

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. THE NEED FOR A MISSIONARY ECCLESIOLOGY FOR WESTERN CULTURE

In the early 1980s, fresh out of seminary, I was appointed by my presbytery to be an evangelist and church planter on the edge of Toronto. The two dominant trends in my church during that time were the church growth tradition and a confessionalist tradition. Both of these traditions had clear, yet unexamined ecclesiologies. I found the first, the church growth model, to be pragmatic and unrooted in Scripture, the gospel, or the Christian tradition. Yet there was a concern to be relevant to the culture and bring the gospel to bear on the lives of people living at the end of the 20th century. The confessionalist model was more rooted in Scripture and tradition but was addressing the concerns and issues of the past. I found myself vacillating; I wanted the church to be rooted in the gospel and tradition, and yet to be relevant to the lives of the people in my congregation and community. The issue for me was, what is the church? This led into a Ph.D. program in which I examined ecclesiology from a Scriptural and historical perspective. Late in that program I came across Lesslie Newbigin's *Foolishness to the Greeks* and *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*. Here I heard a new voice—one rooted in the gospel and struggling to be relevant to the issues of the 20th century. Newbigin's call for a missionary encounter with western culture was firmly rooted in a certain ecclesiology that was unfamiliar to me. This spurred me to inquire into the nature and origin of this ecclesiology.

I have since found that I am not the only one who believes a missionary ecclesiology for the West to be an urgent need. After David J. Bosch had completed his *magnum opus* entitled *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in the Theology of Mission* (1991), he acknowledged that a missiology of western culture must be a priority concern for our day. He recognized that he had not included this topic in his book and so felt an obligation to turn his attention to this theme (Bosch 1995:ix). His tragic death hindered him from pursuing this issue beyond the small book that was published posthumously. When Bosch formulates the contours of a missiology of western culture, the first order of business is a missionary ecclesiology (:27-32; cf. Jongeneel 1997:88-92). This priority informs the entire discussion that follows.

This reference to Bosch's book is significant for the topic of this book for two reasons. First, the issue of mission in western culture has become an urgent matter in missiology in the last few decades. To speak of mission in western culture means that the word mission is being used in a new way (cf. Jongeneel 1995:58-61). In the popular mind 'mission', 'missions', 'missionary', 'mission field', or 'missiology' denotes the idea of geographical expansion. Mission or missions is considered to be an activity that proceeds in one direction: from the West to other parts of the world. A missionary is one who is the agent of this expansion; a mission field is a potential area outside the West where this expansion is carried out; and missiology is a discipline that studies the issues arising from this expansion.

Numerous developments in the 20th century have rendered this older view of mission obsolete. The most important of these factors are the collapse of colonialism, the dramatic rise, growth, and vitality of the non-western churches, and the decline and marginalization of the church in western culture.

Mission understood exclusively as geographical expansion must be replaced by a

fuller Biblical understanding. A number of Dutch missiologists have suggested that mission as *expansion* must be replaced by an understanding of mission as *communication* (Verstraelen, Camps, Hoedemaker, and Spindler 1995:1; Jongeneel 1995:64). That is, mission is not defined geographically but in terms of the church's calling to communicate the gospel in life, word, and deed in every part of the world. Missiology is the discipline that studies the issues that arise from the attempt to bear witness to the gospel. Mission takes place in, to, and from all six continents (cf. Jongeneel 1995:60). Mission issues from the West but also in and to the West. In this situation many long neglected issues arising from the attempt to communicate and embody the gospel in western culture can find renewed attention.

