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The Missionary Church (OMS) In Brazil

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THE MISSIONARY CHURCH
(OMS) IN BRAZIL

A Research Paper
Presented to
the Faculty of
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of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Divinity

by
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	List of Tables	iv
	List of Graphs	v
Chapter 1	Purpose of the Research	1
Chapter 2	Background on Brazil	4
Chapter 3	The Missionary Church	21
Chapter 4	The Brazil Field Mission Of OMS	69
Chapter 5	Some Church Growth Principles	82
Chapter 6	Conclusions	101
	Appendix A Rise of Worker's Income	106
	Appendix B Concentration of Income	107
	Bibliography	108

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table #1 Membership Of The Missionary Church	24
Table #2 Organized Churches Of The Missionary Church	34
Table #3 Seekers In The Missionary Church	40
Table #4 Baptisms In The Missionary Church	44
Table #5 Preaching Points Of The Missionary Church	48
Table #6 Sunday Schools Of The Missionary Church	52
Table #7 Sunday School Enrollment	55
Table #8 Pastors Of The Missionary Church	59
Table #9 OMS Missionaries	63

LIST OF GRAPHS

	Page
Graph #1 Membership In The Missionary Church	26
Graph #2 Annual Membership Growth Rate (1962-1971)	28
Graph #3 Annual Membership Growth Rate (1971-1980)	29
Graph #4 Semi-Logarithmic Graph of Church Membership (1956-1966)	31
Graph #5 Semi-Logarithmic Graph of Church Membership (1966-1980)	32
Graph #6 Number of Churches	36
Graph #7 Organized Churches	37
Graph #8 Annual Church Growth Rate 1970-1980	38
Graph #9 Seekers At Missionary Churches	42
Graph #10 Baptisms Of The Missionary Church	46
Graph #11 Preaching Points	50
Graph #12 Sunday Schools In The Missionary Church	54
Graph #13 Sunday School Enrollment	57
Graph #14 Pastors Of The Missionary Church	61
Graph #15 Missionaries To Brazil From OMS	65

CHAPTER 1

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

OMS International, formerly Oriental Missionary Society, has been working in Brazil since 1950. This mission has been diligent in its Christian witness and thousands of Brazilians have come into a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, either directly or indirectly, through OMS's outreach. Upon looking into the smiling faces of these Christians, I know that God has blessed the missionaries' work, yet all organizations have areas in which they are weak. If those areas are to be strengthened, they first must be found. If those areas are to be found, someone must look for them. Data is not always easily found, nor is it easily organized into a coherent unit, so it is often just not done. This has been the case in Brazil.

The interest in church growth has sparked a number of fine books on principles of church growth and has compared them to existing churches and/or denominations here in the United States as well as in many other countries. As stewards of our time, money, and lives, we will be held accountable for laziness, waste, and even a lack of diligence, so since there are now tools with which churches and missions can be judged as to their effectiveness, we should use those tools.

From 1973 to the present, I have been a missionary under OMS International to Brazil, and I have worked in various capacities, both

in the church and as a missionary. I want to study the OMS church (A Igreja Missionaria, or as I will call it through this paper, The Missionary Church) and, OMS International's relationship to it. To do this, I found it necessary to research how The Missionary Church started, as well as how and why OMS entered into Brazil. This was done through reading back issues of The Missionary Standard which is the old name for OMS's official publication and research of studies of Japanese-Brazilian churches for The Missionary Church came out of such a denomination.

A study of The Missionary Church would not be complete without a hard look at its growth in churches, members, Sunday schools, and so on. To be able to do an adequate study on The Missionary Church's growth, I obtained both OMS's Brazil field annual statistics and The Missionary Church's annual statistics. With these two separate sets of figures, I could check one against the other for accuracy.

The figures and study on The Missionary Church cannot be fully understood without first understanding how other Protestant churches are doing in Brazil, and all of this needs some background on Brazil itself, so the second chapter is devoted to filling this in.

Church growth methods and principles have had a wide ranged impact on plans by churches throughout the world. Using major works on this, I want to set down major church growth principles and correlate these principles with The Missionary Church to see how the church compare to others.

Upon hearing my plans, Joao Liberato (General Superintendent of The Missionary Church) asked for this paper to study and evaluate

it so that he could direct the church's resources most profitably in winning souls.

If no one else reads this research paper but the General Superintendent, and he can profit from it, I will have found this research to be worthwhile, I too, want to wisely use my resources, but I realize that Pastor Liberato will have a much larger effect than I can ever have.

CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND ON BRAZIL

Each country has a unique history, thus together with its geography, religion, social and economic factors, have produced its present culture. Brazil is not unique in its size or diversity of peoples, but to be able to communicate with a people, an understanding of that people must be reached. No one method of evangelism can begin to reach all of the individuals of different cultures, but understanding that culture, or subcultures, can help to show the way of adapting evangelistic tools to it.

Geography and Population

Taking up over half of South America (3,286,000 square miles), Brazil is the fifth largest country in the world, following the Soviet Union, Canada, China, and the United States.¹

108-110,000,000 inhabitants in 1980 puts Brazil among the world's largest countries in population, being behind China, India, the Soviet Union, the United States and Indonesia, and about equal with Japan.²

¹William R. Read and Frank A. Ineson, Brazil 1980: The Protestant Handbook (Monrovia, California: Missions Advanced Research and Communications Center, 1973), p. 1.

²Aloysio Biondi, "O Novo Retrato do Pais Que Nao se Enxerga," Brasil Século 21, II (July, 1980), 51.

A Portuguese explorer and navigator, Pedro Alvares Cabral was the first European to discover what is now Brazil, in 1500. For the next 400 years, settlement of this vast expanse of land was confined to the most accessible areas along the coast. Less than fifty years ago, Londrina, Paran , OMS's Brazilian headquarters, was a jungle village only 350 miles from the coast, and about 250 miles from the state capitol. It is now an important light industrial, agricultural, and banking center with over 400,000 inhabitants. Tens of thousands are moving into the interior as new areas open up, and these growing areas are responsive to the Gospel.

Brazil's territories and states are divided into five large regions, they are, North, Northeast, Southeast, South and Central-west. Of these five regions, the North and Central-west have 64 percent of Brazil's land area but only ten percent of its population. Looking at the map, it can be noted that the other 90 percent live in the coastal states which make up the Northeast, Southeast, and South regions.³

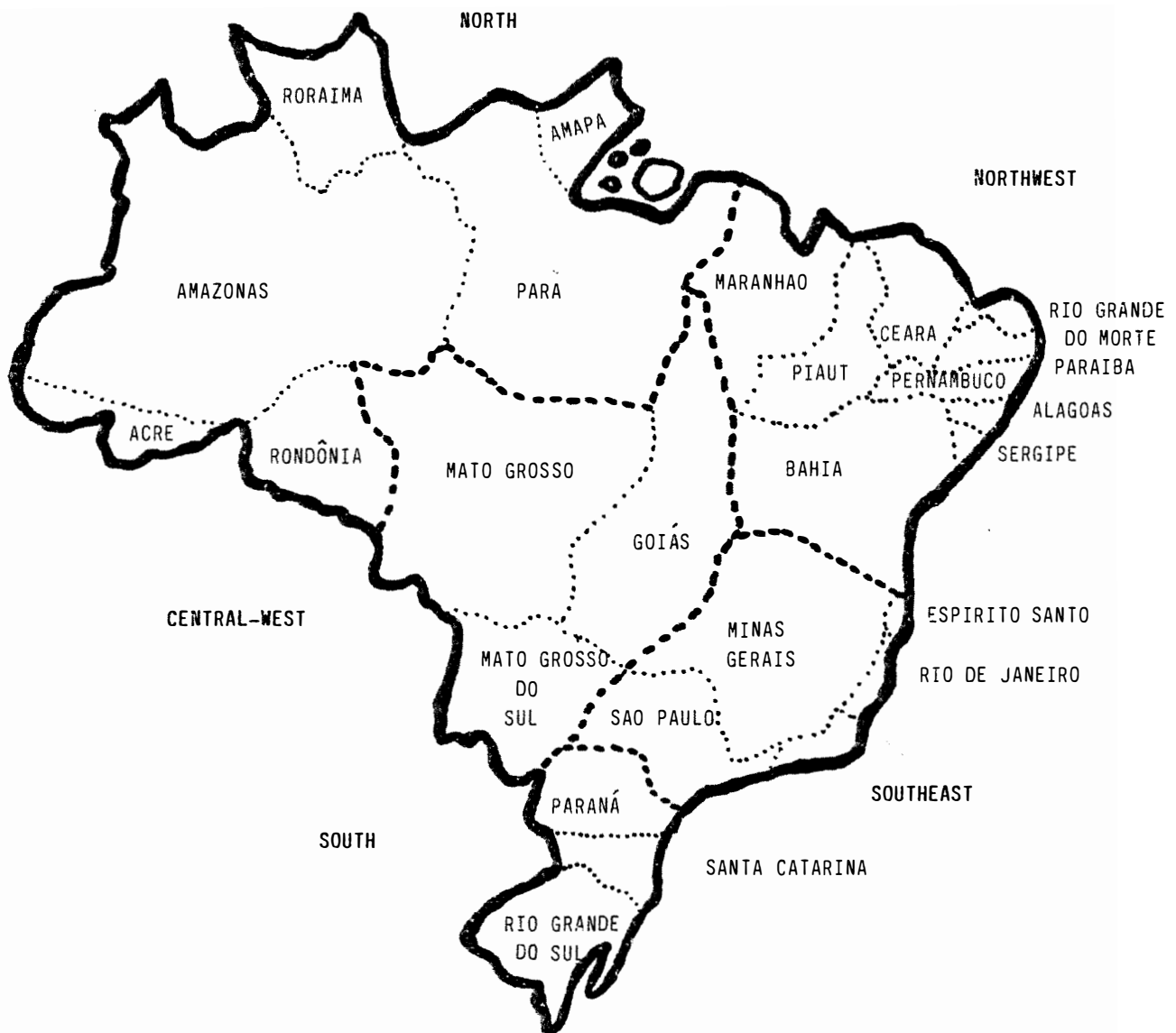
Age

Brazil is a young country in that over two thirds of its population is under 30 years of age.⁴ This is an important point to consider in any study on church outreach in Brazil, because the age

³Read, Brazil 1980, pp. 3-5.

⁴Read, Brazil 1980, p. 6.

BRAZIL



of a population has a great deal to do with its acceptance of the Gospel. The younger the people of a nation is, the greater the potential and possibility of that people accepting new ideas and new ways.⁵

As a young nation, Brazilians are looking to, and migrating to, the urban areas in large numbers, and are becoming more responsive to the Gospel.⁶

Urban - Rural Composition

In 1940, Brazil's population was overwhelmingly rural with a 70 to 30 percent rural urban mix, but by 1960, this had fallen to a 55 to 45 percent mix, and by 1970 it had fallen again to a 44 to 56 percent mix.⁷ As of 1980, only 35 percent were living in rural conditions and 65 percent were in urban areas.⁸ In ten years, from 1960 to 1970, Brazilian cities jumped from 31.3 million inhabitants to 52.1 million and from 1970 to 1980 (preliminary government estimates) to 70.2 million. In twenty years the urban population skyrocketed by almost 40 million. In 40 years the urban - rural mix did a flip-flop from a 30 - 70 percent mix to a 65 - 35 percent one.

⁵Read, Brazil 1980, p. 116.

⁶Read, Brazil 1980, p. 9.

⁷Read, Brazil 1980, p. 1.

⁸Biondi, pp. 46-48.

Cities with more than ten thousand inhabitants had a shocking growth rate from 1950 to 1970 of 243 percent!⁹ Although it might seem that urbanization at such a rapid pace would make it easier to reach large masses of Brazilians, this is not always proved true. Millions of persons are living in apartments and many more work two full time jobs, these things seriously reduce the time away from the job possibilities of introducing them to the Gospel. Apartments, are usually organized as condominiums which generally exclude outsiders thus limiting religious activity to the occupants. The real or imagined necessity of holding down two jobs cuts down on the time available to evangelize them.¹⁰

Literacy

The trend in Brazil is more and more towards a more literate people. In 1920, 35 percent were literate. In 1970, it was 67 percent.¹¹ The government estimate for 1977 was a literate population of 87 percent of those above grade school.¹²

Since the Good News is given in the written form, this rising literacy rate is important to the church. Of course, the level of literacy varies from group to group and area to area, but since being

⁹Biondi, p. 53.

¹⁰Read, Brazil 1980, p. 10.

¹¹Read, Brazil 1980, p. 1.

¹²Biondi, pp. 54-55.

literate has been linked with Protestants and the Roman Catholic Church linked with a strong bias against it, evangelicals have an advantage in this rapidly literate society.¹³

Religion

The 1970 census classified 85 percent of Brazil as Roman Catholic, 11 percent as Protestant, and the remainder as Mormons (Latter Day Saints), spiritists, Jehovah's Witnessess and other sects.¹⁴ When one considers the number of practicing Roman Catholics, the above percentage point grossly exaggerates their true followers. The spiritists will usually say that they are Catholic since their mediums are often consecrated in special Catholic services.¹⁵ Active spiritists are estimated to be as high as 20 percent of the total population with an additional 20 percent dabbling in it now and then, although some researchers place the total at a flat one third of the population.¹⁶

This ties into a survey done by Roman Catholics that showed that only ten percent of the Brazilian Catholics actually practice

¹³Roger Bastide, The African Religions of Brazil, trans. Helen Sebba, (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1978), p. 368-370.

¹⁴Read, Brazil 1980, p. 2.

¹⁵Frances O'Gorman, Aluanda - A Look At Afro-Brazilian Cults (Rio De Janeiro: Livraria Francisco Alves Editora S.A., 1977), p. 63.

¹⁶O'Gorman, p. 17.

their faith. Other figures indicate a higher level of practicing Catholics, but they too, are quite low. Baptism is considered vital in the church, yet only half of the children are baptised. Burial services too, are important, yet only 35 percent have Christian funerals. If one were to assume that all those buried by a priest were active Catholics, it would still leave 65 percent who are not.¹⁷

Spiritism can be divided into roughly two groups, which reach into different levels of society. Kardecism, named after Allan Kardec, a nineteenth century French spiritist who emphasized science, philosophy, and religion, this appeals to middle and upper classes. The other group is actually animistic and was originally introduced into Brazil by African slaves. It reaches the lower classes and is itself divided into four groups, Macumba, Quimbanda, Candomble, and Umbanda, although some will call it all Umbanda.¹⁸

Although Read says that "There is no conclusive evidence at the present time that spiritism as such is increasing,"¹⁹ Frances O'Gorman, in her book, Aluanda (copyright 1977) says that "there are at least 300 thousand Umbanda centers of worship in the country," and this is not including "the thousands of terreiros (meeting places)

¹⁷Read, Brazil 1980, p. 13.

¹⁸D. Cirilo Folch Gomes, O.S.B., ed. Macumba-Cultos Afro-Brasileiros, by Valdeli Carvalho da Costa S.J. (Sao Paulo; Edições Paulinas, 1976), p. 37.

¹⁹William R. Read, Victor M. Monterroso, and Harmon A. Johnson, Latin American church Growth (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1969), p. 251.

that pop up over night."²⁰ O'Gorman's figures show a 20 percent increase of spiritism in only nine years when compared to Read and Ineson's of 1968. Now much of this "increase" could well be a willingness to be counted as a spiritist which had not been true earlier, but how much, is not known. What is known, is that spiritism has increased.

The Protestant church has found fertile ground in Brazil and is rapidly growing. Polls indicate that there are now more active Protestants than active Catholics.²¹ The Protestants are divided into numerous denominations, but they can be lumped into two main groups, the traditional denominations such as Lutheran, Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregational and Baptist, and the Pentecostal denominations such as the Assemblies of God and the Four Square Gospel. The Missionary Church is basically a traditional denomination with heavy Pentecostal undertones. Most Protestants are Pentecostal. Brazil's largest denomination is the Assemblies of God.²²

Economic Status

Brazil still has large numbers of its population in the lower economic classes, it is among these classes that the Pentecostals have grown the fastest.

²⁰Read, Latin American Church Growth, p. 25.

²¹Read, Brazil 1980, p. 14.

²²Read, Brazil 1980, pp. 17-22.

As is true in most societies, the higher the educational, economic, financial, and cultural level of an individual, the less responsive he seems to be to the Gospel message. . . . Growth of the Protestant church has been greatest among the masses - those people who suffer economic, social, and educational inequalities and are not participating in a full measure in the money economy.²³

Read and Ineson in Brazil 1980, say that the way of communicating the Gospel so that it reaches the lower classes generally makes it an unsuitable method to reach middle or upper classes.²⁴ This is probably one reason that the Pentecostals have not fared well among middle and upper classes while the traditional denominations have done well with the middle classes but not done nearly as well with the poorer ones. This, of course, fits into the idea of homogeneous units. The homogeneous unit is a group in which persons can feel comfortable. They know that they are among "our kind of folks." There will be variances of likes and dislikes, attitudes, habits and opinions from person to person. But the variations are within accepted cultural limits. This group is a unit of society and has some characteristics that are common to all members. A homogeneous unit thinks of itself as belonging together. This means that most social contacts will be with those of the unit as will friendships, and marriages, so individuals have lines of intimacy with others in their social grouping. Consequently when one person accepts Christ, those in his homogeneous unit will listen to that person more readily than another.

²³Read, Brazil 1980, p. 11.

²⁴Read, Brazil 1980, p. 11.

Educational, economic, and even language differences can be in the extreme in Brazil, so they must be taken into consideration in any evangelization attempt. The traditional denominations started their work among the poor, lower classes and "with few exceptions generally resulted in churches in the lower middle classes after two or three generations. Through the forces of education, economy, and social evolution these churches moved slowly upward through various cycles." Read goes on to say that it is difficult for good Christians not to rise, but in that rising, churches often separate themselves from the reachable multitudes.²⁵

Protestant Historical Development

Brazil, like most Latin American countries, has been historically a Roman Catholic country. Indeed, for over 300 years the Roman Catholic Church was the only religious organization allowed in Brazil. The immigration of German Protestants into Brazil has changed this entire scene.

Lutherans

German Lutherans began immigrating into Brazil in 1823 and by 1837 had organized the first Protestant church (this does not include churches that the Dutch built during their aborted conquest of Brazil or of the French Huguenots who tried to found a colony near

²⁵William R. Read, New Patterns of Church Growth in Brazil (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965), pp. 222-223.

present day Rio de Janeiro, but were forced out).²⁶ The German organized themselves under a lay ministry and later German ministers joined them.²⁷

The Lutheran church stayed united until 1890 when a local pastor left the "mother" church, and within a few years asked the Luthern Missouri Synod to send missionary help. This was done in 1899. The mission established a seminary in Porto Alegre, and soon formed a Lutheran denomination called the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Brazil.²⁸

The Americal Lutheran Church began sending missionaries to Brazil in 1958 to the parent Lutheran body called the Evangelical Church of Lutheran Confession in Brazil. These missionaries work in cooperation with the national church and serve in various functions.²⁹

In general, the Lutherans have kept to the German - Brazilian communities and have not tried to evangelize other groups. Its membership is largely nominal. They leave nearly all the responsibilities for church work with the pastor. This in itself stunts church growth, but Lutherans have about 300,000 communicant members with a quarter of them in the Evangelical Luthern Church. Most

²⁶Read, Brazil 1980, p. 18.

