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**RICK WARREN'S PURPOSE DRIVEN LIFE (2003)  
AND ERASMUS' ENCHIRIDION (1503):  
COMPARING APPROACHES IN APOLOGETIC  
EVANGELISM**

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There is a certain safety in writing about church history: categories have been spelled out, issues have been debated, and the personages being studied are no longer among us. In contemporary church history or in contemporary theology, such is not the case. For example, one of the subjects in this study, Erasmus, has been analyzed for five centuries. He has been studied and restudied many times. While it is my goal to look at his *Enchiridion* as an evangelistic text—perhaps a slightly new twist—I do not expect that many of us will be enraged by my analysis. Rick Warren, however, is not a deeply studied personage. While he invites his readers to “interact” with his *The Purpose-Driven Life*,<sup>1</sup> we do not yet have safe categories for the study of his theology and practice. Time has not measured the impact of his life and his ministry is still in process. Thus, the comparison of these two authors provides unusual challenges.

Because of the delicate nature of contemporary analysis, there is a penchant to lean in either of two ways: hagiography or unfettered antagonism. Cries of self-fulfilled prophecy may tarnish this study before it has commenced. This author is aware of the problems of historiography, as well as the Baconian fallacy.<sup>2</sup> While complete objectivity is impossible, this author seeks to look at the two works in question from a theological perspective, thus seeking to avoid the prejudices of subjective analysis of a subjective topic. Objectivity may be improved as I have neither met Rick Warren, spoken with him, nor visited his church. Other than one e-mail, my interaction with Warren has been through the printed pages of *The Purpose*

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<sup>1</sup>“Don’t just *read* this book. *Interact with it*. Underline it. Write your own thoughts in the margins. Make it *your* book. Personalize it! The books that have helped me the most are the ones that I have reacted to, not just read” (Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003], 10 [hereafter referred to simply as Warren]).

<sup>2</sup>David H. Fischer calls the postulation of objectivity the “Baconian Fallacy” (*Historians’ Fallacies: Toward a Logic of Historical Thought* [New York: Harper and Row, 1970], 4).

*Driven Life*, as has been my interaction with Erasmus and his *Enchiridion*.

This paper is *not* an analysis of a person, a person's character, a person's ministry, the fruit of a person's ministry, a local church, an ecclesiology, or the Purpose Driven Church method. Rather this paper is a comparison of the theological content of two books. The following pages will seek to compare and contrast the theological content of Erasmus's *Enchiridion* and Rick Warren's *The Purpose Driven Life* as texts dealing with the gospel and spiritual growth.

In one sense comparing these two texts is like comparing apples and oranges, as their historical settings and their views of the atonement and conversion are quite different. In another sense, however, this study is like comparing apples to apples as they both seem to adopt an apologetic approach to the gospel. The topic will be considered as follows. First, the texts will be compared as supplying principles for Christian living. Second, we will note their apologetic conceptions. Third, we will assess their view of the atonement. Fourth, we consider their approach in communicating the gospel. Fifth, we will evaluate their approach to the Great Commission. In this way, we will seek to determine the major theological and evangelistic foundations of each writing.

By way of preliminary consideration, Erasmus (1467-1536) was a foremost pre-Reformation humanist theologian, whereas Rick Warren (1918-)<sup>3</sup> has established himself as the apostle of the purpose-driven model for the local church. Both books were written in the lingua franca of their times: Warren in English and Erasmus in Latin. Because this paper quotes translations of Erasmus, two different translations were consulted.<sup>4</sup> Both Erasmus's *Enchiridion* and Warren's *Purpose Driven Life* were very well received by their respective communities, Erasmus in Europe<sup>5</sup> and Warren in the United States.<sup>6</sup> Both volumes are simple formulations of the

<sup>3</sup>The exact year of Warren's birth has not been established by this author.

<sup>4</sup>Because *Enchiridion* was originally published in Latin, this author consulted several translations, including a text translated and edited by Raymond Himelick (*The Enchiridion of Erasmus* [Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1970]), heretofore identified as Himelick, and another translated and edited by John P. Dolan (*The Essential Erasmus* [New York: Mentor, 1964]), heretofore identified as Dolan. Himelick translated from the Johann Froben 1519 Basel reprint of the 1503 Antwerp text of *Enchiridion*. Dolan, however, translated from the 1704 Leclerc *Érasmi Opera Omnia*, which was based on the 1518 Basel edition. While a thorough historiography was not possible for this paper, this author noted significant differences in the texts. Dolan admitted taking certain liberties in translating and editing the text: "There have been paraphrases and deletions to accommodate the modern reader" (Dolan, 27).

<sup>5</sup>John Dolan wrote of the reception of *Enchiridion*: "Yet there is evidence for believing that if it was not one of the 'masterpieces' of the Renaissance, it certainly proved itself one of the most popular works of the time. Between 1514 and 1518 some eight Latin editions of it appeared. It was translated into English in 1518, into Czech in 1519, German in 1520, Dutch in 1523, Spanish in 1526, and Polish in 1585" (Dolan, 24).

<sup>6</sup>"His [Warren's] latest book, titled *The Purpose-Driven Life: What on Earth Am I Here For?*' has sold 7 million copies in 12 languages since it was published last fall" (William Lobdell, "A How-to Kit for the Ministry," *LA Times* [19 September 2003]: 1).

Christian life. Erasmus wrote *Enchiridion* "to prescribe in a concise fashion some method of Christian living which might help you achieve a character acceptable to Christ."<sup>7</sup> Dolan explained to his readers of the evangelistic use of *Enchiridion*: "The French Catholics in the seventeenth century relied upon its message to convert Calvinists to the ancient faith."<sup>8</sup> Warren, for his part, wrote his book to assist persons "to discover the answer to life's most important question: What on earth am I here for?"<sup>9</sup> Warren added that the book may be evangelistic for some:

First, "What did you do with my Son, Jesus Christ?" God won't ask about your religious background or doctrinal views. The only thing that will matter is, did you accept what Jesus did for you and did you learn to love and trust him? . . .

Second, "What did you do with what I gave you?" . . . Did you spend them on yourself, or did you use them for the purposes God made you for?

Preparing you for these two questions is the goal of this book. The first question will determine *where* you spend eternity. The second question will determine *what you do* in eternity. By the end of the book you will be ready to answer both questions.<sup>10</sup>

As noted in the title of this paper, both *Enchiridion* and *The Purpose-Driven Life* were published approximately five hundred years apart. Because of these commonalities and differences it was assumed by this author that a theological comparison would be intellectually stimulating and provide new vistas for theological inquiry.

### I. PRINCIPLES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

Rules for Christian living have existed since the early church. There were the Rules of St. Pachomius and St. Basil in the East during the fourth and fifth centuries. There was the Rule of St. Caesarius and Columbanus and others derived from them in Gaul during this same time period.<sup>11</sup> Perhaps the most famous of

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<sup>7</sup>*The Purpose-Driven Life* has been on The New York Times Bestseller list for 32 weeks, where it reached the No. 2 spot for hardcover advice books. So far, more than 6 million copies have been sold" (Jacinthia Jones, *The Commercial Appeal* [Memphis, Tenn.; September 20, 2003]). "GRAND RAPIDS, Michigan—It isn't often that a pastor tops a New York Times bestseller list, but that's where Rick Warren's book, 'The Purpose-Driven Life' landed this past weekend with the release of the latest hardcover advice list" (Tara Powers and John Walker, "'The Purpose Driven Life' Tops New York Times Advice List: Book Sales Approach Three Million," accessed November 4, 2003; <http://www.pastors.com/article.asp?ArtID=4253>).

<sup>8</sup>Himelick, 37.

<sup>9</sup>Dolan, 24.

<sup>10</sup>Warren, 9.

<sup>11</sup>Warren, 34.

<sup>12</sup>Pierre Pourrat, *Christian Spirituality From the Time of our Lord till the Dawn of the Middle Ages* (trans. W. H. Mitchell and S. P. Jacques; Westminster, Md.: Newman, reprinted 1953), 1:88-104, 1:242-51.

Christian rules has been the Rule of St. Benedict (A.D. 523-597), founder of the Benedictine order.<sup>12</sup> His vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience guided the formation of future Western monastic rules.

Both Erasmus and Warren wrote their "Rules" to provide simple guidelines for proper Christian living. In fact, Erasmus's *Enchiridion* included twenty-two rules. While each of these twenty-two "rules" provides important information, I have sought to synthesize broad principles in Erasmus's text in order to compare it to principles in Warren's book. Table 1 compares and contrasts the major principles. In order to provide a further comparison, an additional column was included in Table 1, broad principles from Greek philosophy. It is postulated that there is a type of continuum with Greek philosophy on one side, Erasmus in the center, and Warren on the other side.

Table 1 is organized as follows. The first row of content begins with mankind's quest. What is it that man needs to know in order to gain realization, fulfillment, purpose, or salvation? Greek philosophy, focusing on Socrates in Plato, was a quest for self-understanding: "Know thyself." In Erasmus, the quest was similar to that of the Greeks. Warren seems to focus the quest of man as follows: "Know thy purpose." In the second row of content, we note the role that the philosopher or authors play in assisting mankind with their quest. Socrates sought to assist man by causing him to look into himself to "seek that which would satisfy." Erasmus provided a system of thought in which Christians could overcome the flesh through the use of various weapons provided to them. Warren seeks to assist man by showing him the purpose for which he was really created by God. The final row in Table 1 portrays the end result of each of the three systems of thought. For Greek philosophy, the result of proper knowledge-of-self was striving after goodness and truth. For Erasmus, the result of knowledge of the *Enchiridion* (spiritual weapon) was a perfect life, Christlikeness, and salvation. For Warren, the result of knowledge of one's purposes in life was character development, growth in Christlikeness, and bringing pleasure to God. The similarities are interesting to consider.

In this regard, Erasmus was not shy about his debt to Greek philosophy. Throughout his *Enchiridion* he alluded to the necessities of Greek philosophy to frame the question for biblical interpretation and life practice. Erasmus wrote:

Literature shapes and invigorates the youthful character and prepares one marvelously well for understanding Holy Scripture, to pounce upon which with unscrubbed hands and feet is something akin to sacrilege. . . .

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<sup>12</sup>John Chapman, *Saint Benedict and the Sixth Century* (London: Longmans, Green, 1929; Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1971), 145.