Another way of highlighting the significance of this renewed attention is to note the attention given in 19th century mission thought to the theme of “reflexive action” or “blessed reflex.”¹ Mission advocates argued that the missionary impulse of the 19th century—a century that the eminent American missionary historian Kenneth S. Latourette describes as “the great century” of Christian mission (Latourette 1941-1944)—would result in a reflexive action that would benefit the sending church. The mission impulse would rebound back on the sending church in the West and it would reap some of the benefits of this missionary activity. These benefits were never spelled out and the theme gradually disappeared from the writing of missiology at the end of the 19th century as mission more and more became woven together with colonialism. In the latter part of this century mission has gradually extricated itself from the colonial framework. In this post-colonial period the dynamic of the “reflexive action” is becoming increasingly evident as the missionary movement has come full circle, providing a critique from the non-western churches that can lead to a more faithful witness in the West.

Closely related to this is the second reason for a brief reference to David Bosch's book: a missionary ecclesiology is a central feature in this whole study of mission in western culture. Today it is commonplace in missiology to speak of the church as missionary and mission as ecclesial. Yet this has not penetrated the self-understanding of the average congregation in western culture nor the official theology of academic theologians (Berkhof 1979:411). The reason is that the ecclesiologies that have been formative for the churches in the West—both at the academic theological level and at the level of the congregation's self-understanding—have been largely shaped by Christendom.

The church of Christendom was moulded by the changes that took place in the fourth century when Constantine became a Christian and legalized the Christian faith. From the time that Theodosius made Christianity the religion of the empire (A.D. 392) the development of a Christendom ecclesiology was further accelerated over the centuries. The church moved from a marginal position to a dominant institution in society; from being socially, politically, and intellectually inferior to being in a position of power and superiority; from being economically weak and poor to being in a position of immense

¹I owe the following insights on reflexive action to Wilbert Shenk in private communication.

wealth; from being an oppressed minority to being the oppressive majority; from being a *religio illicita* to becoming the only religion in the civic community; from being resident aliens in a pagan environment to being an established church in a professedly Christian state. This could not help but have a dramatic impact on the church's self-understanding.

H. Richard Niebuhr (1935) has described the transition that takes place when the church is part of a culture for a long period of time. When a church is young and a minority, its identity is shaped by tension with the world—defined as civilization or culture in the grip of idolatry—and an “aggressive evangelism.” Its members recognize that they are a distinct people and this moves them to a rigorous evangelism. This missional posture proves to be successful as the gospel salts the society and helps shape the public life of the culture. There are signs of repentance and faith among the powers of the culture. But it is precisely in this success that the problems lie. The salting of the society has the effect of diminishing the church's missionary consciousness. It “relaxes its rigorism” and “begins to live at peace in the culture” (Niebuhr 1935:123). The church no longer considers itself a distinctive community in a hostile environment. The empire is considered Christian and any distinctiveness is undermined. The church is no longer an alternative community living in contrast to the cultural community. It now takes its place as just one power within the constellation of powers which make up the Christian empire. Thus it merely functions alongside of the military, political, economic, and intellectual powers of the empire. The church is at peace in its societal context. It has become an established church. The Roman Catholic scholar Roger Haight describes the established church as follows:

The word established indicates a theological category which characterizes a church whose mission has ceased; an established church is at peace with society and content with and in its own forms and inner life. The term is negative for it implies the presumption that the missionary task has been completed so that the church is no longer a mission but simply a community. In terms of missionary and pastoral activity ... an established church assumes only pastoral responsibilities (Haight 1980:10).

Niebuhr's evaluation is more negative. He calls the established church a captive church (Niebuhr 1935:128), a church corrupted by the idolatry of its culture (:123). Therefore, he argues, the “task of the present generation appears to lie in the liberation of the church from its bondage to a corrupt civilization” (:124, 128).

The Christendom church in the medieval period was an established church. Central to this church was its close link with the state. The church was often an instrument of state policy rather than a bearer of the coming reign of God.

