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Abstract

In this article, I will attempt to disclose the central planks of the apostolic principles that shaped Roland Allen's missionary ecclesiology of *Spirit and Order*. Allen's writings were shaped by St. Paul's missionary practice, and it was this understanding that motivated Allen to proactively argue for implementing a Gospel *method* for Church growth. Allen disclosed his belief in the transcendence of the Holy Spirit's work in the life of the Church and argued for a return to the proper apostolic emphasis—*Spirit and Order*. His integrated pneumatology and ecclesiology formed the basis for his church-planting missionary theology, which he was convinced encompassed true historic apostolicity and catholicity.

Roland Allen's Missionary Ecclesiology

In this article, I will attempt to disclose the central planks of the apostolic principles that shaped Roland Allen's missionary ecclesiology of *Spirit and Order*. Some years ago while doing doctoral research on Roland Allen's published and unpublished archives in Oxford, England, I endeavored to develop an intellectual biography that disclosed how this prescient Anglican missionary and missiologist clearly influenced the thinking and practice of missionaries and missionary societies within the Anglican Communion, established Protestant denominations, the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Communion, as well as the independent branches of the Western and non-Western Church, especially throughout the Majority World of Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

On the one hand, many of these branches of Christ's Church were quite successful in obeying the Great Commission (Matt 28:18–20) as they planted churches throughout the world. On the other hand, when some missionary societies began to replace their original focus of gospel evangelism, discipleship, and indigenous church planting with the development of *mission station* schools and hospitals, Roland Allen believed that the missionary societies diverted from the primary calling to plant churches and to make

disciples in these foreign nations. He also believed that by developing schools and hospitals, instead of planting churches, the missionaries created a continual dependency on foreign financial support. Allen argued that this dependency upon foreign support was *not* St. Paul's missionary methods and practice. Allen observed how the indigenous inhabitants understood the *mission stations* as foreign businesses—held in trust by Europeans—where the missionaries financially organized and permanently managed these properties. For Allen, the *mission station system* lacked apostolic precedent. His solution to the problem was to ask, *what would St. Paul do?* Allen conformed to and argued for the essence of St. Paul's missionary methods and practices to address the problem.

His writings were shaped more and more by St. Paul's missionary practice, and it was this understanding that motivated Allen to proactively argue for implementing a Gospel *method* for Church growth. St. Paul's example of investing his time and energy in mentoring and appointing indigenous leadership, Allen argued, was indicative of why he was so successful with church planting in Galatia, Macedonia, Achaia, and Asia between the years AD 47–57. This significantly influenced Allen's thought, especially because of how St. Paul proactively applied these principles to promote self-extending churches that were not dependent on him to be their resident leader. His understanding of what St. Paul did cannot be understood from an autocratic practice—operating in isolation—Allen argued, but from a selfless practice of his apostolic ministry, which sought the well-being of the indigenous church and the church's ability to be self-governing. So, to set the parameters for his missionary ecclesiology and unpack the apostolic principles that encompass his missionary theology, he carefully designed principles and practices that were more in line with St. Paul's three missionary journeys. Allen disclosed his belief in the transcendence of the Holy Spirit's work in the life of the Church and argued for a return to the proper apostolic emphasis—*Spirit and Order*. His integrated pneumatology and ecclesiology formed the basis for his church-planting missionary theology, which he was convinced encompassed true historic apostolicity and catholicity.

Allen's Missionary Theology: Spirit (Pneumatology) & Order (Ecclesiology)

Apostolic Method: Spirit *before* Order

Roland Allen's apostolic method of Spirit *before* Order advanced a theology of mission that sent missionary clergy with some of the disciples that they had mentored with

them to do missionary work (i.e., on-the-job training). These missional clergy and disciples were to serve as explorers within the kingdom of God’s harvest field, and their commission was to scout out the land for church planting opportunities.

- Church-planting by birthing new churches from new Christians.
- Make disciples.
- Witness to salvation in King Jesus.

