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CHARLES FREER ANDREWS. A PARADIGM SHIFTER IN MISSION WORK IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT. Charles Freer Andrews is one of the outstanding personalities in the history of Christian missions in India. The description of his portrait and missionary activity is not an easy task, especially because of his involvement in the nationalistic movement in India. Andrews was a revolutionary primarily in the area of missions. He applied some missionary principles which are widely accepted today, but were hardly understood in his time. It is not the purpose of this study to give a biography of Charles Freer Andrews. There are a number of biographical works that deal with it. This study gives only a short account of his biography in terms of dates, places and events. It is the purpose of this study to reflect on Andrews' work in India and for India as well as on how his contemporaries and later critics evaluated his philosophy, activity, and achievements.

KEY WORDS: Mission, Indian Nationalistic Movement, Catalyst of reconciliation, Christian dialogue with other religions, Incarnational Ministry

Introduction

Charles Freer Andrews is one of the outstanding personalities in the history of Christian missions in India. The description of his portrait and missionary activity is not an easy task, especially because of his involvement in the nationalistic movement in India. Andrews was a revolutionary primarily in the area of missions. He applied some missionary principles which are widely accepted today, but were hardly understood or practiced in his time.

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his contemporaries and later critics evaluated his philosophy, activity, and achievements. While parts of his theology do not fit into the frame of conservative evangelical Christianity, there can be drawn some principles that can be applied to the present context of the "Church in the Fortress" (that is, the body of Christ in the culture and society where it exists).

Biographical Information

Charles Freer Andrews was born on February 12, 1871, in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. He was one of fourteen children to his parents, John Edwin Andrews and Mary Charlotte Andrews (née Carwright). His father was a minister in the Catholic Apostolic Church in Birmingham. Andrews attended King Edward VI School in Birmingham. In 1893 he graduated from Pembroke College, Cambridge, with a degree in classics.

Andrews became a deacon in 1896, and took over the Pembroke College Mission in south London. In 1897, he became a priest, and also became Vice-Principal of Westcott House Theological College in Cambridge. He returned to teach at Pembroke College, Cambridge, in 1899, and he remained there until 1903.

In 1904, Andrews went to Delhi as a missionary and taught for ten years as a member of the brotherhood of the Cambridge Mission to Delhi at St. Stephen's College. He soon became Principal of the College. In 1907, he supported the appointment of S. K. Rudra as Principal of St. Stephen's College, the first Indian Principal.

From 1914, Andrews committed himself to exploring the relationship between the commitment to the Gospel and the commitment to social justice, especially in India. He supported Indian political aspirations and worked on reconciliation on various levels. He died in Calcutta on April 5, 1940, in his sixty-ninth year.

Religious Background and Pilgrimage

Andrews' family belonged to the Catholic Apostolic Church, founded on the precept of the charismatic Scottish preacher Edward Irving. Being influenced by Westcott and a moderately high-church type of Anglicanism during his years in Cambridge, Andrews became an Anglican in 1895. He had a conversion experience which made him a new man. In the same year he took up lay parish work at Monkwearmouth, in Westcott's Diocese of Durham. He was made a deacon in 1896 and was "priested" in 1897, working during this time among the urban poor in the Pembroke College Mission in Walworth, South London (1896-99).[1]

During his first years in India, Andrews broke away from the mainstream of Christian theology, moving gradually further in a liberal direction, until, finally, in 1914, he felt himself unable to continue to serve as an Anglican priest.[2] He became

1 Eric J. Sharpe, "The Legacy of C. F. Andrews" *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* (1985): 117.

2 Sharpe, "The Legacy of C. F. Andrews", 117.

involved with the Indian National Congress and traveled extensively to investigate the conditions of Indians (Fiji, Kenya, Guiana). In 1931, he accompanied Gandhi to the Second Round Table Conference in London.

In 1936, he resumed his Anglican ministry after and interval of twenty-two years. The last years of his life were spent again as an Anglican priest. Sharpe thinks that this suggests that the church's sacramental life had always been important to him, and that without it he had long felt himself to be lacking something.[3] O'Connor interprets his return to the church and its ministry by giving the explanation that missions and churches in India were themselves rethinking their concept of mission, and were moving along Andrews' own line. Maybe the truth is somewhere between the two interpretations, or it includes both.

Andrews' Ministry in India between 1904-1914

Andrews offered himself to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts for missionary work in India in 1903. His closest friend, Westcott's youngest son, Basil, had died prematurely in India, and it seems that Andrews hoped to replace him in some way. When he went to India he did not approach it as a mission field to be overrun than as a source of light and truth.

Andrews landed in India in 1904, he joined the Cambridge Brotherhood in Delhi and taught philosophy at St. Stephen's College. During this time the Indian Nationalist Movement was gearing up. The Indian National Congress was formed in 1885,

> partly as a result of the self-assurance which the cultural renaissance had given to the Indian people… When Congress began to agitate for full political freedom, the British government became hostile to it. After this, many Indian Christians were for a while reluctant to uphold Congress because their Churches still depended on mission support.[4]

Also, there was a fear among some Christians that India will become independent under a Hindu government. These were the political and social conditions of the time when Andrews served as a missionary in India. He became friends with many Indian colleagues and students, and he supported Indian political aspirations, while being annoyed by the racist behavior of some British compatriots towards the Indians. This attitude was not in concordance with the British politics of his days. Pirouet clearly points out in his church history treatise that "after the uprising against the British of 1857, the British government discouraged missionaries from 'interfering' in social questions in case they caused trouble".[5] Therefore, Andrews' position was not politically correct from the point of view of Britain. It can be stated that

3 Sharpe, "The Legacy of C. F. Andrews", 120.
4 Louise Pirouet, *Christianity Worldwide: AD 1800 Onwards* (London: SPCK, 1991), 67.
5 Pirouet, *Christianity Worldwide: AD 1800*, 61.

he had been a missionary for a turbulent decade in modern Indian history, he was a personal meeting point of forces in tension.[6]

The Continuation of the Ministry after 1914

Andrews developed a close friendship with Mahatma Gandhi, whom he met in South Africa, during a visit that had the goal of helping the Indian community there to solve their tensions with the government. At that time Andrews convinced Gandhi to return to India with him, in 1915. Andrews was known as Gandhi's closest friend. Gandhi nicknamed him *Christ's Faithful Apostle*, based on the initials of his name. Andrews also befriended Rabindranath Tagore, the Indian poet and philosopher, with whom he spent considerable time in conversations.