Table 1: Comparison of Principles for Living

	Greek Philosophy	Erasmus' <i>Enchiridion</i>	Warren's <i>The Purpose Driven Life</i>
Humankind's Quest	He [Socrates] believed that the unexamined life, the life of those who knew nothing of themselves or of their real needs and desires, was not worth being lived as a human being. <sup>13</sup>	The chief point of this wisdom is simply to know yourself, an injunction which antiquity believed originated in heaven and which authors have found so pleasing that they considered the whole fruit of wisdom compactly enclosed in it. <sup>14</sup>	This is not a self-help book. . . . Actually, it will teach you how to do <i>less</i> in life – by focusing on what matters most. It is about becoming what God created you to be. <sup>15</sup> Nothing matters more than knowing God's purposes for your life, and nothing can compensate for not knowing them – not success, wealth, fame, or pleasure. <sup>16</sup>
Author's Assistance	So he [Socrates] would sting into activity the souls of men to test their lives, confident that when they found them utterly unsatisfying they would be driven to seek what would satisfy. <sup>17</sup>	For in the same work he [Plato, <i>Timaeus</i> ] writes that those who have triumphed over the passions will live rightly, but those mastered by the passions will live badly. <sup>18</sup>	There are many ways to bring God glory, but they can be summarized in God's five purposes for your life. . . . We bring glory to God by worshipping Him; by loving other believers; by becoming like Christ; by serving others with our gifts; by telling others about him. <sup>19</sup>
Quest's Realization	Socrates believed that goodness and truth were the fundamental realities, and that they were attainable. Every man would strive to attain them if he could be shown them. No one would pursue evil except through ignorance. <sup>20</sup>	Only seize with a stout heart upon the principle of the perfect life and press forward in that purpose. Never yet has the human spirit failed to accomplish something it ardently demanded of itself. <sup>21</sup>	God's ultimate goal for your life is not comfort, but character development. He wants you to grow up spiritually and become like Christ. . . . God wants you to develop the kind of character described in the beatitudes of Jesus, the fruit of the Spirit, Paul's great chapter on love, and Peter's list of the characteristics of an effective productive life. <sup>22</sup>

However, just as divine Scripture bears no great fruit if you persist in clinging only to the literal sense, so the great poetry of Homer and Vergil is of no small benefit if you remember that this is all allegorical, a fact that no one who has but touched his lips with the wisdom of the ancients will deny. . . . I would prefer, too, that you follow the Platonists among the philosophers, because in most

<sup>13</sup>Edith Hamilton, *The Greek Way* (New York: Avon, 1973), 218.

<sup>14</sup>Himelick, 62.

<sup>15</sup>Warren, 19.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>17</sup>Hamilton, *Greek Way*, 218-19.

<sup>18</sup>Himelick, 66.

<sup>19</sup>Warren, 55-57.

<sup>20</sup>Hamilton, *Greek Way*, 218.

<sup>21</sup>Himelick, 71.

<sup>22</sup>Warren, 173

of their ideas and in their very manner of speaking they come nearest to the beauty of the prophets and the gospels.<sup>23</sup>

It seems that Erasmus gleaned his positive view of humankind from his reading of the ancients. Simultaneously, he wanted to avoid the literalistic interpretation of the unlearned, preferring rather an allegorical approach to biblical interpretation.<sup>24</sup> Because Erasmus relied heavily upon the anthropological view of Platonists, his *Enchiridion* fell prey to the increasing Pelagianism of the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>25</sup>

Warren, for his part, seems to find a position somewhat between Erasmus and historic Evangelicalism. While he acknowledges that "It all starts with God,"<sup>26</sup> that God "has clearly revealed his five purposes for our lives through the Bible,"<sup>27</sup> and that "to discover God's purpose in life you must turn to God's Word, not the world's wisdom,"<sup>28</sup> his purpose-driven model seems to approach some of the inclinations of Greek philosophy. Warren appeals to his five purposes as if they are unifying principles by which human spirituality is guided. If taken to the extreme, he seems to appeal to natural revelation, a common knowledge of God and of God's purposes in life, outside of the prior regenerating work of Christ

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<sup>23</sup>Himelick, 51.

<sup>24</sup>Furthermore, you should observe in all your reading those things consisting of both surface meaning and a hidden one—comparable to body and spirit—so that, indifferent to the merely literal sense, you examine most keenly the hidden. Of this sort are the works of all the poets and of the Platonists in philosophy. But especially do the Holy Scriptures, like the Silenus of Alcibiades, conceal their real divinity beneath a surface that is crude and almost laughable. . . .

"Therefore, disregarding the mere skin of Scripture, especially of the Old Testament, you will profit most from searching into its mystical spirit. . . . After Christ, the Apostle Paul opened up certain allegorical fountains; and following him, Origen easily holds the leadership in this aspect of theology. . . .

"As I see it, there are two principal reasons for this: for one thing, it is impossible for the mystical sense not to be dull or trivial when it is not seasoned with the skill of eloquence and a certain charm of language, something which the older divines excelled in but which we do not even approach. For another, thing, present-day theologians, devoted solely to Aristotle, shut out the Platonists and Pythagoreans from the schools; because they hold a great many views fully harmonious with our religion, but also because their very manner of using a language figurative and, as I have said, appropriate to allegory, comes closer to the style of the Holy Scriptures. So it is not to be wondered at that theological allegory was handled more perceptively and that, by their copiousness of language, any subject you please, even one dry and commonplace could be enriched and made attractive by those who were the most learned men of all antiquity and who had already practiced on the books of Plato and the poets the skill which they were to exercise later on in the interpretation of the holy mysteries" (Himelick, 105, 106-7).

<sup>25</sup>From this time until the Reformation, the predominant trend within Catholic theology was a drift toward Pelagianism" (Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985], 912).

<sup>26</sup>Warren, 17.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, 20

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*

through the gospel.<sup>29</sup> Much like the approach of Socrates, one wonders if asked the right questions in the right way, natural man could “be driven to seek what would satisfy.”<sup>30</sup> In this light, Warren’s emphasis may depart from the theological tenets of historic Evangelicalism, as he did not emphasize man’s “utter depravity,” and the light which comes by grace alone, through faith alone, and from the gospel alone.<sup>31</sup> Although mankind had an understanding of God from nature (Rom 1:18-20), “they did not honor him as God,” but becoming futile and foolish (Rom 1:21), they are under the empire of sin and unwilling/unable to seek God (Rom 3:9-12) outside the gospel.

While each of author’s views of sin will be dealt with under the atonement, we begin to sense that the broad framework of Erasmus’s *Enchiridion* borrowed concepts from Greek philosophy. Warren, for his part, seems to borrow from the intuitive approach of Socrates in his appeal to man’s need for purpose in life. Both of these approaches to the Christian life have an apologetic sense about them.

## II. EVANGELISTIC AND APOLOGETIC

As we have noted above, both Erasmus and Warren wrote with an evangelistic purpose in mind. Our attention now moves to consider the apologetic approach of each author. The term apologetic implies the use of proofs for Christianity or the gospel. As noted in Table 2, there seems to be three broad apologetic methods—a discussion of worldviews notwithstanding. First, apologetics may be considered as judicial proofs of (1.1) the importance and/or appropriateness of evangelism (e.g., Paul in Acts 22, 24-26) or of (1.2) the propriety of, legality of, or beneficial nature of Christianity (e.g., Justin Martyr’s argument of good citizenship<sup>32</sup> and Calvin’s *Institutes*<sup>33</sup>). Second, apologetics may be considered as (2.1) a

<sup>29</sup>At the end of ch. 3, he holds his readers away from a gospel presentation until ch. 7, and an explanation of the death of Christ at the end of ch. 14 (Warren, 34).

<sup>30</sup>Hamilton, *Greek Way*, 219.

<sup>31</sup>The concept of “utter depravity” is found both in the New Hampshire Confession (1833), “man . . . being by nature utterly void of that holiness required in the law of God” (William L. Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith* [rev. ed.; Valley Forge: Judson, 1959, 1969], 362), as well as in the 1846 Evangelical Alliance Statement of Faith, “(4) The utter depravity of human nature in consequence of the fall” (J. W. Massie, *The Evangelical Alliance: Its Origin and Development* [London: John Snow, 1847], 302-5; quoted in Arthur P. Johnston, *World Evangelism and the Word of God* [Minneapolis: Bethany, 1974], 265).

<sup>32</sup>To the Emperor Titus Ælius Adrianus Antonius Pius Augustus Cæsar . . . I, Justin, the son of Priscus Neapolis in Palestine, present this address and petition on behalf of those of all nations who are being unjustly treated and wantonly abused, myself being one of them” (“The First Apology of Justin Martyr [circa 152],” from Professor Wills, “A Reader for Introduction to Church History, Part I,” The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 6).

<sup>33</sup>To his most Christian Majesty, the Mighty and Illustrious Monarch, Francis, King of the French, His Sovereign; John Calvin prays peace and salvation in Christ. . .

necessary *preparatio evangelica* (e.g., Mittelberg's *The Contagious Church*),<sup>34</sup> as (2.2) evangelism itself (natural theology; e.g., Aquinas's cosmological proofs for the existence of God),<sup>35</sup> as (2.3) a natural yearning in the heart of man (e.g., Augustine's God-shaped void),<sup>36</sup> as (2.4) a universal appeal preparing for the gospel (e.g., Finney's system of theology based on moral law, moral obligation, and moral government),<sup>37</sup> as (2.5) an introduction to or affirmation of points of the gospel (e.g., Zacharias),<sup>38</sup> or as (2.6) the basis for a decision for

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. I thought it might be of service if I were in the same work both to give instruction to my countrymen, and also lay before your Majesty a Confession, from which you may learn what the doctrine is that so inflames the rage of those madmen who are this day, with fire and sword, troubling your kingdom" (John Calvin, "Prefatory Address," in *Institutes of the Christian Religion* [London: James Clarke, 1957], 3).

<sup>34</sup>"Value #4: People Need Answers. Today people require more than to merely have the gospel *declared* to them. They also need to have it *defined* and *defended*. . . . If we want to help people move toward Christ, we are going to have to proactively address the issues and show that the Christian faith is built on a foundation of truth and can be trusted wholeheartedly" (Mark Mittelberg, *Building a Contagious Church* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000], 42-43).