Apostolic Principle: Spirit *with* Order

Allen’s missionary ecclesiology also argued for the apostolic principle of Spirit *with* Order. This apostolic principle “did not argue that episcopal ordination was of no importance” but rather that it was a “divine order [that] is for building up, [and] not for destruction: it is to maintain the sacraments of Christ not to annul them: it is to establish the Church not to hinder its establishment” (Allen, Bodleian Library, USPG X622, Box 3, No. 27, 1930). That said, Allen’s ecclesiological argument affirmed the *normal* Order of Anglican clergy (ordained by bishops) presiding over the Lord’s Table. His defense for sacramental ministry in the newly formed churches created a context for a well-ordered ecclesiology to eventually emerge, that being, Spirit *with* Order.

Apostolic Order: Spirit-empowered Order

As an Anglican churchman and missionary, Allen had reverence for *apostolic order* that advances a *Spirit-empowered Order*. In his writings, he also clearly distinguished between itinerate apostolic order (i.e., apostles, prophets, evangelists, teachers) and the resident local ministry (i.e., bishops, priests, deacons) from what he believed was primarily inspired within the Bible, and, secondarily, outlined within the early Church’s application of apostolic instruction as revealed in the *Didache*. It is important to disclose that Roland Allen’s missiology proposes a *Spirit-inspired* ecclesiology, that being, a *Spirit-empowered Order*, designed to accommodate the *charismatic* dynamic in order to equip, commission, send, and expand the Church throughout the world.

Roland Allen’s Missionary Experience in China (1895–1903)

Allen’s articulation of his missionary experiences in China and how these informed his missionary ecclesiology is made clear in his letters both during and after his ministry in China (Allen, Bodleian Library, USPG X622, Box 1-8), his chronicle of the Boxer Rebellion entitled *The Siege of the Peking Legations* (Allen 1901), papers he presented, and subsequent articles he wrote concerning China. All of these sources disclose the experiences of cross-cultural mission in China and how this influenced his thought and

practice. In fact, it was during his ministry there that his vision and mission for developing indigenous churches began to take shape. Before analyzing his missionary experiences in China from 1895–1903, it is helpful to take note of a summary statement he made at the conclusion of his ministry time in China:

The Chinese are apt to compare the antiquity of their religion with the modern character of ours . . . If Christianity is to be presented acceptably to the Chinese, surely it ought to be through Chinese teachers who have remained Chinese in thought and education, but whose Chinese thought is permeated with Christian doctrine and belief. So one might find an Apostle (Allen 1901).

This demonstrates how Allen began to formulate a missiology that anticipated the emergence of an indigenous Christianity, which incorporated the apostolic doctrine and belief, and which would eventually influence the thinking of Chinese Christians concerning the development of their own churches, local leaders, theologians, and those who would do the apostolic ministry of Church expansion. For Allen, foreign missionaries had the opportunities to evangelize and plant churches, ordain, and equip indigenous leadership, and then immediately retire from that region to establish churches in newer areas. He believed that once these new Christians embraced the Christian faith—not necessarily the forms and customs of the foreign missionaries—then a truly Chinese Christianity would develop. He would view that as mission accomplished! And yet, when he first arrived in China in 1895, he did not naturally think this way. What, then, were the contributing factors which can be attributed to this change?

First, Allen argued for an indigenous “how to” methodology that focused on “how to win Native Converts ... how to organize village churches ... how to educate Coreans [sic] to understand and use intelligently any Prayer Book at all ... [and] how to adapt a native hut for worship” (Allen, Bodleian Library, “The Work of the Missionary,” Box 2, File J: 4, 8). Lamin Sanneh correctly interprets Allen’s argument here when he suggests that he was challenging “the Western cultural captivity of the gospel,” which was, in effect, “strangling the gospel” (Sanneh 2008, 224-225). He called this a misrepresentation of Christianity, “slavery to a Foreign system” which was “not their own” and, consequently, the imposition of a “foreigner’s Church” (Allen, “The Work of the Missionary,” Box 2, File J: 4, 12). As far as Allen was concerned, this was a betrayal of St. Paul’s missiology, which opposed slavery to a “foreign system,” as clearly demonstrated when he defended the freedom of the Galatian churches to reject the Judaizing system which they attempted to impose upon the churches (Epistle to the Galatians).