²⁷Read, Brazil 1980, p. 26.

²⁸Read, Brazil 1980, p. 26.

²⁹Read, Brazil 1980, p. 27.

Lutherans live in the south.³⁰

Congregationalists

The Evangelical Congregational Church in Brazil started in 1855 with a Scottish Presbyterian minister. Its efforts have been in Rio de Janeiro, Anapolis, and Recife areas of Brazil. It has been characterized by small churches and slow growth. After over 100 years, the church has only 50,000 members.³¹

The Evangelical Union of South America gives missionary support to this church, but it is more of a service mission working in bookstores, schools, Bible institutes and the like.³²

Presbyterians

Shortly before the American Civil War broke out, the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America started work in Rio de Janeiro. Work was difficult in the city, but rural areas were responsive. In 1869, missionaries from the Presbyterian Church in the United States (Southern) began work in Campinas (a city about 50 miles northwest of Sao Paulo). It was in conjunction with the work in Rio de Janeiro, these two works merged to form the Presbyterian

³⁰Read, Brazil 1980, p. 27.

³¹Read, Brazil 1980, p. 25.

³²Read, Brazil 1980, p. 25.

Church of Brazil.³³

Friction developed between missionary and Brazilian church leadership and in 1903 many Brazilians pulled out and formed the Independent Presbyterian Church.³⁴

The Presbyterian Church of Brazil and the missionaries devised a plan in 1916 to avoid duplication of efforts. It called on the missionaries to plant new churches and hand them over to the national church when they became self supporting, as well as establish needed institutions such as schools and hospitals. The national church was responsible for running the national organization and for furthering the already established churches. With this division of labor, Presbyterian missions not only started many new churches, but built up a strong educational program that has led many Presbyterians to be looked up to in Brazilian society.³⁵

Both the denominations have continued to grow, but with the adoption of the Brazil Plan, the original church has grown faster.³⁶

There are several other small Presbyterian denominations. They are usually limited to the South or Southeast while the other

³³Read, Brazil 1980, p. 28.

³⁴Read, New Patterns, p. 57.

³⁵Read, New Patterns, pp. 84-89.

³⁶Read, New Patterns, pp. 114-115.

two are found throughout Brazil. Still, more than 65 percent of its 300,000 members are in the Southeast.³⁷

Methodist

Circuit riding preachers caused the Methodists to grow phenomenally in the United States and this same method was used to start the Methodists in Brazil in 1867. These activities were centered in the states of Sao Paulo, Minas Gerais, Rio de Janeiro, and Rio Grande do Sul, however, the missionaries soon moved into the establishment of a large institutional program of education. The energy and finances to sustain this program caused the Methodists to cut back on church planting, thus this church has not grown as much as it could have. Its 80,000 members are located mainly in the Southeast.³⁸

Baptists

Southern Baptists opened their Brazilian work in 1881 in Rio de Janeiro, but now have churches in every state and territory of Brazil, under the Brazilian Baptist Convention. This church is the umbrella under which missionaries of many different types of Baptist denominations and missions now work, but Southern Baptists still make up almost half of the 700 Baptist missionaries working in Brazil.³⁹

³⁷Read, Brazil 1980, p. 29.

³⁸Read, Brazil 1980, p. 27.

³⁹Read, Brazil 1980, p. 25.

This church has put a heavy emphasis on evangelism and is growing rapidly, but mostly among the middle class. Estimates of its present membership exceed 500,000 now.⁴⁰

The Assembly of God

This church is the success story of Brazil. It began in 1911, by 1930, it had 14,000 members.⁴¹ The growth did not stop, for by 1940, the church had grown to nearly 70,000 members and by 1950 to 160,000 members. In 1960 they numbered 500,000 members⁴² and in 1970, 745,000 members.⁴³ Although firm statistics are hard to find about recent membership, the Assembly of God now has over 3,200,000 members in Brazil.⁴⁴

There has never been many missionaries working in this church. In 1970 there were only 22, and they worked in supportive roles, in training lay leaders, and in an extensive literature program.⁴⁵

This church relies almost exclusively on lay leadership for church extension and it has a wide appeal among the poor and working

⁴⁰Read, Brazil 1980, p. 24.

⁴¹Fred E. Edwards, The Role of The Faith Mission (South Pasadena, California: William Carey Library, 1971), p. 11.

⁴²Edwards, p. 120.

⁴³Read, Brazil 1980, p. 32.

⁴⁴Donald A. McGavran, Understanding Church Growth (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980), p. 320.

⁴⁵Read, Brazil 1980, p. 32.

classes.⁴⁶

Congregacao Crista

Louis Francescon, an immigrant from Italy to the United States, had a Pentecostal experience in Chicago in 1907. Following this experience, he was led to work among other Italians planting churches (the Christian Church of North America came out of this) in California and Pennsylvania. Because of God's definite guiding, Louis felt called to a missionary journey to South America. He visited and preached in Italian beginning in Buenos Aires and later Sao Paulo. Splitting a Presbyterian church in the Bras district, Francescon started a new church called the Congregacao Crista no Brasil, which means the Christian Congregation of Brazil.⁴⁷ By the 1930's, the church was moving more and more into the use of Portuguese and this change caused it to have impact on those who were not of Italian descent.⁴⁸

As of 1973, the rapidly growing church had over 500,000 communicant members, but more than two-thirds of them live in the Southeast.⁴⁹

⁴⁶Read, New Patterns, pp. 132-134.

⁴⁷C. Peter Wagner, Look Out! The Pentecostals Are Coming (Carol Stream, Illinois: Creation House, 1973), pp. 23-24.

⁴⁸Read, Brazil 1980, p. 32.

⁴⁹Wagner, p. 24.

This denomination has no paid leadership, so all church activity is done underlay leadership.⁵⁰ Laymen are the ones who start churches. This I believe is one of the reasons the church is growing so fast.

⁵⁰Read, Brazil 1980, p. 33.

CHAPTER 3

THE MISSIONARY CHURCH

While OMS officially entered Brazil in 1950 under Carl Hahn, some fruit of its first missionary field (Japan) had already preceded it. In the early part of the twentieth century, Brazil's government invited thousands of Japanese to immigrate and by 1925 over 40,000 had. Most of them settled in the state of Sao Paulo. A small handful of these immigrants had been converted under Juji Nakada (the leader and first bishop of OMS's Japanese church), and their desire with the heroic efforts of Takeo Monobe, a missionary sent from Japan, founded the Japanese Holiness Church in Brazil.¹

Until World War II, the Japanese Holiness Church stayed within its ethnic group, but laws restricting the use of the Japanese language forced the church into the use of Portuguese in Presidente Prudente. With the use of Portuguese in the services, there was no reason not to begin to evangelize their Portuguese speaking neighbors, and so a two culture church developed. This was not a perfect solution to the problem, because many of the older Japanese immigrants could not understand Portuguese, and Brazilian customs were so markedly different from theirs. On the other side of the matter,

¹Fred E. Edwards, The Role of the Faith Mission (South Pasadena, California: William Carey Library, 1971), p. 81.

Brazilians often thought the Japanese too different from the Brazilian way of life. Despite these differences, the Brazilian part of the church grew and in 1943 was organized into a separate congregation. This solved many problems but the congregation was in need of a Brazilian pastor. This happened in 1945.²

Little by little, Brazilians began to come into the denomination, and as new congregations formed, this process accelerated. By the early 1950's, there were enough Brazilian members and congregations, that the Brazilian pastors began to push the denomination towards a more Brazilian stance. This did not sit well with the Japanese who felt the necessity to hold on to their culture, language, (after the war, the Japanese could again hold services in Japanese, which they did) and denominational organization. With the conflict in cultures, the Brazilians looked at the Japanese as being unreasonably stubborn. The mid 1950's saw this situation worsening. Of the thirteen organized churches of the denomination, four of them were all Brazilians. Both Brazilian and Japanese felt that it was only a matter of time before the Brazilians could force the denomination into a more Brazilian position by sheer numbers. This could have caused a rupture in church relations which was not wanted on either side so in 1956, the Japanese Holiness Church changed its name to the Evangelical Holiness Church of Brazil and formed itself into two wings, Japanese, and Brazilian.³ Both groups benefited so

²Edwards, pp. 82-83.

³Edwards, p. 83.

well from this division that they decided to make a friendly, legal, break between the two wings. This happened in January of 1958.⁴ The Brazilian wing became The Holiness Church, Brazilian Wing. Four years later, the church adopted "The Missionary Church" as its new name.⁵

The new denomination was "adopted" by OMS as its own, but while The Missionary Church took a special place with OMS, the denomination felt independent. In fact, The Missionary Church leaned heavily on OMS for both financial support of its pastors and the funding and leading of the evangelistic teams.

The church grew. Membership had a continuous upward growth. (Table #1). This was not numerically astonishing, but its decadal growth rate was. It is to be expected that when a church starts with a handful of members, the addition of a few more members would make an impressive growth rate. The Missionary Church thus had a decadal growth rate of 1,170% during the first decade of its existence. It grew from 92 members in 1956 to 1,185 members in ten years. The graph of membership (graph #1) seems to break down into three sections, 1956--1962, 1962--1971, and 1971 to the present.

The first is characterized by relatively slow growth, virtually all of that in the first two or perhaps three years. It

⁴Edwards, p. 92.

⁵Pedro Klassen, "A Igreja Missionária Está Crescendo" (B.A. Degree Papar, Instituto e Seminário Bíblico de Londrina, 1974), p. 65.

TABLE 1
MEMBERSHIP OF THE MISSIONARY CHURCH

Year	Members
1956	92
1957	207
1958	?
1959	310
1960	273
1961	341
1962	349
1963	597
1964	809
1965	1,005
1966	1,185
1967	?
1968	1,496
1969	1,558
1970	1,614
1971	1,680
1972	1,854
1973	2,071
1974	2,202
1975	2,251
1976	2,694

MEMBERSHIP OF THE MISSIONARY CHURCH

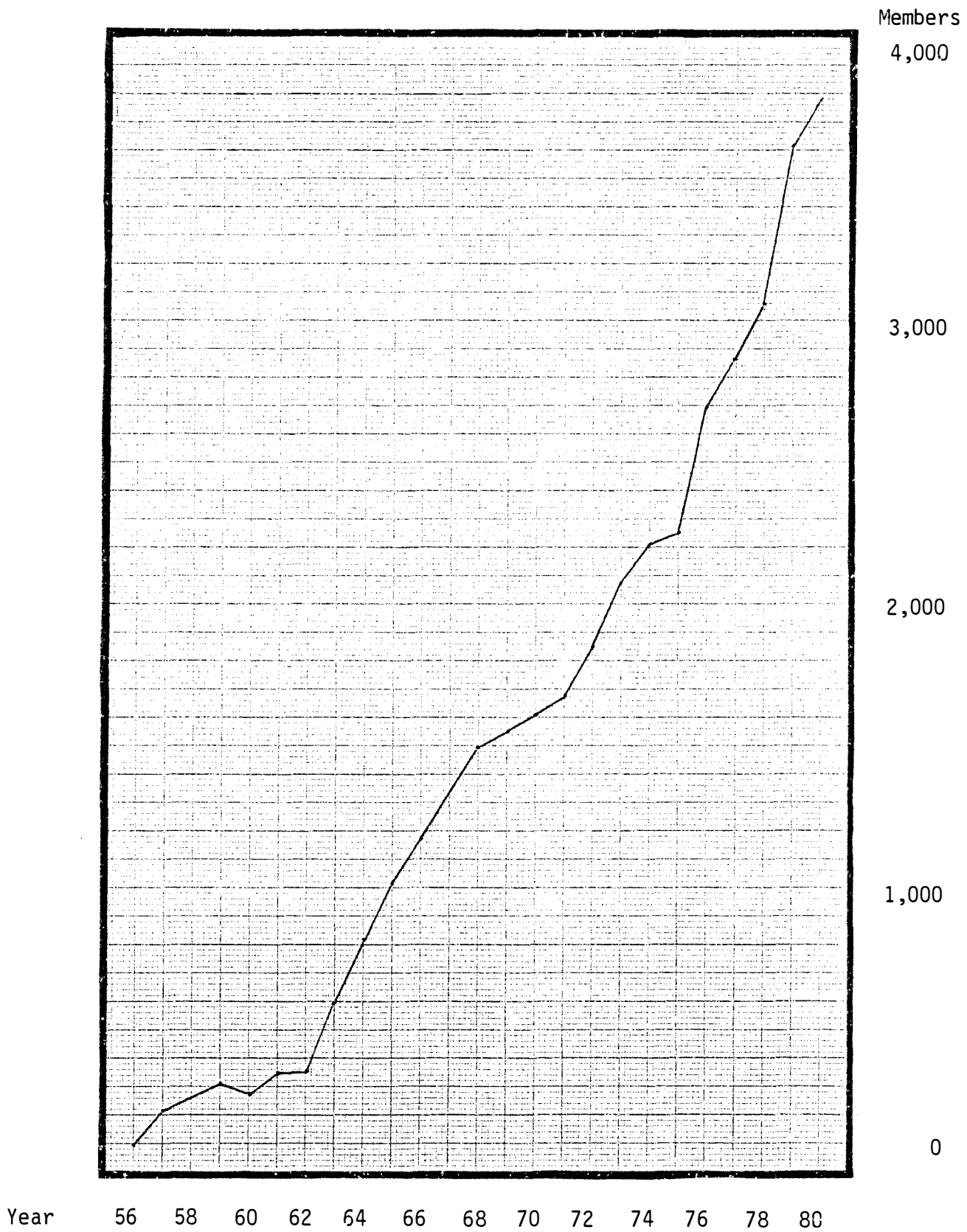
(continued)

Year	Members
1977	2,861
1978	3,060
1979	3,621
1980	3,785

GRAPH #1

MEMBERSHIP IN THE MISSIONARY CHURCH

26.

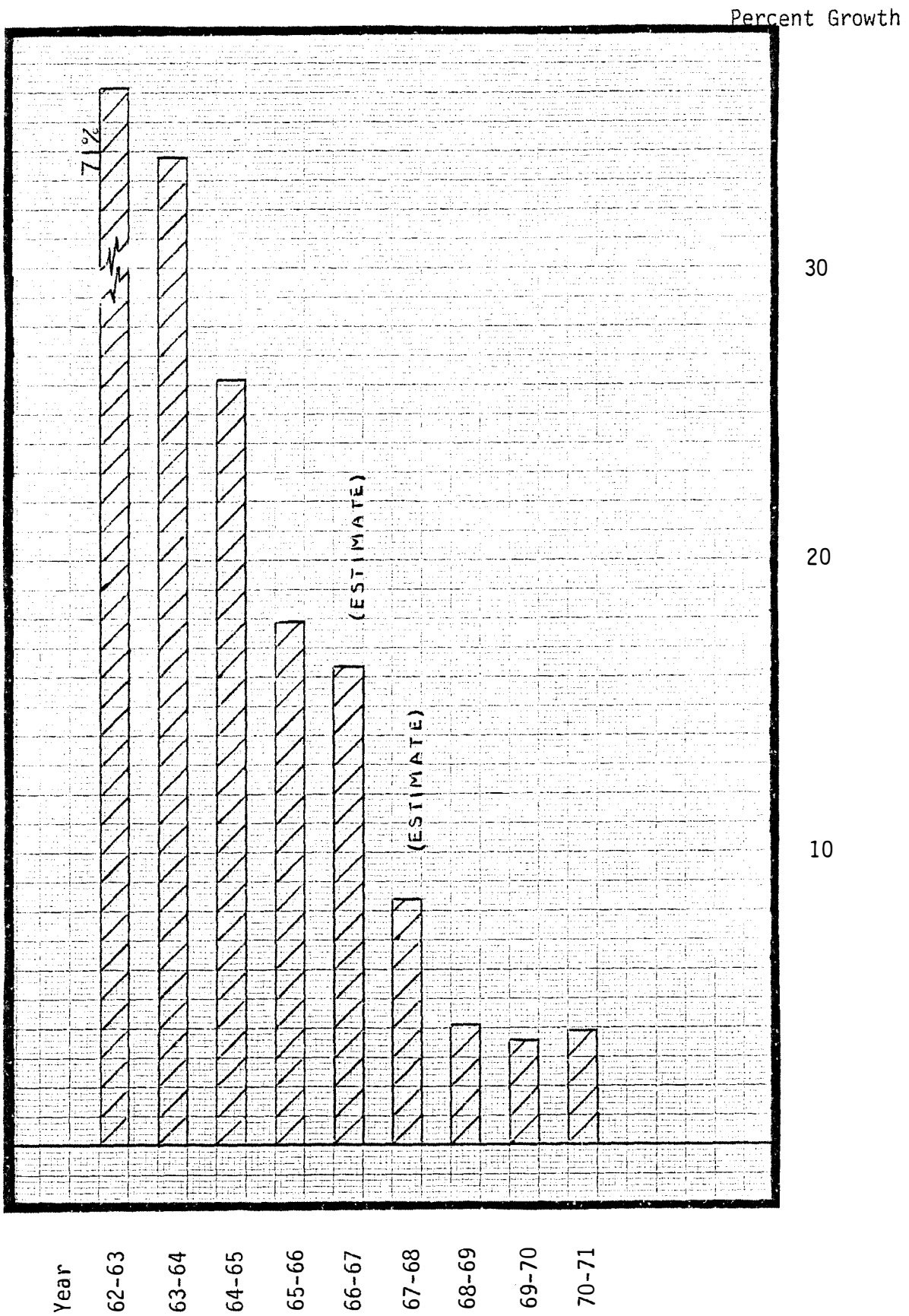


can be noted that despite a good growth from 1956 to 1958, the next three years grew by only thirty-nine members. The lack of data for 1958 is unfortunate in trying to analyze this, because there is no way of knowing whether the 1958 membership is closer to the 1957 total or the 1959. Since 1958 is the year that the Brazilian Wing of the Japanese Holiness Church became The Missionary Church, the statistics would be invaluable. It seems that even though the formation of The Missionary Church was done in a friendly fashion, there were still negative effects that lasted for some time.

Ties to a foreign culture church (Japanese) stunted the Brazilian Wing's growth, since that ran contrary to the principle of homogeneity. There are distinct differences between Japanese and Brazilian cultures which can cause inadvertant, but bad feelings. A good example of this is that of time-consciousness in its cities. This has not yet affected the countryside. Industrialization did not begin until 1964 and the Japanese Holiness Churches were mostly in the country, or in rural oriented towns. The Japanese conscientously were in church by the set time to begin the service, while the Brazilians would begin to arrive at that time. In the Brazilians mind set, if one arrived within twenty minutes of the marked time, they were on time. To the Japanese, the Brazilian's attitude seemed disrespectful.

