How Do We Deal with the Baggage of the Past?

Reclaiming the M-Word: The Legacy of Missions in Non-Western Societies

by Robert D. Woodberry

Robert D. Woodberry is director of the Project on Religion and Economic Change and an assistant professor of sociology at the University of Texas at Austin. His research analyzes the long-term impact of missions and colonialism on education, economic development, and democracy. Other interests include religious influences on political institutions and the economy, and the spread of religious liberty.

There is currently a great deal of controversy about missions. Some of this reaction is related to recent trends, like the sometimes violent response to missions in the Middle East, India, and elsewhere. Much of the controversy, however, is simply a resurgence of a popular perception about missions—namely, that historically the missions movement was the handmaiden of colonialism and an existential enemy of indigenous cultures. The problem with these imperial connotations of missions, however, is that they are usually based on novels, movies, anecdotes and subjective impressions. What's missing is a comprehensive and balanced examination of the actual historical and statistical evidence.

As part of the "Project on Religion and Economic Change" funded by the Templeton Foundation and Metanexus Institute, I have compiled data on virtually all Protestant and Catholic missionary activity from the early-19th century though the mid-20th century and conducted a careful review of historical research on missions.[1] By looking at patterns within the historical record and comparing places where missionaries were present with places they were not, I am able to systematically measure the social effects that missions have actually had. In this article I focus primarily on historical evidence rather than statistics, but in both cases the data point to the same conclusion: When missionaries were independent from direct state control (e.g., they chose their own leaders and raised their own funds), they moderated, not exacerbated, the negative effects of colonialism.

The story of missions is of course also closely intertwined with the story of religious freedom. In this article I argue that religious freedom and missionary activity are usually synergistic; historically, places where they have advanced in tandem have seen a reduction in abuses of power and a expansion of civil society. Although missionaries and other religious "radicals" have been widely resented in their day, they have also been central to the abolition of slavery, the development of mass education, and the flourishing of organizations outside state control. Indeed, the effects of 19th and early 20th century missionaries are

still measurable in the educational enrollments, infant mortalities, and levels of political democracy in societies around the world.

Why Does Missions Matter?

Since the early 19th century, missionaries have been one of the largest groups of Westerners in the non-western world. North American missionaries, in particular, have also tended to be disproportionately well educated. In the 19th and early 20th centuries when university education was scarce, most North American missionaries had college degrees, and most male missionaries had at least some graduate education.

Missionary organizations were also among the wealthiest organizations of any kind. In 1900 the American Federation of Labor (AFL) had an annual budget of $71,000; in the same year the missions board of the Northern Methodists (a single U.S. denomination) had an annual budget of over one million dollars—over 14 times larger. In fact, in the 19th century the largest missions and evangelical reform agencies outstripped all but a few commercial banks as the largest and wealthiest corporations in the United States. The number of missionaries continued to grow through the 20th century, although their size relative to business and government declined.

If the historical scale and level of organization of the missionary enterprise is frequently underestimated, the degree of cultural damage it has caused is frequently overestimated. To be sure, there were many problematic missionary methodologies in the colonial era, and there continue to be some failures today. But, we should not lose sight of the positive legacy of missions in the areas of racial attitudes, education, civil society, and colonial reform. If the primary effect of missions was negative, we would expect conditions to be worse where they were than where they were not, and worse where they had more freedom to do exactly what they wanted than where

they were restricted, but both historical and statistical evidence suggest exactly the opposite. The consequences of colonialism would have been far worse without the presence of missionaries.

Missionary Resistance to Enlightenment Racial Attitudes

One of the most consistent critiques against missionaries is their ethnocentrism. Missionaries are, and were, people of their era. In the 19th and early 20th century, most missionaries assumed the superiority of Western "Christian" civilization. In their

The degree of cultural damage it has caused is frequently overestimated.
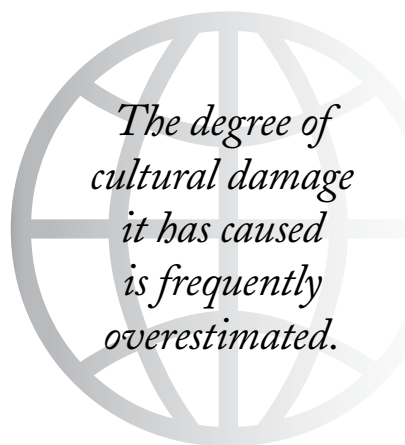
fundraising literature, missionaries often emphasized the problems with other religions, descriptions many modern readers find off-putting. With rising dominance of scientific racism in European thought, many even assumed the racial superiority of whites—something even the Gospel could not overcome. Yet the dominant missionary critique of others was cultural, not racial. For instance, missionaries like William Carey argued that Britons had been barbarians before the coming of Christianity, and the Gospel could transform others in the same way.