In 1914 Andrews relinquished his teaching post at St. Stephen's College, Delhi, to join Rabindranath Tagore at Shantiniketan. This was the year he met Gandhi for the first time, and for years his life was closely linked with the two Hindus. His missionary colleagues found it hard to appreciate his decision, and none of them followed him. Due to the "directions" given by the British government regarding the non-interference of missionaries in social questions, "missionaries were becoming less sure about the rightness of attacking social customs. Perhaps this should be done by Indian Christians"[7]—so they thought. This did not mean that missionaries refrained from helping the poor. They focused on the masses that had become Christians, and worked on educating them and lifting them out of their deep poverty. What they were careful not to do was changing of social customs, because if this antagonized people, the missionaries would no longer get government support.[8]

Andrews worked hard not only on helping the poor, but he tried to get to the roots of the poverty; the social customs of those days were rather strongly established roots of poverty. Christianity was concerned about material and social problems of the poor from the beginning, as the New Testament testifies it. Jesus is presented in the Gospels as linking love of neighbor with love of God. Several of his parables reflect his concern in this direction: the good Samaritan (Luke 10:29-37), the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31), the judgment of the nations (Matthew 25:31-46). The early church continued this concern for the poor as reflected by the book of Acts. Through the centuries, Christians initiated and conducted many efforts for human welfare (hospitals, orphanages, abolition of slavery), and Christian missions always incorporated in their outreach this type of concern all over the world. William Carey, the pioneer of the modern Protestant mission movement, was also a pioneer in the crusades he led throughout his life against the social evils

6 Eric J. Sharpe, Review of *Gospel, Raj and Swaraj: The Missionary Years of C. F. Andrews 1904-1919*, by Daniel O'Connor. *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 17 (1993): 39.

7 Pirouet, *Christianity Worldwide: AD 1800 Onwards*, 61.

8 Pirouet, *Christianity Worldwide: AD 1800 Onwards,* 61.

of those days in India. Missionaries in all parts of the world emulated this attitude with much fervor.[9] Charles Freer Andrews followed the steps of many predecessors.

Ralph Winter, in his presentation of the three eras of missions, insists that

> if the First Era was characterized by reaching coastland peoples and the Second Era by inland territories, the Third Era must be characterized by the more difficult-to-define, non-geographical category which we have called „Unreached Peoples"—people groups which are socially isolated.[10]

The low-caste multitudes of Indians were just these socially isolated people groups that Winter talks about, and through his efforts to reach and help this social category, Andrews can be considered a missionary of the Third Era. Also, because the concept of reaching the socially isolated people has been very hard to define, „the Third Era has been even slower getting started than the Second Era"[11], and consequently Andrews might be considered still a pioneer of the Third Era. Analizing his life and ministry, it becomes clear that his means of reaching these masses were rather peculiar, his approach was more from the direction of their social emancipation than the spreading of the Gospel in the first place.

David Wells sees in the parable of Jesus about the widow and the unjust judge (Luke 18:1-8) a pattern that should be emulated by Christians with respect to unjust situations. He interprets petitionary prayer as being, in essence, rebellion "against the world in its fallenness, the absolute and undying refusal to accept as normal what is pervasively abnormal. It is… the refusal of every agenda… that is at odds with the norm as originally established by God".[12] This refusal of Andrews to accept as normal the evils that the Indian society of those times had to face brings him in line with the principle laid out by Wells. Through the parable presented by Jesus one can understand that Christians should direct their petitionary efforts primarily towards God, but one might also think that there are several other avenues where Christians need to be active and not accept an evil status quo. It is not easy to decide how much petitionary prayer was Andrews' every day practice, but analizing his activities during those years it is clear that he did not want to surrender values that he found to be true.

> … to come to an acceptance of life "as it is", to accept it on its own terms- which means acknowledging the *inevitability* of the way it works—is to surrender a Christian view of

9 Winston Crowley, *Global Mission: A Story to Tell* (Nashville: Broadman, 1985), 281.

10 Ralph D. Winter, "Four Men, Three Eras, Two Transitions", *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement. A Reader,* ed. by Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne (Pasadena, CA: Paternoster, 1992), B-42.

11 Winter, "Four Men, Three Eras, Two Transitions", B-42.

12 David F. Wells, "Prayer: Rebelling Against the Status Quo", *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement. A Reader,* ed. by Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne (Pasadena, CA: Paternoster, 1992), 145.

> God. This resignation to what is abnormal has within it the hidden and unrecognized assumption that the power of God to change the world, to overcome Evil by Good, will not be actualized.[13]

It cannot be said that in 1914 Andrews reached the end of his missionary years. Somehow his pilgrimage reflects the words of Winston Crawley regarding the changes in the life of a missionary: "Even if a missionary's assignment continues the same for many years, the role is still a changing one. The world changes, and its changes affect Christian missions. New ways are required by new days".[14] Andrews felt that the changes in India required new ways from his part. It is true that he detached himself from a "formal missionary role", but it was only to start a new kind of missionary model, which was very personal and peculiar. He did not take on some of the specific work of many missionaries, such as direct church development work or leadership training. His approach to team work among missionaries seem to be peculiar too. In many missions settings missionaries are specialists, each carrying out a specific function, but they also make up a team. This team work does not appear to have been Andrews' approach, and probably a decisive cause was the fact that most missionaries did not agree with his approach to the Indian problems.