In addition to the problem of a lack of homogeneity, the church had to develop its own administrative structure which took both time and manpower. The manpower factor was further aggravated by the fact that the church decided to build and run an orphanage.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP GROWTH RATE

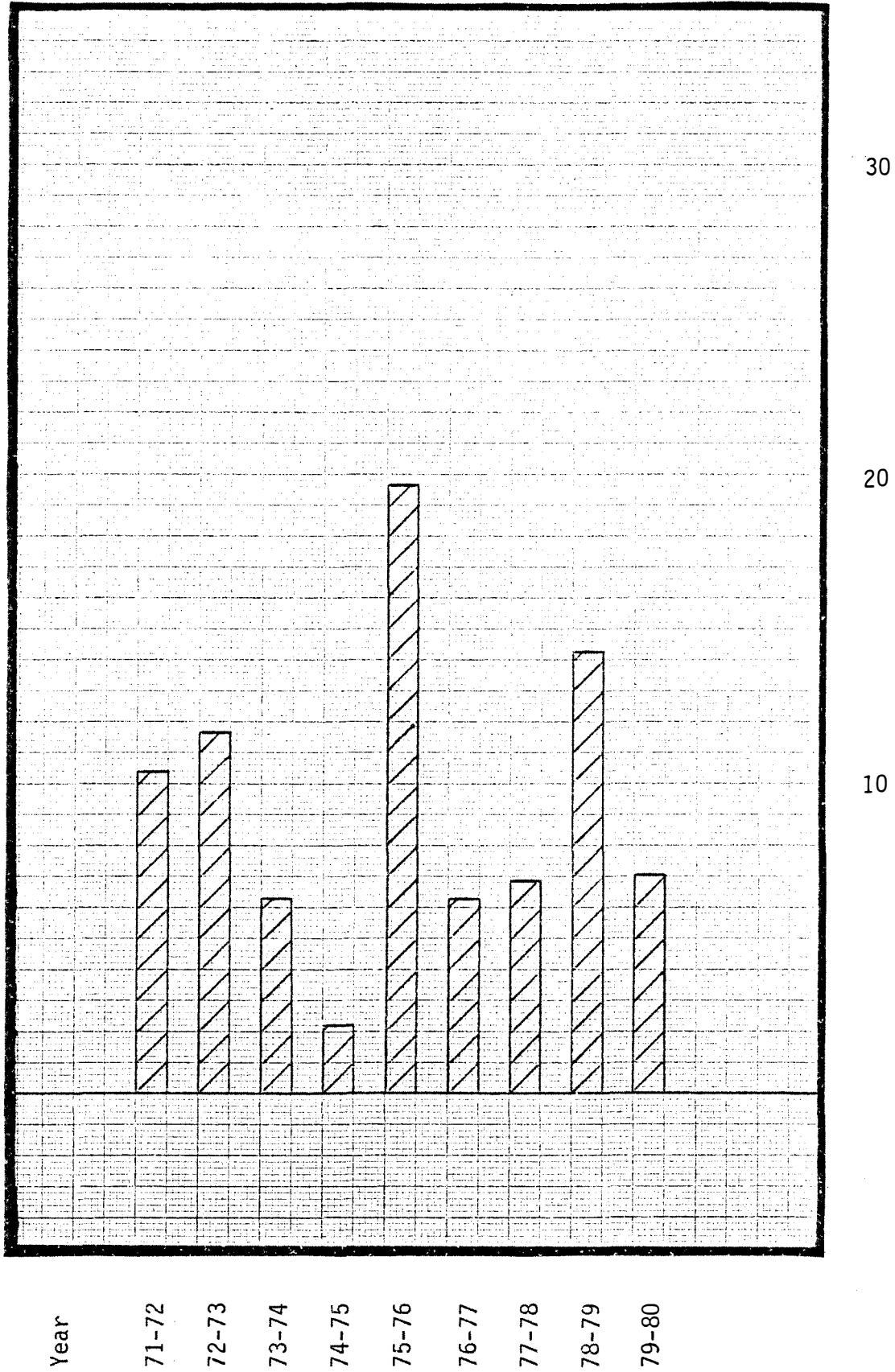


GRAPH #3

29.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP GROWTH RATE

Percent



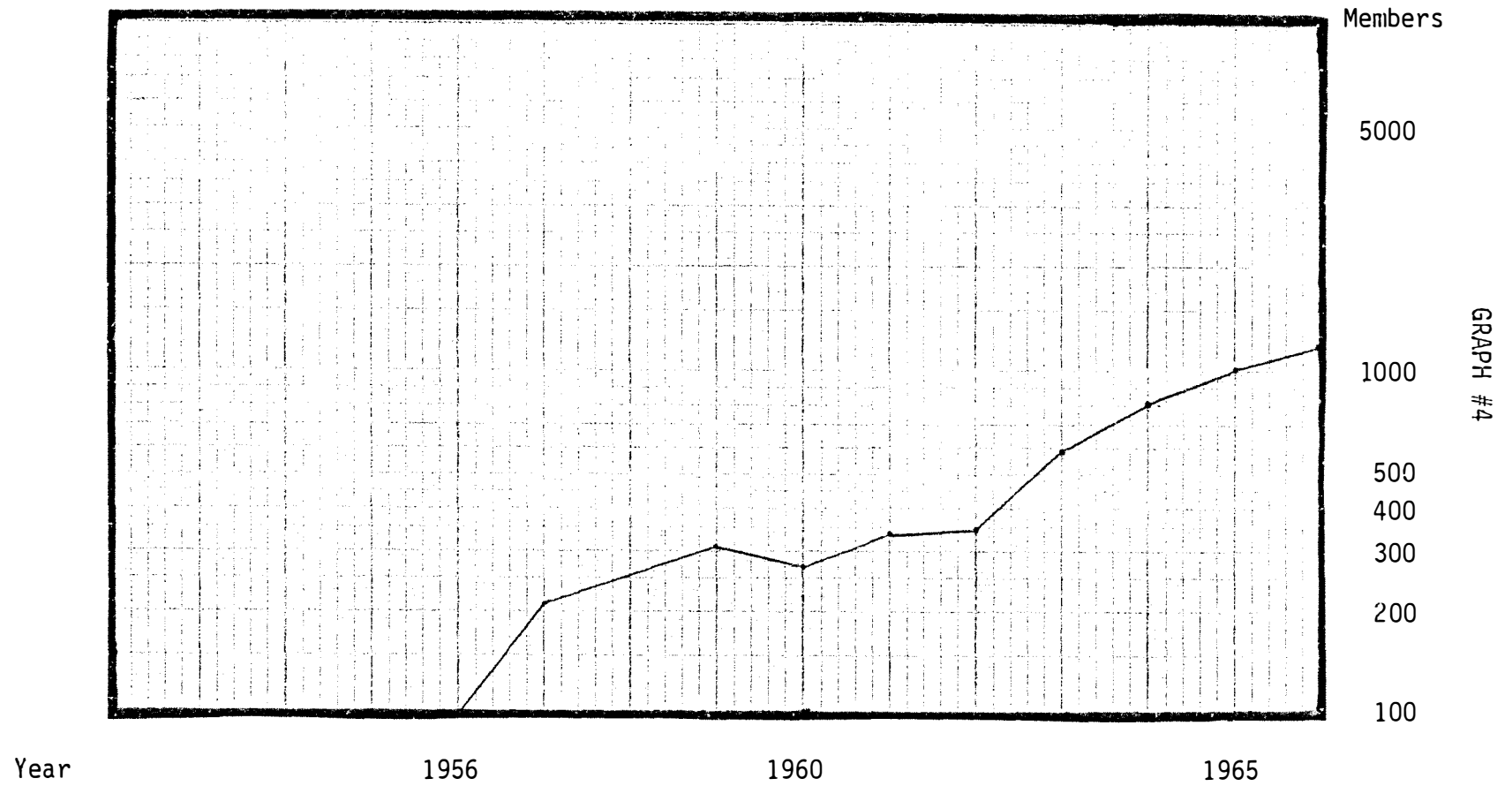
The semi-logarithmic graph (graph #4) demonstrates even more vividly the near stagnate rate of growth during the final three years of this section. This shows leveling between these years while a more accurate picture would show an increase. Such a line indicates that 1958 would have had about 290 members. If this were the case, the denomination grew more in 1957-1958 than in the next four years.

The next section, 1962-1971, is also marked by initial rapid growth, with its last years also slowing down. This is even more obvious in the semi-logarithmic graphs. (Graph #4 and #5). The upward curve, after an initially very positive swing in 1962-1963, begins to flatten out each year after that until the end of that section. What looked so positive in graph #1, now looks to be serious. The Missionary Church shows a year by year drop in its rate of increase until the last year. It drops from a 71 percent increase in 1962-1963 to a 3.8 percent increase in 1970-1971. (Graph #2). Coupling this with a national birthrate of 3 percent during this time, and a heavy internal migration which averaged 1 percent of the total population per year into the areas where The Missionary Church has its churches shows that The Missionary Church did not keep up with the total population growth for the last three years.⁶

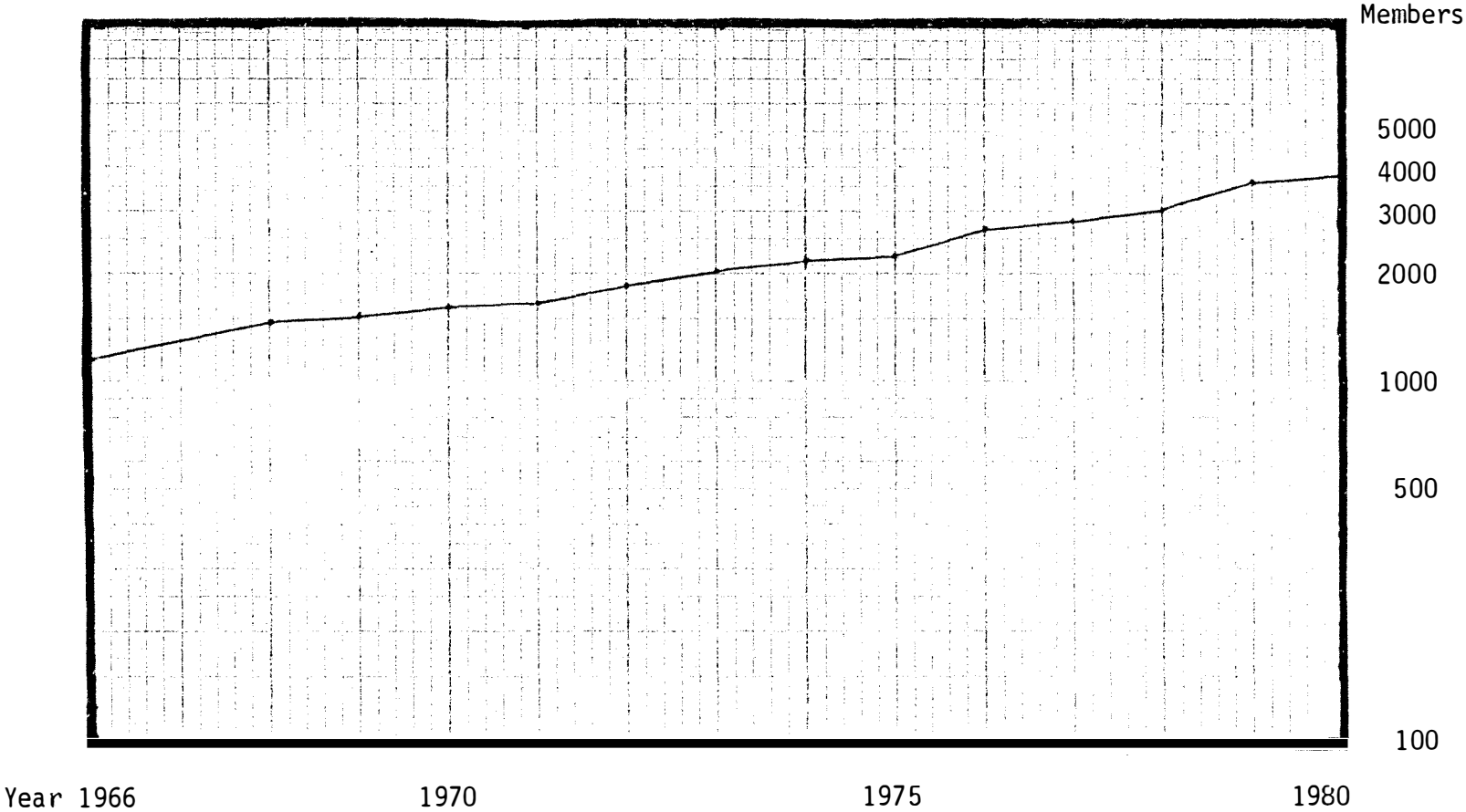
The question that comes to mind is why did this growth rate fall so drastically? Obviously part of the answer is that the larger a denomination, the harder it is to keep up a high growth rate, so

⁶Aloysio Biondi, "O Novo Retrato do Pais Que Nao se Enxerga," Brasil Século 21, II (July, 1980), p. 50.

SEMI-LOGARITHMIC GRAPH OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP 1956-1966



SEMI-LOGARITHMIC GRAPH OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP 1966-1980



GRAPH #5

that even if a church keeps increasing its membership by increasing numbers, its rate of growth can fall. Every year if a hundred new members are added, it makes a smaller percentage of the whole. Both missionaries and church leaders have an explanation for this fall in annual growth rate, but it boils down to the fact that in the early 1960's Pentecostals began to be noticed in Brazil for their growth, and Missionary Church leaders wanted that kind of growth. Some of these leaders brought in Pentecostal preachers and customs such as hand clapping, loud prayers, and a lot of emotionalism. OMS missionaries became deeply concerned. The concern turned to a conviction that this influence was wrong and OMS personnel, especially those in I.S.B.L. worked against it. Friction developed, and worsened until the distinct possibility of a split between the church and mission arose. God brought a reconciliation between the leaders of the two factions, but some pastors could not believe that the missionary leader was really sincere. In an effort to help heal the wounds, that missionary returned home to work at headquarters for the next four years.

The third section, (Graph #5) 1971 and 1980, shows a generally upward rise. Only 1975 seems to be out of the normal pattern, but looking closer the years 1972-1975 have the same leveling off curve as is seen in 1957-1959 and similar to the one in 1968-1971. Yet the difference ends there. A look at the rate of growth for those years (Graph #3) shows that only one year had a growth rate of under six percent (1974-1975) and the average yearly growth was 9.3 percent. The last four years average a yearly growth of a little over 8.6

TABLE 2
ORGANIZED CHURCHES OF THE MISSIONARY CHURCH

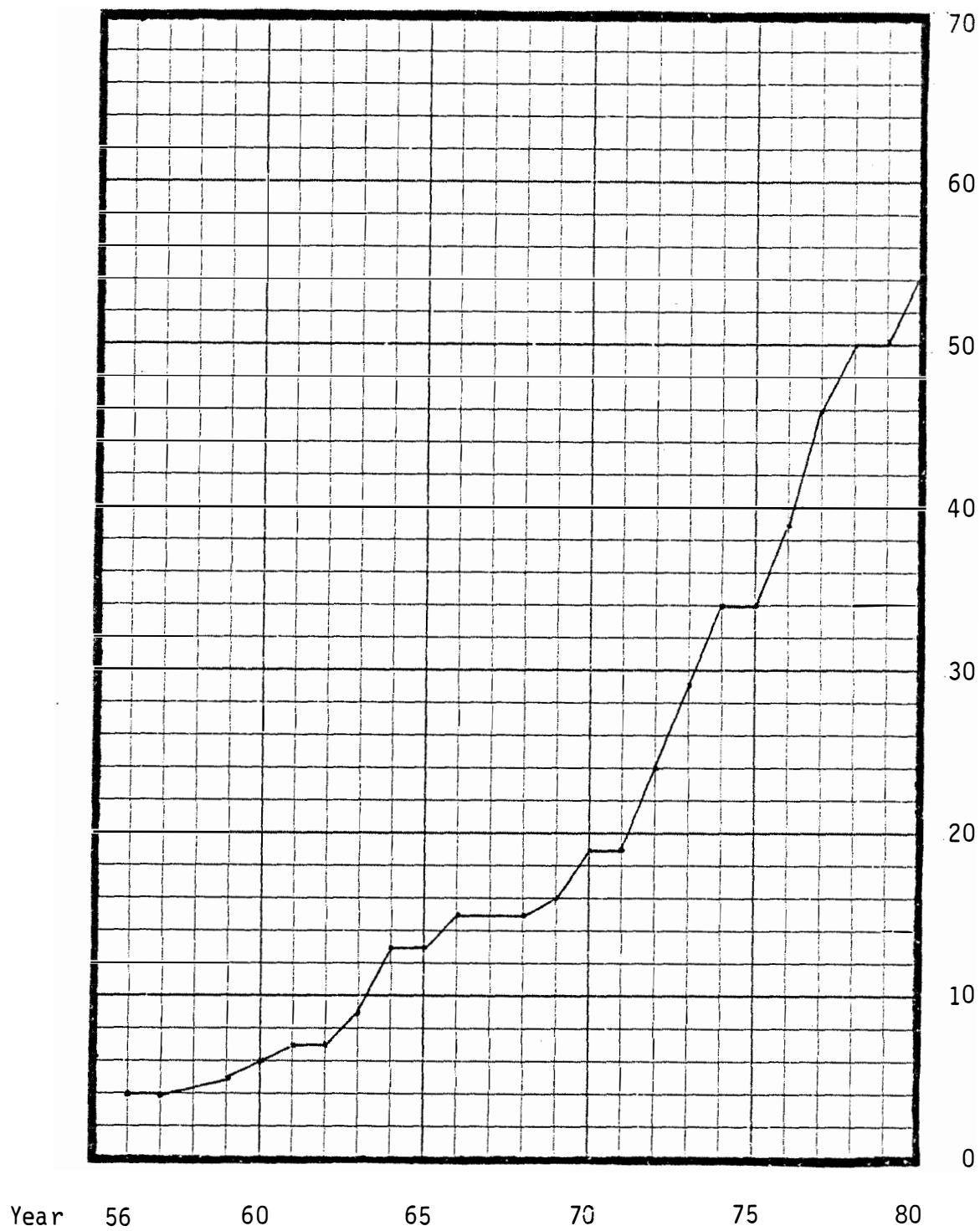
Year	OMS Statistics	Missionary Church Statistics
1956	4	4
1957	4	4
1958	?	?
1959	5	5
1960	6	6
1961	7	7
1962	7	7
1963	9	9
1964	?	?
1965	18	13
1966	13	15
1967	?	?
1968	24	15
1969	15	16
1970	19	19
1971	24	?
1972	24	24
1973	29	29
1974	34	34
1975	34	43