<sup>35</sup>"The group of cosmological arguments begins with our versions of Aquinas' famous 'five ways'" (Peter Kreeft and Ronald K. Tacelli, *Handbook of Christian Apologetics* [Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1994], 49).

<sup>36</sup>"You stimulate us to take pleasure in praising you, because you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they can find peace with you" (*The Confessions of St. Augustine* [trans. Rex Warner; Chicago: Mentor, 1963], 17).

<sup>37</sup>"Moral law [from which Finney posits moral government] . . . is the law of nature, the law which the nature or constitution of every moral agent imposes on himself and which God imposes upon us because it is entirely suited to our nature and relations, and is therefore naturally obligatory upon us. It is the unalterable demand of the reason, that the whole being, whatever there is of it at any time, shall be consecrated to the highest good of universal being, and for this reason God requires this of us, with all the weight of his authority" (Charles G. Finney, *Systematic Theology* [E. J. Goodrich, 1878; South Gate, Calif.: Porter Kemp, 1944], 4).

"Moral government consists in the declaration and administration of moral law" (*ibid.*, 6).

"The moral government of God everywhere assumes and implies the liberty of the human will, and the natural ability of men to obey God (*ibid.*, 325).

"Let it not be said then, that we deny the grace of the glorious gospel of the blessed God, nor that we deny the reality and necessity of the influences of the Holy Spirit to convert and sanctify the soul, nor that this influence is a gracious one; for all these we strenuously maintain. But I maintain this upon the ground, that men are able to do their duty, and that the difficulty does not lie in the proper ability, but in their voluntary selfishness, in an unwillingness to obey the blessed gospel" (*ibid.*, 352).

<sup>38</sup>"In the first step of identification [with postmodern culture], it is critical that we find a point of reference. . . . Where does one go to find common ground? I refer to the *moral argument*, which argues for God from morality" (Ravi Zacharias, "The Touch of Truth" in *Telling the Truth* [ed. D. A. Carson; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000], 33-34). Zacharias continued, "The Scriptures are filled with such points of relevance whenever God speaks to a nation or to individuals. . . . Where is the point of relevance in our time? I believe it is a hunger for love. . . . We proclaim one way to God—Jesus, the Way, the Truth, and the Life. We lay claim to truth in such radical terms, it is imperative that such truth be undergirded by love. If it is not, it makes the possessor of that truth obnoxious and the dogma repulsive. I believe it is vital that we understand this" (*ibid.*, 38).



Christ (e.g., Pascal's wager).<sup>39</sup> Third, apologetics may be considered as (3.1) proofs of Christianity's social superiority over other religious systems (Harnack's and Herrman's *Essays on the Social Gospel*),<sup>40</sup> and (3.2) therefore of its rational superiority and ultimate triumph as a religious system (e.g., More's *Utopia*<sup>41</sup> and Schaff's *Theological Propædeutic*<sup>42</sup>). These approaches have been included in Table 2 to provide a comparative framework.

Table 2 leaves us with two questions for this paper. Are the approaches of our two authors truly apologetic? And if they are apologetic, what type of apologetic method do they seem to parallel? Erasmus spends the initial part of his *Enchiridion* arguing from the Bible and from Greek philosophy that all men live either according to the flesh or according to the Spirit. His appeal is to the universal *condition humaine* of sinfulness. While he never explained the biblical concept of justification by faith alone, by God's grace alone, and by the substitutionary atonement of Christ alone, Erasmus rather spent his time showing the "Christian" how to use his dagger [*enchiridion*] to fight the battle against his own flesh.<sup>43</sup> While his book contained

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<sup>39</sup>"There is more advantage to believing, than in disbelieving the Christian religion. . . . Nay, but there is a necessity to wager" (Blaise Pascal, *Pascal's Thoughts on Religion* [London: Samuel Bagster, 1806], 129). Here is an excerpt of the French original: "Il faut parier. Cela n'est pas volontaire, vous êtes embarqués. Lequel prendrez-vous donc? Voyons; puisqu'il faut choisir voyons ce qui vous intéresse le moins. . . . Oui il faut gager, mais je gage peut-être trop. Voyons puisqu'il y a pareil hasard de gain et de perte, si vous n'aviez qu'à gagner deux vies pour une vous pourriez encore gager, mais s'il y en avait 3 à gagner?" (Blaise Pascal, *Œuvres Complètes* [Macmillan, 1963], 550).

<sup>40</sup>"Evangelical Faith, a heart sensitive to the wants of others, and a mind open to the truth and the treasures of the intellect—these are the powers on which our Church and nation rest. If we are but true to them, we shall realize more and more the truth of the promise expressed in your brave hymn of faith: 'Now is there peace unceasing; All strife is at an end'" (Adolf Harnack and Wilhelm Herrman, *Essays on the Social Gospel* [London: Williams & Norgate, 1907], 90-91).

<sup>41</sup>"By degrees all the Utopians are coming to forsake their own superstitions and to agree upon this one religion that seems to excel the others in reason. . . . We told them of the name, doctrine, manner of life, and miracles of Christ, and of the wonderful constancy of the many who willingly sacrificed their blood in order to bring so many nations far and wide to Christianity. You will hardly believe with what favorably disposed minds they received this account, either because God secretly incited them or because this religion is most like the belief already strong among them. . . . Whatever the reason, many came over to our religion and were baptized. . . . Those among them that have not yet accepted the Christian religion do not restrain others from it or abuse the converts to it" (Thomas More, *Utopia* [1516; Arlington Heights, Ill.: AHM Publishing, 1949], 70-71).

<sup>42</sup>"The extraordinary progress of missionary zeal and enterprise is phenomenal, and one of the greatest evidences for the vitality of Christianity, and an assurance of its ultimate triumph to the ends of the earth" (Philip Schaff, *Theological Propædeutic: A General Introduction to the Study of Theology* [5th ed.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1902], 522).

<sup>43</sup>"Of course, a man who does not consider that he knows all there is to know about his own forces or those of the enemy may seem a very inept soldier, but this war is not between man and man, but between man and himself" (Himelick, 62).

Table 2: Comparison of Select Apologetic Approaches

	1.1	1.2	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	3.1	3.2
Designation	Biblical Apologia	Justin Martyr's Legal Defense of Christianity	Mittelberg's Necessary <i>Preparatio</i>	Aquinas' Five Proofs of God's Existence	Augustine's God-Shaped Void	Finney's Moral Consistency	Zacharias' Apologetic Approach	Pascal's Wager	Harnack's and Herrman's Social	More's <i>Utopia</i> and Schaff's <i>Theological</i>
Posture	Apologetics as Judicial Defense		Apologetics and the Proclamation of the Gospel						Results-Oriented Apologetic Approach	
Expansion of Concept	Emphasizing the protection of the church from false teaching	Proving benefit of Christianity through social	As a necessary worldview precursor to sharing the	Proving God's existence from nature and reason	something to satisfy a God-shaped void; need for	Proving God's existence from morality and thought and the	Proving belief in God is worth the risk of a wager	Emphasizing Christian Education to improve	Rational superiority of Christianity noted in a	triumphalist sense
Relation to the Gospel or evangelism	As tangential to evangelism, rather as part of pastoral ministry	rational proofs of benefits of Christian	world-views are compatible prior to	Rational or scientific proofs of the existence of God	Inner longing drives the person to seek out God in some way	Socio-logical proofs of cross-cultural morality	duction to and affirmation of main	Appeal to benefit of Christian worldview	Education is the <i>preparatio</i> for gradual	cause its ultimate triumph as a religious
Impact on Gospel Presentation	Only the Word of God and the Gospel are the power of God unto salvation <sup>44</sup>	Focus on sociological benefits of Christianity to affirm power of the Gospel	Adds a necessary step to the introductory portion of the Gospel	Scientific proofs logically precede or replace the need for evangelism	No need for a proclamation of the Gospel as it is <i>Appel to culture?</i>	anthropology to affirm	Points of relevance add power and credibility to the Gospel	show benefit of (1) belief in God, and (2) Education convinces of superiority of Christian	Evangelism as a passive response (e.g. 1 Peter 3:15; <i>passive appearance</i> )	
Sample Historical Proponents	cf. NT use of <i>απολογία</i> and <i>απολογία</i>	e.g. Justin Martyr	e.g. Mark Mittelberg	e.g. Thomas Aquinas	e.g. Augustine, Pascal, C. S. Lewis	e.g. Charles Finney	e.g. Ravi Zacharias	e.g. Blaise Pascal's Wager	e.g. Adolf Harnack and Wilhelm Herrman	e.g. Thomas More and Philip Schaff

<sup>44</sup> As we have said, God never has dealt, and never does deal, with mankind at any time otherwise than by the word of promise. Neither can we, on our part, ever have to do with God otherwise than through faith in His word and promise" (Martin

helpful elements relating to living godly in Christ Jesus, he was missing the most important ingredient to godly living, the gospel.<sup>45</sup>

Now Erasmus's apologetic approach seems most akin to the methodology of Finney in Table 2. Finney argued from moral law, moral obligation, and moral government. Similarly, Erasmus argued from the Socratic moral system, using the Bible to buttress his moral imperatives. Where Finney (especially the early Finney) did proclaim the gospel, later in his life the gospel was not something to be believed and received as much as it was a rule of faith to obey.<sup>46</sup> Erasmus, however, never shared the Roman Road Gospel (to be defined below).

Warren seemed to approach the Christian life from the a priori of purpose. If carnal man could be shown his purposes for living from a godly perspective, then he would likely submit to his need for a relationship with God. His gospel presentation began with something other than man's sin nature—it started with a rational argument regarding life's purposes. In this sense, Warren seemed to use a Socratic approach to the gospel. Perhaps Warren's approach to the Gospel, though having elements that are found in Finney, leaned towards Pascal's wager: following God's purposes for your life will allow you to achieve a better result in this life, as well as eternal life in the future.<sup>47</sup>

In noting the apologetic approach of both of our authors, we have assumed a presentation of the gospel. The theological category for discussing a presentation of the gospel is the atonement. For example, when I studied Billy Graham's theology of evangelism, it became apparent that Graham's view of the atonement had undergone some change over the span of his ministry.