Interestingly, during the 19th and early 20th centuries missionaries were more often critiqued for thinking too highly of indigenous peoples, rather than visa versa. For example, James Hunt, who coined the word "anthropology," founded the first anthropological society, and edited the first two anthropological journals, argued that dark skinned people were different species,

mentally inferior to whites, and could not be "civilized" through education. Hunt claimed that missionaries resisted these "truths of anthropology" because of their outmoded religious belief in the commonality of all humanity. Thus, he argued that anthropologists had to fight missionaries to establish their discipline. In the 1866 volume of the *Anthropological Review* he wrote:

> In this endeavor to commend Anthropology to more general acceptance, we must not hide from ourselves that two great schools are, on principle, decidedly opposed to our pretensions. These two influential parties…cordially agree in discarding and even denouncing the truths of Anthropology. They do so because these truths are directly opposed to their cardinal principle of absolute and original equality among mankind. The parties to which we refer are the orthodox, and more especially the evangelical body, in religion, and the ultra-liberal and democratic party in politics. The former proceed on the traditions of Eden and the Flood…the latter…[on] ideas of political rights and social justice, as innocent of scientific data, that is, of the fact as it is in nature, as the wildest of the theological figments which set Exeter Hall in periodic commotion, at the never failing anniversaries of missionary enterprise.[2]

Missionaries varied widely in their sensitivity to other cultures and religions. Still, as the Harvard historian William Hutchinson writes, "If deficient from a modern point of view in sensitivity to foreign cultures, they were measurably superior in that regard to most contemporaries at home or abroad."[3]

Missionary Promotion of Mass Education and Printing

Protestant missionaries wanted people to be able to read the Bible in their own languages. In most religious traditions, lay people can participate fully in religious life without vernacular literacy. This is not true for Protestants. Thus, wherever Protestant missionaries went, they quickly developed written forms of oral languages, created fonts,

imported printing technology, and printed Bibles, tracts, and textbooks. In the process they created the written form of most languages, generally introduced the first printing, and often printed the first newspapers and textbooks. Throughout the non-western world early journalists learned their skills working in missionary presses.

To foster Bible reading, Protestant missionaries also sponsored mass literacy. This spurred other religious groups to invest in mass education to prevent their children from being exposed to Protestant proselytism. To minimize exposure to proselytism, members of other religions also pressured governments to expand formal education and to restrict religious content in missionary schools. When competing with Protestants, Catholic missionaries also invested in mass education and often had the best schools. However, prior to Vatican II, when isolated from Protestant competition, they tended to invest in schools for priests and the elite, not mass education. Missionaries were especially important in educating women, non-elites, and slaves.

Colonial governments, settlers, and business people were generally leery of mass education. They preferred dealing with a small educated elite that they could control, and advocated educating others only in practical skills like masonry and carpentry. For example, in South East Asia the French shut down indigenous schools, barred Protestant education, blocked Southeast Asians from getting education in other countries, and as an explicit policy only educated as many people beyond elementary school as they could hire into the colonial government.

The British funded education through a grant-in-aid system, but this system was initially created through missionary lobbying and it allowed the government to channel education toward their interests. Prior to missionary agitation, the British did not invest in mass education. Moreover, in areas where the British successfully kept out missionaries—e.g., interior Nigeria,

Colonial governments, settlers, and business people were generally leery of mass education. They preferred dealing with a small educated elite.

British Somaliland, the Gulf States, Nepal, and the Maldives—the British did not invest in mass education. At most they educated a few children of the existing elite.

In multivariate cross-national statistical analysis, the historic prevalence of Protestant missionaries and missionary education is a robust predictor of higher educational enrollments in a country. By contrast, being a British colony is not statistically associated with higher enrollments when all factors are taken into account. This is true even when we look at regions of the world that had similar pre-colonial literacy rates—for example West Africa, Oceania, and the Middle East.

Moreover, we find the same pattern when we look at regional educational differences within individual colonies. In Nigeria and Ghana, missionaries were kept out of the north, and current educational rates are lower there. In Kenya, missionaries had less influence on the coast, and education rates are lower there as well. In India, literacy rates are unusually high in Kerala, Goa, Nagaland and Mizoram—areas with large Christian populations and disproportionate missionary influence.