Second, he believed the only way for the missionaries to reverse what Robert Young has referred to as the “long-lasting political hegemony” (Young 2001, 334) toward independence would be to apply the following three principles as part of the training process:

(1) to teach the native converts to recognize their responsibility as members of the Church; (2) to avoid the introduction of any foreign element unless it is absolutely essential; (3) to be always retiring from the people to prepare the way for final retirement (Allen, “The Work of the Missionary,” Box 2, File J: 4,9).

These three apostolic principles began to shape his thinking as he was attempting to train catechists in China. He recognized that the Anglican conventional methodology for leadership training limited any possibility to expand beyond his context. He quickly figured out that unless the local converts took responsibility immediately to disciple, train, and lead their own churches, then any idea of expansion would be slow. He reflects upon what he did in China:

I called the people together, told them it was high time that they were doing something for the spread of the Gospel, and asked them what they meant to do. I observe that people in England sometimes view such conduct with surprise. If they treated their people at home in the same way, I believe they would feel less surprised that it succeeded in China (Allen, “The Work of the Missionary,” Box 2, File J: 4, 11).

Allen argued that his successful experiences in China shaped his missionary thinking to undergo reform by embracing a different methodology. This reform was shaped more through practice than theory. He began to flesh out his missiology by analyzing every aspect of missionary societies’ practices. This led him to develop as a methods analyst concerning the *whys* and *wherefores* of missionary methods.

Third, he warned against missionaries forcing foreign laws and customs rather than allowing the converts to adopt familiar local customs with “principles which they valued” as part of the contextualization process for local church development. He emphasized that missionaries needed to be more self-critical concerning their tendency to force conformity to a foreign system that would likely be abandoned once either independence came through a devolved process, or, if the indigenous churches’ frustrations with paternalism would eventually “lead to rebellion” (Allen, “The Work of the Missionary,” Box 2, File J: 4, 12).

Fourth, he applied the principles of self-government and self-support to the Chinese catechists so that they would take ownership of what they learned. He told the delegates how his reformed methodology in China worked in bringing independence to the churches but that it was contingent on the locals taking ownership of their worship services and daily responsibilities within these churches. He said that the missionaries who expected quick results by imposing a cast-iron system generally failed. In contrast, he told the delegates that the *apostolic principle* he applied was to build slowly and that “we had better at first give them only so much as they can easily assimilate” (Allen, “The Work of the Missionary,” Box 2, File J: 4,13).

Finally, Allen comments on the extent to which the three principles had been adopted: the first principle (converts recognizing their responsibility) was “practised in different shapes very widely;” the second principle (restraint from imposing foreign elements unless it’s necessary) was less widely practiced; and the third (missionaries retiring from their converts) was “scarcely recognized at all” (Allen, “The Work of the Missionary,” Box 2, File J: 4, 15).

Hence, he concluded that the “problem of independent native churches is the great problem of the day” and that the western Church’s missionaries needed to come to terms with: (1) understanding the native mind; (2) feeling “sympathy for the natives in their early efforts;” (3) watching slow growth with patience and hope; (4) realizing “that western Christianity is not the whole of Christianity;” and (5) watching how “the Holy Spirit transforms strange forms of life into Christian forms of life unlike our own” by uniting multiethnic Christians as a “complement of our own needs” (Allen, “The Work of the Missionary,” Box 2, File J: 14-15). His developing ecclesiology presupposed an application of *apostolic principles* that reinforced independent native churches to emerge slowly and which were led by the indigenous people. Allen’s insistence that all members take responsibility for their own development and maturity is an argument against a *Peter Pan* philosophy of mission station paternalism.