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Luther, "The Pagan Servitude of the Church," in *Martin Luther: Selections from His Writings, Edited and with Introduction*, John Dillenberger, ed. [Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1961], 277).

<sup>45</sup>"In regard to the soul, however, we have that capacity for the divine which enables us to surpass even the nature of angels and be made one with God" (Himelick, 63).

<sup>46</sup>"Let it not be said then, that we deny the grace of the glorious gospel of the blessed God, nor that we deny the reality and necessity of the influences of the Holy Spirit to convert and sanctify the soul, nor that this influence is a gracious one; for all these we strenuously maintain. But I maintain this upon the ground, that men are able to do their duty, and that the difficulty does not lie in the proper ability, but in their voluntary selfishness, in an unwillingness to obey the blessed gospel" (Finney, *Systematic Theology*, 352).

<sup>47</sup>"Having this perspective will reduce your stress, simplify your decisions, increase your satisfaction, and, most important, prepare you for eternity" (Warren, 9). "You were made *by* God and *for* God—and until we discover that, life will never make sense. It is only in God that we discover our origin, our identity, our purpose, our significance, and our destiny. Every other path leads to a dead end" (*ibid.*, 18). "Actually, it will teach you how to do *less* in life—by focusing on what matters most. It is about becoming what *God* created you to be" (*ibid.*, 19).

## III. THE ATONEMENT

It would seem, as noted in my *Examining Billy Graham's Theology of Evangelism*, that Graham moved from a substitutionary atonement view towards a reconciliation model of the atonement.<sup>48</sup> The progression was quite interesting to chronicle, and it dealt primarily with his use of terminology when discussing hamartiology. Graham then adapted his terminology of the cross to fit his view of man's sinfulness.

Albrecht Ritschl noted the importance of the doctrine of the atonement:

In order to make questions of what is the central doctrine of Christianity more intelligible as such, I have been compelled to give an almost complete outline of Systematic Theology, the remaining parts of which could easily be supplied.<sup>49</sup>

Ritschl believed that the atonement was the central doctrine of Christianity. Erickson felt the same way about the gospel, "Because the Gospel has been, is, and will always be the way of salvation, the only way, the church must preserve the Gospel at all costs."<sup>50</sup>

Similarly, evangelicals in the nineteenth century felt it necessary to expand on their wording relating to the atonement. Point five of the 1846 Evangelical Alliance Statement of Faith addressed Christ's incarnation and work, stating, ". . . his work of Atonement for sinners and mankind."<sup>51</sup> Apparently, this was not clear enough for those attending the 1895 Niagara Bible Conference. Rather they included an adjective to explain the doctrine of the atonement: "*la doctrine de l'expiation vicaire* [i.e., the doctrine of vicarious expiation or the substitutionary atonement]."<sup>52</sup> It must be noted that the 1895

<sup>48</sup>Thomas P. Johnston, *Examining Billy Graham's Theology of Evangelism* (Eugene, Oreg.: Wipf & Stock, 2003), 218-96.

<sup>49</sup>Albrecht Ritschl, preface of the first edition to *The Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation* (Clifton, N.J.: Reference Book, 1966), vii.

<sup>50</sup>Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 1066.

<sup>51</sup>The nine points of the Evangelical Alliance were: "(1) Divine inspiration, authority, and sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures. (2) The right and duty of private judgment in the interpretation of Holy Scriptures. (3) The Unity of the Godhead, and the Trinity of Persons thereof. (4) The utter depravity of human nature in consequence of the fall. (5) The incarnation of the Son of God, his work of Atonement for sinners and mankind, and his mediatorial intercession and reign. (6) The justification of sinners by faith alone. (7) The work of the Holy Spirit in the conversion and sanctification of the sinner. (8) The immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, the judgment of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, with the eternal blessedness of the righteous, and the eternal punishment of the wicked. (9) The Divine institution of the Christian ministry, and the obligation and perpetuity of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper" (A. Johnston, *World Evangelism*, 265).

<sup>52</sup>The five fundamentals are cited by the Pontifical Commission on Biblical Interpretation to describe the evangelical interpretation of the Bible. They ascribe the term "fondamentaliste" to the American Biblical Congress, Niagara, 1895: "Le terme «fondamentaliste» se rattache directement au Congrès biblique américain qui s'est tenu à Niagara, dans l'État de New York, en 1895. Les exégètes protestants

conference came after Ritschl published his three volumes on the atonement: 1874, 1883, and 1888. Could it be that Ritschl's writings, which Aulén considered a "vigorous criticism of the 'juridical' doctrine of the Atonement,"<sup>53</sup> called for this reaffirmation of the substitutionary atonement among evangelicals?

Perhaps more challenging than the three primary positions on the atonement as expounded by Gustav Aulén (objective, *Christus Victor*, and subjective)<sup>54</sup> is seeking to understand the multitude of middle views. In that light, Table 3 places the substitutionary model on one side and the "middle ground" *Christus Victor* model of Aulén on the other, positing ten intermediary positions between the two. By the way, Aulén's view was considered to elucidate a median position between the objective and subjective models of the Atonement, and thus provide a basis for the reunion of Christendom.<sup>55</sup>

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conservateurs y définirent «cinq points de fondamentalisme»: l'inerrance verbale de l'Écriture, la divinité du Christ, sa naissance virgine, la doctrine de l'expiation viciaire et la résurrection corporelle lors de la seconde venue du Christ" (Commission Biblique Pontificale, *L'Interprétation de la Bible dans l'Église* [Montréal: Fides, 1994], 48). The five fundamentals listed by the Pontifical Commission are: (1) the verbal inerrancy of the Scriptures; (2) the deity of Christ; (3) his virgin birth; (4) the doctrine of vicarious expiation [i.e. substitutionary atonement]; and (5) bodily resurrection upon the second coming of Christ.

<sup>53</sup>Gustav Aulén, *Christus Victor: An Historical Study of the Three Main Types of the Idea of the Atonement* (New York: Macmillan, 1969), 138.

<sup>54</sup>Aulén began by stating that "the traditional account of the history of the idea of the Atonement is in need of thorough revision" (*Christus Victor*, 1). He then described the same three views of the atonement using the following nomenclature: the Anselmic, objective, or Latin view; the *Christus Victor* or classic view; and the humanistic or subjective view.

<sup>55</sup>"In our day the great hope of Reunion has come; but the Reunion movement is confronted by the immense difficulty of reconciling the Catholic and the Protestant conceptions of faith and order. But Dr. Aulén's interpretation of the history of the idea of the Atonement throws real light on the situation. . . . Here, then, is a true hope of Reunion; not in the victory of 'Catholic' over 'Protestant,' or of 'Protestant' over 'Catholic,' but the return of both to the rock whence they were hewn" (A. G. Herbert, "Translator's Preface," in Aulén, *Christus Victor*, xxxvi).

Table 3: Twelve Select Contemporary Views of the Atonement from Substitutionary to *Christus Victor*<sup>56</sup>

Model of the Atonement	Substitutionary Atonement				Substitutionary Atonement/ Reconciliation Language				Reconciliation Theories				<i>Christus Victor</i>
	Reformed Experiential	Reformed Rationalistic Extreme	Discipleship	Relational	Apologetic	Rationalistic Health and Wholeness	Purpose-Driven	Existential	Psychological	Positive Thinking	Love Oriented	Kingdom Oriented	
Implied View of Sin	Adam as Federal Head				Adam as Natural Head (Outside Locus of Sin)				Basic Goodness and Basic Evil of Man				
	Sin as Total Depravity				Sin as Depravity		Sin as Degradation		Sin as Deprivation; Sin as an Antithetical; Sin as a Sickness				
	Total Inability	Mind Tainted	Will Tainted	Severed Relationship with God	Irrationality and Incoherence of Sin	Lack of Spiritual and Physical Wholeness	Primarily Viewed as Selfishness	God Not a Reality in Life	Man is Emotionally Broken and Scarred	Negative Thinking (Stinkin' Thinkin')	Sin as a Lack of Love	Social Sin Against God and Man	
Implied Spiritual Orientation	God-Centered; God Oriented	God-Centered; Man-Oriented	Man-Centered; God-Oriented				Man-Centered; Man-Oriented						
	Individualistic									Socialistic <sup>57</sup>			
Appeal of Gospel	Peace from Weight of Sin	Submission to Glory of God	Appeal of Spiritual Disciplines	Reestablished Relationship with God	Logic of Christian Worldview	Lack of Physical and Spiritual Wholeness	Obtaining Purpose in Life	Gain of Meaning in Life	Recovery of Wholeness in Life	Personal Sense of Self-Worth	Need for and Appreciation of Love	Social Benefits of Christian Worldview	
Focus of Gospel	Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Christ	Sovereignty of God	Man's Efforts Joining with God's Grace	Reconciliation with God (e.g. Prodigal Son)	Christian Worldview and Truth	"With His stripes we are healed"	Meaning and Purpose from God	Connecting with God	Restoration of Wholeness	God's Gift of a Positive Approach to Life	God's Love	Reign of Christ, and Church as Its Earthly Manifestation	

Table 3 is organized under the headings of three models of the atonement: substitutionary, reconciliation, and *Christus Victor*. Three views are listed under the substitutionary model, four are listed under the combined substitutionary model with reconciliation

<sup>56</sup>These views are generalizations as each model of the atonement may include a variety of expressions which may adopt a differing view of the atonement.

<sup>57</sup>Similarly, Rauschenbusch, whose view does not appear on this chart, defined sin as racism: "Every personal act, however isolated it may seem, is connected with racial sin" (Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social Gospel* [New York: Macmillan, 1917; Nashville: Abingdon, 1978], 246).

language, and four others are listed under the reconciliation theory. Interestingly, Aulén viewed his *Christus Victor* as a reconciliation model.<sup>58</sup> It is clear historically that there are a variety of views within each position. While most of the views listed will affirm the concept of substitution,<sup>59</sup> as well as use reconciliation language, the positions are differentiated by their overall view of sin and salvation. Table 3 uses common terminology to identify positions. Each position is defined by its *primary* definition of mankind's sin problem, its *primary* terminology regarding the atonement, and its *primary* emphasis regarding the results of conversion on the individual or society, as found in the rows by the heading "Implied View of Sin." I have also included a row which differentiates "Implied Spiritual Orientation." Each view then emphasizes a different appeal of the gospel, and for each the gospel is tailored to reproduce the *primary* emphasis of the position.

