means presence and lifestyle without words. Langmead cites Costas, who wrote of incarnational mission as meaning 'lifestyle without words'.²⁹ My own observations are that when Liberal Catholicism is being more Liberal it can be difficult to distinguish its message from that of other prophetic voices in our community, and that when it is being more Catholic it can revert into its own idiosyncratic culture of middle class values and to fail to engage with the realities of the world around it.³⁰ Middle Anglicanism fails to be incarnational when it sees its calling as retaining the values of the past, identifies English culture as of the essence of Anglican identity, and has no regard to the mission of the church. Both fail to be truly incarnational when they neglect the

²⁷ Adam, Peter, 'The Trinity and Human Community', in, Timothy Bradshaw, ed. [1998], *Grace and Truth in the Secular Age*, Grand Rapids and Cambridge: Eerdmans, pp. 52-65.

²⁸ Langmead, Ross, [2004], *The Word Made Flesh: Towards an Incarnational Missiology*, Lanham: University Press of America, pp. 182-188

²⁹ Langmead, *The Word Made Flesh*, p. 232

³⁰ I recognise that the term 'liberal' is now not widely used, but I use it here in order to point to the connections with *Lux Mundi*.

atonement, do not respect or use the Bible in their ministries, and fail to engage in verbal witness to Christ.

Evangelical Anglicanism fails to be incarnational when it pretends that human culture does not matter, unwittingly imposes its own culture, and when it focuses so much on individual and eternal salvation that it fails to observe or equip its converts to engage with the realities of its surrounding culture. Charismatic Anglicanism fails to be incarnational when it imposes a total culture on its converts.

The sad reality is that when thinking about incarnational mission it is easier to see motes in others' eyes than it is to see beams in our own. At least observing others should prompt us to notice that how easy it is to be selective in our choices, and blind to important aspects of our own culture.

v. Key features of an adequate Anglican view of incarnational mission

The Catholic and Reformed identity of Anglicanism should lead to theology which is deeply contextual, reflecting God's universal grace, universal Saviour, and universal Gospel. Sadly, the reality often does not reflect the rhetoric, and many Anglican churches look like 'Little England'.

Attempts to render Anglicanism genuinely Australian must grapple with the fact that the perceived Australian identity is often far from the reality. Our perceived identity is of outback life, whereas real Australian life is increasingly urban. Grappling with Australian identity is complex!

Perhaps the most serious issue is not that of decorative actions, but that of the membership of our churches. The Anglo-Saxon identity of the church is a major barrier. A genuinely Australian church would have to be multi-ethnic and multicultural. This requires the desire and the practice of evangelising people of every ethnic group. And this will not happen unless we are willing to assert and defend the uniqueness of faith in Jesus Christ, and the universality of the Gospel.

Here is a paradox! Anglicans who prefer to believe that all religions are the same, or that we should not expect people of other religions to become Christian, are most likely to continue Anglican churches which are white Anglo-Saxon ghettos. Whereas Anglicans who want people of any religion or none to become Christians are more likely to produce churches which reflect the eschatological hope of 'a great multitude...from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb'³¹. It would be an irony for those who delight in the extent of the worldwide Anglican Communion not to continue the energetic cross-cultural mission which produced it. The Anglican church of Australia will be genuinely contextual when it reflects the eschatological vision of Revelation 7.

³¹ Revelation 7: 9.

In our multi-cultured and rapidly changing society, any person in public ministry will need to learn cross-cultural ministry, and congregations will need to learn cross-cultural life as well as cross-cultural mission.

I was amused recently when reading *The Minotaur*, by Barabara Vine. In it Kerstin Kvist, a Swedish woman, observes English family life in Norfolk. She attends the local parish church, and also observes the life and conversation of the Vicar of that church. Of Eric, the Vicar, with whom she has had much social contact, she observed,

I thought then that in all the time I knew him I had never heard Eric make a single reference to God or the Christian faith or heaven or hell except when he was conducting a service.³²

Of the church, she observed,

The Church of England fascinated me then. Now it only disappoints me. In those days I used to marvel at an institution dedicated to a religion where no one seemed to believe in God and everyone believed passionately in ritual and rubric. It was my first visit for some time and I watched rapt, as some knelt, some remained sitting, all closed their eyes in prayer, some crossed themselves, while other witnessed the crossing disapprovingly, some sang 'Hallelujah!', other 'Allelujah!' and all gave a kind of court bow, dipping their heads when the Creed was said and the words 'Jesus Christ, His only son, Our Lord' were reached. I don't know why. I didn't know then and I don't know now. Were their minds devoutly full of Christ's passion, his suffering, his descent into hell and his mystical resurrection? Or did they think of the roasting joint and whether their neighbours would be coming back after church for sherry?³³

Mission-shaped church makes it clear that new expressions of church must have adequate theological justification. However surely the notion of incarnation would also lead us the question the continuing theological adequacy of some of our traditional expressions of church. Here are two examples:

- a. The geographical structure of Anglicanism, with defined boundaries for a diocesan and parish must be due for a review. The word 'Diocese' comes from a subdivision of the Roman Empire. The Celtic church did not function with modern dioceses and parishes. It was Augustine, who as Archbishop of Canterbury introduced the system of geographical dioceses to England in 597, and Theodore, the first Greek Archbishop of Canterbury, who introduced the parish system in the 670s. The parish system had begun to be ineffective by the 1300s, and one reason why the Preaching Orders were established was to cover this deficiency. Furthermore, the establishment of Colleges, Universities, and Hospitals and Proprietary Chapels independent of the Bishop of the geographical diocese in which they were situated was another

³² Vine, Barbara, [2005], Camberwell: Penguin/Viking, *The Minotaur*, p. 283

³³ Vine, *The Minotaur*, p. 232, 233

admission of the inadequacy of the parish structure. This system of geographical analysis of the mission of the church has some uses, but it also has some disadvantages. It is especially destructive when it is used to pretend that the mission of the church has been achieved because the whole nation is covered by dioceses and parishes. And it is also destructive when it is used to stifle grass-roots initiatives in mission. There are still some advantages in retaining a geographical perspective, but we must ensure that it is our servant and not our master, and that it is effectively complemented with other patterns of mission, as it is, for example, with the Defence Force Chaplaincy. As a matter of fact, I think that some element of geographical coverage might still be helpful, but by itself it hinders rather than helps our mission in such a mobile age.

- b. The liturgical life of our cathedrals is reminiscent of the formality of colonial Government house Balls of the 1890s. This expression of human culture represents a privileged minority of the past.

Truly incarnational mission must avoid the following failures:

- i. Becoming so identified with its host culture that it is indistinguishable from it, and has no prophetic voice.
- ii. Restricting itself to a sole pre-occupation with either social or personal ethics.
- iii. Reducing its message to the ethics and moral values that flow from the Gospel, and neglecting Gospel proclamation and dialogue.
- iv. Retaining so much cultural baggage that no serious interaction occurs.
- v. Handing on the results of theological reflection, and not handing on sufficient Bible knowledge to enable the host church to read and understand the Scriptures for itself.
- vi. Having a merely exemplarist view of Christ and his sufferings, and so diminishing Christ glory.
- vii. Failing to proclaim the Gospel of the atoning and reconciling work of Christ on the cross and in his resurrection.
- viii. Falling into the temptation of identifying Christ with our mission as much as we identify with his mission.
- ix. Neglecting the fact that older models of church and mission may now be obsolete, as the world in which they were incarnated has now changed.
- x. Failing to keep up with the ever-faster changes in human society.

Truly incarnational mission must include the following features:

- i. Churches and individuals who are committed to the proclamation of the Gospel to all nations.
- ii. Churches and individuals who are committed to the universal salvation to be found in Jesus Christ.
- iii. Churches and individuals who are committed to paying the price of serving those who do not know Christ in order to win them to Christ.
- iv. Churches and individuals happy to give up valued customs and traditions and lifestyles in order to enable sacrificial mission.

- v. The preaching of the atoning work of Christ achieved in his death and resurrection, and not a merely exemplarist view of the Christ's sufferings,
- vi. A humble willingness to accept the values of the host culture that are not opposed to Christianity,
- vii. A humble willingness to distinguish between matters of primary and secondary importance,
- viii. The humility to recognize that in the long-term it is the host church that has the responsibility to God to develop a pattern of Christian living that is both truly Christian and also deeply enculturated,
- ix. The patience to allow time for this to happen, the realization that it may take some time to sanctify some local customs, and that it may mean that some features of the sending culture need to be used for a time,
- x. The realization that without careful and thoughtful enculturation, the missionary will be imposing unnecessary burdens on the host church, and making it less able to evangelise its own people.
- xi. The awareness that incarnation means costly long-term commitment.
- xii. The realization that incarnation is more than 'presence', and that the faith needs to be articulated, proclaimed, explained, defended, and commended.
- xiii. The realization that prayer, the reading and preaching of the Bible, and the two Gospel sacraments, and an ordered ministry are essential expressions of church.
- xiv. A sending church which resists the temptation to create another church in its own image, and which will give the missionary the freedom to work for a truly indigenous church,
- xv. A serious engagement with the pattern of incarnational mission found in St Paul and in his writings, who as the apostle of the risen Christ was given the particular task of cross-cultural mission into the Gentile world, and to whom Christ gave the responsibility of clarifying which aspects of Judaism could be required of Gentile churches, and which aspects should be left behind.
- xvi. A serious Biblical and theological engagement with the world of the sending church, so that it is better able to distinguish between what is essential to Christianity and what is not essential.
- xvii. A serious review of the practices and priorities of the sending church, that it may put its own house in order.
- xviii. The establishing and supporting of effective structures of mission in Australia and overseas.
- xix. A serious Biblical and theological engagement with the world of those to be evangelized, in order to begin to work out the shape of the intended mission, and in order to help prepare the host church to make the same evaluation.
- xx. Churches and individuals who have the wisdom and humility to resist the seductive temptation to make others in their own image.