

MOVING ON FROM THE C1-C6 SPECTRUM

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The one who states his case first seems right,
until the other comes and examines him (Prov. 18:17)

1. INTRODUCTION

New models of work among Muslims have been proliferating over the past 20 years. In general, these approaches reflect sympathy for Muslim thought and life style that is characteristic of the experiences of most workers among Muslims. But it seems to me there is a dramatic difference in some of these models. That difference is seen in their shift from the way missionaries have traditionally understood and presented the person and work of Jesus Christ as the Son of God.

This shift represents a sea change in mission theology. Due to reasons of ‘security’, much of the propaganda disseminated by these practitioners of a new approach to Muslims is not being discussed and analyzed by the general missionary community. This lack of exchange has caused leaders of some mission agencies to buy into this new philosophy without really understanding all that it entails. Younger workers of some mission agencies that work among various faith traditions are being indoctrinated in these new methods before they are capable of conceptualizing incisive questions about their intrinsic value. It is vital that everyone hear all sides of the issue. This paper is an effort to outline some of the critical issues I have observed with the appeal to bring all points of these issues to the worldwide Church for consideration in light of Scripture.

2. THE CRITICAL ISSUES

From my perspective, all the primary issues emerge from a lack of theological moorings and consequently a lack of a comprehensive biblical

worldview. (1) Models are being developed which are illusory. The C1-C6 Spectrum is an example. (2) From these models flow methods such as allowing converts to be both ‘Muslim’ and ‘Christian’ at the same time. (3) Some new Bible translations reconstruct the identity of Jesus in order to support these approaches. (4) Finally, long time mission practices are redesigned as though they are *avant-garde* creations of this generation.

In this paper, I will seek to call these issues into question by revisiting some prominent appraisals of them. This is not to say that I oppose all the ministry of these practitioners. My field experience is not much different from theirs, though longer than most. However, I believe that our theology and method differ in significant ways. While their motives are beyond my capacity to judge, their facility in biblical studies and wisdom in the implementation of certain models can be shown to be immature and faulty.

3. THE C1-C6 SPECTRUM

When the C1-C6 Spectrum made its appearance in the Sundanese Muslim situation of West Java, Indonesia, it was promoted as a contextual model even though it had few of the traits normally expected of a contextual model. That was around 1990. Although it was obviously the creation of a western educated thinker, a number of workers among Muslims were fascinated by it and it was widely distributed. In 1998, a person using the pseudonym of John Travis published this spectrum as a ‘practical tool for defining six types of Christ-centered communities’¹ In his description, the word ‘contextualize’ only appears under the description of C3 and C4 communities. But the impression is that the other examples in his model (C1, C2, C5, and C6) should also be considered as ‘contextualized’ models. This impression is reinforced by noted missiologists such as Phil Parshall who systematically refer to it as a model of contextualization.²

¹ John Travis, ‘The C1 to C6 Spectrum’, in *EMQ* 34:4 (October 1998), pp. 407-408.

² Phil Parshall, ‘Danger! New Directions in Contextualization’, in *EMQ* 34:4 (October 1998), p. 404; Phil Parshall, ‘Camel Training Manual’, in *EMQ* 41:3 (2005), p. 385.

It is difficult to understand Parshall's meaning in this regard because a model of contextualization would normally encompass a vast array of cultural phenomena. John Travis, himself, subsequently describes the C1-C6 Spectrum as a 'simple chart...to graphically portray these different expressions of faith by MBBs'.³ Due to confusion of this sort that has also emerged in other contexts, my intention is to critique the value of the C1-C6 Spectrum and its impact in mission thinking. While the C1-C6 Spectrum has some diagnostic use, it is important for all workers to see it in perspective. This is partly what I mean by my title: 'Moving on from the C1-C6 Spectrum'. It may have a limited use but the understanding of true contextual models goes light years beyond it.

In Col 1:24-29, Paul describes the ministry of the church, which is to proclaim Christ while 'warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ'. (vs. 28). In passages such as this, we comprehend the depth and breadth of our responsibility to envision a ministry of the church that will affect the broad context of human society and result in mature believers. This would cover the philosophy, traditions and structures of a culture. Some examples are the fields of education, politics, law and justice, labor, religion, leadership, economy, kinship relations, domestic activities, and other aspects of social organization. It takes years of experience and study and close cooperation with national workers to understand and participate in the development of that kind of contextual model.