His belief was that if the mission societies released control, giving the works over to the indigenous converts, the latter could rely on the Holy Spirit’s ability to govern, sustain, and propagate the Church’s growth apart from foreign influence. The centrality of his pneumatology was influenced by Paul’s epistles and Luke’s historical account of the Acts of the Apostles, which he called “missionary history” (Paton 1970, 15). Consider the following influence of St. Paul’s practice upon his mission theology:

St. Paul was a preacher of a Gospel, not of a law . . . This is the most distinctive mark of Pauline Christianity. This is what separates his

doctrine from all other systems of religion . . . He did not establish a constitution, he inculcated principles. He did not introduce any practice to be received on his own or any human authority, he strove to make his converts realize and understand its relation to Christ . . . He never sought to enforce their obedience by decree; he always strove to win their heartfelt approval and their intelligent co-operation. He never proceeded by command, but always by persuasion. He never did things for them; he always left them to do things for themselves. He set them an example according to the mind of Christ, and he was persuaded that the Spirit of Christ in them would teach them to approve that example and inspire them to follow it (Allen 1962, 148-149).

In terms of St. Paul's theology, Allen believed that the Apostle's practice of church planting was permeated with a dependency on the Holy Spirit's ability to lead the Church into all truth, as revealed in John 16:13. That said, he believed that the Church's global expansion was based upon foundational *apostolic principles* organically energized through a realized pneumatology, empowered ecclesiology, and an applied mission theology he believed stemmed from Pauline practice. For Allen, the apostolic principles (not systems) are the centrality of his missionary ecclesiology. Arguably, these key missionary principles are generated by the charismatic dynamic within Christianity, which produces self-supporting, self-governing, self-propagating indigenous churches that find their rootedness in the Bible, a basic creed, trans-local and domestic ministers, and an ongoing sacramental life.

The key *apostolic principles* Roland Allen emphasized are: (1) belief that the one holy catholic and apostolic Church is ordered by the Scriptures, a basic creed, holy orders, and sacraments; (2) apostolic evangelists were called and sent to plant and equip indigenous churches; (3) church-planters were to organize, train, and retire from young church-plants as soon as possible (Allen 1962, 81-83, 95-107; Allen, "The Work of the Missionary in Preparing the Way for Independent Native Churches" (1903), USPG X622, Oxford, Bodleian Library; Allen, Bodleian Library, USPG X622, "The Work of the Missionary in Preparing the Way for Independent Native Churches," 1903); (4) indigenous churches then were to maintain self-support, self-government, and self-propagation (Allen, Bodleian Library, USPG X622, Box 2, No. 23, 1927; Allen Bodleian Library, USPG X622, Box 3, "Establishment of Indigenous Churches," 1927); (5) self-supporting churches spontaneously produce home-grown leadership from the inception (non-devolution); (6) ordination of indigenous voluntary clergy who are authorized to administer the sacraments frequently (Allen 1923, 1930); (7) trust in the ministry of the Holy Spirit to empower the spontaneous expansion of the Church

(Boer 1954, 224-231; cf. Allen 1962, 48); (8) a belief that all Christians are missionaries – and that the Church is a missionary body (Paton 1962, 40, 61, 67, 75, 77-80, 165; Allen, Bodleian Library, USPG X622, “The Work of the Missionary in Preparing the Way for Independent Native Churches,” 1903); (9) emphasize the priesthood of the laity, by which he referred to the empowerment of the church community (Allen 1933, 234-244); and (10) an ordered ministry in apostolic succession through a proactive missionary ecclesiology (Allen 1930, 3-4). Having identified these apostolic principles, I now want to unpack them.

A cursory and selective study of Roland Allen’s writings has caused some to misrepresent his missiology. One must come to terms with what he meant by words such as: *Church, Spirit, mission, apostolic, catholic, apostolic succession, indigenous, expansion, sacraments, orders, and principles*. First, he defined these words from what he believed were Pauline missionary principles and practices. Second, as a High Churchman, this presupposed a framework of belief that embraced historic Christianity—the faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 3)—that being, *apostolic* and *catholic*. And, when reading him carefully, one will find a catholic understanding of the Christian faith, especially articulated through the first five centuries of the *undivided* Church. That said, an understanding of his mission theology will contribute significantly to contemporary missiology.