ORGANIZED CHURCHES OF THE MISSIONARY CHURCH

(continued)

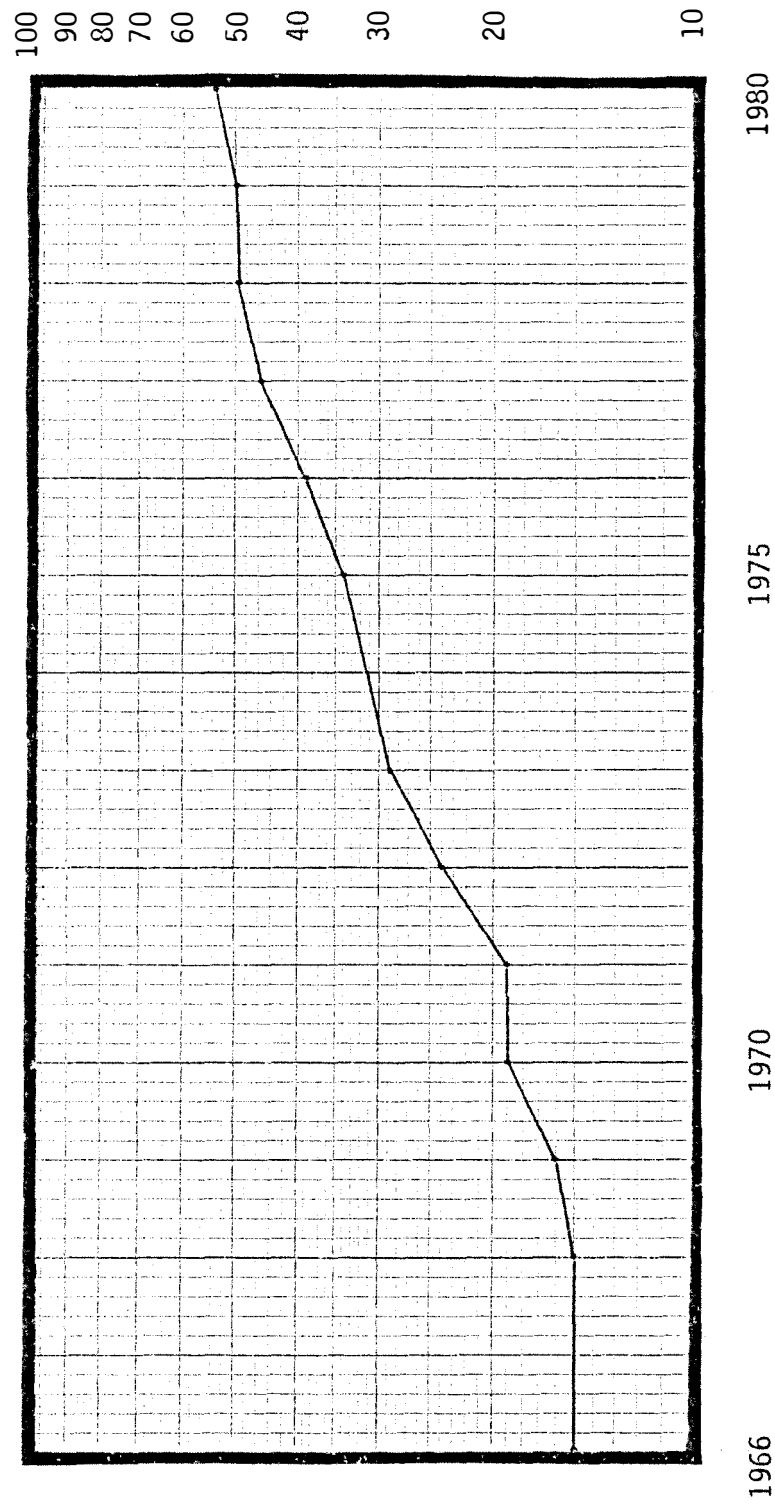
Year	OMS Statistics	Missionary Church Statistics
1976	39	39
1977	46	46
1978	50	50
1979	49	50
1980	54	54

GRAPH #6
NUMBER OF CHURCHES



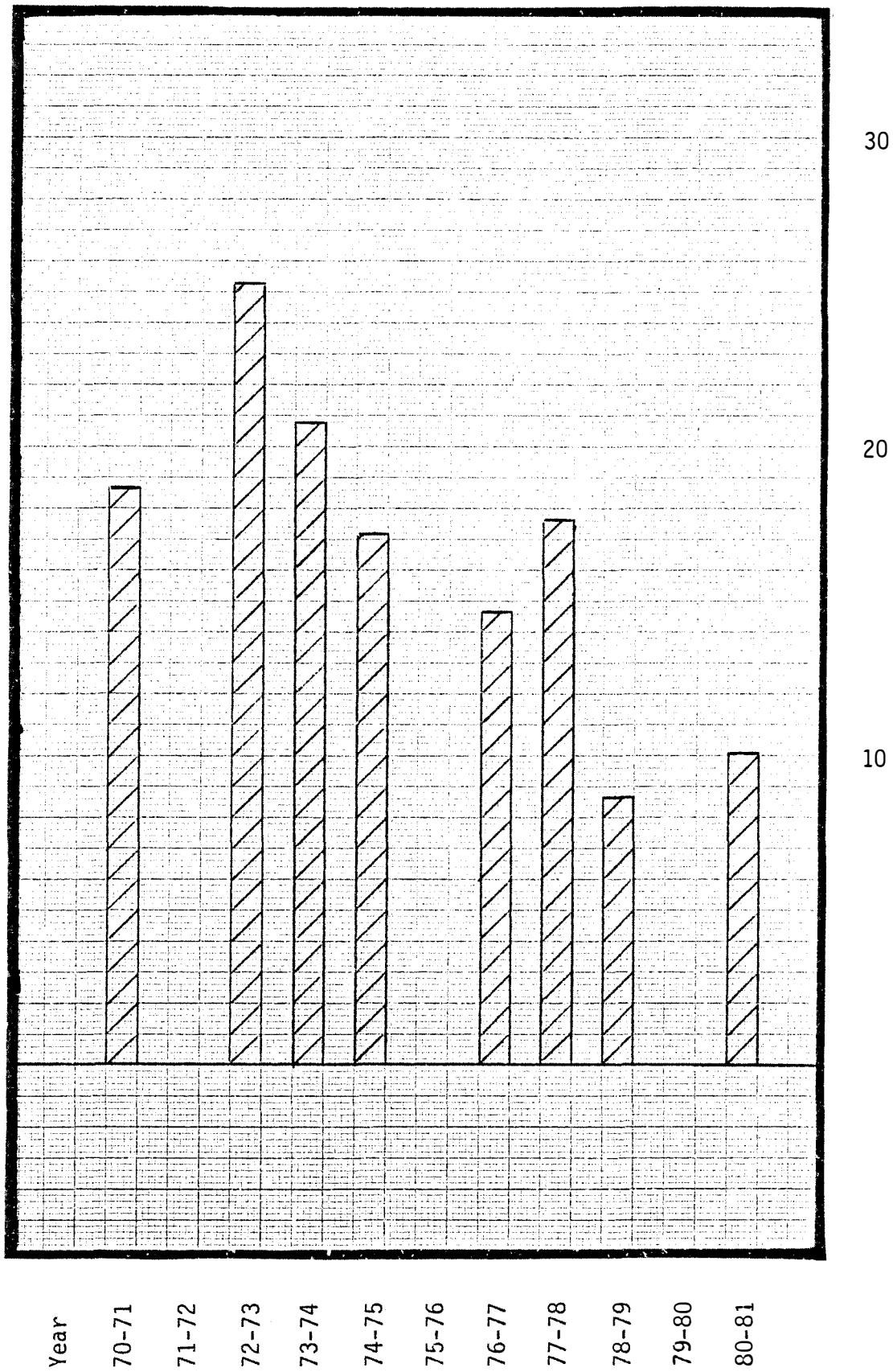
ORGANIZED CHURCHES

GRAPH #7



ANNUAL CHURCH GROWTH RATE 1970-80

Percent



percent. With a population growth rate of this time frame of barely over two percent and a decrease internal migration, any growth above three percent would be above biological growth.

Growth can come in three ways: biological that is through bringing up children in the church; through transferring in from other churches; and through evangelism. A healthy church should be able to keep most of its children, but the bulk of its growth should be through evangelism. Unfortunately, except for 1957, there are no statistics on conversions for The Missionary Church but there are statistics for "Seekers" (table #3) and for "Baptisms" (table #4). Seekers are those who sought the Lord, and do not necessarily equal converts, although that would be true with most of them. Pedro Klassen, present dean of I.S.B.L. made a study in 1974 on The Missionary Church. He equates seekers with converts, but has this to say.

We must recognize that this is not very faithful to reality because of the fact that the statistics in this area also are not sound. In general, the workers in their reports, presented an approximate number of converts in round numbers. For this reason, there is no exact number of converts. Still, the numbers that we have are not so far from reality that they cannot serve as a base for some considerations.⁷

Pedro Klassen was deeply concerned in the four year fall of converts from 1969 to 1973. The number of converts had fallen to a ten year low. He concludes his evaluation of the statistics by these remarks.

⁷Klassen, p. 74.

TABLE 3
SEEKERS IN THE MISSIONARY CHURCH

Year	OMS Statistics	Missionary Church Statistics
1956	28	28
1957	41	41
1958	?	?
1959	340	340
1960	344	344
1961	443	443
1962	?	443
1963	1,463	1,463
1964	?	1,120
1965	993	880
1966	942	942
1967	?	?
1968	1,125	1,137
1969	2,572	2,672
1970	1,995	1,995
1971	1,084	?
1972	1,469	1,489
1973	800	750
1974	797	797
1975	942	942

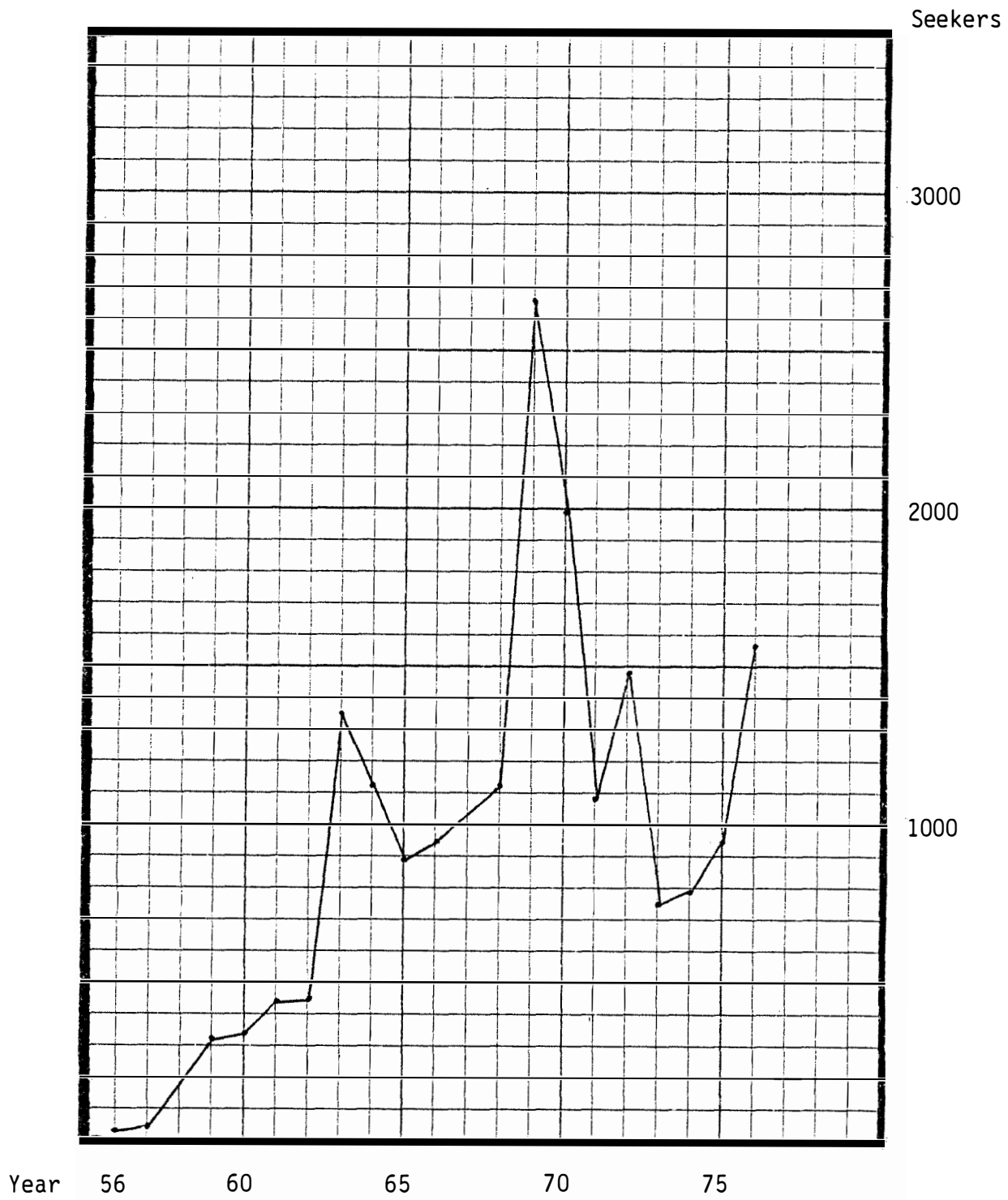
SEEKERS IN THE MISSIONARY CHURCH

(continued)

Year	OMS Statistics	Missionary Church Statistics
1976	1,571	1,571
1977	no record	no record
1978	no record	no record
1979	no record	no record
1980	no record	no record

GRAPH #9

SEEKERS AT MISSIONARY CHURCHES



In 1973 the number of converts has fallen to only 750. This is the lowest figure in ten years. This is to say that each one of our organized churches won only 25 souls in 1973. It also says that it took almost four believers to win each convert in 1973.⁸

Baptism is a necessary ordinance of The Missionary Church, so all those who have not been baptized, in a Protestant church, must be baptized before entering into membership with The Missionary Church. Thus the figures on baptism would correspond fairly well with those evangelized, converted, disciplined, and brought into the church.

In Jesus' parable of the four soils, we learn that not all persons will accept God's Word and fewer still will persevere. That must be part of the conclusion in comparing the Seekers with the Baptized. Often there are three, four, or five times as many Seekers as those Baptized. There is the possibility that some Seekers could have gone back into sin, and have been counted as a Seeker several times during a three or four year period, but the most obvious conclusion is that the church failed to nurture the new born babes, and they died. Still, The Missionary Church has baptized 5,475 individuals since 1956, and that is not counting the four years with no statistics.

There are more persons who were baptized than the active members in the church (5,475 vs. 3,785). These reasons include: death, transfer to other denominations, returning to their past sins, and not becoming a member after baptism. As the church grows older,

⁸Klassen, p. 78.

TABLE 4
BAPTISMS IN THE MISSIONARY CHURCH

Year	Baptisms
1956	15
1957	19
1958	?
1959	31
1960	31
1961	77
1962	18
1963	164
1964	?
1965	181
1966	286
1967	?
1968	270
1969	358
1970	228
1971	133
1972	314
1973	320
1974	?
1975	259
1976	433

BAPTISMS IN THE MISSIONARY CHURCH

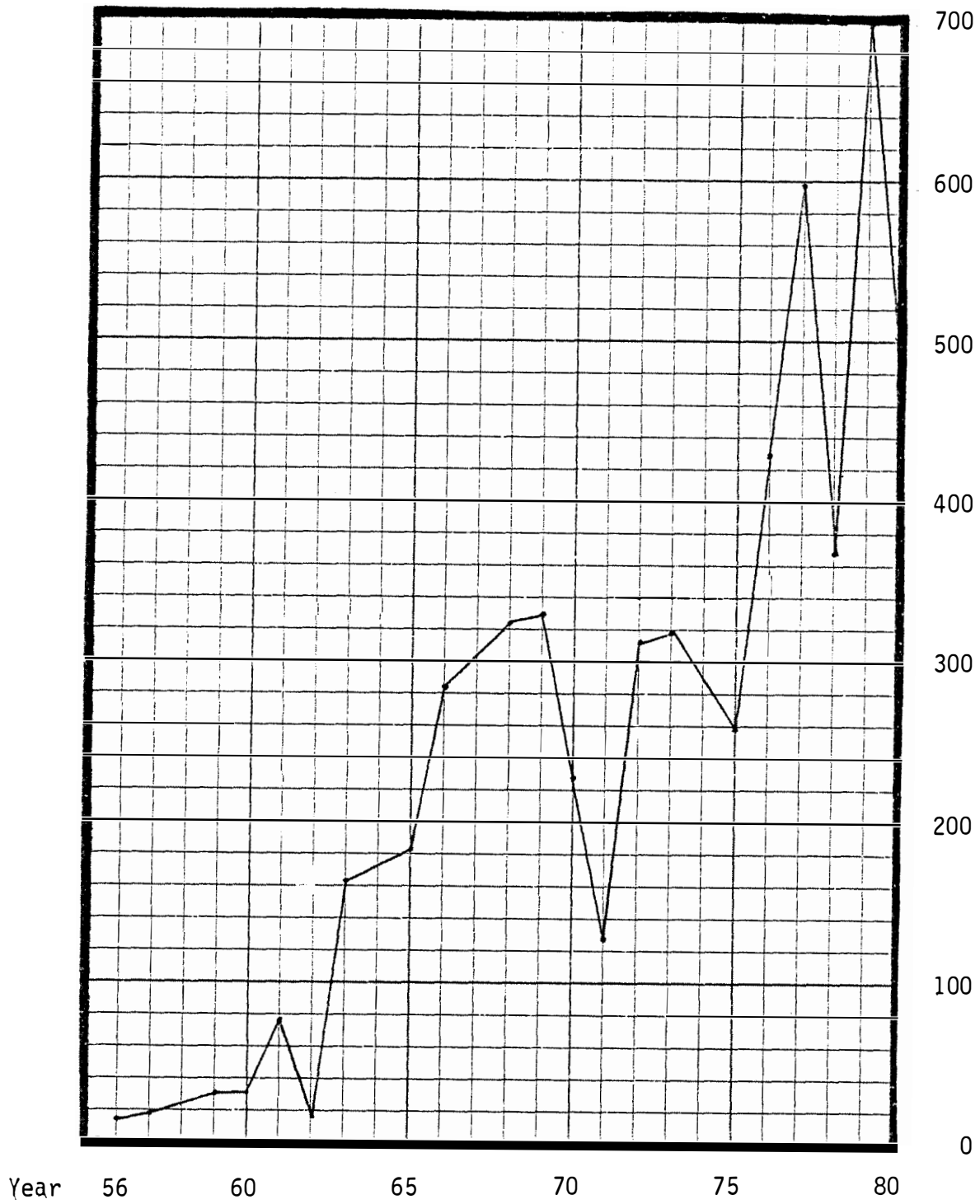
(continued)

Year	Baptisms
1977	598
1978	367
1979	698
1980	503

GRAPH #10

46.