Thus there appears to have been a multiplier effect. Early missionary education demonstrated the economic returns of education and spurred demand. Missionaries also wrote and translated books, built buildings, and trained teachers, which made future educational expansions easier. These early investments have had long-term consequences.

Missions and the Rise of Civil Society

Missionaries also had an important impact on the growth and diversification of organizations outside state control. For example, there is a clear link between Protestant missions and the rise of indigenous nongovernmen-

tal organizations (NGOs) in India. Protestant missionaries tried to convert Hindus and to reform social customs they considered immoral, such as burning widows on the funeral pyres of their husbands and consummating marriage before age 12. Both the conversionary and social reform efforts of missionaries spurred powerful reactions among Hindus. Some created groups like Bramo Samaj to reform Hinduism. Others formed groups like Dharma Sabah to fight reform. But both wings hoped to prevent conversion to Christianity. Both wings also copied the organizational forms and tactics that missionaries had introduced—petitions, newsletters, traveling "evangelists," boards of directors, and so on.

Moreover, because evangelicals forced the British to allow religious liberty, the British allowed these religious/anti-missionary groups to flourish. Over time these groups gained identifiable leaders, newspapers, extensive memberships, and cross-regional networks. Eventually, these groups helped birth Indian nationalism and provided leaders for the Indian National Congress Party and the BJP. Because they were so large and could get their message out through their newsletters, speakers, etc., when these groups became anti-colonial, the British could not easily crush them and had to compromise. Thus, they forced the British to leave earlier and divest power more gradually than they wanted to. As a result India had political parties, experience managing government agencies, and a thriving civil society at independence. This may have helped stabilize its democracy. However, civil society was organized along religious lines; over time this may have fostered Hindu nationalism and inter-religious violence.

A similar pattern of Protestant missionary activism followed by local imitation of missionary tactics and organizational forms is clear in China, Egypt,

Japan, Korea, Palestine, Sri Lanka, and elsewhere. Where we have quantitative data (such as Sri Lanka and Japan), the evidence shows that the current prevalence of NGOs is still associated with the historic prevalence of missionaries. The first wave of nationalists in Africa, the Middle East, India, China, and Korea were also closely tied to mission education. Although later waves of nationalism were often anti-missionary (particularly in their Marxist forms), these may ironically owe some of their existence to missionary-planted ideologies and organizations.

Missionary Mobilization of Colonial Reform and Abolitionism

Perhaps the most profound influence of missions has been on colonial reform. Although some missionaries were strongly anti-colonial, most were not. They were primarily concerned with conversion, not politics. In areas where missionaries thought colonialism was inevitable or where missionary work was prohibited, missionaries generally preferred colonizers that suited their interests. For example, Protestants usually preferred British colonization, because the British allowed religious liberty, while most historically-Catholic colonizers restricted Protestants. However, when missionaries did not think colonization was inevitable and had freedom to proselytize, they often helped indigenous rulers resist colonization—as in Thailand, Ethiopia, Madagascar, and post-Opium Wars China. Elsewhere they helped local rules negotiate protectorates in an attempt to block white settlers from taking over indigenous land—for example, Botswana and Malawi.

Regardless, most missionaries wanted a moderate form of colonialism. Colonial abuses angered local people against the West—which many associated with Christianity—and thus made conversions more difficult. Missionary writings are full of complaints about how colonial abuses undermined their best efforts to win converts. Thus, missionaries had (1) incentives to fight colonial abuses that hampered missionary work, (2)

personnel throughout the world directly exposed to them, (3) a base of supporters in many colonizing countries, and (4) a massive network of religious media to mobilize the faithful against policies that hampered mission interests.

Missionaries were best able to reform colonial policy in colonies where they were independent from direct state control—that is, the British, U.S., Australian, and New Zealand colonies—and in areas where they were not financially dependent on local white settlers. In French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian colonization, the state made

Spurred by this success, the missionary lobby initiated a series of reforms in British colonialism.

agreements with the Catholic Church under which the state paid missionaries' salaries, chose/approved colonial bishops, and severely restricted Protestants. This usually silenced overt criticism of colonial policy, although there are exceptions.