During this period Andrews traveled a lot and supported the cause of the poor and underprivileged, both inside and outside India. "He wrote, spoke, lobbied, and negotiated on their behalf, producing a constant stream of books and articles in the attempt to interpret India to, and arouse the conscience of the West".[15] His focus on the poor can be considered a pioneer attitude. Although the twenty-first century considers this focus an all-present trend in missions, at the time of Andrews' presence in India it was rather new. If there is a land that asks for an increased concern for world hunger, India is for sure such a land. The situation was not better at the time of Andrews' work in India.

WhileAndrews supported wholeheartedly the causes of Indians, he must have been under the pressure of a new wave of rejection of Christianity from the part of nationals. Gandhi returned from South Africa in 1915 and his interest in the teaching of the New Testament encouraged many Hindus to read the Gospels. This attitude was not unique among prominent Indians. Historical records attest to the fact that

> during the nineteenth century Indian religious leaders, writers and scholars began to be interested in Christ and His teachings. Not many of them became Christians—some in fact actively opposed missionary teaching—but all of them, in one way or another, were deeply influenced by what they learnt about Christ.[16]

13 Wells, "Prayer: Rebelling Against the Status Quo", 145.
14 Crowley, *Global Mission: A Story to Tell*, 192.
15 Sharpe, "The Legacy of C. F. Andrews", 118.
16 Pirouet, *Christianity Worldwide: AD 1800 Onwards*, 64.

While Gandhi's attitude was quite positive towards the Gospel, yet at the same time "his policy of telling Hindus that they could have all the good things of Christianity without ceasing to be Hindus was perhaps the strongest factor in limiting the spread of Christianity among educated Hindus in this period".[17] All of this was known by the missionaries and it made even harder for them to understand Andrews' close association with Gandhi.

Andrews' Theology

Andrews' vision of Christianity was simple, profound, and, above all, practical. He was not an innovator in terms of missionary theology, although many contemporaries did not understand him because of his rather "strange" approaches.

His uniqueness lay in the intensity with which he labored to translate that vision into a life of practical service.[18] He believed that faith must be practiced. It was not a mere profession of a creed. Genuine faith had to be expressed by actions, some of which are oriented towards the specific needs of people. At the other end of the spectrum is the philosophy that the specific needs of the world should set the agenda for the mission work. Sometimes it seems that Andrews walked on a thin line that is found between these two philosophies. Winston Crawley points out that the biblical conviction is that "the agenda of the church is already set within the *Missio Dei*. However, the church deals with that agenda in a real world, and the way in which the agenda is handled must reflect the realities of the human condition and human needs".[19]

Andrews' theology was largely influenced by Westcott. He placed a particular emphasis on the Gospel of John. In those days the common missionary approach was the Pauline approach, with its emphasis on sin and forgiveness or the "synoptic" approach, where the emphasis was on the kingdom of God as an ideal earthly society. The Johannine approach emphasized Christ as the Light and Life of all mankind, and it was translated by Andrews into a program of social action. Although Andrews was a socialist, as Sharpe describes him, he was not a Marxist.[20]

His encounter with peoples of many religions during his years of service undoubtedly shaped his attitudes towards other religions. He respected and refused to condemn other religions. His was an unusual sensitivity to the religious situation—a characteristic that is required anyway of missionaries. He treated people of other religions with respect, fairness, understanding, and he was not afraid of engaging even their leaders into dialogue. At the same time, he did not mean that all religions are equal. He believed that the fulfillment of all religious aspirations can be achieved only in Jesus Christ. Contrary to Gandhi's view on religious conversion,

17 Neill Stephen, *A History of Christian Missions* (London: Penguin Books, 1987), 442.
18 Sharpe, "The Legacy of C. F. Andrews", 118.
19 Crowley, *Global Mission: A Story to Tell*, 100.
20 Sharpe, "The Legacy of C. F. Andrew", 118.

Andrews believed that people can change their religion if the new faith would make their lives more fruitful. His openness to other religions did not mean giving up the uniqueness of Christ. All these theological convictions made Andrews to move out of his narrow priestly vocation to one of prophetic mediation and peacemaking.[21]

Andrews tried to understand the beliefs and the values of the Hindus. This attitude reflected the mission principle according to which "the missionary needs to understand the terminology, the history and beliefs, the values, and insofar as possible the psychology of the religion that is prominent where he serves".[22] Andrews was determined to identify with the people of India, whom he served, but he did not surrender his Christian standards and values.

As a principle that can be applied in today's context of the "Church in the Fortress", it is important not to cease contact with those of other convictions and religions, but to seek to develop a relational type of evangelism, build bridges of understanding through which Christians can present Christ and the gospel in the most natural way, in a natural setting and within the frame of a real friendship which, of course, does not agree with or join sin or erroneous theological thoughts. Christ assumed human flesh and he emptied and humbled himself in order to reveal himself. This incarnational type of ministry is the desired approach for today's missionary endeavors.

Andrews' Message of Reconciliation

The New Testament clearly presents God's plan of reconciling all things to himself, by making peace through the blood of Christ shed on the cross (Colossians 1:19-20; Ephesians 2:16; 1 Timothy 2:5). This plan is in line with the original intention at creation and it is now adjusted to the realities of the presence of sin in the world.[23] People reconciled to God are also people reconciled to one another. Everywhere he went, Andrews carried a message of reconciliation, among individuals and communities and nations. And above all, the great principle of reconciliation was the cross of Christ.