The difficulty of many of the intermediary views is not in what they propound, but in what they (1) do not emphasize, (2) do not discuss at all, and even (3) may be antagonistic to. At the top of the chart, I have placed three models of the atonement: substitution, reconciliation, and *Christus Victor*. There is fluidity as to how theologians and practitioners have applied these models. For example, James Denney posited his reconciliation model, presumably because he disaffirmed the harshness of the Westminster Confession on the depravity of man.<sup>60</sup> Ritschl preferred

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<sup>58</sup>But if the earthly life of Christ as a whole is thus regarded as a continuous process of victorious conflict, it is His death that is the final and decisive battle. . . . The ransom is always regarded as paid to the powers of evil, to death, or to the devil; by its means they are overcome, and their power over men is brought to an end. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that when this new has been done, Atonement has taken place; for a new relation between God and the world is established by the fact that God has delivered mankind from the powers of evil, and reconciled the world to Himself. At this central point, God is both the Reconciler and the Reconciled" (Aulén, *Christus Victor* 30). "First, that the double-sidedness of the idea of the classic idea of the Atonement means that God is not only Reconciler but now stands as Reconciled. It is not only the world that now stands in a new relation to God, but also that God stands in a new relation to the world" (ibid., 59-60).

<sup>59</sup>It is important to note that both sides of the controversy [Great Crisis of 1910] agreed on the atoning work of Jesus Christ on the cross, and both sides subscribed to the doctrine of penal substitution. The difference was this: SCM [Student Christian Movement] said that you could preach the gospel without preaching the atonement, whereas the small group of Cambridge students [Cambridge Intercollegiate Christian Union] argued that it was central to Christian doctrine and to Christian gospel preaching. They argued that without the atonement, you no longer have the gospel.... If you lose that [Christ crucified] at the center of your ministry, then like the SCM you cease being an evangelical ministry" (Phillip D. Jensen and Tony Payne, "Church/Campus Connections," in *Telling the Truth*, 197-98).

<sup>60</sup>We must be Augustinians without being Manicheans. . . . On the other hand, there may be a doctrine of human depravity, not only seriously expressing serious facts, but so exaggerated and uncompromising as to exclude the very possibility of redemption. The Westminster Divines came at least perilously near to this when they spoke of Adam's posterity as 'utterly indisposed, disabled, and made the opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil.' The need for redemption is only too

to use reconciliation language<sup>61</sup> because of its horizontal or social element.<sup>62</sup> Aulén himself disapproved of the stark judicial element of Anselm's substitutionary atonement, because it lacked the incarnational element.<sup>63</sup> Barth's major view was the reconciliation model,<sup>64</sup> though he used substitutionary language at times. *Now each of these had a similar antipathy for the uniquely substitutionary approach, and each posited a different reconciliation model.* Thus, the reconciliation model is both fluid, in that it contains a variety of views, and similar, in that it shares an aversion to a uniquely substitutionary model. Were our evangelical forefathers, who elucidated the substitutionary atonement as one of the five fundamentals, seeking to guard us from the wiles of the reconciliation model? It seems like this was the case.

Now, where do our two authors fit on this Table 3? Erasmus wrote prior to the Reformation and prior to the Council of Trent. Yet his philosophical approach to theology was gleaned from his predecessors, Peter Abelard, Peter the Lombard, and Thomas Aquinas,<sup>65</sup> though he indicated an aversion to his contemporary theologians.<sup>66</sup> It seems that Aquinas's antipathy to the Manicheans (i.e., Albigenses) led him down a non-proclamational path in the

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powerfully expressed here, but what becomes of its possibility?" (James Denney, *The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation* [London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1942], 198-99).

<sup>61</sup>For example, Ritschl explains forgiveness as a relational issue: "All kinds of punishment for sin are the expression of a separation of sinners from God which is counter to their ideal destiny. If, therefore, forgiveness of sins is the removal of the penal state of sinners, it follows that it brings back those who are separated from God by sin into nearness or fellowship with God. It [justification] is to be defined, then, as the *removal of separation* which, in consequence of sin, has entered in between man and God" (Ritschl, "Preface," 53).

<sup>62</sup>These conditions lead us to conclude that the religious conceptions of justification and reconciliation, to be explained, must not be applied in isolation to the individual subject, but to the subject as a member of community. . . . The *Kingdom of God* likewise is a directly *religious conception*. . . . For this combination of words distinctly expresses an operation of God directed towards men" (Albrecht Ritschl, *The Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation* [trans. H. R. Mackintosh and A. B. Macaulay; Göttingen, 1874, 1883, 1888; Clifton, N.J.: Reference Book, 1966], 30).

<sup>63</sup>"It is God's love, the Divine *agape*, that removes the sentence that rested upon mankind, and creates a new relation between the human race and Himself, a relation which is altogether different from any sort of justification by legal righteousness" (Aulén, *Christus Victor*, 34).

<sup>64</sup>"The reconciliation of the world with God takes place in the person of a man in whom, because he is also true God, the conversion of all men to God is an actual event. . . . In so far as He was and is and will be very man, the conversion of man to God took place in Him, the turning and therefore the reconciliation of all men, the fulfillment of the covenant" (Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, 4:1, "The Doctrine of Reconciliation" [trans. G. W. Bromiley; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1956], 130, 132).

<sup>65</sup>"In his treatment of the atonement, Peter denied that Christ's death was a price paid to the devil. It is the manifestation of God's love, and by Christ's love on the cross, love is enkindled within us. Here Lombard approaches the view of Abaelard. He has nothing in favor of Anselm's view that the death of Christ was a payment to divine honor. . . . Following Peter the Lombard, he [Aquinas] held that grace was a superadded gift to Adam, over and above the natural faculties and powers of the soul and body" (Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church* [Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2002], 5:634, 669).

<sup>66</sup>Himelick, 53, 107-8.



development of his theological system—thus moving him away from the substitutionary model of the atonement. Because of the theological shift of the Roman Catholic Church in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Erasmus followed his predecessors in affirming an increasingly Pelagian approach to the atonement.<sup>67</sup> In other words, Erasmus is not on our chart. His view would be closer to the third view delineated by Gustav Aulén, the humanistic or subjective view: “He [Abelard] emphasizes especially that Christ is the great Teacher and Example, who arouses responsive love in men; this love is the basis on which reconciliation and forgiveness rest.”<sup>68</sup>

Warren, however, does appear on Table 3. Flowing from his approach to the gospel as found in his *Purpose Driven Life*, several points are clear. First, his primary definition of sin is a type of antithetic—failing to give God glory.<sup>69</sup> In this Warren somewhat follows Augustine who made sin a negation to avoid the Manichean doctrine.<sup>70</sup> Sin as an antithetic is found throughout *The Purpose Driven Life*.<sup>71</sup> Similarly, man’s nature is primarily described as selfish.<sup>72</sup> Hodge wrote, “The Theory that all Sin consists in Selfishness . . . destroys the very idea of moral good.”<sup>73</sup> Warren’s

<sup>67</sup>“From this time until the Reformation, the predominant trend within Catholic theology was a drift toward Pelagianism”(Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 912).

<sup>68</sup>Aulén, *Christus Victor*, 96.

<sup>69</sup>“In the entire universe, only two of God’s creation fail to bring glory to him: fallen angels (demons) and us (people). All sin, at its root, is failing to give God glory. It is loving anything else more than God. Refusing to bring glory to God is prideful rebellion, and it is the sin that caused Satan’s fall—and ours, too. In different ways we have all lived for our own glory, not God’s. The Bible says, ‘All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God’ [NIV]” (Warren, 54-55).

<sup>70</sup>Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 2:158-59. It is interesting to note that Hodge affirms that the predominant Romish position was also negative, “Winer, Guericke, Koellner, Baur, and Dr. Shedd in his ‘History of Christian Doctrine,’ all represent the Church of Rome as teaching original sin is merely negative, the want of original righteousness, and as denying that there is anything subjective in the state of human nature as men are born into the world, which has the proper nature of sin” (ibid., 177).

<sup>71</sup>“Wandering through life without a purpose . . .” (Warren, 28). “You think, Maybe this time will be different, but it doesn’t solve the real problem—a lack of focus and purpose” (ibid., 32). “All sin, at its root, is failing to give God glory. . . . Refusing to bring glory to God is prideful rebellion, it is the sin that caused Satan’s fall—and our’s too. In different ways we have all lived for our own glory, not God’s” (ibid., 54-55). “It [sin] is loving anything else more than God” (ibid., 55).

<sup>72</sup>“Surrender is hard work. In our case, it is intense warfare against our self-centered nature” (Warren, 81). “Sometimes it takes years, but eventually you will discover that the greatest hindrance to God’s blessing in your life is not others, it is yourself—your self-will, stubborn pride, and personal ambition” (ibid., 83). “Learning to love unselfishly is not an easy task. It runs counter to our self-centered nature” (ibid., 123). “That’s one reason God puts us in a church family—to learn unselfishness” (ibid., 167). “Of course, this is a difficult mental shift because we’re naturally self-absorbed and almost all advertising encourages us to think of ourselves,” (ibid., 299).

<sup>73</sup>Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 2:144, 145.

relational emphasis is also clear from his lists of sins<sup>74</sup> and other comments on sin.<sup>75</sup>

Second, Warren explains the atonement in greatest detail in ch. 14, "When God seems distant."<sup>76</sup> Several other passages in the book also hint at Warren's view of the atonement.<sup>77</sup> This author searched *The Purpose Driven Life* for an expansion of the substitutionary atonement, and found only the ch. 14 portion. If this were a book uniquely on the spiritual disciplines, this would be an understandable minimization. However, Warren himself indicates that the book is also meant for unbelievers.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>74</sup>"The opinions or expectations of others, to money, to resentment, to fear, to your own pride, lusts, or ego" (Warren, 82). "Your past regrets, your present problems, your future ambitions, your fears, weaknesses, habits, hurts, and hang-ups" (ibid., 83). "When God seems distant, you may feel that he is angry with you or is disciplining you for some sin. In fact, sin *does* disconnect us from intimate fellowship with God. We grieve God's Spirit and quench our fellowship with him by disobedience, conflict with others, busyness, friendship with the world, and other sins" (ibid., 109). "The list could be long: conflict, hurt, hypocrisy, neglect, pettiness, legalism, and other sins" (ibid., 162).