My other meaning of 'moving on' has to do with the way the C1-C6 Spectrum promotes changing traditional Christian missions. By fostering a model of faith that includes both Islamic and Christian world views in the same structure, it moves us into a *liminal* category where a traditional understanding of 'Christian' and 'Muslim' is changed. In this special state it is possible that a person would belong to a 'new faith tradition' that is not recognized by its larger society. For example, the C5 category would not be accepted by Christians or Muslims. The C1-C6 people claim this is contextual but if the society at large does not recognize it as contextual, we should not claim it is. We need to move on from that kind of confusion.

³ John Travis, 'Messianic Muslim Followers of Isa: A Closer Look at C5 Believers and Congregations', in *International Journal of Frontier Missions* 17:1 (2000), p. 53.

4. WHY WE QUESTION THE C1-C6 SPECTRUM AND ITS AUDIENCE

It is very naive for missiologists of this generation to believe that they have greater insight than those highly educated, brilliant minds of the past who mastered indigenous theology and culture. While not many indigenous workers or their missionary counterparts are going to jettison established and proven theology and strategy in favor of some new fad, this new philosophy of ministry has had a significant impact in some quarters. This is not to say that C1-C6 missiologists are all wrong and others all right. There must always be openness to new ideas because outreach to Muslims has not been successful in many places.

But new ideas require rigorous questioning and testing and many C1-C6 people seem to not be willing to face that. In the past, whenever a challenge has been made to their claims, they have frequently declined to consult or have revised their position slightly to avoid disapproval. For many of them, information is on a 'need to know' basis. They even withdraw into protective enclaves such as Joshua Massey constructs in his article: 'God's Amazing Diversity in Drawing Muslims to Christ'.⁴ Massey compares criticism of his ideas and approach to that of the 'Judaizers' whom Paul opposed in Galatia. He sets up a frightening scene where anyone questioning new approaches to Muslims is condemning their freedom in Christ. These practitioners may not be aware of their immaturity but others are. The apostles and disciples did not denounce those who criticized their methods. They only warned about criticism of motives - of judging the heart.

In Christian ministry, all premises and strategies must be based on biblical principles. These should be clear for the observer as well as for the practitioner. C1-C6 practitioners have not made this information available. Therefore, one has no way to evaluate it. This kind of secrecy is not characteristic of the Church and should be avoided by missiologists. For example, I have been given some material produced by those espousing radical Islamic contextualization that I am not at liberty to reveal in print. I honor that commitment and am discussing nothing in this

⁴ Joshua Massey, 'God's Amazing Diversity in Drawing Muslims to Christ', in *International Journal of Frontier Missions* 17:1(2000), p. 10.

article that has not already been published. However, I don't agree with concealing information from any relevant population. There are doubtless volumes of similar material to which I have no access. In any social science such as missiology, research must be available for testing. One has to be able to replicate results by following the scientific method described. Reports and surveys of the C1-C6 methods and related Islamic contextualization are frequently not available to be tested.

We don't even know who many of these practitioners are, where they work, or where they were trained. Like Joshua Massey and John Travis, they use pseudonyms and report from unknown places on the earth about anonymous people. They quote what they consider significant reports proving their theories but the reports are only accessible to a few. An example is a major survey made of what is called 'Islampur' people. It is noted in journals but not revealed.⁵ We are at the mercy of the interpretation of a few who do not allow other missiologists to peruse the full text. I understand the need for security and it is not necessary to reveal the location where the survey was made or even the people. But we should have access to the developmental research sequence showing how and why the survey was constructed, what was its explicit purpose, what questions were asked, how answers were tabulated, and other aspects of social science research. It is not legitimate for C1-C6 advocates to castigate those who will not blindly accept their interpretation of facts. In light of what I have presented so far, if you are interested in considering tough questions about the C1-C6 model read on!

5. WHAT IS THE C1-C6 SPECTRUM?

The most recent published examples of the C1-C6 Spectrum is from Travis' articles in *EMQ* (1998), in *Mission Frontiers* (2005), and in a book titled *Appropriate Christianity* (2005).⁶ The later version of this

⁵ Dean S. Gilliland, 'Context is Critical in "Islampur" case', in *EMQ* 34:4 (1998), p. 415; Massey, 'God's Amazing Diversity in Drawing Muslims to Christ', p. 297.