BAPTISMS OF THE MISSIONARY CHURCH



death will play a larger role, but for now, the largest source of loss is through transfers. One pastor in the state of Mato Grosso complained that numerically his church had not grown in the two years that he had been there, yet he had taken in over forty new members. The problem was that over forty older members had moved away.

Church membership is naturally important in figuring church growth, but the number of organized churches and preaching points are also important. (tables #2 and #5). There are some discrepancies between OMS Brazil Field statistics and The Missionary Church's statistics, and while both are recorded, the author favors The Missionary Church's statistics, because they are more consistent. The one exception is the year 1975 in which the author feels that the digits for 34 were inadvertently switched to 43, so for that year OMS's statistic of 34 is accepted. Both sets of statistics show a generally upward trend.

The growth rate (graph #8) for organized churches is a healthy annual rate of 11.5 percent. In numbers of churches, it means that The Missionary Church grew from 19 to 54 churches in ten years. In 1971, 1975, and 1979 there were no new churches organized.

Since many preaching points develop into churches, there should be a correlation between the two. Comparing graphs of the number of preaching points (graph #11) with the graph of organized churches, (graph #6) it can be seen that each year there was a drop of major proportions in preaching points (1961-62, 1970-71, and 1978-79) no new churches were organized. From 1957 to 1980, The Missionary Church failed to organize at least one new church during the following

TABLE 5
PREACHING POINTS OF THE MISSIONARY CHURCH

Year	Preaching points
1956	4
1957	13
1958	?
1959	23
1960	19
1961	39
1962	14
1963	67
1964	?
1965	64
1966	82
1967	?
1968	100 (101)
1969	105 (103)
1970	84 + (110)
1971	56
1972	66
1973	?
1974	74
1975	83
1976	115

PREACHING POINTS OF THE MISSIONARY CHURCH

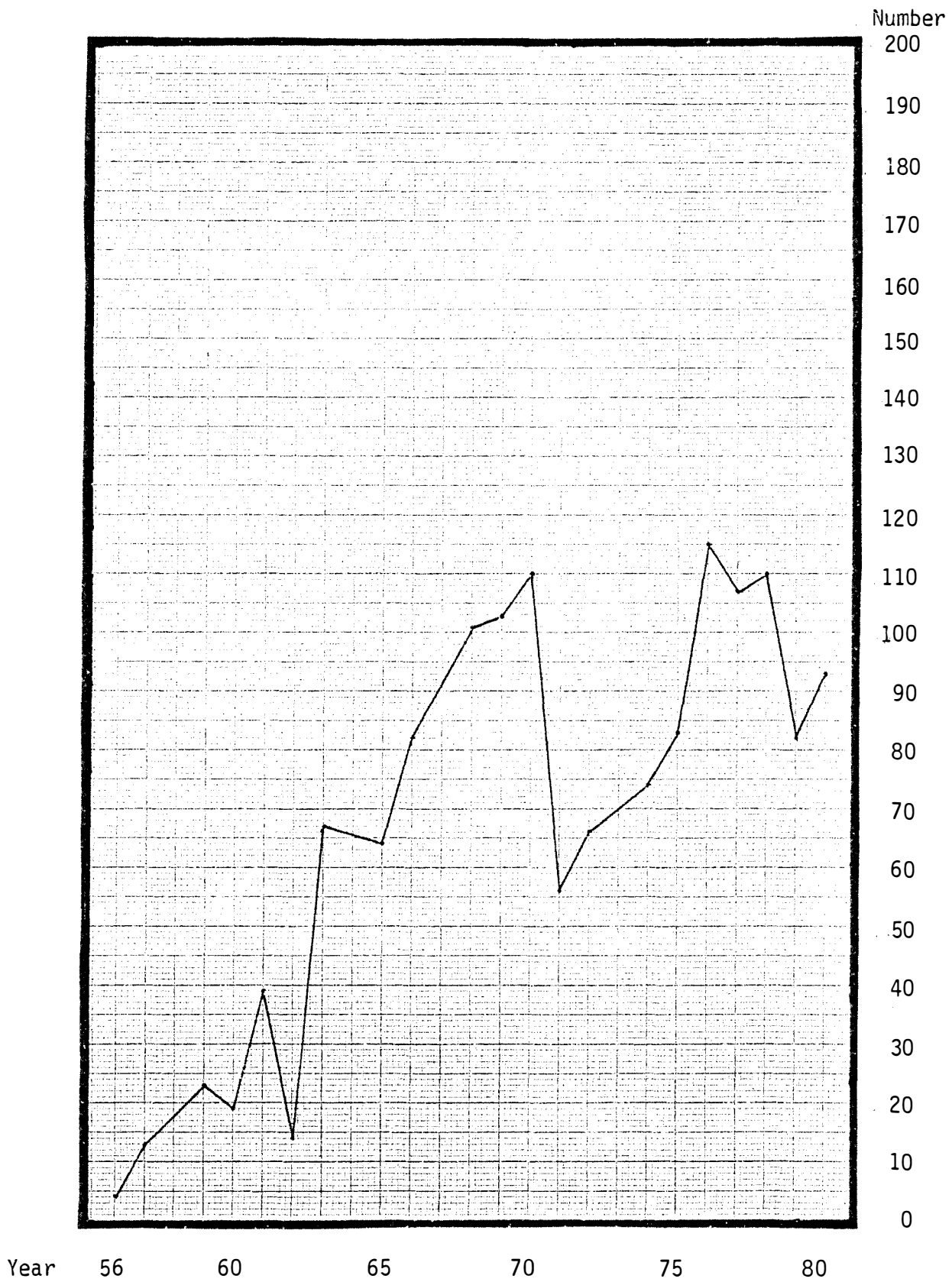
(continued)

Year	Preaching points
1977	107
1978	110
1979	82
1980	93

* Not all churches were recorded by OMS that year.

GRAPH #11
PREACHING POINTS

50.



years 1961-62, 1964-65, 1966-68, 1970-71, 1974-75 and 1978-79. Only in 1974-75 was there an increase in preaching points but no increase in organized churches. This clearly shows that the more places that the Gospel is preached, the more churches will be organized.

The number of preaching points (graph #11) ties in very closely with seekers too (graph #9). It is unfortunate that there are no figures from 1977 to the present, yet a pattern between the two graphs can be discerned. It is simple: a rise in preaching points brings a rise in seekers.

Preaching points have an even closer relationship to baptisms (graph #10). Comparing the graphs of the two, (graphs #10 and #11), one can see a near lockstep relationship up until 1972 when the two vary more. Organized churches (graph #6) do not have such a relationship. It is interesting to see that the two years (1965 and 1966) that statistics separated baptisms between the churches and the preaching points, preaching points had over 36 percent of all baptisms, and in 1966 they had almost half of them. If this were to be true throughout, it would be impressive indeed, but there is no way of knowing.

Sunday schools are started where preaching points have been successful, so they have played an important part in the life of The Missionary Church. In fact, except for the first year, there have been more Sunday Schools than organized churches. This can mean that Sunday schools grow into organized churches, but that can only be a possibility. Until 1977, Sunday school enrollment ran ahead of church

TABLE 6
SUNDAY SCHOOLS OF THE MISSIONARY CHURCH

Year	OMS Statistics	Missionary Church Statistics
1956	?	2
1957	6	6
1958	?	?
1959	11	11
1960	17	18
1961	19	19
1962	18	16
1963	?	20
1964	?	32
1965	40	?
1966	34	39
1967	?	?
1968	?	43
1969	49	40
1970	?	42
1971	44	?
1972	39	42
1973	46	46
1974	45	?
1975	45	53

SUNDAY SCHOOLS OF THE MISSIONARY CHURCH

(continued)

Year	OMS Statistics	Missionary Church Statistics
1976	61	61
1977	53	53
1978	53	53
1979	52	52
1980	54	?

GRAPH #12
SUNDAY SCHOOLS IN THE MISSIONARY CHURCH

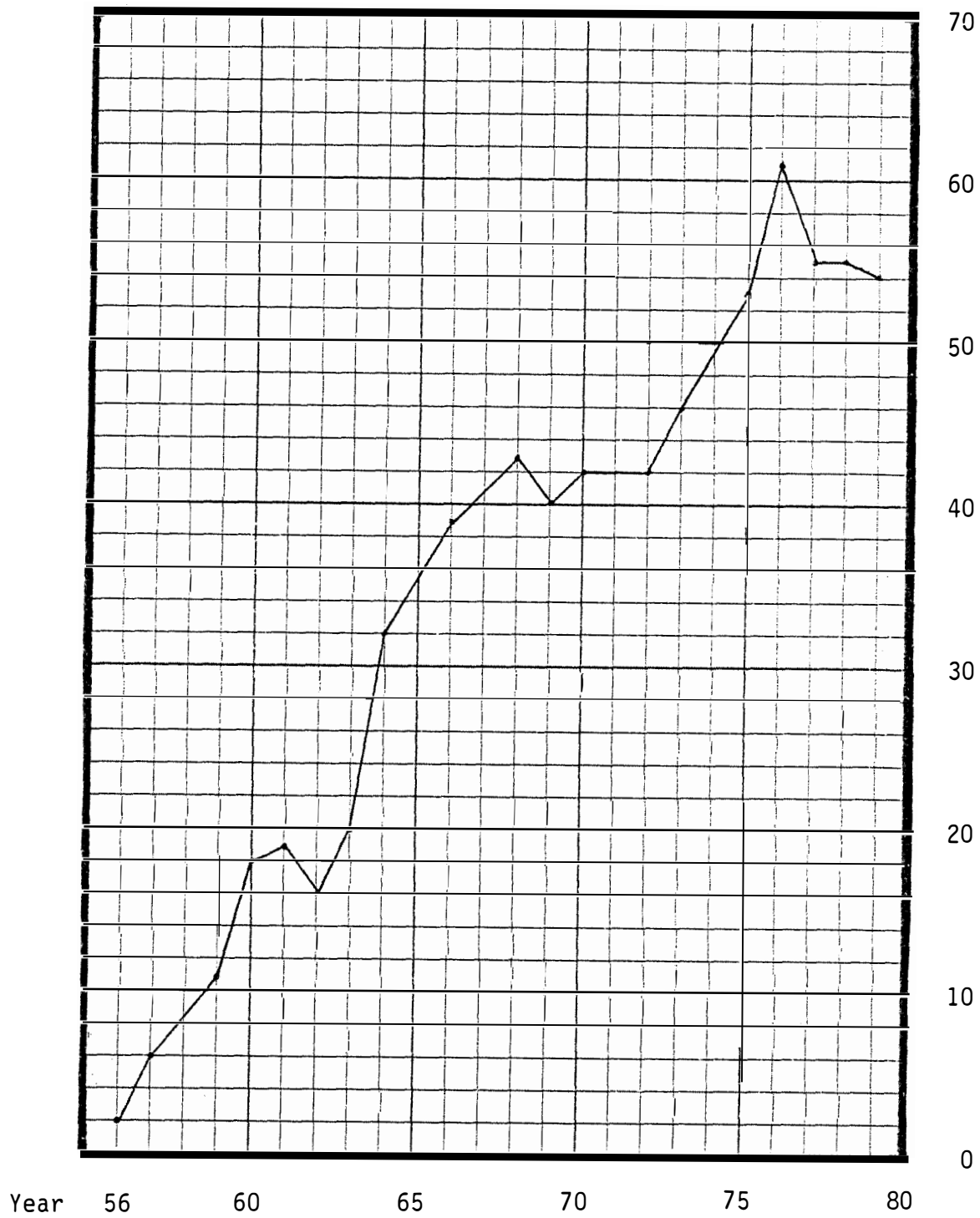


TABLE 7
SUNDAY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

Year	Sunday School
1956	151
1957	199
1958	?
1959	577
1960	754
1961	904
1962	872
1963	1076
1964	1675
1965	1351
1966	1897
1967	?
1968	?
1969	2070
1970	?
1971	1933
1972	2262
1973	2492
1974	2512
1975	2241
1976	2734

SUNDAY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

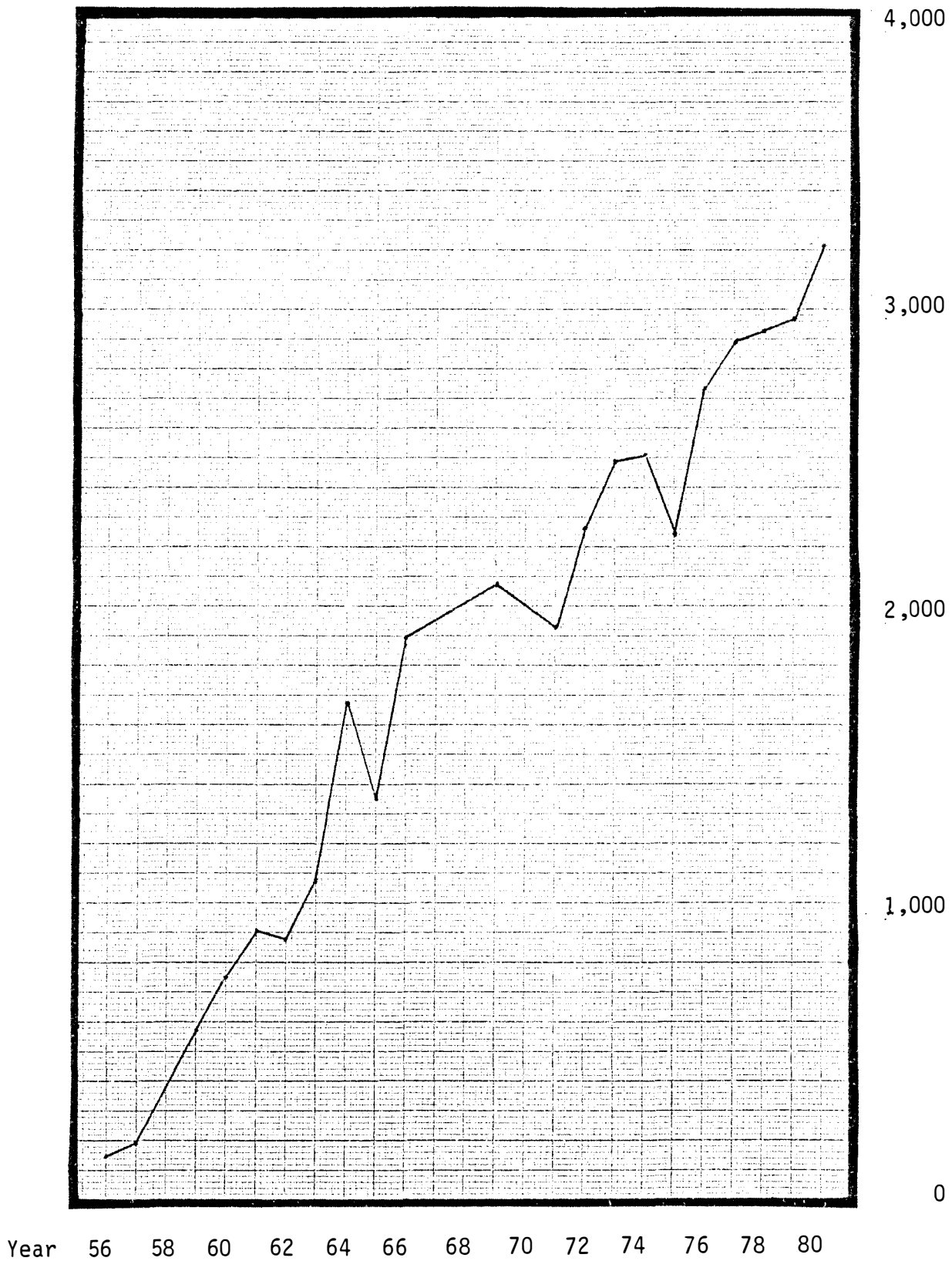
(continued)

Year	Sunday School
1977	2886
1978	2925
1979	2966
1980	3213

GRAPH #13

57.

SUNDAY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT



membership (note tables #7 and #1). In the early years, Sunday school enrollment often ran over twice as high as church membership, but from 1966 to 1977 the two drew closer and closer together culminating with the two being virtually equal from 1975 to 1977. From 1977 to 1979 (the last date for which Sunday school enrollment is available) church membership passed Sunday school enrollment and increased its lead. This gives the impression that Sunday school, in and of itself, did not bring up church membership. This impression however, may not be true. Sunday schools were more closely tied to preaching points than they are today. But in the late 1960's this changed. Numbers of Sunday schools show little change from 1966 to 1972 (graph #12). In 1973, Sunday schools were again gaining in numbers, but there no longer was such a tie into preaching points.

The Missionary Church does not now look at its Sunday schools as a way of growth. Sunday school is primarily a tool of educating Christians and their families, as well as having Christian fellowship.

Both average Sunday school attendance and average worship service attendance figures could have been useful but they were not kept except for a few years, which makes analysis useless.

Two statistics that can have an effect in church growth are numbers of pastors, both ordained and lay-pastors, and numbers of missionaries. These statistics are available. There is again some discrepancy between mission and church statistics, but most years agree.

Statistics show, (table #8) and the graph (graph #14) demonstrates a generally upward trend in total number of pastors until

TABLE 8
PASTORS OF THE MISSIONARY CHURCH

Year	Ordained	Lay-Pastors	Total
1956	0	4	4
1957	1	3	4
1958	?	?	?
1959	2	6	8
1960	4	6	10
1961	7	3	10
1962	7	4	11
1963	9	9	18
1964	?	?	?
1965	9 (8)*	9 (14)	18 (22)
1966	11	11	22
1967	?	?	?
1968	9 (9)	10 (7)	19 (16)
1969	11 (12)	11 (10)	22 (22)
1970	9 (13)	9 (10)	18 (23)
1971	15	15	30
1972	15	9	24
1973	?	?	?
1974	12	1	13
1975	12	9	21
1976	13	11	24

PASTORS OF THE MISSIONARY CHURCH

(continued)

Year	Ordained	Lay-Pastors	Total
1977	13	10	23
1978	21	11	32
1979	24	13	37
1980	23	17	40

* Those in parenthesis are statistics from The Missionary Church files that differ from OMS statistics.

GRAPH #14

61.