The British originally banned missionaries in India and elsewhere, but evangelicals forced them to allow religious liberty in 1813 by blocking passage of the British East India Company (BEIC) charter. Spurred by this success, the missionary lobby initiated a series of reforms in British colonialism. Some of these reforms challenged local customs. For example, in India missionaries mobilized pressure to: ban *sati* (burning widows in the funeral pyres of their husbands); outlaw female infanticide; allow "untouchables" to use public roads, wells, and wear clothing above the waist; and forbid consummation of marriages before age 12 (although this final law raised such ire that it was never enforced

and became a crucial factor in the rise of Indian nationalism).

Missions and the Rise of Immediate Abolitionism

Mission lobbying also challenged British colonial policy. One clear example is the rise of abolitionism. In the West Indies Anglican clergy worked primarily with whites and generally defended slavery. But nonconformist missionaries worked with slaves. They initially tried to stay apolitical because they needed slave owners' permission to meet with slaves. However, missionaries gathered slaves for weekly services, trained church leaders, and taught congregants how to read and write. Among other things, literate slaves began to interpret the Bible for themselves and read newspaper accounts of debates over political rights in Europe.

In 1823 thousands of slaves rebelled in Demerara (now Guyana). The planters brutally crushed the rebellion and blamed John Smith, an LMS missionary, for inciting the uprising, sentencing him to death. In reaction, slave owners in other British slave colonies burned churches, harassed missionaries, and restricted missionary access to slaves. This infuriated evangelicals and stoked their support for abolitionism.

Under evangelical pressure, the colonial office recalled the governor of Demerara and parliament passed a slave code restricting punishments of slaves and mandating provision for slave's religious instruction. This gave missionaries legal grounds for meeting with slaves and further angered slave owners. Parliament imposed this law on crown colonies and required colonies with legislatures to pass similar codes. However, over the next decade the British government repeatedly overruled the codes passed by the Jamaican legislature because they restricted religious liberty. Finally, in 1828 the British crown temporarily disbanded the legislature and imposed a slave code.

However, because of their close relations with planters, Jamaican magistrates and officials did not enforce the

code either for maltreating slaves or for persecuting nonconformists. To reestablish their authority, the colonial office began systematically investigating complaints, but this required people in Jamaica to gather information and file them despite harassment by planters. The governor and local magistrates repeatedly delayed and ignored complaints filed at the local level. Thus missionaries, tentatively at first, but later more confidently, gathered evidence and complained directly to the colonial office.

Two incidents were crucial to this transformation. First, in June 1829 an Anglican priest named George Bridges and magistrate named James Betty attempted to shut down Methodist churches in St. Ann's district. When the Methodist slave lay leader Henry Williams passively resisted, he was sent to the most severe workhouse on the island and beaten almost to death. His sister was also publicly stripped and flogged. To save Williams' life the missionary Isaac Whitehouse intervened with a letter to the press and a complaint to the colonial office. Williams was released, but the governor refused to investigate. Whitehouse collected his own evidence and presented it to court, but his case was dismissed and he was repeatedly threatened. However, when the colonial office saw the evidence, they sent orders to remove Betty from his position and severely reprimanded the governor.

Although this had little immediate impact on slave conditions, it emboldened missionaries. In 1830, when Sam Swiney, a Baptist lay leader, was flogged and imprisoned for leading an extemporaneous prayer meeting on Easter Sunday without a missionary present, Baptist missionary William Knibb did not hesitate to act. When the governor and the courts tried to dismiss the case, the colonial office dismissed two magistrates and the governor. This further emboldened both missionaries and slaves. Thus, conflicts over religious liberty engendered legal protections for slaves, freed

*M*issionaries who had been attacked, imprisoned, and/or kicked out of British slave colonies toured Great Britain making fiery speeches …

missionaries from the requirement of getting slave owner permission to meet with slaves, emboldened missionaries to critique abuses, provided slaves with the ability to be religious leaders and have semi-autonomous organizations, and let slaves know that they had rights which would occasionally be defended.

In 1831 nonconformist slave church leaders organized an uprising in Jamaica. When planters discovered who the leaders were, they burned down nonconformist churches, attacked missionaries and put many in prison, and barred slaves from learning to read or meeting for worship. For nonconformist missionaries this was the final straw. Not only was slavery abusive, it threatened the eternal destiny of African souls.