⁶ Travis, 'The C1 to C6 Spectrum' (1998), pp. 407-408; John and Anna Travis, 'Contextualization Among Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists: A Focus on Insider Movements', *Mission Frontiers* (September-October 2005), pp. 12-15; John and Anna Travis, 'Appropriate Approaches in Muslim Contexts' in *Appropriate Christianity*, ed. Charles H. Kraft (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2005), pp. 397-414.

spectrum is more developed than the earlier ones and is arranged in a different manner from earlier versions. By looking at the 1998 version, we get a context for the discussions of recent years. Below is an abbreviated schematic showing only the titles of each type but not Travis' explanations. The reader will need to access Travis' full explanation to follow this in detail. However, even without the full Spectrum, the reader will understand my critique.

- C1 – Traditional Church using Outsider⁷ Language
- C2 – Traditional Church using Insider⁸ Language
- C3 – Contextualized Christ-centered Communities using Insider Language and Religiously Neutral Insider Cultural Forms
- C4 – Contextualized Christ-centered Communities using Insider Language and Biblically Permissible Cultural and Islamic Forms
- C5 – Christ-centered Communities of 'Messianic Muslims' who have accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior
- C6 – Small Christ-centered communities of Secret/Underground believers

6. THE ILLUSION OF THE SPECTRUM

What is the 'spectrum'? While Travis' use of the word fits the dictionary definition in a general sense, we normally demand that a spectrum reflect all the variations that there are in a continuum. When a prism creates a spectrum of colors, it does not leave any out. Phil Parshall says that the C1-C6 Spectrum is not an accurate description of the communities. He writes that although the spectrum has some advantages, 'a heavy fog has resulted, producing more confusion than clarity'.⁹ I submit that the 'Spectrum' is more accurately identified with the word *template*. The C1-C6 model has some preliminary use as an instrument to categorize ministries in several general terms such as cultural or religious characteristics. If one were to lay this template over a ministry, a small

⁷ Travis says 'insider' pertains to the local Muslim population; 'outsider' pertains to the local non-Muslim population.

⁸ See comment at footnote 7.

⁹ Phil Parshall, 'Lifting the Fatwa', *EMQ* 40:3 (July 2004), p. 288

amount of information would be quickly ascertained. But that information would be severely limited and only useful as a stepping-stone to deeper investigation of the ministry. It is limited in its usefulness due to its one-dimensional nature. Travis admits that it is a 'simple chart'.¹⁰ It is not only simple but simplistic and while that is probably its attraction to many missiologists, it is also the reason why I feel it is doing more harm than good among new workers and some older ones. It creates the illusion of offering insight to ministry while only giving a cursory view. Inexperienced workers are deluded into thinking that this 'spectrum' is revealing special insights whereas it isn't. New workers are subject to being incorrectly indoctrinated by this tool.

At a glance, we see that the C1-C6 Spectrum is divided in a linear manner and compartmentalized. The original model was set up in a horizontal mode whereas this later version is vertical. The last publication of this model in *Appropriate Christianity* returns to the linear model. However, the principle is the same. This trait gives away the fact that this is a western philosophical model laid over non-western phenomena. This alone is reason enough to use the template with caution. I believe that if you trust the *template*, you will miss practically all of what you should be seeing in the situation. The lines between the compartments show their separation whereas in Asian and African holistic societies these separations do not exist. In West Java, where I worked, belief systems operate in a way that shows flow back and forth between all of these compartments. I have known numerous believers who would be placed in the so-called C3 compartment who were secret believers to their families and in their communities. They developed elaborate strategies to attend Christian activities without being discovered. This is still the case in West Java.

The model describes the stages of increase in the use of Islamic characteristics. In other words, it indicates a progressive movement. The only religious characteristics dealt with are Christian and Islamic and Travis ignores the influence of other belief systems that pervade the Islamic and Christian contexts. This is a profound weakness because there are many kinds of practitioners of multiple belief systems who are influencing the formal religions of Christianity and Islam. Their forms and

¹⁰ Travis, 'Messianic Muslim Followers of Isa: A Closer Look at C5 Believers and Congregations', p. 53.

meanings are interwoven into the fabric of these religions and there is no way to develop a contextual approach without understanding these influences. For example, in West Java we have an elaborate shaman system that is completely integrated with the formal Islamic religious practices. It also influences the Christian system to a lesser extent.