PASTORS OF THE MISSIONARY CHURCH

Pastors
40

30

20

10

0

ALL PASTORS

ORDAINED PASTORS

Year

56

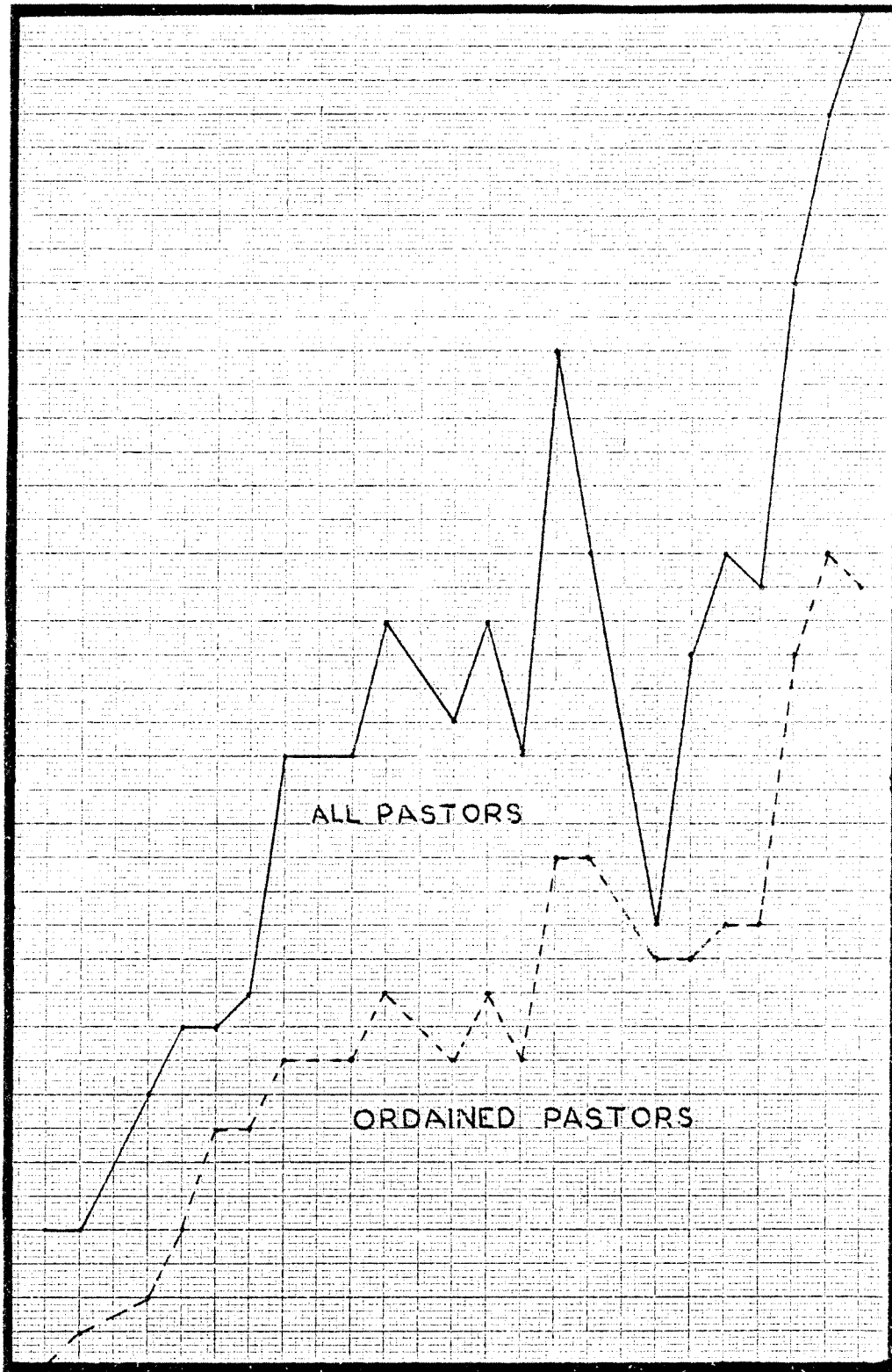
60

65

70

75

80



1971, followed by a sharp three year decline, reaching a low of thirteen pastors. From 1974 to 1980, there has been a sharp rise more than making up for the previous three year decline.

Obviously, a sharp decline in pastors must affect a denomination, but membership statistics show a gain of 348 during this time. What shows up is a sharp decrease in preaching points and an extremely sharp decrease in conversions (seekers) as well as in baptisms. Clearly, the more pastors there are, the more preaching points can be established, resulting in more conversions and baptisms. There are not enough ordained pastors to fill each church pulpit unless some pastors have several churches so this limits how much time they can spend in establishing preaching points. Lay-pastors are however limited to one church which is usually a small one. He then has the time to establish several preaching points. Consequently, the sharp drop in lay-pastors hurts the denomination's evangelistic outreach in a proportionately large amount. Although there is a lack of data on missionary numbers (table #9) from 1964 through 1968, appearances suggest there was little change either way in their numbers. However, while the numbers of pastors were falling (1971-1974), missionary personnel was rising from 1969 through 1972 (graph #15).

In Brazil, few OMS missionaries have been primarily involved in evangelism, so it is understandable that they have not had a direct impact on church evangelism and growth. This is a major weakness. The mission, if it is truly concerned with church growth, must put more personnel into evangelism. If nothing else is done but the inspiration and challenge of national leaders to evangelize.

TABLE 9
OMS MISSIONARIES

Year	Number
1956	14
1957	15
1958	?
1959	14
1960	11
1961	12
1962	15
1963	14
1964	?
1965	?
1966	?
1967	?
1968	?
1969	13
1970	15
1971	17
1972	20
1973	17
1974	17
1975	13
1976	16

OMS MISSIONARIES

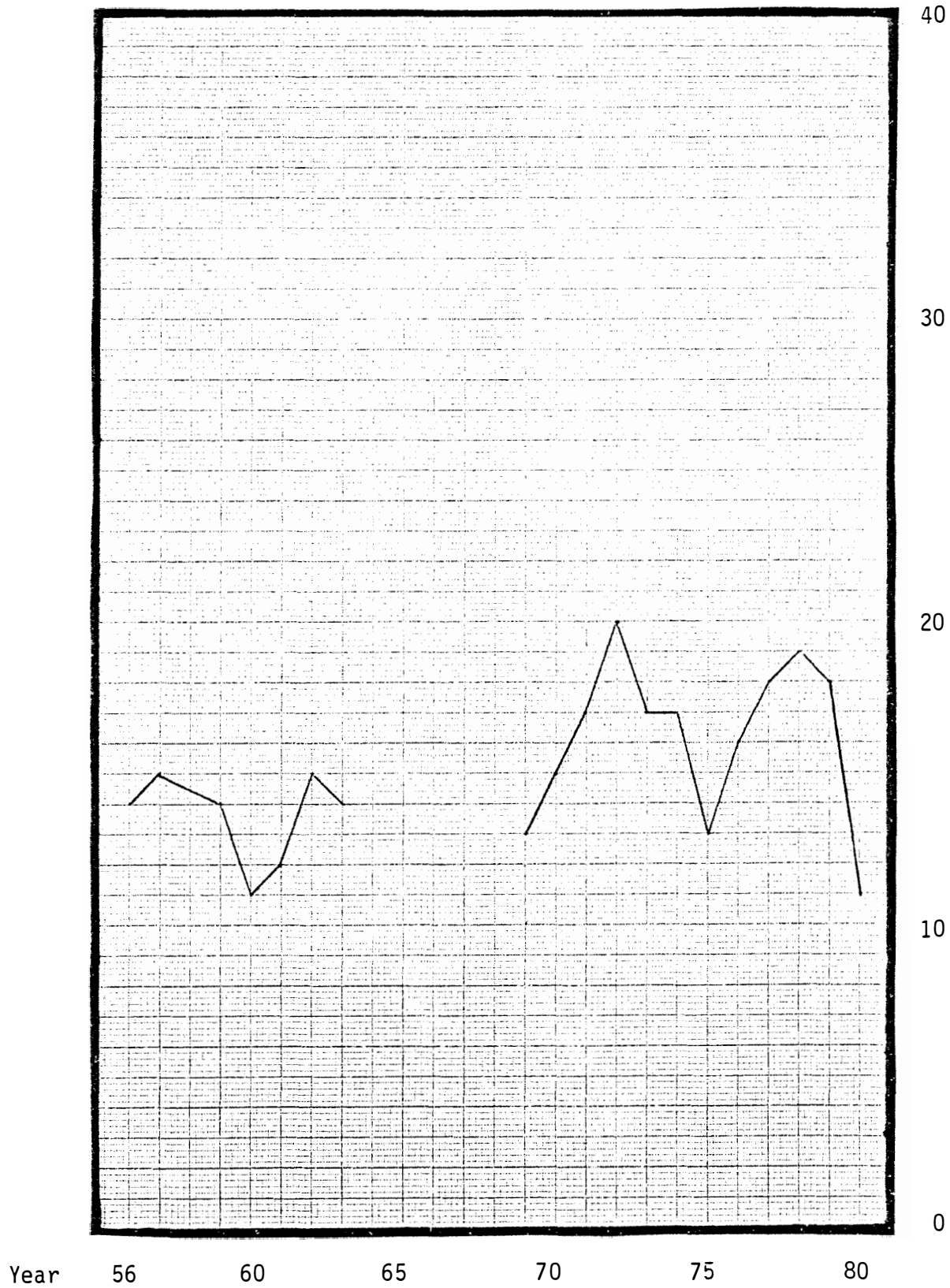
(continued)

Year	Number
1977	18
1978	19
1979	18
1980	11

TABLE #15

65.

MISSIONARIES TO BRAZIL FROM OMS



Looking at all of the data can be confusing, but there seems to be two strong trends that stand out. The first trend is that membership has been tied to organized church growth. Brazilians have no difficulty accepting Christ at a preaching point, but a preaching point is not necessarily a permanent thing, while an organized church is. McGavran says in The Bridges of God, that "Peoples are not going to commit their destinies to a faith which is here today and gone tomorrow."⁹ This has proven true with The Missionary Church. Even with extremely large conversion numbers in comparison to the size of the denomination, church membership growth was only a fraction of those who were converted. Perhaps if churches had been rapidly organized there would not have been such a loss of the harvest.

The other trend has been mentioned earlier. It is that both conversions and baptisms are tied to the number of preaching points. These preaching points are tied to the pastorate, and in particular to the lay-pastors, so decreases in lay-pastors lead to decreases in conversions, and the opposite also holds true.

There are several national contextual factors that may well have played a part in The Missionary Church growth. The most obvious, is that The Missionary Church is scattered through the states of Parana, Sao Paulo, Mato Grosso do Sul and Rio Grande do Sul, all of which have experienced large influxes of immigrants from Brazil's Northeast. While The Missionary Church does not have a work in that area, Those immigrants are more open to the Gospel. An interesting

⁹Donald A. McGavran, The Bridges of God (New York: Friendship Press, 1955), p. 46.

aspect of this is what Roger Bastide found in his study of African religions in Brazil. Protestantism has come to be looked upon as "the religion of the book and therefore of a literate people."¹⁰ Bastide says that Catholic priests are portrayed as country hicks on national media, while Protestant pastors are portrayed as active city men, giving a favorable impression, even among Catholics.¹¹

Most Missionary churches are located in cities and due to the explosive growth in the cities, the churches have added new members.

Some institutional factors must also be considered. Missionary church relations were extremely tense in the late sixties and again in 1976. During the first tense time church growth was affected, but it did not seem to be affected the second time. Two denominational decisions were made in 1965 that probably had a conflicting effect on church growth. One decision was for the denomination as a whole to move into social work starting with an orphanage already started by the Maringa Region. This was to lead to several other orphanages, a home for unwed mothers, nurseries, a half-way house for released convicts, and a home for juvenile delinquents. This is quite a work for such a small denomination, and has drained money and effort from the church. Perhaps if they had not been started, the church could have grown faster, but the people

¹⁰Roger Bastide, *The African Religions of Brazil*, trans. Helen Sebra, (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1978), p. 373.

¹¹Bastide, pp. 365-368.

felt: the spiritual necessity to reach out and help those in need.¹²

The other important decision was to make a big push to use laymen in the church. These men would be encouraged to go into "the ordained ministry, if they had proved themselves capable of the ministry." In other words, if a layman showed promise, he was made a lay pastor and given a preaching point or told to develop one. If he succeeded he could be ordained.¹³ In considering how lay pastors can effect the rate of conversions, this decision was an extremely valuable one.

OMS at one time had a missionary who worked on planting churches through evangelistic teams. This was especially useful in starting works in totally new areas but this was dropped by the mission by 1970. The Missionary Church started it up again on their own in 1973 and it lasted until 1978. Not all of the churches started by these teams have been able to succeed, but many have.

The principle means of adding churches today is through lay pastors building up preaching points.

¹²McGavran, The Bridges of God, p. 65.

¹³McGavran, The Bridges of God, p. 65.

CHAPTER 4

THE BRAZIL FIELD MISSION OF OMS

Until World War II, the Oriental Missionary Society had opened fields only in the Orient, in the countries of Japan, Korea, and China. But travels by Lettie Cowman, wife of the society's founder, had brought her into contact with those in need of salvation in other parts of the world. Her heart was drawn south of the border to Mexico, where crusades were held, although no field was opened, but the response to the Gospel was so strongly positive, that Mrs. Cowman prayed for God to open up fields in Latin America.¹ God did open the door to OMS, first in Columbia (1945), then Brazil (1950), Ecuador (1952) and finally Haiti (1958), although Mrs. Cowman herself only lived to see the start of this.²

The name Oriental Missionary Society seemed inappropriate for a mission planning to open fields in Latin America, but the society's supporters around the world knew it under its original name, and changing it would cause too much confusion so the society created another missionary name for its Latin fields, the Inter-American Missionary Society.

¹Fred E. Edwards, The Role of The Faith Mission (South Pasadena, California: William Carey Library, 1971), p. 84.

²OMS Outreach, April 1981, p. 30.

Rev. C.P. Culver and Dr. Roy Adams made a survey trip through South America in 1942 and recommended that Brazil be OMS's next Latin field. Rev. Culver enlisted the aid of the mission's first national co-worker, Rev. Jonathas Thomas de Aquino in 1945, and this man was supported by OMS for five years before the first missionary came. His ministry was largely evangelistic in which he called young men into full time Christian service.³ So when OMS's first missionary couple, Rev. and Mrs. Carl Hahn, stepped off the boat in Rio de Janeiro in 1950, there was already a small group ready to meet them.⁴

The Hahns were soon joined by others, and the mission soon saw results. These results were a Bible House, a colporteur, three organized churches, several other preaching points, a radio program, evangelistic meetings, Spiritual Life Conventions, and OMS's unique Every Creature Crusade.⁵ OMS did not originate all of this, though. The churches and preaching points were the work of a Salvation Army pastor, Rev. Carl ("Daddy") Cooper who gave them to the mission. The evangelistic meetings were from Rev. Jonathas' work. The Spiritual Life Conventions likewise were given to the OMS missionaries by "Daddy" Cooper.⁶

³Edwards, p. 85.

⁴Carl Hahn, "Brazil Is Calling" The Missionary Standard, July-August, 1950, p. 12.

⁵B.H. Pearson, "God's Open Door In Brazil" The Missionary Standard, November, 1951, p. 5.

⁶Edwards, p. 88.

OMS was off to a good start, on a foundation which had been layed by others. Dr. Pearson, the first field director of Brazil, was advised not to form another denomination since there were already too many.⁷ So even though forming a denomination was one of OMS's goals, it was not immediately done.⁸ Eight years passed before a denomination was organized, and by then, the Brazilian field of OMS was strongly tied into an interdenominational Bible School - seminary and its development.

I.S.B.L.

In 1953, the property for what would become OMS's Bible School - seminary was bought. Training nationals has been an important part of OMS's missionary strategy of reaching a nation for Christ, so this move was a logical one, what was not, was the location of the property. Most of the missionaries assumed that the school would be in or around the Sao Paulo area which was already a large city of millions and growing rapidly, but missionary Robert Millan, who was living in Londrina, was contacted by a Christian there who offered a building for a seminary at a very reasonable price. Londrina was the center of northern Paraná, but it was still a small town. It had still been jungle less than twenty years previously. Still, it seemed

⁷Melva Webb, A History of the Brazil Field 1950-1975, Londrina, Paraná, Brazil, 1975, p. 1-13.

⁸Hahn, p. 12.

that God was leading towards Londrina. No one knew that in twenty years Londrina would have a population of over 400,000!

The school, when it opened in March, 1954 was called Instituto e Seminario Biblico de Londrina (I.S.B.L.) or the Bible Institute and Seminary of Londrina. It was started on an interdenominational basis, and it became the main thrust of the society in Brazil.

OMS has historically had a three fold emphasis on evangelism. The OMS Manual states these goals.

1. To establish Bible institutes and Bible seminaries for the training of a national ministry,
2. To found an indigenous church,
3. To evangelize systematically and intensively in every field and to use, where possible, the Every Creature Crusade.⁹

So I.S.B.L. fit nicely into OMS's plan for evangelism, but with some modification. In other fields, OMS, through its Every Creature Crusade evangelism, was responsible for winning many to Christ, and then it organized those new converts into churches. These were brought together in training sessions, or Bible Schools to equip those called to minister to the churches. In Brazil, because of opposition, the mission did not immediately organize the nucleus of believers given it by "Daddy" Cooper and Rev. Jonathas into a denomination. Nor did the Every Creature Crusade really function as it had in other fields. This meant that while missionary effort went into developing a good Bible School and seminary, the graduates were not going into an OMS denomination. This was alleviated somewhat when

⁹OMS International, Manual of OMS International Inc., July 17, 1980, p. 1.

the Japanese Holiness Church made I.S.B.L. its official seminary, but it was not on the same relationship as other fields.

When the Brazilian wing of the Evangelical Holiness Church became The Missionary Church, it assumed a special relationship with I.S.B.L. The national leadership felt that it should have some say in running the school. This was resisted by the mission until 1973 when Pastor Arno Deggau became the dean, but even then OMS ran the seminary. The missionary leadership did not feel that any Brazilian in the church was capable of doing the job.¹⁰

Friction occurred off and on (1975-1976 was a critical time) with the mission leadership trying to move towards its goals and the church towards its, in regards to I.S.B.L. This problem was resolved in 1980 with a defining of mission - church goals. OMS told the church that its main goal was the continuing of its ministry of training Brazilians, and this would be on an interdenominational basis, with a special privileged relationship with The Missionary Church. The church would receive scholarships for its students and would have one-third representation on the school board. The Missionary Church was not totally satisfied, for they wanted I.S.B.L. to be theirs, so its curriculum would meet more of the church's needs, and would make better pastors for the church. Superintendent Joao Liberato said afterwards, that now both knew where the other stood

¹⁰Joao Liberato, General Superintendent of The Missionary Church, personal interview, Londrina, Paraná, Brazil, July 20, 1980.

on the issue, and the church could make its plans from there.¹¹

I.S.B.L. now averages about 50 students with 40 percent coming from The Missionary Church. This does not include the extension seminary that started up in Sao Paulo in 1981. It is still small, with only 16 students, but it is expected to grow larger than I.S.B.L. in Londrina.¹²

Of the eighteen missionaries now in Brazil, four husband-wife teams and two single ladies are actively working in I.S.B.L. This shows the emphasis that OMS is placing on training pastors.