The churches of the Reformation period hardly challenged this ecclesiology. Jose Miguez Bonino argues that the classical ecclesiologies of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation presupposed a Christendom context (Miguez Bonino 1975:155). They did not define themselves in terms of their calling to the world but rather in contrast with one another. When the Reformation shattered the unity of the church each of the various splinters was now compelled to define itself over against the other splinters. The churches of the Reformation distinguished themselves by the pure teaching of the gospel and the right administration of the sacraments. In the Council of Trent, the Roman Catholic church responded by accenting historical continuity and institutional

visibility and unity. Each prided itself in accentuating what they possessed and the other lacked. Both ecclesiologies were formed over against other churches rather than in terms of their calling in the world. And as David Bosch has observed:

In all these instances the church was defined in terms of what happens inside its four walls, not in terms of its calling in the world. The verbs used in the Augustana are all in the passive voice: the church is a place where the gospel is *taught* purely and the sacraments *are administered* rightly. It is a place where something is done, not a living organism doing something (Bosch 1991:249).

Stephen C. Neill has examined the ecclesiologies of this period by comparing the various confessional statements of the Anglican, Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed traditions (1968:71-77). Wilbert Shenk summarizes his findings:

The confessional statements of the other three traditions strike the same stance [as the Augsburg Confession of 1530]: all emphasize the *being* rather than the *function* of the church. Ecclesiologically the church is turned inward. The thrust of these statements, which were the very basis for catechizing and guiding the faithful, rather than equipping and mobilizing the church to engage the world, was to guard and preserve. This is altogether logical, of course, if the whole of society is by definition already under the lordship of Christ (Shenk 1995:38).

This kind of Christendom ecclesiology has shaped the self-consciousness of the church in western culture to the present day. There are a number of things, however, that are challenging this ecclesiology and encouraging a re-conception of the church. First, Christendom is dissolving in the acids of the Enlightenment. While the Enlightenment marked the end of the Christendom connection of church and state, the ecclesial mentality has not dissolved as quickly.² Not until the 20th century has the Christendom ecclesial consciousness begun to break down. This is happening as western culture becomes increasingly neo-pagan. The church, pushed to the margins of

²This is especially true in the United States. Perhaps this can be explained by looking at the thesis of Martin Marty (1969). He distinguishes between three kinds of secularity. There is *utter* secularity that took place in France. Here the state is violently opposed to the church and Christianity, seeking actively to eliminate it from the public square. Secondly, there is *mere* secularity as can be found in Britain. In this form there is not a concerted effort to rid society of God and religion but the church is simply ignored. The final form, *controlled* secularity, can be found in United States. There is a division of labour between church and state in terms of responsibility. The public/private dichotomy of modernity is structured into public policy. The church then is taken up into the larger society as another power alongside others, all of which strive toward the same goal. "In God We Trust" and "One Nation Under God" describe the umbrella under which all public institutions supposedly operate. This new form of Christendom has only begun to break down in the United States since the 1960s.

the public life of western culture, can no longer assume any kind of privileged place of power, influence, or standing in its cultural context.

The second factor that has challenged the reigning Christendom ecclesiology is the development of a missionary ecclesiology flowing from the cross-cultural missionary experience of the church. The world missionary conferences of the ecumenical tradition and Second Vatican Council are of decisive importance in this shift. For both, mission is no longer separated from the church; the church is “missionary by its very nature.” What does this mean for the church in the West? What impact would this have on the structures and ministry of the local congregation in western culture?

A third factor challenging a Christendom ecclesiology that has dominated the West is the rise and vitality of ethnic minority churches in the West. These churches have not embraced a Christendom ecclesiology and while there is a serious decline in the majority of older mainline churches these minority churches are among the fastest growing and most vital churches in the West.