7. THE LACK OF A THEOLOGICAL BASE

The most serious weakness of the C1-C6 Spectrum is a fatal one in my judgment. There is no theological base. When Shoki Coe first presented the idea of contextualization to a 1972 World Council of Churches consultation he brought the Church new insight. Ray Wheeler wrote: 'His approach was to allow the text (Scripture) to provide the vocabulary and the perspective needed to wrestle with a changing context'.¹¹ As it is abbreviated in another place, 'faithful to the text, relevant to the context'.¹² In contrast, the C1-C6 Spectrum begins with context and has no foundation in the text- i.e., the Word of God.

In his article about the dangers of new directions in contextualization, Phil Parshall advises that we need to bring the issues of the C1-C6 model 'before our theologians, missiologists, and administrators...before we suddenly find that we have arrived at a point that is indisputably sub-Christian.'¹³ Travis echoes his agreement in the same *EMQ* journal. 'I agree with Dr. Parshall it is time for missiologists, theologians, and others, ...to seriously seek God's will over this C5 issue'.¹⁴ Unfortunately, both of them reached this conclusion about ten years too late. The theological base should have been laid *before* the concept was released. The text should always precede the context. Yet, there is little progress seen in this perspective.

In 2005, Travis outlined 10 premises that form the structure in which he hopes to understand what he describes as the C5 phenomenon. The

¹¹ Ray Wheeler, 'The Legacy of Shoki Coe', in *International Bulletin* 26:2 (April 2002), p. 79.

¹² Douglas J. Elwood, 'Asian Christian Theology in the Making: An Introduction', in *Asian Christian Theology: Emerging Themes*, ed. Douglas J. Elwood (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1980), p. 28.

¹³ Parshall, 'Danger! New Directions in Contextualization', p. 405.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 411.

last of these premises relates to the contextual theology that Travis feels must be developed. He sets up the conditions out of which this contextual theology should evolve even though he himself has apparently not yet developed a theology that supports the entire C1-C6 model.¹⁵ He bases some of these premises on Christian theology while others are based on secular observations. My point here is that mission premises are futile without a comprehensive biblical base.

By leaping to create a text for a contextual concept (e.g., C5) without a text for the entire framework (C1-C6 Spectrum), these practitioners get more and more conflicted. In a recent article in the *International Journal of Frontier Missions*, Kevin Higgins supports C1-C6 thinking by repeating a common litany of inaccurate exegesis concerning the story of Naaman and Paul's Athenian argument.¹⁶ It will suffice to give these two examples. He quotes the Naaman story to support his contention that the Bible supports worship of God, the Father, in one's prior religion whereas the text clearly states in 2 Kings 5:15 that Naaman said, 'Behold, I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel...' And when he asks permission to escort the king to his worship (v.18), he could not mean that he himself would participate in that heathen worship. As a comparison, if a convert in Indonesia were to ask if he could take an elderly parent to the mosque, I am sure all the evangelists would give assent. They would allow it because one needs to take care of one's parents, even though this case would necessitate showing respect for the mosque by wearing a hat and other appropriate clothes, taking off one's shoes, and other customary actions. But it would not mean in any way that one would join in the prayers.

The entire Old Testament history condemns the worship of foreign gods. The first Commandment declares: 'Thou shall have no other gods before me.' Can it be faithful to Old Testament exegesis to propose that the prophet would give Naaman permission to return to foreign worship?

Higgins also makes this mistake in using a familiar New Testament example. He contends that in Paul's Athenian argument, Jesus is unnamed: 'this Person is unnamed in this sermon, though Paul may be as-

¹⁵ Travis, 'Contextualization Among Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists: A Focus on Insider Movements', p. 13.

¹⁶ Kevin Higgins, 'The Key to Insider Movements: The "Devoted's" of Acts', in *International Journal of Frontier Missions* 21:4 (2004), pp. 158, 161.

suming his hearers will connect the reference to Jesus...'¹⁷ If one studies the entire context of this passage chosen by Higgins- Acts 17:16-34, one will see that in verse 18, Paul was preaching Jesus and the resurrection. The name of Jesus is precisely what brought Paul to the explanation (vv. 22-31) of which Higgins refers. Unfortunately, many of the arguments constructed by C1-C6 people are like these. They are not based on a careful reading of the text. In a decisive article, Scott Woods tactfully demolishes the interpretation of many of the Bible proof texts used by C1-C6 practitioners (2003). It does not seem necessary to repeat all his points here even though I see no evidence that C1-C6 people are interacting with his arguments and subsequently correcting Higgin's *eisege-sis*.