Camps

Camping ministries now occupy a very large share of OMS's finances in Brazil as well as two missionary couples and two Japanese - Brazilians.

The Brazil Field had not planned to go into such a ministry, but a camp at the far western edge of the state of Sao Paulo was offered free to OMS. It was badly in need of repair and far from any Missionary Church so OMS vice president Eugene Wittig did not want to accept it. The Brazil Field however, felt that God was giving them a new opportunity and urged the approval at headquarters. It was approved with the mandate that the Brazil Field develop churches in the area to utilize the camp. With this in mind, Camp Panorama became

¹¹Liberato.

¹²Letter from Mrs. Melva Clevenger, secretary on the Brazil Field of OMS, to Dave Graffenberger, March 12, 1981.

OMS's in 1969.

Mr. and Mrs. Max Edwards were largely responsible for renovating the camp and developing its ministries. They tried to develop churches in the area too, They discovered that to be a full time job, so they turned their full attention of getting Camp Panorama going.

Since there were few Missionary Churches within a driving distance from Panorama and these were small, the Edwards went to Baptist, Presbyterian, Independant Presbyterian and Evangelical Holiness Churches. From these, they recruited campers and trained counselors. Every camping season saw hundreds accepting Christ. Unfortunately, there was no growth for The Missionary Church from this, and attempts of following up of converts once they left camp was met with a singularly lack of success except with those near Evangelical Holiness Churches. Most counselors came from this denomination so they could draw the teenagers into the counselor's home church.

One of the Missionary Churches from Sao Paulo wanted to have a retreat that would also be evangelistic and talked with Max about their plans. From this came what is called the 1+1 camps. Each Christian, to be able to go to camp, must bring a non-Christian who would go at either a reduced rate or free. The results were phenomenal! Most non-Christians became converts and since they already had friendship with those of the church, when they returned, they had little or no trouble fitting in with the youth group.

These results excited Missionary Church leaders who then saw the possibility for their churches if a camp could be built closer to church concentrations.

An American layman, seeing the potential, bought six alqueres (roughly 30 acres) south of Londrina and gave it to OMS for another camp. This is call Camp Shalom. Max Edwards planned this camp's development too, but soon went on furlough. The author, who ran Camp Panorama in the 1977-78 camping season (December through February) then took over Camp Shalom's development through June of 1979 when he too went home for furlough. While Max had started the building program, it was not ready for campers until shortly after Schoenborn took over.

Camp Shalom was then tied closely to The Missionary Church. Counselors were trained from that church, having been selected by their pastors. All of the camps planned by the staff were for The Missionary Church. Other churches or para-church groups used the camp too, but paid a fee that helped to subsidize Missionary Church camps and Shalom's development. The goal was to build up the individual churches in The Missionary Church.

One incident is worth recording. Pastor Samuel Cabral of the Londrina Banderantes Church and Roger Schoenborn planned for a 1+1 camp of junior high age youths of that working class section of town. There was only room for 40 campers at that time and Pastor Samuel got 36 kids to come - 18 Christians and 18 non-Christians. Roger was shocked to find that the age span went from third grade to juniors in high school! He had planned for junior highers with sports and various activities for that age group. The large age span called for much improvisation.

In talking with the counselors before the camp, Roger repeated

the goal of the camp was to get all of the campers to accept Christ, and that they were to work towards that, but make the camp a good enough experience that if some did not do so, they would still want to come back. I personally felt that a 50 percent rate of conversions would have been a success, but before the camp was over, all 18 had accepted Christ!

Six months later, another junior high age 14-17 camp was held by Banderantes (Pastor Samuel saw that it should be for just one age group after the first camp) and with room in another dormitory now available, there were 44 campers. Nearly all of the first campers who were junior high age came back, brought friends and the results were the same - 100% conversions!

The two camps had two different philosophies. Camp Panorama was primarily evangelistic - interested in winning souls. There was an interdenominational emphasis, which encourages campers to join a church, but not necessarily any one in particular. Even if camp directors had tried to funnel campers into Missionary Churches, it would have been impossible to do, since no Missionary Churches were close by most campers' homes.

Camp Shalom's efforts were focused on not only winning souls, but on integrating them into The Missionary Church. In this way, new converts could be nurtured and conserved. This required a close contact with Missionary Church pastors, and explanations to them on how Camp Shalom was trying to function, so that the pastors could do their part in the nurturing process.

The Brazil Field of OMS after much soul searching and

admitting to itself that despite much work and money, Camp Panorama was not producing measurable fruit for The Missionary Church decided to sell the camp. The Evangelical Holiness Church enthusiastically bought Camp Panorama, and with a vision for reaching young people through their church, should make Camp Panorama more productive.

Theological Education by Extention

Seminary training is the accepted method of raising up pastors for churches in North America and Europe, but it has not been a complete success in Latin America. Part of the problem is that many churches have only a lay-pastor and cannot support a pastor on their own. This is compounded by the Latin culture which says that an educated man does not work with his hands. Graduates from seminary then do not want, and will often refuse a church which cannot fully support them, thus small churches suffer. If the lay-pastor leaves the church to study at seminary (which in itself is difficult, since he usually is married and has children in school) the church is left without a pastor. Then too, most seminaries are in large cities, and after three to four years living there, most graduates will refuse to go to the smaller towns.

Theological Education by Extension (T.E.E.) was developed to help country pastors, lay-pastors, and others feeling the need for Bible training to get it without having to disrupt their church and their family by moving to a large city. Seminary professors go out to central locations once a week, or at some predetermined time, and teach these church leaders. This has the added benefits that the

student can put to use what he has learned right away, and the teachers usually must give lessons that are practical.

This method of training man in theological matters was accepted by OMS in Brazil as a way to train the lay pastors of The Missionary Church. By the early 1970's three missionaries were working nearly full time on this, but results were slow in coming. T.E.E. students were not on the same level of education as the seminary students, and their grasp of theological concepts were at a lower level. Despite these problems, T.E.E. was looked at as the only way to train most of these men.

Gradually as missionaries went on furlough or left the field, duties were handed over to Brazilians to teach and administer T.E.E. Brazilians now to run the program, but use missionaries from other missions to areas with no OMS personnel. Its students are all from The Missionary Church and has an enrollment of just over 170. This is much higher than the seminary enrollment, since it takes much longer to complete the equivalent work.

Telemensagem

Rev. Jesse (Mike) Murphy had been working with an interdenominational singing group (for witnessing in high schools), a radio program (for pushing the seminary), and a youth style coffee house. All of this was done under OMS. In 1976, his plans for an evangelistic program collapsed when the Londrina station refused to sell air time. After much prayer, Mike felt led to develop a telephone ministry. This he called Telemensagem.

The idea of Telemensagem was simple. A short simple devotional would be recorded and anyone calling that number would hear the message. At the end of the message the voice gave a number to call for personal counselling.

The response was staggering! The recording was constantly working and a new line had to be added. Thousands took the additional step and called the counselor. Of these thousands, hundreds prayed a prayer of forgiveness and were placed with counselors. Unfortunately many of these "converts" wanted to remain anonymous and follow-up could not be done. This raises doubt as to their sincerity as Christians, but if they have not really accepted Christ, the seed of the Gospel has been sown.

Conservation of the fruit has been a preoccupation with those in Telemensagem. All of the counselors were either OMS personnel, I.S.B.L. students, or Missionary Church pastors, yet if the new convert has ties with other churches through friends, or relatives, they were encouraged to go there. Consequently few ever came to visit Missionary churches and fewer became members.

The missionaries were still awestruck at the response to the simple Gospel message and decided to do the same thing in Sao Paulo. The response was greater still! Four full time men were required for counseling and follow-up.

Financial difficulties, made it impossible for OMS to continue funding Telemensagem in Londrina, so Rev. Murphy gave it over to Missao Antioquia, a Brazilian missionary society.

A long hard needs to be taken of Telemensagem. Its purpose and goals need to be clearly stated. Once that is done, OMS should evaluate Telemensagem's purpose to see if it is consistent with OMS's purpose as a mission. It should then evaluate the goals to determine if they are being met.

As with Camp Panorama, it may be necessary for OMS to divest itself of a good program, to strive for the best.

CHAPTER 5

SOME CHURCH GROWTH PRINCIPLES

"Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation" (Mark 16:15 N.I.V.). The more familiar King James Version says "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," as Mark recorded it. This is the last command of Jesus to His disciples.

Since that time, succeeding waves of missionaries have pushed the boundaries of pagandom further and further back. In the first century, Christianity jumped the cultural gap between Judaism and the Hellenistic world and became predominantly non-Jewish. It was an urban faith, and it moved along trade routes from city to city. From those central location it spread into towns and even into the countryside.¹ By the third century, mass conversions of whole peoples was happening in places like Armenia, but this did not continue.² The church did grow, but acceptance by the secular world of Christianity brought the church to the point of accommodation with the world, and the church stagnated.³

¹Kenneth Scott LaTourette, A History of Christianity, Vol. I, Beginnings to 1500 (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1975), p. 75.

²LaTourette, p. 79.

³LaTourette, p. 242.

With the conversion of Ireland, that island became the major force for spreading Christianity to northern and central Europe as well as revitalizing other⁴ "Christian" areas, in the sixth and seventh centuries but missionary activity declined after Ireland's submission to Rome.⁵

The Reformation brought a renewal of Christianity and sparked the Roman Catholic church into renewed missionary activity, but Protestants were content to minister among themselves. In the nineteenth century, this attitude changed. Missionaries such as William Carey and Adoniram Judson went into new areas to win the lost for Christ. Missionary stirrings swept through Christendom and thousands left their homeland to preach the Gospel to those who had never heard. Western European Christianity had moved, however, from tribal, or people movement decisions on religion, to individual ones. Those with whom the missionaries worked still thought and acted as a people. This made potential converts choose between abandoning their people, relatives, and culture, or Christianity. As Donald McGavran said in The Bridges of God,

Converts felt that they were joining not merely a new religion, but an entirely foreign way of living -- proclaimed by foreigners, led by foreigners and ruled by foreigners. Converts came alone. Often even their wives refused to come with them. Naturally conversions were few. A vicious circle was established: the few becoming Christian one by one set such a pattern that it was difficult for a Christward movement to be started, and by the lack of a movement converts

⁴LaTourette, pp. 272-273.

⁵John T. McNeill, The Celtic Churches (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1974), pp. 111-116.

continued to come one by one and in very small numbers. In many parts of the field it was as psychologically difficult for a person to become a Christian as it would be for a white man in South Africa to join a Negro Church knowing that his children would intermarry with the black children. The person not only became a Christian, but he was generally believed to have "joined another race." When, among peoples which intermarry only amongst themselves, a man becomes a Christian, his old mother is likely to reproach him, saying, "Now whom will your sons marry? They cannot get wives from amongst us anymore." ⁶

The missionaries had expected a great ingathering of souls, but the expected, did not occur. What did happen was the development of a new approach to missions, one called by McGavran the Exploratory Mission-Station approach. In that missionary method, the mission would acquire a piece of land (usually with much difficulty) to build the base of operations. This center would have the missionaries homes for that region, as well as a church, school, living quarters for helpers, hospital, and anything else that might be needed. Extensive and often difficult tours were made into the surrounding territory. Christianity was so different from the accepted religion, and so tied to the invading colonial rule that those who embraced the faith were normally ostracised and forced out of their homes. These folks, along with orphans, rescued women, and slaves freed by the missionaries usually came to the mission station to live. There they were taught various trades and formed the gathered colony.⁷ This

⁶Donald A. McGavran, The Bridges of God (New York: Friendship Press, 1955), p. 49.

⁷McGavran, The Bridges of God, pp. 45-46.

method was often the only possible way to evangelize and was characteristic of the great century of missions. For that day and age, the strategy was a good one. It was able to find those peoples who were responsive to the Gospel, and it demonstrated over a period of years a stable, lasting faith. Men could see just what Christ does to both groups and individuals.⁸

The problem with the Exploratory Mission-Station approach arose when the mission saw that its evangelistic efforts were not meeting with a great success in numbers. This led the missionaries to be easily diverted into building great institutions of various kinds, such as orphanages, schools, and hospitals. These were visible proofs of the missionaries efforts. From these insitutions, it was hoped that the foundation of a great church was being built. "Indeed, the solid nature of a church based on famine orphans and one-by-one converts, as opposed to that built on a group movement out of an illiterate people, became a matter of considerable pride, and leaders consciously turned from seeking "large numbers of ignorant converts."⁹ While these efforts were worthwhile, they did not give birth to any people movements towards Christ.¹⁰

McGavran points out that members of the churches formed by

⁸ McGavran, The Bridges of God, pp. 46-47.

⁹ McGavran, The Bridges of God, p. 51.

¹⁰ McGavran, The Bridges of God, p. 53.

the gathered colony approach within three generations had no non-Christian relatives at all. Links with non-Christians were all, or nearly all gone. A separate community that thinks of itself as such, and intermarries only with itself has been formed. This is a new people.¹¹

In The Bridges of God, Donald McGavran studied church-mission growth. He comes to the conclusion that if Christianity is to win the world, it must be through people movements. (Because of negative response to this term, another has been coined -- multi-individual mutually interdependent decisions - but for convenience sake, and brevity, this paper will continue to use people movements.)

There are five great advantages that people movements have. One advantage is that the people movement provides Christianity with permanent churches in dozens, hundreds or even thousands of villages. These churches are not dependent upon missions for their economic life, although they are usually of a lower level of education than mission run churches.¹²

The churches have the advantage of being naturally indigenous. In the Mission-Station approach, the converts, as individuals, are brought into a setting generally dominated by foreigners. New Christians in people movements are still immersed in their own culture and

¹¹ McGavran, The Bridges of God, p. 57.

¹² McGavran, The Bridges of God, p. 87.

rarely see the missionary. Their way of life as it pertains to food, clothes, vocabulary continues on with little change. This means that missionaries don't have as great influence on them in regard to the church design etc. so the church looks like it is a part of the community, and the songs sung in it are hymns sung to local tunes. This makes it easier for the non-Christian to accept Christianity.¹³

Closely tying in with the advantage of people movements being indigenous is that these movements have within them a natural spontaneous expansion. People movements require new converts to be formed into churches which of necessity must be spiritually fully equipped. This means a complete trust in the Holy Spirit's guiding. It is assumed, indeed it is often demanded that these groups of new converts multiply themselves. This expansion is natural. The desire to win their own folk, and the opportunity for witnessing in intimate conversations with their unsaved peers are present to a high degree. This is difficult to achieve in churches from the Mission Station approach. These churches might be free of all mission control, "be filled with the Holy Spirit and abound in desire to win others to Christ," and yet because they have become a separate people, they just do not have the bonds with any neighboring people and find it difficult to form new churches.¹⁴

¹³McGavran, The Bridges of God, pp. 87-88.

¹⁴McGavran, The Bridges of God, pp. 88-89.

The possibilities in these movements for growth is enormous. People movements are encircled with growing points, among their own people, who are along the fringes of the movement. This happened in Acts among the Jews of Judea and Galilea. From there, Jews of other countries were reached, both on the day of Pentecost and as a result of persecution. This in turn led Jews to witness to God-fearing Gentiles who then accepted Christ.¹⁵

Although people movements can reach vast numbers quickly, often pockets of unconverted are left. This leaves room for internal growth.¹⁶

The hardest way for growth is by bridging. McGavran defines bridging as reaching into other peoples to a large enough extent for "the baptism of enough groups in a short enough time and a small enough area to create a people movement in the other community."¹⁷

There are other possibilities for growth for the leaders of the people movement find "that after the church has attained power and size the normal processes of growth, including the baptism of individual seekers on the fringes of the church, often produce more quiet regular ingatherings year after year than was the case during the period of the greatest exuberance of the movement."¹⁸

¹⁵ McGavran, The Bridges of God, p. 90.

¹⁶ McGavran, The Bridges of God, p. 90.

¹⁷ McGavran, The Bridges of God, p. 91.

¹⁸ McGavran, The Bridges of God, p. 91.

The last advantage of people movements that McGavran lists is that they provide a solid pattern for becoming a Christian. Non-Christians can see that Christianity is not a change in living standards made possible by mission money, but a change of the inner man made possible by God's power. This is seen through the regular worship of God, the regular hearing of the Bible, the spiritual care by the pastor, habits of prayer and personal devotion, the giving of the tithe to the church, the disciplining of the congregation, and the elimination of un-Christian modes of behavior. It is this life itself, centering in the village church, that is seen to be the main feature of the Christian religion.¹⁹

Evangelicals are often initially appalled at the idea of people movements (which is the reason for now calling them multi-individual mutually interdependent decisions) because of the belief that these new Christians cannot actually be truly born again. Of course some probably are not born again, but because of that mutual decision, those who are not saved are more receptive to the Gospel because of the necessity to be part of the group. It must be noted that while these decisions may be made with an incomplete knowledge of who Jesus is, and while these decisions may be made with little Bible knowledge, these things are not necessary to become a Christian. Children do it in the United States, so adults elsewhere can also do it.

¹⁹ McGavran, The Bridges of God, pp. 91-92.

The process of recognizing Christ as the sole spiritual sovereign of their life is called "discipling." This is the start of a Christian's new life. The Christian's daily walk is called "perfecting." This is not static, but is an on-going process of putting into daily practice what the Holy Spirit has taught the Christian in all aspects of life from the Bible, church, prayer, or even conversations with others.

Moving a mission in the direction of encouraging people movements is not an easy task, but McGavran gave several suggestions. One of the most obvious is to put more missionary resources where the growth is. Emphasizing the necessity of finding where a people movement is, McGavran states that it would be both tragic and wasteful for a mission to make major moves to reallocate much of their resources to help a people movement only to find that the movement had stagnated.²⁰

Tied with the idea of putting mission resources where the growth is, comes a prioritizing of the peoples or groups which need help. Some groups can be keys to win other groups or an entire nation to Christ, while other groups are important because they can be won now. An important question that needs to be asked is, "From the point of view of the greatest possible extension of Christianity during the foreseeable future which growing churches should receive priority?"²¹

²⁰ McGavran, The Bridges of God, pp. 112-113.

²¹ McGavran, The Bridges of God, p. 115.

Donald McGavran helped to open the windows to new vistas on Church growth, but the terminology was not yet developed, at least not in relation to studies on church growth. C. Peter Wagner has helped to define needed terms, and his studies have helped to broaden knowledge on church growth. One term that he has helped to define is the homogeneous unit. This is a group that thinks of itself as belonging together, so decisions that affect the group affect each member.

Wagner developed a chart on the principle components of "ethclass" identity in the United States.²²

The "pie" slices have been arbitrarily assigned proportions of the circle with a stronger emphasis on social class and ethnic grouping than with the rural-urban orientation and regional identity. In other countries, the proportions would be different. Brazil, for example, would be much larger proportions for rural-urban orientation and regional identities, and a smaller ethnic group section, but each region of Brazil would be different.