Roland Allen’s Contribution towards Missiology: A Contemporary Perspective

By *charismatic ministry*, I mean here a ministry which is exercised by a man who is moved to perform it by an inward, internal, impulse of that Holy Spirit who desires and strives after the salvation of men in Christ. I do not deny that men receive a charisma, a gift of grace, for their ministry in ordination: but I use the word *charismatic* to express the ministry which is exercised in virtue of that direct internal impulse of the Spirit, as distinguished from the ministry which is exercised by those who have been ecclesiastically ordained or commissioned (Allen 1930).

Allen’s vision for the Church encompassed a combination of *Spirit* and *Order*—that is, pneumatology and ecclesiology. He believed that the Holy Spirit empowers Christians to apply *apostolic principles* in any given situation. His contribution to missiology stemmed from St. Paul’s understanding of an indigenously-led Church that was, therefore, fully equipped with ministry to function as a permanent Church. He proposed the restoration of an apostolic order to enhance evangelism, particularly

through the laity, by reaching out to pioneer regions where the Church had no current witness. His ongoing contribution to *missiology* advances (1) the historical significance for what he believed were universal *apostolic principles* and (2) how these principles provide flexibility within a framework of Spirit-driven Church growth to deal with a changing missionary environment (Rutt 2012, 201).

When missionaries discuss Allen's writings, they typically refer to either *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours?* (1912) or *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church* (1927). While, arguably, these two books are his most famous published works, it is important to realize that he wrote extensively for over fifty years—books, pamphlets, journal contributions, articles, ecclesiastical letters, speeches, sermons, and various unpublished works (Allen, Bodleian Library, USPG X622, Boxes 1-8). Indeed, his grandson and biographer, Hubert Allen, categorically states that his grandfather's booklet entitled *Pentecost and the World* (Allen 1917, 1-61) was his most characteristic work then and still "can speak to us today as cogently as when it was written" (Allen and Allen 1995, 104). "My grandmother once remarked to me," recalled Hubert Allen, "that Roland himself believed his best piece of writing to have been his brief *Pentecost and the World*," (Allen 2011, Email Correspondence, May 19) and that "on his death, for this reason, Grannie gave bound copies to each of us, his three grandchildren" (Allen and Allen 1995, 104).

Allen's main thesis in *Pentecost and the World* can be summarized by stating that the Pentecost story is the fulfilled promise of the Holy Spirit's coming in supremacy to baptize, fill, indwell, lead, inspire, and empower the missionary Church as a witness to all nations. He argued that the main emphasis in Acts is that Pentecost marked the turning point in the Church's emergent juncture in "that they were the recipients of a gift of the Holy Spirit sent upon them by Christ, and that all the labours and successes of their lives were due to the influence of that Spirit" (Allen and Allen 1995, 3). A missionary within the Reformed Church, Harry Boer, agreed and was convinced that Allen was the preeminent "missionary thinker of the Spirit" and that "except by Roland Allen, a missionary theology centering around Pentecost and its continuing meaning for the Church has not been developed" (Boer 1964, 63). Things have progressed since 1961, when Boer made that remark. Today, many books stress a missionary theology that engages the charismatic dynamic of Pentecost within the Church's mission, as can be seen in the growth of Christianity (and in particular the Anglican Communion) in the Majority world of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. That said, we might ask whether Allen's writings have influenced past and current trends in mainstream missionary theology. There can only be one answer: Yes (Kraemer 1960, 20; McGavran 1965, 43, 54; Schnabel 2008, 11-14, 21).

A century ago, Roland Allen envisaged a global Church emerging from indigenous Christianity that was free of the trappings of the mission station system. Allen said, “A *mission station* is indeed a contradiction in terms: mission implies movement, station implies stopping” (Allen 1927, 105). He argued that Pauline missiology was a better way to do mission, (1) by transferring missionary churches to indigenous converts without going through a devolutionary process; (2) by ordaining local ministers—stipendiary and voluntary—to direct, manage and administer the Sacraments for their own churches by means of an indigenous episcopate; and (3) by trusting the Holy Spirit to direct these churches without foreign control. Today, these are considered mainstream practices, but this was not the case a century ago.