The blood of Christ is central to God's plan of reconciliation. Howard Snyder explains that "the reconciliation won by Christ reaches to all the alienations that resulted from our sin",[24] and that includes alienations between nations, even between a colonizing and a colonized nation. God's redemptive power is the one that is able to overcome hatreds and heal hostilities. Without this redemptive power all efforts are futile or incomplete at their best. According to 2 Corinthians 5:17-21, God entrusted to the Church the message and the ministry of reconciliation. In

21 Asish Mondal, "Charles Freer Andrews: A Disciple Extraordinary". *Indian Church History Review* 25 (1991): 54.

22 Crowley, *Global Mission: A Story to Tell*, 232.

23 Howard A. Snyder, "The Church in God's Plan", *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement. A Reader,* ed. by Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne (Pasadena, CA: Paternoster, 1992), 135.

24 Snyder, "The Church in God's Plan", 135.

other words, the church should be the catalyst of reconciliation, and the servants of the church (missionaries included) can be instrumental to this effect. The examination of the life and work of Charles Freer Andrews leads the reader to conclude that he was a catalyst who tried to facilitate reconciliation. Andrews was concerned about racism and inter-racial reconciliation. He argued that the Indian people are intellectually and spiritually on the same level as white people and the deserve dignity and honour.

As a missionary, Andrews' presence in India and at the crossroads of the society of those days had its own value. Since the Second World War, some missiologists have urged that Christian presence is one of the leading methods of engaging in today's mission work. In other words, the witness lies in "simply being a specific kind of people while living among other people".[25] Andrews' presence among the Indians was a way of presenting the gospel, but one needs to remember Johannes Verkuyl's evaluation of such approach: "the idea that presence is witness has deep roots in the Old Testament. The prophets continually claimed that by her very act of living out her divine appointment to serve, Israel becomes a sign and bridge for the other nations… However, I do not believe it is correct to view the missionary motif only in terms of the concept of presence".[26] Andrews' mission work cannot be summarized only by making it equivalent with his presence, but that presence was definitely part of his work.

God's presence is an exceedingly more important and changing factor in any setting. When God is actively present through his servants, his church, there is a secular assumption that is refuted: "God may be 'present' and 'active' in the world, but it is not a presence and an activity that changes anything".[27]

Andrews did an excellent job in identifying with the local people. In mission work, identification is a much needed characteristic of a true missionary, as part of the cultural adaptation.[28]

C. F. Andrews as a Writer

Andrews' first book was published in 1896, *The Relation of Christianity to the Conflict between Capital and Labour*. This first book revealed his Christian socialist orientation. At this time he had not yet begun to contemplate work in India.

He wrote books about his heroes—Gandhi, Tagore, Sundar Singh, Zaka Ullah, such as *Mahatma Gandhi: His Own Story, Mahatma Gandhi at Work: His Own Story Continued, Mahatma Gandhi's Ideas, Sadhu Sundar Singh: A Personal Memoir, Zaka Ullah of Delhi, The Hungry Stones, and Other Stories* (with Rabindranath Tagore).

25 Johannes Verkuyl, "Biblical Foundation for the Worldwide Mandate", in *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement. A Reader*, ed. by Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne (Pasadena, CA: Paternoster, 1992), 52.

26 Verkuyl, "Biblical Foundation for the Worldwide Mandate", 52.

27 Wells, "Prayer: Rebelling Against the Status Quo", 145.

28 Crowley, *Global Mission: A Story to Tell*, 168.

India and Indians appear in several of his writings: *Documents Relating to the Indian Question, India and Britain: a Moral Challenge, India and the Pacific, India and the Simon Report, Indian Logic and Atomism, North India, The Indian Earthquake, The Indian Problem, The Opium Evil in India, The Renaissance in India, The Rise and Growth of the Congress in India, The True India: a Plea for Understanding*.

He was concerned not only for those who lived in India, but also for the Indians outside the country. This concern is reflected among others in *An Interim Statement Concerning East Indian Conditions in British Guiana*. Other writings treat various topics on social or spiritual matters: *Christ and Labour, Non-co-operation, The Good Shepherd, The Sermon on the Mount, To the Students, What I Owe to Christ*.

Andrews continued to write even during the years that preceded his death. Some of these works were focusing on Christian devotion, such as *Christ in the Silence* (1933), *Christ and Prayer* (1937), *Christ and Human Need* (1937), and *The Inner Life* (1939).

Andrews' Philosophy of Mission

C. F. Andrews worked in India during its struggle for national independence. It has been said that the British "used Christianity to support their rule, and this has sometimes led to too close an identification between imperialism and Christian missionary work".[29] R. Pierce Beaver contends that all missions were paternalist and colonialist at the turn of the twentieth century.[30] British missionaries were often identified with those wanting to keep India under subjection, but Andrews was an exception. He did not practice the double kind of cultural imperialism mentioned by John Stott: "imposing our own culture on others and despising theirs".[31]

Helping the Poor by Influencing National Leaders

The World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh in 1910 gathered an impressive amount of studies and surveys and they revealed that "the native church was really a fact and was resting under paternal domination".[32] The result of this was that following the Conference an impressive drive for "devolution" of authority from the mission organization to the church emerged. Practically all boards and societies gave lip service, at least, to this ideal.[33]

29 Pirouet, *Christianity Worldwide: AD 1800 Onwards*, 57.

30 R. Pierce Beaver, "The History of Mission Strategy", *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement. A Reader,* ed. by Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne (Pasadena, CA: Paternoster, 1992), 69.

31 John R. W. Stott, "The Bible in World Evangelization", *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement. A Reader,* ed. by Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne (Pasadena, CA: Paternoster, 1992), A 7.