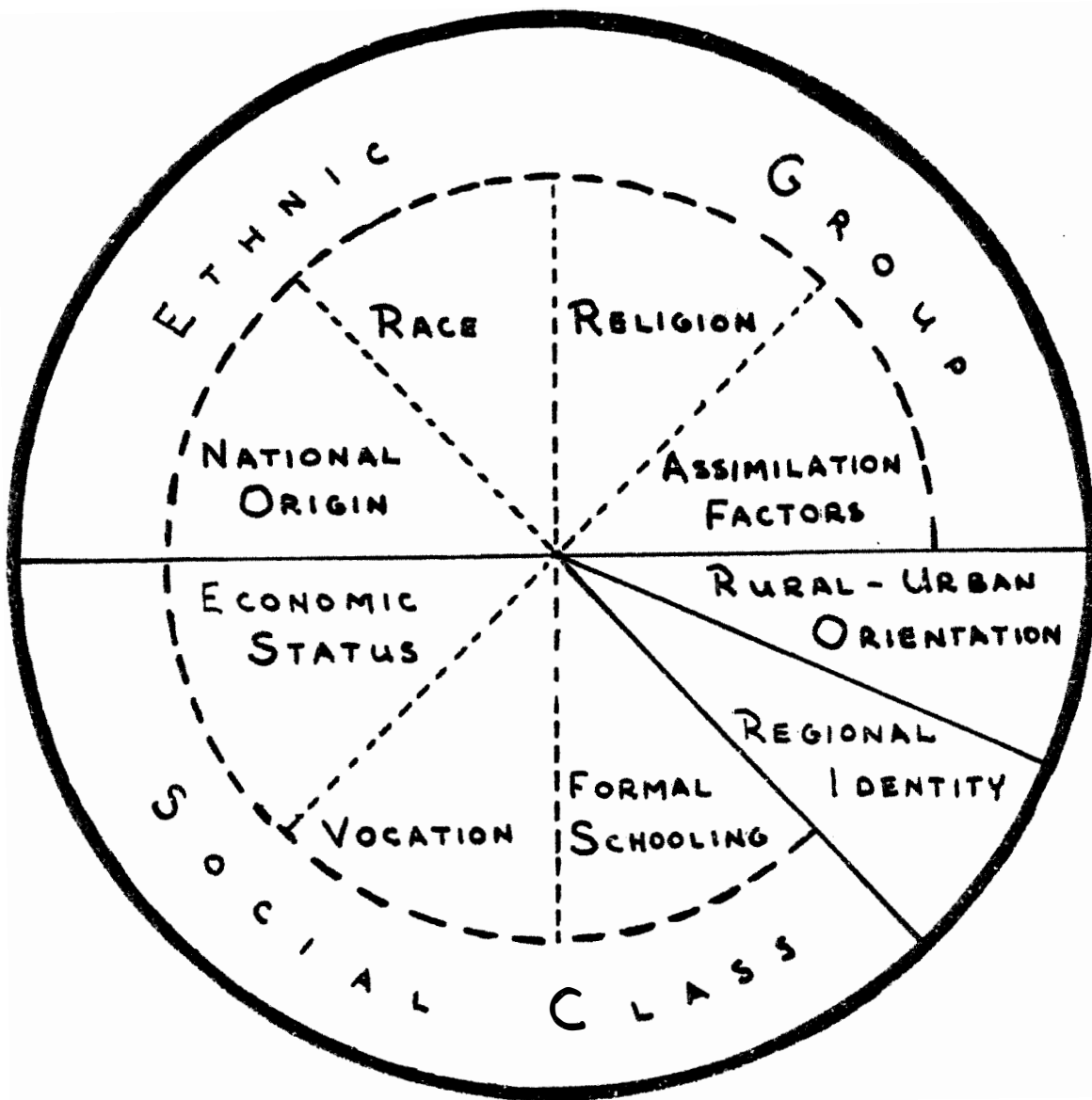
The subcategories are even more difficult to measure. Race, for a Dane would probably be less a factor in the United States than for an Indonesian. Assimilation into the American society would be less a strain on a Belgian than an Ethiopian.

Dr. Don Hohensee, in his class on Contemporary Trends in

²²C. Peter Wagner, Our Kind of People: The Ethical Dimensions of Church Growth in America (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1979), p. 61.

Ethclass is a term that Wagner borrowed from Milton Gordon in Assimilation in American Life. This describes an American homogeneous unit.

ETHCLASS



Missions give six identifying marks of a homogeneous unit.

1. There is a unique view of itself. Its self-image is different from other groups.
2. Marriage is usually within the unit.
3. There is an elite, or power structure, possibly based on wealth, or age that greatly influences or dictates group decisions.
4. Land rights (ownership, or stewardship of the Land) are dictated by a uniform set of customs or laws.
5. Mores on sex are uniform.
6. There is a consciousness of being a people. The individuals feel a part of a special group, and that no other is quite like it.²³

Understanding that there can be different homogeneous units within a society can help in understanding E-1, E-2, and E-3. The symbol "E" stands for "evangelism," and the numbers stand for different cultural distances from the person who is initiating the evangelism. E-1, or evangelism one, means evangelism done by persons within their own culture, or homogeneous unit. Both E-2 and E-3 contrast with E-1 in that they represent the type of evangelism that is necessary for winning persons to Christ who are from a different homogeneous unit of culture than the evangelist. E-2 and E-3 are cross cultural evangelism, and this type of evangelism is called bridging.²⁴

²³Donald Hohensee, Missionary and Seminary Professor, in a lecture ("Contemporary Trends in Missions") at Western Evangelical Seminary, Portland, Oregon, September 22, 1980.

²⁴C. Peter Wagner, Your Church Can Be Healthy (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon, 1979), p. 52.

E-2 and E-3 differ only in degree. E-2 represent cross-cultural evangelism that is closer to the evangelists homogeneous unit than the other. All cultural distances are not equal. An illustration can easily show the difference. For example, an Anglo-American from Portland, Oregon who went to Sao Paulo, Brazil to evangelize the Brazilians would be doing evangelism of the E-2 type. There are differences in culture, but having a strong European and Latin influence on the two cultures provide many points of similarity. If the same person were to go into Brazil's Amazon jungle to evangelize the tribal Indians, the missionary would be in an E-3 situation.²⁵

Of course, one does not have to leave the United States to find an E-3 situation. The Western Conference of The Evangelical Church has a mission work in the Southwest among the Navajoe. An Anglo-American working in that situation would be in an E-3 situation.

Since Ralph Winter first introduced these terms in 1974 at the Lausanne International Congress on World Evangelism, another "E" has been added, E-0, and E-1 has been divided into two parts. E-0 is an internal evangelism, such as winning the children of church members for Christ as well as people already in the church who have never been born again. E-1 has been divided into expansion evangelism and extension evangelism. The difference is that in extension evangelism, a group reaches out and plants churches within the culture

²⁵Wagner, Your Church Can Be Healthy, p. 52.

while in expansion evangelism a local group reaches out to the community around them.²⁶

"Redemption and Lift" is a term often used in church growth articles, but not always understood. When Jesus comes into a man's life, that man becomes a new creation. He is redeemed due to Christ's saving activity in the human heart. As Donald McGavran in Understanding Church Growth says:

The fellowship of the church buoys him up. The brethren gather at his bedside to pray for him in sickness. He reads or hears the Bible and realizes that God is for him and is available to him. He realizes he is a son of God and begins to act as such -- begins to live for others. His community, in which many others have accepted Christ, becomes a better and better place to live. All these redemptions occur in imperfect measure, to be sure, but they occur.²⁷

This new creation, in his repentance, turns from his sins. He no longer chases women, and fights with his neighbors. His reliance on the Holy Spirit to direct his life leads him to gain victory over his pride, drink, gambling and other sins.

"Lift" is the benefits that come with becoming a Christian due to church or mission activities. These activities may include hospitals, schools, and other institutions to serve and help the general public, but especially Christian brothers and sisters. Literacy classes are started if the people are illiterate, because the new converts need to be able to read the Bible.

²⁶ Donald Hohensee, Missionary and Seminary Professor in a Lecture ("Key Church Growth Concepts") at Western Evangelical Seminary, Portland, Oregon, September 15, 1980.

²⁷ Donald A. McGavran, Understanding Church Growth (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980), p. 296.

"If these are illiterate, they are taught to read. Their children, attending church and mission schools -- or increasingly, tax-supported schools -- become grade-school, high-school, and college graduates. Perhaps they go to Christian vocational schools and become mechanics, radio technicians, or artisans. Girls, sent to nurses' or teachers' training schools, and snapped up by the rapidly expanding government health and education programs and get good salaries. Able men and women rise to positions of international note in the Churches. A few or many, depending on the country, enter government service and hold positions of influence. The wealth of Christians rise, they become middle-class people. Members of the Christian community, who have not personally done so well, nevertheless share in the general sense of well-being. All this I am calling lift."²⁸

The problem that redemption and lift causes is that it can lead to a separation from the original homogeneous unit. Their language changes as obscene talk falls away. If they are among a primitive people, they become cleaner as they learn of germs, flies and waste. Marriage relations change. The list goes on, and the separation becomes a broad gulf.²⁹

Redemption and lift is not bad, and it should not be halted, because there is a remedy for the problem it causes. It is simply that the church must continue winning converts at such a rate from

²⁸ McGavran, Understanding Church Growth, p. 297.

²⁹ McGavran, Understanding Church Growth, p. 299.

the homogeneous unit in which the church works, that despite the "lift" of second and third generation Christians, there will still be many persons in the church with whom non-Christians can feel comfortable.³⁰

Church growth advocates believe that the church can, and should grow, but research is necessary. Research to ascertain the characteristics of a local church, or a denomination, so that it can be determined what group would be most receptive to a witness from the church. Research is necessary to find unchurched areas, as well as why some churches grow and others do not. All areas of church life need to be studied and analyzed. McGavran says:

The Church cannot afford to blunder ahead evangelizing the cities with her eyes closed. To throw as much light as possible on what evangelism is effective and what is not good stewardship. Failure to acquire light would in these days be called, in the business world, criminal negligence. Our Lord would regard it no less seriously.³¹

There can be no better way of concentrating efforts and putting aside good things for better ones than setting goals. If churches are to effectively evangelize, they must gain members. They should set membership goals. Setting these goals will focus their efforts to the task.

Goal setting can be damaging to the ego of pastors as well as the church body, because it forces the measurement of the past.

³⁰McGavran, Understanding Church Growth, p. 310.

³¹McGavran, Understanding Church Growth, p. 322.

This can be the impetus though, that is needed to galvanize a godly, but ineffective people. They may be forced to set their priorities in line with God's -- winning the lost, and perfecting them in the church.

Holistic evangelism must be carried out to the specific end that all peoples shall be disciplined. The many unreached peoples, the billions who have yet to believe stand in rebuke to us and a challenge to all Christians to reach them.

Goal setting helps pastors and missionaries keep their priorities pleasing to God. It keeps them from getting lost in a jungle of maintenance jobs and good works. It helps missiologists remember that unless the discipling of panta ta ethne is the steady aim, they are, perhaps against their wills, engaged in vague humanitarianism or intellectual exploration, not world evangelization. Whatever Christians do or teach in America or any other land, goal setting helps them remember that their great Head ever leads them and the Holy Spirit ever impels them to world evangelization.³²

From the looks in chapter three on the numbers of "seekers" (conversions), one can get the idea of an initial peoples movement with the Missionary Church but the harvest was not all conserved, still from this time came the Liberato family which besides giving many members to the Missionary Church, gave the Church two pastors and a general superintendent.

Many of the early converts were country people, so the church has aimed at reaching those kinds of people. This has met with mixed success. The Missionary Church has succeeded in winning many people in the country, but Brazil is becoming an urban and industrial nation,

³²McGavran, Understanding Church Growth, p. 413.

so the church has lost many members through moves to cities where no Missionary church was near. To compound the loss of members is the fact that as new lands for farming open up, many members moved west to try and make a better life.

Despite mission urgings, church leaders were reluctant to put their resources into city works. They knew that they could win souls in the country and small towns, but large cities were unnerving. With success in the cities, the church is beginning to put new emphasis on growth there.

The Missionary Church appeals to working class, and in some cities, lower middle class, people. It is especially effective with those who have rural roots. If it is to follow church growth principles, it should concentrate on those people in new areas springing up on the perimeter of all large Brazilian cities. Much effort has been expended in trying to start new churches in small towns in new areas recently opened up for homesteading where church members have moved, but the churches have been struggling. The church has found a homogeneous unit with which it can grow. It needs to now exploit it more.

Many OMS Missionaries have wanted a nice middle class denomination or at least a couple of churches that would reach the middle class. Much time, effort, money, and personnel has been spent in ways to reach these individuals through singing groups, a coffee house, and Telemensagem. Many hundreds have sought the Lord through these means, but few have joined The Missionary Church. If the missionaries could realize that given time, many churches will rise into

a higher social class, because of "Redemption and Lift" then perhaps more of its resources could be applied to those who are responsive now.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

In looking at church statistics, particularly the semi-logarithmic graph of membership (graph #5), and the figures of conversions (table #3), it becomes painfully obvious that The Missionary Church has problems. Membership is growing, but not much more than population growth. Granted, The Missionary Church has a number of churches in small, rural oriented, towns and these towns are not growing, but this lack should be more than made up with the number of churches and congregations in and around major, and growing, population centers such as Maringá, Londrina, and Sao Paulo. Several times membership growth has spurted ahead with a good rate of increase, but the rate increase has not been sustained. A detailed study of this needs to be made to uncover all of the pertinent facts about this, from this preliminary study, the data indicates that The Missionary Church must vigorously plant churches, if it is to have a healthy rate of growth. The data also indicates a solution. The church must develop and train lay pastors with the idea of starting preaching points. Many, of these points will develop into organized churches.

Some church leaders want to build up larger central churches, so that pastors can be fully paid by the church, and after that is done, to plant smaller, satellite congregations. This has not yet

worked for The Missionary Church, nor is it possible, under this plan, to plant as many churches as is possible using lay pastors.

Using lay pastors can pose problems. The most serious is that these men do not have the theological training, or the tools to continue to feed their flock for a long period of time. This problem can be solved through the T.E.E. program, but only if the pastors themselves see the necessity for further training. The Missionary Church could, as an organization, insist on a continual process, of lay training, giving T.E.E. as an option for the lay pastors, or develop their own system of training. OMS has the expertise in this field, and should be used.

If figures on seekers are correct, The Missionary Church is loosing a wide host of possible members. Further research should be done to determine exactly how many conversions there are, and where they are from. Only if this is done, can it be determined to what extent there is a problem. If there is (statistics indicate there is) the church and/or mission will need to develop a program of nurturing these babes in Christ. I believe that the best way to nurture them is through the church, so organizing churches would be imperative.

In Acts, we repeatedly see the apostle Paul concentrating his efforts in the cities. Cities are key points to a country. In the cities, Paul worked mostly among those who were most responsive to the Gospel. This needs to be The Missionary Church's strategy. Winning those in small towns is good, but those towns could be better reached if the cities were reached first. With Brazil already an urban nation, the church must ask itself if it can give more personnel

and money to developing more city churches in major, growing population centers. If the church cannot spare the personnel, but sees the need, it could ask the mission to begin again the Every Creature Crusade which has been so successful in other countries.

It seems as if The Missionary Church has lost its ardor for evangelism. It must regain it. A strong evangelistic thrust can only come from those who have a vision, a gift, and a burden for evangelism. OMS could send one or two families into Brazil for just planting churches, and giving a challenge and inspiration to Brazilians to do the job.

There are those within the church and the mission who deeply desire middle class congregations. This is possible today in several of the centrally located churches in Maringá, Londrina, and Sao Paulo, to name a few. It is possible because of "Redemption and Lift." Second generation church people are growing up with a much higher level of education than their parents. The church must win these church children for the Lord. Camp Shalom has been extremely useful in winning these children, but more emphasis needs to be put on nurturing them. Camp Shalom can only reach effectively the Londrina and Maringá regions, so some means must be found to reach the others.

Both the church and the mission must set some short range and long range goals that are both reachable and measurable. For example, setting a goal of adding ten percent to the membership each year for the next five years. This is reasonable, because the church has done better than ten percent in the recent past. This goal can also be easily measured.

Often, the setting of goals has been difficult for many churches and missions. To help form goals, some of these groups have asked themselves this question. "If Jesus were to tarry five more years, what would He have us do in that time?" Both OMS and The Missionary Church should ask that question.

To plan for the future, one must know the past. Research now needs to be done on individual churches and regions. With this data, goals can be set for individual churches of regions.

These goals should then be used as a standard by which church and mission proposed projects and plans will be judged. If some project, no matter how dear to the heart of those who proposed it, does not contribute towards the goal, the plans for it should be dropped. This is not saying that goals in and of themselves are sacrosanct, but if they have been made with much thoughtful consideration, and much prayer by God's people, one must assume that God guided the process of making the goals.

The church does not have a sufficient number of pastors, yet many are heavily involved in social programs. This involvement takes time and effort away from the pastor, and must adversely effect the church. If the church is to grow, as I believe it can, the church must evaluate each social program in line with its goals. The Missionary Church may have to eliminate some of the programs, or turn them over to societies whose purpose is that sort of thing, but with The Missionary Church's small size, it cannot both strongly evangelize and continue to expand its social work.

OMS is not exempt from an overemphasis on one thing to the

detriment of another. Both camping and the seminaries are good, and are needed, but the mission must shift its major emphasis from its educational institutions into evangelism - an evangelism that plants churches. The mission has already divested itself of Camp Panorama, so now it needs to seriously study Telemensagem to see if it is helping to plant churches. Such questions as, "How many church members have been added because of it?," and "How many congregations or churches were formed by it?" need to be asked. After a thoughtful, thorough study of Telemensagem, the mission must decide if Telemensagem is worth the time and money.

God has used OMS to spearhead people movements and reap great harvests for Him. God has used The Missionary Church to win thousands to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Let us hope, and pray for God to use these two, to spark another great movement to Christ so that Brazil can be reached with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

APPENDIX A.

Rise of Worker's Income

Percentage of Workers Receiving	1971	1976
0 - 50% of minimum salary	6.5%	1.5%
50 - 100% of minimum salary	17.9%	8.9%
100 - 200% of minimum salary	31.5%	29.7%
200 - 500% of minimum salary	28.6%	35.2%
more than 500% of minimum salary	11.3%	23.8%

Source: Aloysio Biondi, "O Novo Rosto Do Brasil," Brasil 21, 2 (1980), 57-58.

It should be noted that the minimum salary is adjusted for inflation so these statistics are not skewed by inflated cruzeiros.

APPENDIX B.

Concentration of Income

The richest ten percent of Brazil and their percentage of the income of the country.

Year	Percent of National Income
1960	45
1970	50
1972	51
1976	54

Source: Aloysio Biondi, "O Novo Rosto Do Brasil," Brasil 21, 2 (1980), 53.

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