Out of this dissolution of a Christendom ecclesiology, a missionary ecclesiology is developing. Two contemporary discussions highlight the need for a missionary ecclesiology. The first involves the continuing conversations within the World Council of Churches on ecclesiology. It was in the missionary conferences of the IMC and the WCC that a missionary ecclesiology emerged. The church was defined in terms of its participation in the *missio Dei*. However, there was a shift from an ecclesiocentric to a cosmocentric understanding of mission in the period following the Willingen meeting of the IMC (1952). Out of this shift two divergent understandings of the missionary church have emerged. The first emphasizes the church as a distinct body that continues the mission of Jesus in the world. The second emphasizes the work of the Spirit in the world of culture with the church restructuring itself to be involved in the social, political, economic, and ecological problems facing the world community. These two missionary ecclesiologies remain in tension to the present (Bosch 1991:381-389; Raiser 1991a). The second discussion is within the growing Gospel and Our Culture network in North America. Galvanized by Newbigin’s call for a missionary encounter with western culture, this network opened a vigorous conversation on the issue of ecclesiology (Guder 1998). These two discussions open up many issues surrounding a faithful missionary ecclesiology in the West.

1.2. NEWBIGIN’S SIGNIFICANCE FOR A MISSIONARY ECCLESIOLOGY FOR WESTERN CULTURE

This book will examine the missionary ecclesiology of Bishop J. E. Lesslie Newbigin that underlies his mission in western culture project. The promise of Newbigin for this issue is significant for three reasons. First, Newbigin’s work has served as the catalyst for bringing the issue of mission in western culture to the forefront of the agenda of mission studies (Hiebert 1997:230). The appearance of *The Other Side of 1984* (Newbigin 1983d)³ marks a major milestone for a missiology of western culture. With unusual skill the book crystallized a number of issues which have stimulated vigorous

³Hereafter all references to Newbigin’s work will simply note the date and page number.

discussion. Philip Morgan, former General Secretary of the British Council of Churches, described Newbigin's little book this way: "... with that peculiar skill possessed by Newbigin, it [*The Other Side of 1984*] brings together a range of ideas, relates them together and very sharply focusses a series of highly controversial positions and questions. The power of this small book to stimulate to excitement or vigorous refutation lies here" (Morgan 1985:4). The stream of books and articles written by Newbigin since that time has continued to focus the issue for many people. The Gospel and Our Culture movements in Britain, North America, and New Zealand, the Missiology of Western Culture project headed up by Wilbert Shenk, and a growing stream of publications on the issue bear witness to the stimulus that the work of Newbigin has produced in the last couple of decades. The promise of Newbigin for discussions on a missionary ecclesiology in North America is clear.

Second, Newbigin played an active and central role in the International Missionary Council and the Commission of World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches. After serving as a missionary in India for twenty-three years, Newbigin took the post of general secretary of the IMC and then director of CWME of the WCC. His influence was formative for many of the discussions throughout since 1948. Newbigin was shaped by the theology, missiology, and ecclesiology of the early ecumenical movement. Yet when there was a dramatic challenge to that paradigm, Newbigin was able to appropriate many of the insights of the new challenge. His flexibility along with his commitment to tradition makes his insight for the current ecclesiological discussions significant.

There is a third reason for focussing on the work of Newbigin. Not only has he provided an impetus for renewed reflection on the issue of mission in western culture and been an active participant in the ecumenical movement, Newbigin has also paid close attention to ecclesiological questions throughout his long and distinguished career (Verkuyl 1978:56) as a recognized leader in the context of three settings: as a missionary in India; as an ecumenical leader in a global context; and as a missionary to the West (cf. title of Stafford 1996). A glance at his bibliography reveals at once the interest that Newbigin has had in ecclesiological issues in his published work. His record as a missionary, bishop, ecumenical administrator, and pastor all testify to his commitment to the local church. Indeed, it is his vast experience in struggling for a missionary church in many different contexts that has nourished his deep and valuable theological reflection on ecclesiology. It is precisely the missionary ecclesiology developed by Newbigin that has been foundational for and formative of both his work within the ecumenical movement and his call for a missionary encounter with western culture. It is the purpose of this book to examine that ecclesiology.