32 Beaver, "The History of Mission Strategy", 69.

33 Beaver, "The History of Mission Strategy", 69.

At the same time, it is worth remembering what Stephen Neil says about the attitude of the missionaries working in colonial settings:

> It must not be supposed that missionaries were all the time resisting the passionate desire of their people for independence. The vast majority of the Christians, never having experienced anything but the 'colonial' situation of missions, were fairly well content with its advantages, and had hardly an idea that it could be changed. And when the possibilities of change were put before them, many Christians… viewed the proposals with horror.[34]

This general attitude absolves in a way those missionaries that remained unmoved by the struggles of those who were seeking independence. At the same time, it shows how Andrews' philosophy of mission was rather different.

Studies show that Andrews was not the only missionary who considered it important to help the cause of the poor and low-castes. Almost four hundred years earlier, Bartholome de las Casas and other missionaries struggled heroically for the rights of the Carib Indians, and "since then protection of primitive people against exploitation by whites and by colonial governments has been an important function of missions".[35]

Later, the "Serampore Trio" of William Carey, Joshua Marshman, and William Ward worked for the transformation of society almost a century earlier, and they became an important force that had multiple impact on several levels: social reform and clear direction for Hindus to enlightened views on old wrongs and their elimination on one hand, and exertion of pressure on the colonial government on the other hand.[36] The transformation of society under the influence of the gospel was multifaceted and through his philosophy of missions Andrews followed into the steps of these predecessors in India.

Eric Sharpe gives details concerning Andrews' friendship with Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore and other leaders, which shows clearly that he could not be accused as being an enemy of the Indians.[37] However, his approach of befriending national leaders was not new. From the beginning of the missionary work in India, missionaries tried to reach with the Gospel the educated Indians of the higher castes. In the seventeenth century Robert the Nobili, and later, in the middle of the nineteenth century the Scotsman Alexander Duff believed that "the Indian populace could be won for Christ only if the Brahmin caste were first brought to our Lord. He sought to win Brahmin youths through a program of higher education in the English language".[38]

34 Stephen, *A History of Christian Missions*, 383-384.
35 Beaver, "The History of Mission Strategy", 59.
36 Beaver, "The History of Mission Strategy", 66.
37 Sharpe, "The Legacy of C. F. Andrews", 117.
38 Beaver, "The History of Mission Strategy", 66.

The hope of such missionaries was that "if a good number of these became Christians, it would be easy for the rest of the population to follow".[39] However, for those who were from the upper-casts it was difficult to become a Christian because they had too much to lose: family, friends, privileges. The number of high-caste Hindus that converted to Christianity was relatively small, and the missionaries realized that this method would not bring the expected results.[40] One can imagine the challenge faced by high-caste Hindus converted to Christianity trying to obey Christ's command to invite the outcasts into their lives: "When you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed" (Luke 14:13-14). It had to be the inner constraint of a life totally changed by Christ.

Donald McGavran rightly points out that in bringing *peoples* to Christ it is important to be aware of the layers of strata of society. The individuals in each stratum are limited to their own society, that is, their own people.[41] Low-caste Hindus and high-caste Hindus were definitely separate layers of the Indian society, and missionaries first failed to recognize the gap between these subsocieties and the challenges of bringing the high-caste Hindus to Christ through the low-caste Hindus.

One of the factors of small response to the gospel from the part of nationals was the foreignness involved in the whole process. The new religion was foreign, and if the locals joined the new religion, they also had to join an entirely foreign way of living, proclaimed by foreigners, led by foreigners and ruled by foreigners. If, however, someone became a Christian, he was generally considered to have "joined another race".[42] That is another reason why the close relationship of Andrews with the nationals was significant. They did not consider him a foreigner, and that was meant to be conducive to more openness towards his religion, Christianity. The walls of prejudice towards foreign missionaries could be high, especially because they were coming from the country that was colonizing them. Andrews' attitude towards Indians and his tireless work for their betterment had significant impact on tearing down walls of prejudice. The same pattern is presented in the period of the Acts of the Apostles: the Apostle Paul writes about himself that he had become all things to all people so that by all possible means he might save some (1 Corinthians 9:22). Andrews in an inadvertent way became Indian to the Indians.

Despite of the failure of missionaries to attract large numbers of high-caste Hindus to Christianity, Andrews maintained a very good relationship with the leaders, they were not just high-caste Hindus, but leaders in the whole nation. If they became Christian, there would have been a rather high probability of influencing not

39 Pirouet, *Christianity Worldwide: AD 1800 Onwards*, 58.

40 Pirouet, *Christianity Worldwide: AD 1800 Onwards*, 58.

41 Donald A. McGavran, "The Bridges of God", *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement. A Reader,* ed. by Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne (Pasadena, CA: Paternoster, 1992), 137.

42 McGavran, "The Bridges of God", 144.

only the poor masses, but also the high-caste Hindus to consider accepting Christianity. Donald McGavran insists that in an Oriental society "group decision is not the sum of separate individual decisions. The leader makes sure that his followers will follow".[43] Andrews seemed to be aware of this as he developed a close relationship with the top leaders, lived out the Gospel and proved that he was concerned about the welfare of their people. If they accepted the Christ whom he represented as ambassador, their followers were likely to accept him too. This process was called later a "People Movement" in missiology.