The Contribution towards Missiology in India

In 1910, Roland and his wife visited Delhi, Calcutta, and Madras upon an invitation to preach within the Diocese of Dornakal (Allen and Allen 1995, 86). He met with Vedanayagam Samuel Azariah and probably saw Henry Whitehead, Bishop of Madras. This visit initiated an ongoing friendship with both men over the years, especially with Azariah, who was consecrated as bishop of the Dornakal diocese in 1912. In 1927, Allen was invited back to minister for Bishop Azariah (Allen, Bodleian Library, USPG X622, Box 7, File N, “Diary of a Visit in South India”). Bishop Azariah’s familiarity with Allen’s writings in general, and his *apostolic principles*, in particular, contributed to an environment for Church growth expansion. Azariah and Allen saw that Church expansion was certain since the bishop was willing to ordain the existing teachers and catechists as fully equipped priests and to distinguish from among the pastors those who were gifted as trans-local evangelists. Azariah embraced his principles wholeheartedly and sought ways to administer diocesan adjustments wherever necessary. The time was right for Church renewal and transformation because Azariah had already “proved to be such a competent leader and administrator” (Harper 2000, 132). Therefore, Allen’s teachings reinforced the clergy troops to prepare for planting more missionary churches. According to Susan Harper, some years later, the facts reveal that

Under the leadership of Bishop Vedanayagam Samuel Azariah (1874–1945), Dornakal became the fastest growing Anglican diocese in South Asia. The total Anglican Christian population in the Dornakal diocese increased from 56,681 in 1912 to 225,080 in 1941, a number that exceeded the total number of Anglican converts for all of Japan, Korea, and China combined. In 1936 the Dornakal Church baptized over 200 converts each week, and a

total of 11,400 converts that year, and sustained this general level of accession throughout the decade (Harper 2002, 185).

The Dornakal diocese was enriched by the teaching ministry of Roland Allen during his missionary journey in 1927–1928. It was the application of these apostolic principles which shaped Allen’s proactive missionary theology for China, India, and his ministry later in Africa, which can still significantly contribute to missiology for the situation of the changing structures within World Christianity today.

Roland Allen’s Missiology of the Holy Spirit

Allen’s missiology of the Holy Spirit is systematically articulated in *Missionary Principles—and Practice* (1913) and *Pentecost and the World* (Allen 1917, 1-61). Subsequently, this broadly pneumatological understanding is interspersed throughout his sermons, teaching notes, articles, and correspondence. His emphasis on pneumatology and ecclesiology—Spirit and Order—stem from his devotion to Pauline thought, especially with his instruction on spiritual gifts (I Cor 12–14; Allen, Bodleian Library, USPG X622, Box 3, No. 27, “The Ministry of Expansion: the Priesthood of the Laity,” 1930) which the apostle’s concluding emphasis underscores: “Let all things be done decently and in order” (I Cor 14:40).

Additional disclosure of his pneumatology is located within an unpublished work entitled “The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit” (Allen, Bodleian Library, USPG X622, Box 3, 13, “The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit,” 1930), which incorporates a symphonic blend—pneumatology, ecclesiology, and missiology—that shaped his overall missionary ecclesiology. For Allen, the missionary Spirit creates, nourishes, fills, and empowers “the native apostles” (Allen, Bodleian Library, USPG X622, Box 12, “The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit,” 1930) to plant the Church and provide sacramental spiritual food. His missiology of Spirit and Order incorporates a central fostering of the faith through the sacramental means of grace. This argument for native clergy presupposes the necessity of the sacramental life of the Church and demonstrates how his theology embraced the frequency of its administration. The organic nature of Church growth stems from people who have embraced the faith, he believed, and subsequently desire to share what they have received (Allen 1912, 3). This is natural. Allen compares this with how Muslim missionaries—traders, soldiers, teachers—that is, common people who have embraced Islam, share their faith with people and eventually see that “a mosque springs up, a school is established, a Moslem community arises” (Allen 1912). He critiqued his fellow Anglicans’ reluctance to share their faith in the way that Muslims did and concluded