It seems to me that the rationale of C1-C6 practitioners is inconsistent and unsupportable. In the Joshua Massey article quoted above, we see an example of this. He argues that the C5 concept can only be understood if one has the right perspective. D.A. Carson (2005), Research Professor of New Testament at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, writes about the Massey article:

The language and argumentation are perpetually manipulative. On almost any disputed subject, one can find authorities behind every option. But genuine scholarship thinks through opposing views very carefully, and cites opposing arguments, and does not simply opt for what one wants. [Massey] is guilty in this respect again and again. For example, on Rom 9:5, there is a very substantial literature, and quite frankly most scholars, from every theological tradition, now support the view that this is an affirmation of the deity of Christ. Again, [Massey] quotes Dunn on Phil. 2, but on this passage N. T. Wright, whom [Massey] happily quotes in another connection, has written masterfully refuting Dunn.¹⁸

Among other things, Massey argues that Muslims do not necessarily need to understand and experience the Trinity because 'not one biblical writer felt it necessary to extrapolate (*sic*) that God "is" Father, Son and Holy Spirit...'¹⁹ Although the doctrine is not promulgated (if that is

¹⁷ Ibid., p.161.

¹⁸ D.A. Carson, Unpublished personal letter (1 February 2005). Quoted with permission.

¹⁹ Joshua Massey, 'Misunderstanding C5: His Ways Are Not Our Orthodoxy', in *EMQ*, 40:3 (July 2004), p. 298.

what Massey means) there are scores of references in the New Testament to the unity of Jesus with the Father and with the Holy Spirit. This is a main emphasis in John's Gospel. On another point, Massey states: '...the Qur'an itself is proving to be a powerful apologetic in the hands of Muslim believers for restoring Muslim confidence in the inerrancy of Scripture.'²⁰ This occurs, he believes, when they understand what the Qur'an really says about the Bible. Massey seems to have a typically post-modernist viewpoint so that terms such as inerrancy of Scripture take on new meaning. His position seems to make the Qur'an the determining factor for Muslims in seeking the truth of God. Examples such as these show that without a theological basis, the C1-C6 practitioners are moving farther and farther afield.

8. MOVING ON FROM THE C1-C6 SPECTRUM

These previous references to C5 methodology are indicative of the new level to which these practitioners are moving. While the C1-C6 Spectrum seeks to describe perceived categories of Christian ministry among Muslims, the C5 emphasis supports the reality of Muslim believers who are becoming followers of Jesus without losing their Muslim identities. An example is an article referenced above: 'Messianic Muslim Followers of Isa' by John Travis. The writer attempts to persuade the reader that the outside evangelists are not the ones determining the beliefs or actions of Muslim converts. He writes; 'How they view Islam is not prescribed by us, but left to them as they are guided by the Word and the indwelling Spirit.'²¹ These kinds of statements are very misleading. Anyone who understands Islam knows that adherents are led by practitioners who are regarded as the experts in religion. To insinuate that new believers are making up their own theological conclusions without outside help shows Travis' lack of experience in evangelism and pastoral ministry.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 302.

²¹ Travis, 'Messianic Muslim Followers of Isa: A Closer Look at C5 Believers and Congregations', p. 53.

It is obvious that the unique language and rudimentary theology of C5 have been developed by non-Muslims. For example, it is a far reach to assume that Muslims would describe themselves as ‘Messianic Muslims’. Their theology teaches that Jesus is the Messiah for the Jews, not for Muslims. The concept of a Messiah as understood by Christians does not exist for the Muslims. In connection with this, I have not seen any articles about C1-C6 theology or method that were written by non-westerners. However, since so much of this material is anonymous, it is hard to tell.