Missionaries who had been attacked, imprisoned, and/or kicked out of British slave colonies toured Great Britain making fiery speeches and distributing petitions against slavery.[4] Through their missionary work they had direct experience with the brutality of slavery and could describe it vividly. Their evangelical supporters mobilized a massive pressure campaign for immediate abolition. In fact, the parliament was so amazed by the nonconformist dominance in the anti-slavery campaign that they recorded petitioners' religious traditions. The historian Seymour Drescher calculates that in Great Britain over 59 percent of adult nonconformists, and over 95 percent of adult Wesleyan Methodists, signed petitions demanding immediate abolition.[5]

Allied with a small group of intellectual, free-market economists, evangelicals forced the government to both ban slavery in 1834 and to pressure other governments to ban slavery. This was done against direct opposition of planters and traders at a time when slavery was highly profitable.

Missionary Monitoring of Colonial Abuses

Spurred by this success, missionary supporters established The Parliamentary Select Committee on Aboriginal Tribes in 1835 under the leadership of Thomas Fowell Buxton, vice president of the Church Missionary Society.[6] This group commissioned a worldwide investigation of

> what measures ought to be adopted with respect to the Native Inhabitants of Countries where British Settlements are made, and to the Neighbouring (sic.) Tribes, in order to secure them the due observation of justice and the protection of their rights, to promote the spread of Civilization among them, and to lead them to the peaceful and voluntary reception of the Christian Religion.[7]

The commission collected over a thousand printed pages of testimony about the consequences of colonization, most of it from missionaries, and used the information to initiate a series of colonial reforms.[8] In 1837 the Select Committee reorganized as the Aborigines Protection Society and commissioned a series of ethnographies it hoped would alter public opinion and pressure colonists to change their exploitative behavior.

Over time missionary influence on colonial policy waned as businesspeople and settlers created lobbying organizations and journals to counter missionary influence and the rise of "scientific" racism hardened British attitudes about the racial inferiority of subject peoples. Still, the missionary lobby continued to influence policy.

For example, in 1865 Edward Underhill, the Secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society, wrote the colonial secretary outlining the deteriorating economic situation of former slaves in Jamaica and enumerating abuses. He asked the colonial office to initiate economic and political reforms—including expanding the suffrage.

The colonial office forwarded the letter to Governor Eyre of Jamaica who responded angrily and attacked nonconformist missionaries.

In this period of high tension, a courtroom squabble in Morant Bay escalated into a riot and several whites were killed. In retaliation Governor Eyre's soldiers killed hundreds of blacks, flogged hundreds more, and burnt black villages almost randomly. Governor Eyre shipped George Gordon, a prominent mulatto activist, from Kingston to Morant Bay, court marshaled him, and hung him although he had no link to anyone in the uprising.

The Colonial Office initially commended Eyre, but missionaries sent damning reports and mobilized their supporters. Governor Eyre was recalled and put on trial in England for murder. Missionaries and their allies wanted to set a precedent that English law applied equally to whites and non-whites.

Missionaries were also a dominant force in ending the opium trade, fighting for native land rights, mitigating forced labor programs in Kenya and Melanesia, changing land-tenure rules in northern India, and fighting for the rule of law. It is hard to imagine many of these abuses being restricted without active missionary involvement. Often these struggles made missionaries unpopular with both settlers and government officials who then hampered mission work. Thus, missionaries had to balance between placating those in power, doing religious work, and reforming abuses. To pursue what they viewed as a higher calling, they sometimes did not fight abuses or did not fight them as vigorously as later nationalists would have liked. But this does not negate the crucial role they played.

Missionaries are often blamed for coming to China on opium ships and for their supposed collusion with European colonial policy, but this hard to reconcile with the historical record. Missionaries were in fact the most virulent critics of the opium trade and many other abuses. Consider the following statements from "The Committee on The Relations of Commerce and Diplomacy to Missions" at the 1888 Centenary Conference on the Protestant Missions of the World, held in London.

> [Colonial policies such as the opium trade] are a very great evil standing in the way of all Mission work. They are a standing reproach to Christianity and tend to associate in the natives' mind immorality and Christianity…The outlook in regard to the opium and drink traffic of a so-called Christian country is such as to lead one to question whether on the whole Britain is not a greater curse than a blessing to the world…In [Great Britain] we can say to the Government that when