that much of the hesitancy in “our fellow churchmen who go abroad” is due to a past reliance upon professional clergymen to provide for them all the ministerial services, especially the sacraments (Allen 1912). This comparison serves as his charge for them to exercise faith in the missionary Spirit’s creativity. He cites how the layman Frumentius (AD 300–380), referred to as the “Apostle of the Abyssinians,” was later consecrated bishop of Axum (Northern Ethiopia) by Athanasius (Cross and Livingstone 1997, 644). “I suppose,” Allen said, “most of our Bishops would deny that they had ever met a Frumentius. So rare a thing is it for a layman to think that as a Christian he has the right [and] duty to propagate his religion and instruct the ignorant in his faith” (Allen 1912, 4).

The basis for Allen’s ecclesiology originates in his interpretation of the way the universal common priesthood of Christians functions through the presence, direction, and ministry of “the missionary Spirit” (Allen, Bodleian Library, USPG X622, Box 3, No. 27, “The Ministry of Expansion: the Priesthood of the Laity,” 1930). This pneumatology shaped Allen’s church planting methodology, in that it served both to advocate the oversight by missionary bishops (Allen 1912, 14), for the ordaining of a specialized ministry and to support the administration of the Sacraments by the “priesthood of the body” (Allen, Bodleian Library, USPG X622, Box 3, No. 27, “The Ministry of Expansion: the Priesthood of the Laity,” 1930), whenever they were outside the range of the organized church due to the absence of ordained clergy. Again, his argument was always that “the universal priesthood cannot be annulled by an absent specialized priesthood” (Allen, Bodleian Library, USPG X622, Box 3, No. 27, “The Ministry of Expansion: the Priesthood of the Laity,” 1930). Does Roland Allen’s missionary ecclesiology remain influential today?

Allen’s Impact and Contemporary Relevance

It is rather ironic that Allen’s influence today encompasses an ecclesiastical sphere far beyond the Anglican Communion, which he faithfully served. On the one hand, my analysis has identified his significant contribution to Anglican missiology in India through his friendship with and influence of Bishop Azariah’s ministry within the Dornakal churches and their expansive missionary undertakings outside of their diocesan borders. The archival research disclosed two letters (1912) from Bishop Henry Whitehead (Whitehead to Allen, Bodleian Library, USPG X622, Box 1, File A, June 1912), thanking Allen for supporting Azariah’s consecration as the *first indigenous bishop* in India. Ongoing correspondence between Azariah and Allen disclosed how Azariah not only thanked him for writing *Voluntary Clergy* (1923) (Azariah to Allen, Bodleian Library,

USPG X622, Box 1, File A:12, December 1923) but also assured him that the episcopacy was “in favour of an order of permanent Deacons and Voluntary Permanent Deacons” (Azariah to Allen, Bodleian Library, USPG X622, Box 1, File A:12, December 1923).

After Roland Allen’s death in 1947, Hendrik Kraemer, in his *A Theology of the Laity* (1958), cited Roland Allen’s *Spontaneous Expansion of the Church* (Kraemer 1956, 20; Allen 1962, 143-146) to disclose how the significant growth of the Church during the first centuries was accomplished through the laity’s witness. Allen’s contribution to Kraemer’s missiology is the first example where he had an influence on a major ecumenical theologian a decade after his death. Shortly after Kraemer’s book was published, two other noteworthy missiologists—Sir Kenneth Grubb and Lesslie Newbigin—men who already had been reading Allen’s works, each contributed to writing the *Foreword* in 1962 for both republished books: *Missionary Methods: St. Paul’s or Ours?* (1912) and *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church* (1927). And again, in 1948, the Reformed missionary in Nigeria, Harry Boer, wrote an article for the missionary journal—*World Dominion*—in appreciation of Allen’s work. And, in his *Pentecost and Missions* (1961), he engaged with Allen’s missiology throughout the book (Boer 1964, 48, 61, 63-64, 99, 136, 163, 210ff). Unlike many later missiologists who generally quote only from Allen’s two most published books (Allen 1912; 1927), Boer purposefully quoted from some of Allen’s articles (Allen 1918, 162; Allen 1930, 32) and other books (Allen 1917, 39-41, 42-43, 85, 87; Allen 1919, 41-42; Allen and Clark 1937, 132), that later missiologists tend to neglect. Hubert Allen pointed out to me that it was Boer who best understood his grandfather’s thinking on how the Holy Spirit’s power affects mission expansion (Interview with Hubert Allen, 4 February 2011).