1.3. METHOD OF RESEARCH: HISTORICAL AND SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS

The method of research followed is both historical and systematic. Newbigin's theology is first and foremost *ad hoc* and contextual. He never accepted the title of a scholar but viewed himself as a pastor who wanted to bring the light of the gospel to bear on the urgent issues of the day. Any examination of Newbigin's ecclesiology, therefore, must pay attention to the historical context in which his view of the church developed. My

research into Newbigin's ecclesiology has been carried out historically, examining his writings chronologically in the context of the day. This historical treatment of Newbigin's work will inform every page of this book. However, the presentation of his ecclesiology will be both historical and systematic.

The historical analysis will uncover the development of Newbigin's ecclesiology. It traces two inextricably intertwined factors. First, his experience as a churchman. Newbigin has varied from district missionary and evangelist in India, bishop in the Church of South India, ecumenical administrator in The International Missionary Council (IMC) and the World Council of Churches (WCC), member of a house church in Geneva, professor of missions at Selly Oak, to pastor in an inner city church in Britain—experiences that have had a formative impact on the development of his missionary ecclesiology. The second factor is the intellectual development of his ecclesiology as found in his publications. Newbigin has published many writings forged in the heat of a missionary engagement, hammering out clear lines of a missionary ecclesiology. Part One, the historical section of this book, treats certain themes and issues in his life and writing that are important for the development of his missionary ecclesiology.

Part Two, the systematic analysis will examine Newbigin's missionary ecclesiology in its relation to God, in relation to its mission, and its relation to the religio-cultural milieu. While I am careful to take full account of the historical context and development, my analysis of Newbigin's ecclesiology will be systematic. This venture is fraught with danger for a number of reasons. Newbigin is not a systematic theologian; he never wrote a systematic ecclesiology. Moreover, his writings are occasional and contextual, shaped by the burning issues of the day which he felt needed Scriptural reflection. Then, too, Newbigin's ecclesiology developed throughout his life. There are several major shifts in his thinking about the church that reshape his entire ecclesiology. Any distillation of a systematic ecclesiology runs the risk of presenting an ecclesiology that is a mirror of the author's understanding rather than that of Newbigin. Perhaps these objections would dictate against the attempt to express Newbigin's ecclesiology systematically were it not for a fundamental continuity in his thinking about the church. This continuity is succinctly expressed in the title of this book—*As the Father has sent me, I am sending you*. This text is taken from John 20:21, a verse Newbigin quoted numerous times in his ecclesiological articulation. Even though he never wrote a systematic ecclesiology, Newbigin dealt with the urgent concerns of his day from the standpoint of a consistent and deeply held understanding of the nature of the church. It is precisely because he did not write a systematic ecclesiology that this exercise is valuable; we can uncover the systematic theological reflection on the church that informed his approach to many matters in the course of his ministry. The various components of Newbigin's missionary ecclesiology will be uncovered and systematically explicated.

1.4. STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

This work will be made up of three primary parts—the historical development of Newbigin's missionary ecclesiology, a systematic treatment of his missionary

ecclesiology, and a concluding analysis.

Following this introductory chapter, there are two chapters that trace the historical context and formation of Newbigin's missionary ecclesiology. Newbigin's life is briefly sketched paying close attention to the historical factors and the ecclesial experiences that shaped his doctrine of the church. The historical formation of his ecclesiology is traced in terms of two basic shifts: the shift from a Christendom to a missionary ecclesiology and the shift from a Christocentric to a Christocentric-Trinitarian ecclesiology. Chapter two analyzes the first shift and chapter three, the second.

During the early period of his life, Newbigin was nourished by an ecclesiology that belonged to Christendom. By the decade of the 1950s, two fundamental factors led to a shift in which he understood the church in a missionary way. The first was his missionary experience in India. Eight years as a district missionary in Kanchipuram and another time period of similar length as bishop of Madurai led him to a reconsideration of his Christendom ecclesiology. The second factor was the influence of the developing missionary ecclesiology in the ecumenical tradition. Newbigin was a creative participant in this historical development. His missionary ecclesiology that formed during this time is most explicitly articulated in the books *The Household of God: Lectures on the Nature of the Church* (1953d) and *One Body, One Gospel, One World: The Christian Mission Today* (1958b). He became fully conscious of the new place the church now had in his thinking during the writing of *Sin and Salvation* (1956c). A comparison with earlier books that treat ecclesiology, *What is the Gospel?* (1942) and *The Reunion of the Church: A Defence of the South India Scheme* (1948b), indeed shows that Newbigin moved from a Christendom to a missionary ecclesiology.