Joshua Massey is much more creative than Travis in describing what so-called C5 groups are doing. He states, ‘C5 advocates encourage Muslim believers to view the Jesus act from their seat in the human auditorium’. Massey means that the Muslim comes to know Jesus within his own religious framework and may remain a Muslim as he follows Jesus. According to Massey, this means ‘C5 Muslim believers are, of course, rethinking and redefining Islam according to the authority of the Bible.’²² His proposition seems to be that a supernatural transformation of Islam will occur that allows a place for the person and work of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

As I understand the reasoning of these practitioners, it seems to me that the process of implementing C5 methodology will change the definition of both ‘Christian’ and ‘Muslim’. C5 philosophy proposes the possibility that Scripture can be reconciled with Islamic teachings. Thus, Muslim believers will be both ‘Christian’ in their core beliefs and ‘Muslim’ in their basic tenets. This proposition describes the impossible position of C5 proponents. It seeks to integrate two opposing worldviews and harmonize their accompanying theological bases that conflict one another. This defies all logic. One of the worse mistakes a Christian evangelist can make is to justify a non-biblical world view. I urge every missiologist to examine these C5 claims in great depth before buying into this immature conception of reality with its grandiose claims of success. The delusion of this approach has led some western missionaries to pray the *Shahādah* (Muslim confession of faith) and become official members of the religion of Islam. What a tragedy and what an accountability must be given by some.

²² Massey, ‘Misunderstanding C5: His Ways Are Not Our Orthodoxy’, p. 301.

9. ONE KEY TO C5 THEOLOGY AND METHODOLOGY

One critical key facilitating the so-called C5 concept is the way they view new Bible translations for peoples of other faiths. In 1987, a new alleged harmony of the gospels was produced for Muslim readers. This book is a diglot with opposing pages printed in Arabic and English. It is a very important example of the C5 group's effort to *rethologize* the Son of God for the Muslim reader.²³ Some C5 Bible translators have felt the need to shade the meaning of certain Greek terms such as Lord and Son of God so that those of other faiths will be more open to considering the claims of Christ.

Perhaps this unusual and unexpected divide in Bible translation has come about because of the philosophy that spawned what is called dynamic equivalency. Whatever the original intent of this translation model, it has been used as a vehicle that allows the translator to insert much more of his or her interpretation into the translation. The 'word-for-word' correspondence model can also be manipulated by the translator but it is more difficult to do. The 'thought-for-thought' translation philosophy of dynamic equivalency allows the translator to insert various nuances of present day culture.

While it is customary for evangelists to use the biblical record selectively and to introduce theological truths at various stages in evangelism and Christian nurture, there is no justification for changing God's Word, the Bible. This removes the foundation upon which a Christian life is built. If God's record no longer exists, what is the framework of truth for a new believer and how can one be disciplined into the truth of who Jesus is?

The Bible, as recorded in the original languages, is the only source we have for a biblical worldview. When we begin to integrate the message of the Bible with that of other religions, we lose the foundation of our worldview and move into syncretism. While we acknowledge that there is some truth in other religions, we also recognize the ways in which that truth has been integrated into a non-biblical worldview. Changing Bible

²³ See Roger Dixon, 'Identity Theft: Retheologizing the Son of God', in *EMQ* 43:2 (2007), pp. 220-226.

translations to agree with Qur'ānic worldview or the worldview of any other faith system will cause us to lose our touchstone.

The Bible is consistent in portraying prophets and apostles as defenders of the biblical worldview. God's prophets and apostles never authorize or approve of worship or other activities of faith that are based on a non-biblical worldview. They may participate in a variety of cultural traditions but not when they are directed to any other god than the God of the Bible.

10. REDEFINING TRADITIONAL METHODOLOGY

The final issue we will discuss is less critical than the others but nonetheless important. It represents the tendency of C5 practitioners to misrepresent mission history. This involves the camouflaging of traditional mission methodology. It may be due to a lack of knowledge or it may be an over anxious attempt for affirmation of their own approaches. The C5 practitioners seem to thrive on purported new missiological philosophies and *avant-garde* approaches. While the only 'new idea' the C5 people have proposed is Massey's hopeless concept of unifying Christianity with Islam, there are many other ideas which they present as though they were original.

An example is the so-called Insider Movement. In their article in *Mission Frontiers* the Travis couple seeks to link the C5 movement with what is called the Insider Movement.²⁴ The term is used in the title of his article and is the subject of the entire issue of the magazine. However, what is described, as an Insider Movement is really not any different from what has happened over and over throughout the history of Christian missions. Phil Parshall notes the example of Kiai Sadrach, a convert in Java in the 19th Century.²⁵ I presented Sadrach's case study in an article on the Javanese church in which I described that church's struggle to produce a contextualized Javanese Christianity.²⁶ Sadrach

²⁴ Travis, 'Contextualization Among Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists: A Focus on Insider Movements', pp. 12-13.