Grubb’s honest analysis and Boer’s advocacy of Allen’s works incited a substantial interest in Allen’s works. And it was Grubb’s influence with World Dominion Press to then republish these works, including *The Ministry of the Spirit: Selected Writings of Roland Allen*, edited by David Paton (1960), which caused Allen’s missiological thought to spread. Then, it was the Anglican—Canon David Paton—who carried Allen’s missiological baton within ecumenism after the dismantling of colonialism. Paton’s contribution to Allen’s legacy is commendable. Bishop Lesslie Newbigin, who believed that “Allen was right” (Newbigin 1989, 146-147) and emphasized *apostolic ministry*, which relied upon the *pneumatological dynamic* and also placed the *sacraments* as central to the community’s life, contributed much to mission studies (Newbigin 1989, 147). In 1962, Newbigin argued that Allen’s impact had affected the “assumptions of churches and missions, and slowly but steadily the number of those who found themselves compelled to listen has increased” (Allen 1962, Foreword, i).

In 2006, the contemporary missiologist Brian Stanley argued that Allen’s missional pneumatology can be summarized as: “if the Holy Spirit is given, a missionary Spirit is given” (Allen 2006, Foreword VI). Stanley went on to say that “Allen thus foreshadows also the prominence which (in marked contrast to his own day) is now given to the Holy Spirit in Christian theology and in the churches of the majority world, so many of which are pentecostal in emphasis” (Allen 2006, Foreword VI). It was Francis Anekwe Oborji, the Nigerian-born Roman Catholic professor of missiology (Pontifical Urban University, Rome), when highlighting the success of Pauline mission, said that “Allen suggests [that it] was due to the fact that he trusted both the Lord and the people to whom he had gone” (Oborji 2006, 92). Oborji agreed that “Allen alerted his readers [*Missionary Methods*] to the glaring difference between Paul’s missionary methods and those of contemporary mission agencies” (Oborji 2006, 92).

The aforementioned African missiologists and missionaries who engaged with Allen’s works are indicative of various leaders from within the 2008 Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON) who were influenced by him: Michael Nazir-Ali (former bishop of Rochester), Roger Beckwith, Vinay Samuel, and Chris Sugden. GAFCON’s confessional statement—*The Jerusalem Declaration*—basically echoes Allen’s Anglican apologia in terms of a clear Gospel emphasis, primacy of Scripture, creedal fidelity (1–5); clerical orders and sacramental practice (6–8); and missional ecclesiology that is dependent on the pneumatological dynamic (9–14) (Okoh, Samuel, and Sugden 2009). As my research has disclosed, two archbishops—Nicholas Okoh (Nigeria) and Eliud Wabukala (Kenya)—argued that the current crisis in Anglicanism is due to the fact that “the Church of England [ought to] go back to the basic principles and develop new structures while remaining firmly within the Anglican Communion” and further that “its leadership should be focused not on one person or one Church, however hallowed its history, but on the one historic faith we confess” (Thornton 2012). These statements from the younger churches of Anglicanism reflect Roland Allen’s *apostolic methods* for church planting (*Spirit before Order*), the *apostolic principles* that served as the central planks for his theology of mission (*Spirit with Order*), and the *apostolic order* that has clearly advanced St. Paul’s missionary ecclesiology (*Spirit empowered Order*) within the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.

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