The second shift took place between 1957 and 1961. At the New Delhi Assembly of the World Council of Churches in 1961 Newbigin realized that the ecclesiology of *One Body, One Gospel, One World* was inadequate. This was the result of a process begun four years earlier (1993h:144). Two factors were significant in this shift. First, the times were revolutionary. The collapse of colonialism, increased globalization, the modernization of the world, and the secularization of the West led to a time of rapid social change. These events had a deep impact on the church, theology, missions, and the ecumenical movement as they forced a rethinking of the activity of God in the world. Secondly, Newbigin was at the centre of the storm as an ecumenical leader in the IMC and the WCC. This ecclesiological shift was from a more Christocentric ecclesiology to a Christocentric-Trinitarian one and from a church-centric basis for mission to a notion that places the church in the context of God's purposes for the entire world. His first attempt to formulate this new understanding came with the book *The Relevance of Trinitarian Doctrine for Today's Mission* (1963g).

While Newbigin would modify, fine-tune, and reshape his ecclesiology in many contexts, his Christocentric-Trinitarian ecclesiology remained in place throughout the rest of his life and came to undergird his call for a missionary encounter with western culture.

Two brief quotes from Newbigin's autobiography will point to the logic of this

division.⁴ After seventeen years of missionary service, both as a district missionary and as a bishop in the Church of South India, Newbigin wrote:

I found as I wrote that book [*Sin and Salvation* (1956b)] that my thinking had changed in a significant way. Twenty years earlier in writing on this theme I had referred to the Church only in a very marginal way at the end of the essay. In answer to the question 'How does the salvation wrought by Christ become ours?' I had begun with faith and then moved on to speak of the Holy Spirit and the Church. Now I found that I had to begin with the Church ... and then go on to speak of word and sacraments, faith, regeneration, and justification (1993h:137).

This describes the shift from the first to the second period of Newbigin's ecclesiological development. His missionary and ecumenical experience contributed to this major shift that put the church into the centre of his theological thinking.

The second quote points to the second significant shift in Newbigin's ecclesiology. Reflecting on his new appointment as bishop of Madras in 1965 he wrote:

And my own point of view had changed.... Looking back in 1965 upon my earlier ministries in Kanchi and Madurai I felt that I had been too narrowly ecclesiastical in my concerns, and I resolved that I would challenge the strong churches of Madras City to think less of their own growth and welfare and more of God's purpose for the whole of the vast and growing city (1993h:203).

If the missionary context challenged Newbigin's thinking about the church during his years in Kanchi and Madurai, then his ecumenical experience amidst global revolutionary times sharpened his insight into the cosmic context of God's mission in the world. His experience in the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches broadened his vision further. The comprehensive scope of the kingdom and the mission of the Triune God in the world formed the setting for his ecclesiology. This was worked out in practice and writing both in Madras and in Britain.

For Newbigin, theology is reflection on the Scripture in the practice of mission. To understand his development, it is necessary to take account of both his faith and life experience as well as his theological reflection. Indeed, these two were so closely tied together that they cannot be separated. It will be important, therefore, to take account of the historical situation and ecclesial issues that shaped his writings. It is for this reason that the historical section contributes an important dimension to our understanding of Newbigin's missionary ecclesiology.