<sup>75</sup>"Bitterness is the greatest barrier to friendship with God," (Warren, 94).

<sup>76</sup>"If God never did anything else for you, he would still deserve your continual praise for the rest of your life because of what Jesus did for you on the cross. *God's Son died for you!* This is the greatest reason for worship.

"Unfortunately, we forget the cruel details of the agonizing sacrifice God made on our behalf. . . . [The next several paragraphs detail the physical torture of the cross.]

"Next, as Jesus took all of mankind's sin and guilt on himself, God looked away from that ugly sight, and Jesus cried out in total desperation, "My God, My God, why have *you* forsaken me?" Jesus could save himself—but then he could not have saved you.

"Words cannot describe the darkness of that moment. Why did God allow and endure such ghastly, evil mistreatment? Why? So *you* could be spared from eternity in hell, and so *you* could share in his glory forever! The Bible says, 'Christ was without sin, but for our sake God made him share our sin in order that in union with him we might share in the righteousness of God' [2 Cor 5:21, TEV].

"Jesus gave up everything so you could have everything. He died so you could live forever" (Warren, 112-13).

<sup>77</sup>"We bring glory to God by telling others about him. God doesn't want his love and purposes kept a secret. Once we know the truth, he expects us to share it with others. This is a great privilege—introducing others to Jesus, helping them discover their purposes, and preparing them for their eternal destiny" (Warren, 57).

"First, believe. Believe God loves you and made you for his purposes. Believe that you are not an accident. Believe you were made to last forever. Believe God has chosen you to have a relationship with Jesus, who died on the cross for you. Believe that no matter what you've done, God wants to forgive you" (ibid., 58).

"Second, receive. Receive Jesus into your life as your Lord and Savior. Receive his forgiveness for your sins. Receive his Spirit, who will give you the power to fulfill your life's purposes" (ibid.).

"Jesus changed the situation. When he paid for our sins on the cross, the veil in the temple that symbolized our separation from God was split from top to bottom, indicating our direct access to God was once again available" (ibid., 86).

"Your testimony: the story of how you began a relationship with Jesus" (ibid., 289).

<sup>78</sup>Warren, 34.

What then is the predominant view of the atonement taught by Warren? Three concepts emerge: a demonstration of love, a response of love, and Christ's example. First, dealing with a demonstration of love, in the ch. 14 portion, Warren explains the crucifixion. Most of his text on these pages is spent enumerating the horrible physical torture of Jesus prior to and on the cross. The word sin is used twice on these pages, once in a quote of 2 Cor 5:21 and once in the midst of a prepositional phrase, "as Jesus took all of mankind's sin and guilt on himself." It seems that explaining the idea of substitution for sin, although found variously, is not primary for Warren. Thus, I call this a demonstration of love approach.<sup>79</sup>

Second, Warren explains the necessary response of love in his chapter "What Matters Most."<sup>80</sup> He continues in this same chapter, "Love should be your top priority, primary objective, and greatest ambition."<sup>81</sup> After using the example of Mother Teresa,<sup>82</sup> Warren then explains that love will be the measuring stick by which mankind will be evaluated for eternity.<sup>83</sup> He summarizes this poignant chapter with these lines: "The best use of life is love. The best expression of love is time. The best time to love is now."<sup>84</sup> Clearly, one of Warren's interpretations of the atonement centers on a response of love. Charles Arn also seems to reinterpret the Christian life and mission as love.<sup>85</sup> It must be noted that Horace Bushnell reinterprets the vicarious atonement according to the

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<sup>79</sup>"God loves you infinitely more than you can imagine. The greatest expression of this is the sacrifice of God's Son for you. "God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us." If you want to know how much you matter to God, look at Christ with his arms outstretched on the cross, saying, 'I love you this much! I'd rather die than live without you'" (ibid., 78-79).

<sup>80</sup>"Life is all about love."

"Because God is love, the most important lesson he wants you to learn on earth is how to love. It is in loving that we are the most like him, so love is the foundation of every command he has given us: "The whole law can be summed up in this one command: "love others as you love yourself" [Galatians 5:14, LB].

"Learning to love unselfishly is not an easy task. It runs counter to our self-centered nature. That's why we're given a lifetime to learn it. Of course, God wants us to love everyone, but he is *particularly* concerned that we learn to love others in his family. As we've already seen, this is the second purpose for your life." (Warren, 123).

<sup>81</sup>Warren, 124.

<sup>82</sup>"Love leaves a lasting legacy. How you treat other people, not your wealth or accomplishments, is the most enduring impact you can leave on earth. As Mother Teresa said, 'It's not what you do, but how much love you put into it that matters.' Love is the secret of a lasting heritage." (Warren, 125).

<sup>83</sup>"We will be evaluated on our love. The third reason to make learning to love the goal of your life is that it is what we will be evaluated on in eternity. One way God measures spiritual maturity is by the quality of our relationships" (Warren, 126).

<sup>84</sup>Warren, 128.

<sup>85</sup>"The great commission—to make disciples—and the great commandment—to love—are inseparably linked. The *mission* Christ gave us is to make disciples. The *model* He gave us is love. . . . the *method* He gave us is love. . . . the *motive* He gave us is love. . . . the *message* He gave us is love" (Charles Arn, "A Response to Dr. Rainer: What Is the Key to Effective Evangelism?" *Journal of the American Society for Church Growth* 6 [1995]: 77-78).

concept of love.<sup>86</sup> Erickson considers Bushnell to hold “The Moral-Influence Theory: The Atonement as a Demonstration of God’s Love.”<sup>87</sup>

Third, Warren’s penchant for the example view comes at important junctions of the book. When he describes a “bringing God glory” approach to salvation, in ch. 7, Warren writes, “God’s glory is best seen in Jesus Christ.”<sup>88</sup> Continuing with his purpose driven approach to the atonement, Warren writes, “Jesus honored God by fulfilling his purpose on earth. We honor God the same way.”<sup>89</sup> In ch. 10, “The Heart of Worship,” which is a chapter on complete surrender, Warren writes, “The supreme example of self-surrender is Jesus.”<sup>90</sup> Similarly, in his two-page explanation of the atonement, he seems to emphasize the human extent of the self-sacrifice of Christ.<sup>91</sup>

It is clear from Warren’s upbringing as described in his book,<sup>92</sup> from his denominational heritage,<sup>93</sup> and from an e-mail he sent me,<sup>94</sup> that the substitutionary atonement doctrine played an important part in his formative years. While this author rests assured that Warren believes and affirms the substitutionary atonement, its

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<sup>86</sup>For a good being is not simply one who gives bounties and favors, but one who is in the principle of love; and it is the nature of love, universally, to insert itself into the miseries, and take upon its feeling the burdens of others. Love does not even consider the ill desert of the subject; he may be a cruel and relentless enemy. It does not consider the expense of toil, and sacrifice, and suffering the intervention may cost. It stops at nothing but the known possibility of relief, or benefit; asks for nothing as inducement, but the opportunity of success. Love is a principle essentially vicarious in its own nature, identifying the subject with others, so as to suffer their adversities and pains, and taking on itself the burden of their evils” (Horace Bushnell, *The Vicarious Sacrifice, Grounded in Principles of Universal Obligation* [New York: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1866], 41-42).

<sup>87</sup>“Horace Bushnell (1802-1876) popularized it [Abelard’s Moral Influence Theory] in the United States. . . .” (Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 785).

<sup>88</sup>Warren, 54.

<sup>89</sup>*Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>90</sup>“The supreme example of self-surrender is Jesus. The night before his crucifixion Jesus surrendered himself to God’s plan. He prayer, ‘Father, everything is possible for you. Please take this cup of suffering from me. Yet I want your will, not mine.’ . . .

“Genuine surrender says, ‘Father, if this problem, pain, sickness, or circumstance is needed to fulfill your purpose and glory in my life or in another’s, please don’t take it away.’ This level of maturity does not come easy. In the case of Jesus, he agonized so much over God’s plan that he sweat drops of blood. Surrender is hard work. In our case, it is intense warfare against our self-centered nature.” (Warren, 81).

<sup>91</sup>Warren, 112-13.

<sup>92</sup>*Ibid.*, 287-88.

<sup>93</sup>For example, *The Baptist Faith and Message* (2000) reads in Point II.A. “God the Son”: “He honored the divine law by his personal obedience, and in his substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men of sin” (*The Baptist Faith and Message* [Nashville: LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, 2000], 8).

<sup>94</sup>After the Evangelical Theological Society conference information was published, Rick Warren sent a thoughtful email to me, where he spoke of “my Calvinist roots” (October 2, 2003). He also provided me with the articles that I used above to explain the wide dissemination of his book.

priority does not seem to be clearly communicated in *The Purpose Driven Life*. Therefore, Table 3 places Warren's approach to the atonement under the section titled "Substitutionary Atonement/Reconciliation Language."

From a discussion of the views of the atonement, the natural flow of one's view of the atonement consists in the presentation of the gospel. The next section will examine our two authors' approaches to the gospel plan.

#### IV. THE INDIVIDUAL GOSPEL

Before seeking to delineate the gospel plans put forward by our two authors, several historic gospel precedents will be put forward for the sake of comparative analysis. The terms "personal gospel" or "individual gospel" were coined in opposition to the "social gospel" of Walter Rauschenbusch, as well as Josiah Royce's parallel philosophical thought during the height of the social gospel movement.<sup>95</sup> First, we will note two biblical sources for the personal gospel, and then we will provide two historic examples that affirm the substitutionary atonement. The two biblical sources of the individual gospel are 1 Cor 15:1-8<sup>96</sup> and the structure of the book of Romans.<sup>97</sup> Two historic examples of evangelical gospel presentations that affirm the substitutionary atonement are Spurgeon's "Ark of Safety"<sup>98</sup> and "The Roman Road," which are commonly organized as follows.<sup>99</sup>

<sup>95</sup>It is interesting to note that throughout Rauschenbusch's *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, he quoted Josiah Royce's *Problem of Christianity* (1914), "Josiah Royce, one of the ablest philosophical thinkers our nation has produced, has given us, in his 'Problem of Christianity,' his mature reflections on the subject of the Christian religion" (p. 70). Royce (1855-1916) was an instructor in philosophy at Harvard University for thirty-four years. In his main work, *The World and the Individual* (1908), Royce began his epistemology from the human mind: "For Royce, the Absolute is the mind" (Brand Blanshard, "Royce, Josiah," *Collier's Encyclopedia*, 1961 ed.). Royce then argued against individualism and for the role of society. In defining right and wrong, he maintained that "an act is right so far as, looked at from the point of view of the wider community of which we are members, it can still be approved" (ibid.). With this positive view of community, antagonism to individualism, and dismissing the Scriptures as irrelevant in understanding knowledge, Royce provided the intellectual foundation upon which Rauschenbusch built his theology of social gospel.