While Andrews had a good relationship with the national leaders, he did not forget about the poor. The "outcastes" had no place in the Indian society, they could not own land and the work they did was considered too degrading by the rest of the population. Before and after the turn of the nineteenth century India experienced a number of famines and epidemies, and Christian churches organized relief for the poor of the society, since they were affected the most. Large numbers of these people wanted to be accepted by the Christian churches (they wanted to be baptized), but some of the missionaries "thought that many of the poor only joined the Church so as to get famine relief and aid, and had no real desire to follow the Christian faith; and they feared that if the churches were filled with 'untouchable', no one else would want to join them".[44]

One other difficulty for the missionaries was the differences between the Western individualistic societies and the Oriental societies where the decisions of the community overrules any individual decision. In a Western culture a member of a family can decide to become Christian without being ostracized by the rest of the family or community. Mission work and evangelism done from such an approach was extremely difficult to develop in the Indian culture. The cultural setting provided a framework in which bringing whole families and communities to Christ seemed easier than trying to win one individual in the midst of a totally non-Christian community. This setting makes it easier to understand the importance of Andrews' efforts directed not only towards helping certain individuals to come out from the deep poverty and misery and know the true liberation provided by Christ, but towards influencing entire communities and subsocieties through their leaders and their emerging structures of leadership.

Andrews had a deep concern for the poor and he was not reluctant in working for their spiritual benefit and liberation from poverty. The challenge of the Social Gospel has been a presence long before the dawn of the twenty-first century, and Andrews had to face it a century earlier. Especially people affected by uncertainty and relativism concerning the truths of the Gospel had the tendency to back away from the traditional gospel core of faith and salvation. Such persons began to emphasize social concerns as if they were the only true Christian gospel.[45] Although

43 McGavran, "The Bridges of God", 140.
44 Pirouet, *Christianity Worldwide: AD 1800 Onwards*, 137.
45 Crowley, *Global Mission: A Story to Tell*, 282.

Andrews did not leave out the proclamation of the gospel of Christ in India, at times his energies were used extensively for the social aspect of the ministry. On the whole, the testimony of his entire activity in India drew the attention of the nationals to the full meaning of the gospel:

> Combining evangelism… with compassionate ministries gives the clearest testimony to the full meaning of the gospel and has the greatest long-range effectiveness, both in meeting material needs and in accomplishing spiritual purposes.[46]

His servant attitude was clearly another valuable characteristic of a true missionary. He loved and respected the people of India, and he was also respected and trusted by them. Tatlow mentions that "Andrews is known all over the world as the Englishman who is more trusted than any other by the people of India".[47] It is accurate to state that Andrews' service was an incarnational type of ministry. "In cross-cultural missions, such ministry is not possible by brief or superficial contact. It requires long-range depth involvement".[48] Only in an incarnational type of ministry it is possible to develop warm personal relations with those of other cultures, and the deep friendship Andrews built in relation to some of the Indian personalities of those days prove that he was strongly motivated by this type of mission work.

Andrews' support of the movement was not uncritical. O'Connor says that "his passion was to translate into terms of practical service the theology of the incarnation he had learned from the Christian Socialists, and especially from Westcott in Cambridge".[49] Westcott provided him with a new theology, Platonic, Johannine, and socially activist. Sharpe mentions that "despite his socialism, Andrews came to India a moderate imperialist. This phase did not last, however, and very soon he had identified himself completely with the Indian national movement".[50]

Daniel O'Connor is one of the writers who present Andrews' agonizing efforts to respond to the Indian nationalism and the renaissance of traditional religions accompanying it. He assumes that Andrews tried to interpret them in the light of the gospel and to re-interpret Christ in a more inclusive manner.[51] Although contextualization is a relatively new term (began to be used widely in relation to missions in 1972)[52], Andrews was keen to implement the essentials of this concept. The central question in contextualization is the relationship of the Christian faith to culture. In his approach he tried to avoid the dangers thath can arise as related to contextualization: foreignness or rigidity on one side, and syncretism on the other.

46 Crowley, *Global Mission: A Story to Tell*, 293.
47 Tissington Tatlow, *The Story of the Student Christian Movement of Great Britain and Ireland* (London: Student Christian Movement Press, 1933), 140.
48 Crowley, *Global Mission: A Story to Tell*, 149.
49 Sharpe, Review of *Gospel, Raj and Swaraj: The Missionary Years of C. F. Andrews 1904-1919*, 39.
50 Sharpe, "The Legacy of C. F. Andrews", 117.
51 Madathilparampil Mammen Thomas, Review of *Gospel, Raj and Swaraj: The Missionary Years of C. F. Andrews 1904-1919*, by Daniel O'Connor, *International Review of Mission* 81 (1992): 483.
52 Crowley, *Global Mission: A Story to Tell*, 202.

Andrews never lost either his contact with the poor or his ideal of service to the poor. He considered the nationalist movement a potential for unity between Hindus and Muslims and for uplift of the depressed classes. Therefore, he acknowledged the presence of Christ in it and sought to work out his own Christian mission in India in relation to it. Andrews discriminated between religion and religion. He saw popular Hinduism as evil and criticized the anti-Christian character of some ideologies of nationalism. He considered Christianity the one final religion of universal brotherhood.

Andrews' Attitude toward the Modern Missionary Movement

Andrews condemned the missionary movement to India as a failure. One of the characteristics of those times was that missionaries were rather slow to recognize and trust the gifts of indigenous Christians.[53] This criticism was shaped by his experience on the field and, as Jeffrey Cox says, "it was often directed to the Anglican presence in Delhi".[54] Westcott held up as a model the Alexandrian school of the second and third centuries, where Clement and Origen brought the culture of the Greeks to bear on Christian truth. This school was notable for its recognition of truth in non-Christian philosophies. This kind of approach was the dream of Westcott concerning India, and Andrews was a faithful follower of these principles. However, the Protestant missionaries in India had conducted a frontal assault on Hinduism and Islam. They hoped to demonstrate the complete truth of Christianity by contrasting it with the complete falsehood of the other religions.[55]

As an application of the principle of recognition of truth in non-Christian philosophies, in post-communist countries of the twenty-first century there are truths spoken by magistrates about justice and integrity, which need to be taken into account by the body of Christ. The problem is not the validity of these truths, but the fact that such lifestyle is possible only for those who were born anew through Christ. Therefore, the body of Christ is not called to negate truths espoused by political leaders of magistrates—meaning those truths that have their basis in the Bible (such as the Ten Commandments), but to demonstrate by word and deed that the only way of materializing them is through a new life in Christ, not through a new social order.

