What in the world is God doing?
In the 19th century, thanks to the colonial system, missionaries were able to come and go as they pleased without passports, visas, residence permits and other forms of red tape; but when they entered those wide-open doors they found the hearts of the people closed against them. In the latter half of the 20th century the shoe is on the other foot. The political doors are sometimes difficult to enter; but once inside, missionaries find the hearts of the people are wide open. One thing is clear. God is doing a new work in some areas where New Life For All campaigns have been held there has been a 50 percent church growth in one year. The results are fantastic but can only be preserved with thorough follow-up by the churches.

The Church Growth Movement has gone into orbit in recent years. Church growth workshops have been held in 45 countries. Resource personnel have been unable to respond to the many calls that have come from all parts of the world. Vergil Gerber’s book, God’s Way to Keep a Church Going and Growing, has been published in 35 languages, with as many more on the way.

Theological Education by Extension, which began in Guatemala in 1960, aims to provide basic theological training for older pastors who cannot leave home, church, and farm or business to attend Bible school. By 1965 one hundred students had enrolled in the program. Ten years later there were 100 TEE institutions in 75 countries with a total enrollment of 40,000. Only persons who have served on the mission field can possibly appreciate the significance of this development.

Modern technology has made it possible to proclaim the Good News to all the world. Today there are 65 radio stations owned and operated by Christian missions in the Third World. Most of these are small with local coverage. Others are large and powerful enough to beam the gospel around the world by short-wave. One of these stations in Manila is broadcasting the gospel daily to 70 transmitters in 72 languages to more than two billion people in Asia. Every month 18,000 letters are received from almost 60 countries. More than 1,500,000 have enrolled in Bible correspondence courses. The operation requires a full-time staff of 400.

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church is on the move—teaching, preaching, helping, healing, building, growing. For the first time in history we have the tools and the techniques to finish the job of world evangelization in one generation. The only problem is manpower. Can we get the right kind of missionary in sufficient numbers to complete the task?

In his return from a recent world tour one Christian statesman said: "The more I see of what God is doing in the world, the more I am convinced that we stand today, at this very hour, on the threshold of the greatest spiritual advance the world has ever witnessed. Clearly God is telling us that tens of millions are ready and waiting to know Jesus Christ." —J. Herbert Kane

Facts & Figures

WORLD POPULATION. Now stands at 4.3 billion. Annual increase is 1.9%. Christians account for slightly less than 30%. There are more non-Christians in India and China than there are Christians in the entire world.

CHRISTIAN POPULATION. Estimated at 1.23 billion. Includes 710 million Roman Catholics, 300 million Protestants, and 100 million Eastern Orthodox. Evangelicals may number as many as 200 million.

PROTESTANT MISSIONS. Total number of missionaries—56,500. Divided as follows: From North America 37,000; United Kingdom 7,000; Europe 5,500; Third World 4,000; Other 3,000.

ROMAN CATHOLIC MISSIONS. Total number of missionaries—65,000. Of these 6,600 are from the U.S.A., down from a peak of 9,655 in 1968. American missionaries are supported by 230 different missions and orders.

AMERICAN MISSIONS. Mainline denominations (with few exceptions) are retrenching rapidly. Evangelical missions continue to expand. Recruitment is a continuing problem. Older societies, due to deaths and retirements, are barely holding their own. Younger societies are still forging ahead.

WORLD CHRISTIANITY. Christianity is losing ground in Europe; barely holding its own in North America; doing fairly well in Asia (outside China); gaining ground in Latin America; and registering phenomenal gains in Black Africa.

MUSLIM WORLD. Apart from Indonesia the Muslim world has yielded few converts to Christianity. Several Muslim countries are closed to Christian missionaries—Saudi Arabia, Syria, Libya, Somalia, Mauritania, South Yemen. Several Arab countries are using their fabulous oil revenues to promote the spread of Islam, especially in Black Africa. Some 25 million Muslims now reside in Europe where they are making their presence felt. The Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979 may well spark similar movements in other Muslim countries. In spite of this, however, there is reason for cautious optimism regarding the future of evangelical missions to the Muslim world.

COMMUNIST WORLD. Some 1.3 billion persons now live under Communism. All suffer some degree of religious perse-