<sup>96</sup>"The death of Christ for our sins and his resurrection were therefore the great facts on which Paul insisted as the foundation of the gospel. . . . The apostle, therefore, could speak with infallible confidence, both as to what the gospel is and as to its truth" (Charles Hodge, *A Commentary on 1 & 2 Corinthians* [1857; Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1974], 312).

<sup>97</sup>These one and a half verses [Rom 1:16b-17] are at the same time both an integral part of Paul's expression of his readiness to preach the gospel in Rome and also the statement of the theological theme which is going to be worked out in the main body of the epistle" (C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* [Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1975, 1985], 1:87).

<sup>98</sup>After quoting Lev 17:2 and Exod 12:13, Spurgeon's tract starts out: "God's people are always safe. But God's people are only safe through *the blood*, because He sees the blood mark on their brow. . . . The blood of Christ, nothing but it, can ever

- (A) Need (Why?): (1) God says that all are sinners, Rom 3:10, 23; (2) God tells us the reason all are sinners, Rom 5:12.
- (B) Consequence (What?) God tells us the result of sin, Rom 6:23.
- (C) Remedy (How?) God tells us of his concern for sinners, Rom 5:8-9
- (D) Condition (Who?) God's way of salvation is made plain, Rom 10:9-10, 13.
- (E) Results: God tells us the results of salvation, Rom 5:1, 8:1.
- (F) Assurance: God gives the saved sinner assurance, Rom 8:16.

As the biblical formulation of the gospel, these gospel presentations are (1) sin-centered, (2) God-focused, and (3) God-oriented. They all emphasize the substitutionary atonement—Christ as the payment for mankind's sin. With this introduction in mind, we will now seek to analyze the gospel presentations of our two authors.

For Erasmus, faith appears to be a strict adherence to Heb 11:6—diligently seeking God, outside of the prerequisite of repentance and faith in the Jesus Christ. The Roman Road Gospel is never shared in his *Enchiridion*. Everything revolves around a Christianized Stoicism, based on Abelard's example theory.

The gospel for Erasmus seems to be as follows:

1. Sin exists—using the platonic differentiation between the flesh and the Spirit.
2. Sin must be resisted—emphasizing the use of Stoic means.
3. Christ has given us the example of resisting sin.
4. To resist sin, we must have faith in the Bible, faith in the example of Christ, follow his example and that of other role models of Stoicism in the Bible and in church history—as confirmed by the Roman Catholic Church.

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save the soul. . . . *The blood* is to save thee, not thy tears; *Christ's death*, not thy repentance. . . . You are not saved by the efficacy of your faith, but by the efficacy of the blood of Christ. . . . Yet again, we may say of the blood of Christ, it is *all-sufficient*. There is no case which the blood of Christ cannot meet; there is no sin which it can not wash away. . . . Sinner . . . Leave off doing altogether; get Christ *first*, and then you may do as you like. See the Savoir hanging on the cross; turn your eye to Him, and say, 'Lord I trust Thee; I have nothing else to trust in; sink or swim, my Savior, I trust Thee' (C. H. Spurgeon, "Salvation and Safety," *Royal Dainties*, no. 169 [Minneapolis: Asher, affiliated with The Union Gospel Mission, n.d.], 1, 2, 3, 4; found at <http://www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/docs/tract01.html>; accessed January 4, 2001.

<sup>99</sup>"Roman Road," (Chicago: Pacific Garden Mission, n.d.).

Because of this gospel emphasis, I have placed Erasmus under the column titled “Christian Stoicism” in Table 4 (to be discussed in the next section).

Warren uses numerous approaches to sharing the gospel, depending on the main point he is seeking to make in the given section of his book. The following six outlines (not exhaustive) provide examples of his gospel presentations.

Warren’s gospel presentation 1—based on finding meaning and purpose:<sup>100</sup>

1. God wants you to find purpose and meaning in life;
2. Selfishness keeps us from finding meaning in life;
3. My five purposes, from the Bible, will help you find God’s divine purposes for your life.<sup>101</sup>

Warren’s gospel presentation 2—based on bringing glory to God:

1. Man Does Not Bring Glory to God;
2. Man Needs to Bring Glory to God—By Fulfilling God’s Purposes;
3. Man faces the same choice (that Jesus did in the garden)—he must chose to glorify God through worship (bringing pleasure to God) and total surrender to His purposes.<sup>102</sup>

Warren’s gospel presentation 3—based on believing and receiving:<sup>103</sup>

1. Believe: (1) That God loves you and made you for his purposes; (2) That you were not an accident; (3) Believe God has chosen you to have a relationship with Jesus, who died on the cross for you; and (4) Believe that no matter what you’ve done, God wants to forgive you.

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<sup>100</sup>“Nothing matters more than knowing God’s purposes for your life, and nothing can compensate for not knowing them” (Warren, 29). “When life has meaning, you can bear almost anything; without it, nothing is bearable” (ibid., 30).

<sup>101</sup>There are many ways to bring God glory, but they can be summarized in God’s five purposes for your life. . . . We bring glory to God by worshipping Him; by loving other believers; by becoming like Christ; by serving others with our gifts; by telling others about him” (ibid., 55-57).

<sup>102</sup>Warren, 81.

<sup>103</sup>Ibid., 58.

2. Receive: (1) Receive Jesus Christ into your life as your Lord and Savior; (2) Receive his forgiveness for your sins; and (3) Receive his Spirit, who will give you the power to fulfill your life purpose.

Warren's gospel presentation 4 – based on total surrender:<sup>104</sup>

1. Can I trust God?
2. Admitting our limitations;
3. What it means to surrender.

Warren's gospel presentation 5 – based on "When God Seems Distant":<sup>105</sup>

1. God Is Real No Matter How You Feel;
2. How Do You Praise God When You Are In Crisis? (1) Tell God exactly how you feel; (2) Focus on who God is – his unchanging nature; (3) Trust God to keep his promises; (4) Remember what God has already done for you:
  - (a) God's Son died for you
  - (b) "Next, as Jesus took all of mankind's sin and guilt on himself . . ."
  - (c) Jesus could have saved himself – but then he could not have saved you
  - (d) Jesus gave up everything so that you could have everything. He died so that you could live forever.

Warren's gospel presentation 6 – being formed for God's family:<sup>106</sup>

1. You were formed for God's family;
2. Because God is love, he treasures relationships;
3. He devised a plan to create us, bring us into his family, and share with us all that he has;
4. When we place our faith in Christ, God becomes our Father, we become his children, other believers become our brothers and sisters, and the church becomes our spiritual family;
5. You became a part of the human family by your first birth, but you become a member of God's family by your second birth;

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<sup>104</sup>Ibid., 77-84.

<sup>105</sup>Ibid., 107-13.

<sup>106</sup>Ibid., 117-18.



6. The invitation to be a part of God's family is universal, but there is one condition: faith in Jesus.

When these gospel presentations are analyzed, they have a different sense than presentations which emphasize the substitutionary atonement. While Warren's gospel presentations are (1) biblical, (2) personal or individual, and (3) emphasize God or Christ, they do not emphasize or explain man's depraved sin nature or Christ's bearing our sins in his body on the cross. Because they emphasize sin as an antithetic and a relationship with God apart from man's moral departure from God's laws, these gospel presentations lie closer to a reconciliation model of the atonement.

Our discussion has now come full circle. We began with the apologetic approach of the authors, and now we move from the atonement and the personal gospel to the big picture of the Christian church – the Great Commission.

#### V. THE GREAT COMMISSION

We have now come full circle back to a discussion of method. Each of the various views of the atonement noted above has implications for the Great Commission. Where proclamational evangelism flows from the substitutionary model of the atonement, a lifestyle emphasis flows from the example theory of the atonement. A huge theological and methodological move took place in the Roman Catholic Church in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The proclamational approach of the book of Acts had gradually transferred from Rome to the sectarian movements of the early and mid Middle Ages: e.g., Paulicians, Albigenses, and Waldenses. Simultaneous to the illegitimate crusade against the Albigenses and the Waldenses, as noted by Michel Rubellin in *Inventer l'hérésie*,<sup>107</sup> there was an institutional antagonism toward proclamational evangelism.<sup>108</sup> In fact, Roman Catholic theology of twelfth and

<sup>107</sup>“3. Enfin, l'histoire lyonnaise de Valdès apparaît exemplaire quant à l'invention de l'hérésie et à la mise en place de la 'société de persécution' que décrit Robert Ian Moore [*La persécution: Sa formation en Europe (Xe-XIIIe siècle)* (Paris, 1991)]. Le valdéisme en tant qu'hérésie ne naît pas à Lyon avec Valdès, puisque celui-ci, si mon hypothèse est la bonne, collabore alors avec l'archevêque. Il naît hors de Lyon à partir du moment où cette collaboration est rejetée, et que Valdès et ses partisans sont devenus non seulement inutiles mais encore dangereux, et qu'en conséquence on les condamne et on les chasse de Lyon” (Michel Rubellin, “Au temps où Valdès n'étais pas hérétique: hypothèses sur le rôle de Valdès à Lyon,” in *Inventer l'hérésie? Discours polémiques et pouvoirs avant l'inquisition*, [Collection du centre d'études médiévales de Nice 2; ed. Monique Zerner; Paris: C.I.D., 1998], 217).