Andrews made a clear difference between bearing public witness to one's faith and proselytism.

> He believed that Christians should bear witness through service to others, and look for opportunities to explain the Christian motivation for that service while engaging in respectful dialogue with people of other faiths. This concept was rarely put into theoretical

53 Stephen, *A History of Christian Missions*, 384.

54 Jeffrey Cox, "C. F. Andrews and the Failure of the Modern Missionary Movement", *Modern Religious Rebels*, ed. by Stuart Mews (London: Epworth Press, 1993), 227.

55 Cox, "C. F. Andrews and the Failure of the Modern Missionary Movement", 227.

> form for fear of upsetting missionary supporters back home who thought their money went to convert the heathen as rapidly as possible. Andrews made the service and dialogue theory explicit.[56]

Andrews identified several elements of failure of the missionary movement to live up to Christ's standards. Cox gives a few elements:[57]

1. The British missionaries' identification with imperial power at a time when the spirit of Christ was on the other side, in the national movement broadly defined.
2. The missionaries' failure to treat others with sympathy and love, and to look for truth in other religions and cultures.
3. They had failed to create an indigenous Indian church and had instead "denationalized" Indian Christians, leaving them without influence in their own nation and isolated from the Christian spirit which he identified in the national movement.

Regarding the subject of missionaries' identification with imperial power, Donald McGavran's explains that "while it is true that missionaries tried to identify themselves with the people (locals), they were never able to rid themselves of the inevitable separateness which the great progress of their home lands had imposed upon them".[58] Andrews built a bridge that indisputably stirred the seemingly permanent, unchangeable separateness fueled by the dominance of the West and the dependence of the East.

"Indigenizing" the church seems natural for missionaries and missionary agencies of the twenty-first century. Missionary manuals state clearly that "if churches are indigenous, they will be at home in their own nations, rooted firmly in their own soil—not hothouse plants imported from another land".[59] In the days of Andrews the indigenous concept was in its infancy. As Pierce Beaver points out in a summary of the indigenous church question, "it is astounding that it should have taken Protestant missionaries three hundred years to accept the indigenous church ideal".[60] During the next decades the idea of "indigenizing" the Church started to take hold, as missionaries realized that "the Christian Church as introduced by the missions seemed foreign to most Indians".[61] Although the principle was well recognized, it was not followed consistently.

56 Cox, "C. F. Andrews and the Failure of the Modern Missionary Movement", 234.
57 Cox, "C. F. Andrews and the Failure of the Modern Missionary Movement", 233.
58 McGavran, "The Bridges of God", 141.
59 Crowley, *Global Mission: A Story to Tell*, 197.
60 Pierce Beaver, *The Missionary Between the Times* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1968), 136.
61 Pirouet, *Christianity Worldwide: AD 1800 Onwards*, 68.

Regarding the indigenous Indian church, some missionaries within the Christian world were very firm about not imposing upon Indians a particular form of Christian doctrine, "but to sow a seed which, falling into alien soil, would grow according to the law of its own being into forms never previously seen in the Christian world".[62] The data available on Andrews does not provide much information on his stand in this matter, but this ideal was found to be unworkable, for two reasons. The first reason is that the first conversions in a foreign land usually happen after more than a decade. During that time the prospects become familiar with the externals of Christian worship. The converts are imitative and they want to do everything exactly in the way they saw it done by the missionaries, since they consider it to be the proper way. The second reason is that the new converts will have many questions on various topics and they will go and ask clarification and direction from the missionaries they already know. These missionaries would give their answers and directions according to the tradition of their own church and their understanding of Christianity.[63]

Relationships with Prominent Indian Leaders and Personalities

The story of Andrews' life was the story of his friendships. He extended his tent of fellowship beyond the limits of the Church. Although he was a good friend of a number of Indian personalities, supporting them in their quest for true freedom, Andrews had his own convictions even when these opposed such friends as Gandhi. Andrews criticized Gandhi's depreciation of the body and his deification of the soul and sought in many conversations and letters to affirm the spiritual goodness of the body.[64] Theologically speaking, Andrews never accepted the equation of body with violence and soul with non-violence. The missionary community at large could not understand Andrews and his connection to Gandhi, especially because Gandhi's standards were not those of the Christian missionary community.

Probably one of the main common values that Andrews shared with Gandhi was the non-violent approach to the liberation of the masses. For Andrews, the source of inspiration in this direction was Jesus Christ, who defied the violent liberation movement of his days. His contemporaries expected the appearance of a military conqueror type of Messiah, and he had to remind his disciples that it was an erroneous expectation. Not only did he refute that expectation, but also presented his messianic strategy as one of love for the enemies. "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy'. But I tell you: Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven". (Matthew 5:43-45). The difference between Andrews and Gandhi was that Andrews represented not only a set of non-violent rules, but also the foundational

62 Stephen, *A History of Christian Missions*, 395.

63 Stephen, *A History of Christian Missions*, 396.

64 Madathilparampil Mammen Thomas, "Basic Approaches to Power: Gandhi, Andrews and King", *Religion and Society* 16 (Noive1969): 19.

principle according to which such results are possible to attain only if there is an inner change of the heart, through Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, Gandhi was not able to get to this foundation.