The second major part will consider Newbigin's systematic ecclesiology. The church has three primary relationships: to God, to its mission, and to its environment. The systematic section unfolds each of these relationships. The first relationship of the

⁴ The historical analysis that follows shows that Newbigin's recollection and self-consciousness of his ecclesiology is consistent with the historical evidence.

church to God is examined in chapters four and five: chapter four treats Newbigin's understanding of the *missio Dei*; chapter five examines the church's missionary identity as it participates in God's mission. The second relationship of the church to its mission is investigated in the next two chapters: chapter six deals with the institutional and communal dimension of the missionary church while chapter seven analyzes the church's task in the world. The third relationship of the church to its religio-cultural environment is sketched in the next two chapters: chapter eight considers Newbigin's understanding of contextualization; chapter nine examines a specific context—the mission of the church in western culture.

The final chapter, Part Three, poses the question of the promise of Newbigin's missionary ecclesiology for current discussions on the church. Two conversations are chosen: the discussion within the ecumenical movement regarding the relationship of the church to the world, and the discussion about the missional church within the Gospel and Our Culture network of North America.

1.5. SOURCES

The bibliography for this work is divided into three sections: Newbigin's own writings, works of other authors about Newbigin, and background works.

1.5.1. Primary Sources

The primary source for this work is Newbigin's own published and unpublished writings. These works are listed in the first part of the bibliography. This bibliography has been updated and expanded from the bibliography found in George R. Hunsberger's dissertation (1987).

Newbigin's writings range broadly, including systematic theological works (e.g., 1953d; 1956b), Biblical studies and commentaries (e.g., 1960b; 1982c), autobiographical reflection (e.g., 1951c; 1993h), speeches given in the context of his ministry (e.g., 1948b; 1950), occasional books and articles addressing important issues of the day (e.g., 1948d; 1982b), and essays in systematic missiology (1963g; 1978e; 1989e). Of special interest is Newbigin's autobiography *Unfinished Agenda* (1993h), first published in 1985 and updated in 1993. This autobiography enables us to follow the chronological development of Newbigin's life.

1.5.2. Secondary Sources

The secondary sources that deal with Newbigin can be divided into four parts. First, there are theses, dissertations and published books about Newbigin (e.g., Hunsberger 1987, Veldhorst 1989, Thomas 1996). Second, there are numerous book reviews that assess his publications. I have included only the book reviews cited in the text. Third, there is a growing body of literature dealing with twentieth-century theology, missiology or church history that reserves a prominent—and often large—place for a critical discussion of Newbigin's thought (e.g., Yates 1994:239-244; Ramachandra 1996:143-176). Fourth, there are several encyclopedia articles on Newbigin found in dictionaries of mission (e.g., West 1998, Thorogood 1991).

1.5.3. Background Works

There are many background works that have informed the writing of this book that are listed in the third category. First, there are books that give historical background to Newbigin's ministry and life. Books that deal with the history of the church in India, primary source documents and histories of the ecumenical movement, and mission histories are valuable in providing the historical context for Newbigin's life. Secondly, there are many books that Newbigin refers to throughout his writings that have shaped his thinking. For example, in 1912 Roland Allen wrote a book entitled *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's Or Ours?* which challenged the missionary practice of the Protestant churches in the 19th and 20th centuries. Allen's work has had a formative influence on Newbigin's critique of the relationship between western missions organizations and the younger churches. Out of this critique has developed much fruitful reflection on the missionary church. Instances like this could be multiplied: Hendrik Kraemer's *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World* (1938), Charles Cochrane's *Christianity and Classical Culture* (1939), Michael Polanyi's *Personal Knowledge* (1962) and Hendrikus Berkhof's *Christ and the Powers* (1962) and *Christ, the Meaning of History* (1966) are obvious examples. Thirdly, there is a growing amount of literature on the subject of a missiology of the West. This literature, developed from the questions asked by Newbigin in the 1980s, continues to provide the contemporary context for many of the issues that make the study of Newbigin's work valuable today. Fourth, current works in ecclesiology and missiology provide the theoretical backdrop against which Newbigin's contribution can be understood. Finally, I list some of the books that have significantly shaped the philosophical and theological lenses through which I view the church and Newbigin's development.