<sup>108</sup>“Un deuxième point sur lequel je voudrais attirer l'attention, c'est qu'il faut absolument séparer les vaudois des cathares. Les vaudois de la haute époque ne sont pas des hérétiques, mais des schismatiques, même pas d'ailleurs: ils sont simplement désobéissants. Ils souhaitent rester dans l'Église mais ne veulent pas obéir à l'interdiction de prêcher sans autorisation. Pour eux, la règle c'est l'exemple évangélique” (Jean Duvernoy, Round Table Discussion, Jacques Dalarun, chair, in *Évangile et évangélisme (XIIe-XIIIe siècle)*, Cahiers de Fanjeaux 34 [Toulouse, France:

thirteenth centuries moved from the substitutionary position of Anselm, to that of (Peter Abelard) Peter Lombard, Thomas Aquinas, and gradually into the Pelagian theory.<sup>109</sup> Likewise the emphasis of the Great Commission moved from verbal evangelism to the imitation of Christ. In fact, this *imitatio Christi* emphasis in à Kempis led to a dangerous mystical devotion to the passion of Christ as salvific in itself<sup>110</sup> – hence a fascination with the crucifix, the *dolors* of Christ, the bleeding heart of Mary, the schismata, etc.

Similarly, scholars of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries have differentiated between *vita evangelica* (having a lay proclamation emphasis) and *vir evangelicus* (having a monastic lifestyle emphasis).<sup>111</sup> It would seem that the crusade mounted against the Albigenses produced an irreparable effect on Roman Catholic theology that was sealed in the Dominican Aquinas's *Summa Theologica*. This rejection of the NT proclamation method of the Waldenses and Albigenses not only affected Roman Catholic theology (which became a "here-and-now" kingdom theology of the church), but it also affected their view of the Great Commission, changing it to one of imitation of Christ. Could it be that evangelicals are going through this same evolution in the wake of the discipleship movement? With this brief, but intense introduction, how do our authors fare as relates to this proclamational versus

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Éditions Privat, 1999], 235). "Il [Michel Rubellin] a montré qu'à l'origine ils [les vaudois] ne sont nullement hérétiques. Durant six ans, entre 1173 et 1179, Valdo et les siens sont utilisés par l'archevêque, Guichard de Pontigny, un cistercien, pour lutter contre le chapitre cathédral de Lyon. Après que Jean de Bellesmains a succédé au siège épiscopal, les vaudois sont définis hérétiques parce qu'ils refusent d'obéir à la règle faisant aux laïcs interdiction de prêcher" (Jean-Louis Biget [ibid., 246]).

<sup>109</sup>"From this time until the Reformation, the predominant trend within Catholic theology was a drift toward Pelagianism" (Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 912).

<sup>110</sup>Far more important was the influence of the religious phenomenon of *Devotion to the Passion*, or passion-mysticism; indeed it would be hard to exaggerate the importance of this either in the Middle Ages or in the subsequent period, both in Roman and in Protestant Christendom. . . . It can truly be said that the appeal of the passion, the martyrdom of Christ, has never been so deeply felt as in mediaeval religion: 'The whole life of Christ was a cross and a martyrdom,' says à Kempis in *Imitatio Christi*. The attitude of the Christian is to be *meditatio et imitatio*; to enter with loving compassion into the unspeakable sufferings of Christ, to follow in His steps, and so to be cleansed and united with the eternal Divine Love: *per vulnera humanitatis ad intima divinitatis*" (Aulén, *Christus Victor*, 97).

<sup>111</sup>"Un autre problème est de définir l'évangélisme des XIIe et XIIIe siècles et de constituer en «objet historique», alors que le terme n'existe pas à l'époque, à la différence d'expressions comme *vita evangelica* et *vir evangelicus*. Il est bien évident que l'évangélisme se conçoit et se vit différemment selon le statut de ceux qu'il motive. À côté de l'évangélisme des personnalités d'exception, il existe un évangélisme des religieux et un évangélisme des laïcs; tous évoluent au fil du temps et il faut tenter d'en mesurer l'expression et les modalités. . . . Toutefois, avant saint François, la *sequela Christi* ne se confond pas avec l'*imitatio Christi*, elle postule seulement l'adoption de la *vita apostolica*. Suivre le Christ, ce n'est pas tenter de l'imiter, c'est se conformer au modèle des apôtres pour mieux s'inscrire dans leur succession" (Jean-Louis Biget, introduction to *Évangile et évangélisme (XIIe-XIIIe siècle)*, Cahiers de Fanjeaux 34, 7).

lifestyle continuum? Table 4 seeks to lay out the issues in simplified form.

Not surprisingly, Erasmus leans strongly to a lifestyle emphasis. In his fourth rule, he hints at the need for godly conversation,<sup>112</sup> communication of the knowledge of Christ,<sup>113</sup> and winning over one's household to God.<sup>114</sup> While these few crumbs are encouraging, they by no means express the emphasis of the NT on the Great Commission and evangelizing. Interestingly, Himelick's version of Erasmus's Fourth Rule seemed to leave out the verbal element found in the Dolan version. Thus, as mentioned above, the main mission for followers of Erasmus's *Enchiridion* would be to accept the monastic lifestyle (not discussed), to subjugate the flesh, and to exercise the Spirit in the spiritual weapons, such as the virtues.

**Table 4: Three Approaches to the Great Commission, the Christian Life, and Holy Living<sup>115</sup>**

	Evangelism	Christian Discipleship	Christian Stoicism
Great Commission	Luke 24:46-49 Proclamation of the Gospel	Matt 28:19-20 Discipleship	1 Cor 11:1 <i>Imitatio Christi</i>
Biggest Issue	Saving Souls	Christlikeness	Living the Virtues
		Practicing Spiritual Disciplines	
		Using One's Spiritual Gifts	
		Finding One's Purpose in Life	
Main Aspect of Difficulties in Life	Persecution Due to the Gospel	Trials and Tribulations in Life	Fighting against Sinful Nature
Life's Results	Souls Saved	Christlikeness	Victory over the Flesh
Possible Medieval Proponents	Albigenses (and later Waldenses)	Franciscans	Dominicans
Possible Current Evangelical Proponents	Campus Crusade	The Navigators	
In Relation to Our Two Authors	Warren's Father <sup>116</sup>	Warren	Erasmus

<sup>112</sup>"There are other actions that by their very nature are so virtuous that they can never be really wicked—for example, wishing well to all men, helping friends with honest aid, hating vices, and participating in godly conversation" (Dolan, 58).

<sup>113</sup>"Let your study bring you to a clearer perception of Christ so that your love for him will increase and you will be able in turn to communicate this knowledge of Him to others" (Dolan, 58-59).

<sup>114</sup>"But do not forget that your household must be won over for Christ" (Dolan, 59).

<sup>115</sup>The items are listed to show the inter-relationship of the general concepts there included. This Table does make generalizations which almost always have exceptions one way or another.

<sup>116</sup>Notice how Rick Warren's father was in this camp: "My Father was a minister for over fifty years, serving mostly in small, rural churches. He was a simple preacher, but he was a man with a mission. . . . One night near the end, while my wife, my niece, and I were by his side, Dad suddenly became very active and tried to get out of bed. . . . He persisted in trying to get out of bed, so my wife finally asked, 'Jimmy, what are you trying to do?' He replied, 'Got to save one more for Jesus! Got to save one more for Jesus! Got to save one more for Jesus!' He began to repeat the phrase over and over" (Warren, 287-88).

Warren for his part tends to emphasize a spiritual disciplines orientation in his *The Purpose Driven Life*. While his book was very helpful in explaining certain spiritual disciplines, it may not place these spiritual disciplines "under the blood." Could it be that Warren blurs the distinction between justification and sanctification? One gets the impression that God assists man in accomplishing his divine purposes for his life, *rather than God doing it all*. In Scripture we find God at work both to work and to will (Phil 2:13), good works which God prepared beforehand (Eph 2:10), deeds wrought in God (John 3:21), and the grace of God which makes the Christian what he is (1 Cor 15:10). Consequently, one gets the impression that Warren emphasizes man's ability to accomplish the five God-ordained purposes by which he can please him. Outside of God's prior work of justification, however, man is under the empire of sin, is not righteous, does not understand, does not seek God, has turned aside, has become useless, and can do no good (Rom 3:9-11). Therefore, the five purposes, if taken to an extreme, may become works by which man can find fulfillment in this life and heaven in the life to come. Spurgeon reminded his students of the importance of sublime doctrines: "To this end we must give clear statements of gospel doctrine, of vital experience, and of Christian duty, and never shrink from declaring the whole counsel of God."<sup>117</sup>

Along with a subtle move toward emphasizing man's place in salvation, a simultaneous shift seemed to take place in Warren's gospel emphasis. As noted in Table 4, it may be that with a simultaneous emphasis on spiritual purposes and disciplines comes a parallel move toward discipleship. While the end of *The Purpose Driven Life* is very strong on mission, and Warren makes clear that his father sought souls, the clarity of the mission may be blurred by the lack of a clear gospel presentation. The Great Commission may become church-oriented rather than gospel-oriented.

The gospel does not stand in isolation. It is inextricably wed to method. Any movement away from the substitutionary atonement also reorients the method of propagation of the gospel, what the response to the gospel entails, and the Great Commission given to the church. None of these stand in isolation from one another. In conclusion, it does not seem that Warren emphasizes the substitutionary atonement. God not only ordains the ends (salvation), but also the means (proclamation of the gospel). Both

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<sup>117</sup>"The glory of God being our chief object, we aim at it by seeking the edification of the saints and the salvation of sinners. It is a noble work to instruct the people of God, and to build them up in their most holy faith: we may by no means neglect this duty. To this end we must give clear statements of gospel doctrine, of vital experience, and of Christian duty, and never shrink from declaring the whole counsel of God. In too many cases sublime truths are held in abeyance under the pretence that they are not practical; whereas the very fact that they are revealed proves that the Lord thinks them to be of value, and woe to us if we pretend to be wiser than He" (C. H. Spurgeon, *Lectures to My Students* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1954], 336).

Jesus and Paul reminded their readers that a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough.<sup>118</sup> While Erasmus did not come close to sharing the gospel or encouraging NT evangelism, Warren does not seem to share the gospel as found in the Roman Road. He does, however, have a strong missional emphasis toward the end of his volume. This author is grateful that *The Purpose Driven Life* has sold seven million copies and has been translated into twelve languages, allowing many persons to read about Christian spiritual disciplines and, Lord willing, to deepen their spiritual lives.

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<sup>118</sup>Matt 6:6, 11-12; Mark 8:15; Luke 12:1; 1 Cor 5:6-8; Gal 5:9.