Indians about Andrews

Tagore thought of Andrews as a Christian *sadhu*.[65] Many called him a friend of the poor. Ron Sider observes that "it is very important to understand Jesus' teaching that his Messianic kingdom was especially for the poor".[66] Jesus was in sharp contrast with his contemporaries when he demonstrated interest not only in the poor, but also the lepers, disabled, the outcasts and ostracized of society. In this context, Andrews did not lose from sight this primary target for the Messianic kingdom. He was concerned about the poor, but also the outcasts of the Indian society.

Talibuddin says that Andrews was beholden by his faith to serve the land of his adoption with a zeal equal to that of any native.[67] Mahatma Gandhi called him "love incarnate" and considered him "the pattern of the ideal missionary".[68] That is a significant statement in light of the fact that from anti-colonialism there is only a short step to anti-foreignism.[69] Andrews, living his life in India, seeking the good of the Indians, and dying in India, fits into the image presented by P. T. Forsyth on the devotion of missionaries to the foreign land and its people:

> There is nothing finer nor more pathetic… than the way in which missionaries unlearn the love of the old home, die to their native land, and wed their hearts to the people they have served and won; so that they cannot rest in England, but must return to lay their bones where they spent their hearts for Christ. How vulgar the common patriotisms seem beside this inverted home-sickness.[70]

These evaluations from the Indians are valuable especially in light of the fact that India experienced the historical fact that the great expansion of Christianity "coincided in time with the world-wide and explosive expansion of Europe; … that the colonizing powers were the Christian powers".[71] During the colonial expansion,

65 Sharpe, "The Legacy of C. F. Andrews", 117.

66 Ron Sider, "What if the Gospel is the Good News?", *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement. A Reader*, ed. by Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne (Pasadena, CA: Paternoster, 1992), 85.

67 Ernest W. Talibuddin, "The Sons of the Soil and Salt of the Earth: A Reflection on the Life and Mission of the Church with Special Reference to North-East India" *Religion and Society* 39 (1992): 65.

68 Talibuddin, "The Sons of the Soil and Salt of the Earth", 69.

69 Crowley, *Global Mission: A Story to Tell*, 54.

70 Peter Taylor Forsyth, *Missions in State and Church: Sermons and Addresses* (New York: A.C. Armstrong, 1908), 36.

71 Stephen, *A History of Christian Missions*, 414.

monarchs had the assignment and the obligation from the part of the Pope to evangelize the peoples of the colonized lands, to establish the church, and to maintain it. "Mission was thus made a function of government".[72] Andrews tried to do his best to prove that Christianity, as understood from the Bible, is not a colonizing religion, or the religion of the white man being imposed upon the rest of the world. His approach was in line with one of the principles of mission work valid even in present times: "It is important for missionaries to remain on good terms with the general public, remembering that they are guests in the country".[73] While many of the thinkers of the colonized lands "welcomed the West because of certain good things that it could give to their people… often they recognized that the West was both deliverer and destroyer, and that therefore the white man was necessarily both friend and foe".[74] Charles Freer Andrews was definitely perceived by Indians only as friend.

Conclusion

Andrews hoped that eventually the Indian thinkers would be able to interpret fully the Gospel of John. This is one of the reasons he sought the friendship of some outstanding contemporary Indian thinkers. It is difficult to fully evaluate his impact on them. However, clearly he had an impact on many Indians, and the future missionary endeavor in India. He believed not only that all men need Christ, but that he owed Christ to all men. The way Indians perceived Andrews shows that his "public relations" were not comprised of advertising or promoting himself or the mission, but self-forgetfulness and self-giving in order to display Christ. The principle was that of spiritual victory through the cross.[75]

A part of Andrews' life belonged to the "Great Century" (1800-1914), a period when Christianity made astonishing progress all over the world. One of the influences of Christianity during this great century was on relief and prevention of human suffering, and Andrews certainly took part in endeavors that had these objectives.

His biographers state that in many ways Andrews "caused the name of Christ to be honored, and not infrequently prevented it from being dishonored".[76] He realized that the missionary movement was at a turning point in the years after 1905, and that a national movement in power in India would regard Christianity in its missionary form as either irrelevant or malevolent. This outcome could be avoided, he believed, only if missionaries and Indian Christians were to adopt his own approach of respectful dialogue, service, and nationalist commitment.[77]

72 Beaver, "The History of Mission Strategy", 59.
73 Crowley, *Global Mission: A Story to Tell*, 231.
74 Stephen, *A History of Christian Missions*, 415.
75 Crowley, *Global Mission: A Story to Tell*, 231.
76 Asish Mondal, "Charles Freer Andrews: A Disciple Extraordinary", *Indian Church History Review* 25 (1991): 60.
77 Jeffrey Cox, "C. F. Andrews and the Failure of the Modern Missionary Movement", 239.

In the new conditions in India today, a new type of missionary is needed, who is able to identify himself with the people and share their national aspirations to a certain extent. A missionary will not have to participate in a freedom struggle or a revolution, but he could find out new avenues of service to the nation. Andrews fits rather precisely the definition of the missionary given by Winston Crawley: "a person in whom the gospel is embodied, in loving relationship with others across barriers of race, nation, language, and culture, to make Christ known as Savior and Lord and to initiate living fellowships of believers".[78]

On a more general note, the body of Christ needs to find new avenues to influence the Fortress (culture and society), whether that is a completely non-Christian one, or a nominal-Christian fortress. Some of the select aspects of the life and ministry of Charles Freer Andrews can be of help for today's Christians in widening their view of what a Christ-centered life means: a life of love incarnate in human affairs.[79]

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78 Crowley, *Global Mission: A Story to Tell*, 154.
79 Asish Mondal, "Charles Freer Andrews: A Disciple Extraordinary", 61.

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