²⁵ Parshall, 'Lifting the Fatwa', p. 289.

²⁶ See Roger L. Dixon, 'The Major Model of Muslim Ministry', in *Missiology: An International Review* XXX:4 (October 2002), pp. 443-454.

was one of the spiritual fathers of a movement that has brought millions of Muslims into the Kingdom of God. It would be wise for us to first study what has actually been done in the past before creating new buzz-words in missiology.

When the C1-C6 people do relate to the past they link their approaches somewhat dubiously with some of the giants of missiology. Travis speaks of Samuel Zwemer's model of respect for Muhammad but doesn't mention his transparent criticism of Islam.²⁷ The *Kitab Suci Injil* [Holy Gospel] so called 'culturally appropriate' Bible translation in Indonesia is claimed to be in the tradition of W.G. Shellabear whereas Shellabear shared Zwemer's criticism of Islam and in his Malay translation 'eliminated' words he regarded as foreign to Malay, such as the Arabic *fasik* and *Bait*.²⁸

Another example is Massey's use of 'Christ-centered' as opposed to 'church-centered'.²⁹ He writes as though Christ-centered people are not the Church but rather some group outside the Church and inside their own cultural traditions. Mixing vocabulary in this way and skewing the meaning of words does not promote incisive thinking about critical issues. If one's theology allows the separation of believer and Church, one must clearly delineate this. The spiritual Church exists and so does the institutional churches and church centered people by definition should also be Christ centered.

Travis changed some of his original C1-C6 descriptions from church to Christ centered. Designations like 'Christ-centered' and 'church-centered' are not helpful. They give the impression one can bring souls to Christ without having them being received into his Church. Possibly, such views result from the influence of parachurch organization theology. However, new mission workers are not going to be able to discern these nuances and it also creates confusion among new believers about their status in the worldwide fellowship of Christians.

²⁷ Travis, 'Messianic Muslim Followers of Isa: A Closer Look at C5 Believers and Congregations', p. 56.

²⁸ Robert Hunt, *William Shellabear: A Biography 1862-1848* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1996), p. 164.

²⁹ Massey, 'Misunderstanding C5: His Ways Are Not Our Orthodoxy', p. 300.

Finally, the C1-C6 crowd should stop using proof texts. There simply are no Bible texts that describe or support their methodology. Their use of 1 Corinthians 7:24 is a good example. This is where Paul advises remaining in the condition in which one was called. C5 people interpret this to mean one can continue in a religious tradition where the Lordship of Jesus Christ as the Son of God is not recognized. It is not possible that the apostle who suffered all of his life for the gospel could have meant that. If a C5 missionary really believed it could mean that, he himself could not participate in the non-Christian religious practices of other faith groups because he himself would then no longer be in the condition in which he was called.

11. CONCLUSION

In this article, I have analyzed briefly some of the ways the C1-C6 Spectrum is viewed erroneously as a contextual model and the illusion it gives that a believer can experience the contradictory existence of being both a follower of Christ and active in the faith traditions of another religion. Then I discussed the lack of a theological base for the C1-C6 Spectrum and, in connection with that, the lack of a biblical base for all C5 teaching. Following that, I reported the way new Bible translations have been promoted in order to create a theological base and biblical worldview that is more in line with Islamic teaching or the teachings of other religions as the case may be. These new translations reinterpret the person and work of Jesus in various ways so that members of other religions do not need to assent to the full meaning of the person and work of Jesus. The Trinitarian theology of Jesus as Son of God and Lord of life is minimized so that it does not become a stumbling block to people of other faiths. Finally, I described the way new buzzwords are used to give one the impression that traditional mission approaches are, in fact, innovative models of our generation.

In closing, let me reaffirm that my critique does not imply a rejection of innovative approaches to other religions or a condemnation of those who try them. It is simply a call to prepare oneself theologically and culturally to understand what is happening in the models that are being used in mission. Let us bring them all to the Church at large. I don't believe

the C1-C6 crowd has done that. Let us move on from the C1-C6 Spectrum.

May the Holy Spirit lead us to be established in him so that 'we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ ...' Eph 4:15b