These are hardly words of uncritical allegiance.
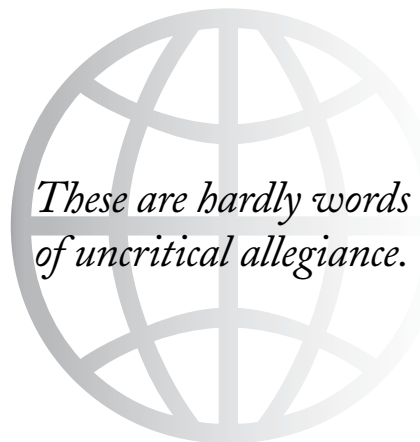
> the Treaty [of Nanjing] expires, the Chinese Government shall be left with as much liberty to make a Treaty as the Government of France is. We must give the Government of China perfect liberty to say what terms it will insert in any renewal of that Treaty….[F]or generations to come China will be the worse for what we have done. It is impossible to consider the condition of China, through our action in this matter, without feeling that one has not words to express our sorrow that the land we love should have any connection with a business so fearful….We have to reckon with…Divine Judgment if we neglect this matter…We have wronged China as I believe no nation ever wronged another."[9]

These are hardly words of uncritical allegiance.

The Enlightenment Veneer
Of course, missionaries and their supporters did not act alone. They often cooperated with a small group of anti-religious political liberals, such as John Stuart Mill. Although modern academics usually focus on this enlightenment elite, they were not the crucial factor in the real politics of colonial reform. Missionaries and their evangelical supporters were.

This becomes clear when we compare British colonialism with other European forms of colonialism. France, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Italy, and the Netherlands all had egalitarian radicals who criticized colonial policy. In fact in all these countries, "secular" Enlightenment elites controlled the government during significant portions of the 19th and early 20th centuries. None had a mass abolitionist movement, none had programs to ameliorate the conditions of slaves after emancipation, and most used forced labor until after World War II.[10] The British were the only European colonizer that did not have a secular enlightenment government during this period, yet they reformed earlier and more completely.

These other colonizers all had missionaries, but the state exercised much tighter control over them, e.g., choosing their leaders, paying their salaries, and restricting entry. This usually had the effect of muzzling missionary critiques. Moreover, none of these other European colonizers had non-state missionaries from the colonizing country working directly with slaves. Thus, continental abolitionists relied almost entirely on translations of accounts of English and American slavery.

Enlightenment intellectuals lacked the first-hand information, the built-in self interest of field missionaries, and the broad power base of the non-state missionary movement. Thus, although they critiqued abuses, they did not mobilize broad social pressure for change. Non-state missionaries also helped the British colonial office monitor the compliance of local officials. As a result of missionary intervention, the British recalled several governors and magistrates for abuses of slaves and blacks. I am not aware of any other colonizer doing this during the 19th or early 20th century. This

greater rule of law in British colonies seems to have had long term effects.

Conclusion

Prior empirical studies, including those employing a rigorous array of statistical controls, have consistently suggested that former British colonies are today more democratic and have lower levels of corruption than former colonies of other nations. But my own statistical research demonstrates that this British colonialism effect disappears after we control for the prevalence of Protestant missionaries. In fact, statistically speaking, the historic prevalence of Protestant missionaries seems to "explain" about 50 percent of the variation in non-western democracy, and removes the impact of other variables social scientists traditionally associate with democracy, such as the nationality of those who colonized the country, the country's Gross Domestic Product, the percentage of its population that is European, and the percentage of its population that is Muslim.

Thus perhaps it is time for a reevaluation of the glib assertions popular in intellectual circles today about the close connection between missionaries and colonialism, and the overwhelmingly deleterious impact of missions on non-western societies. Both historical and statistical evidence suggests that colonialism would have been far worse if non-state missionaries had not been present and engaged. Furthermore, it is worth noting that Christianity spread far more rapidly in areas and periods when European colonialism was not a major threat.[11]

These findings should also give people confidence—regardless of their religious beliefs—that protecting religious liberty is not a fool's errand. The organizational diversity and competition that often flourish under conditions of religious freedom can be crucial to other positive developments in society and law. After all, the Methodists, Baptists, and Quakers who dominated the campaign for immediate abolition were the religious "fanatics" of the 19th century. The dominant academic ideologies of the day were fanatical in a far different way: They viewed blacks as biologically inferior and held that educating them beyond manual skills was pointless.[12] But in retrospect most of us think the religious fanatics were right. **IJFM**

Recommended

- Follow developing research on the social impact of missions and download digital maps and data on historic missionary activity at the Project on Religion and Economic Change website: www.prec.com.
- Read recent historical research on the impact of missions on foreign and colonial policy such as: Norman Etherington, *Missions and Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Mary Turner, *Slaves and Missionaries: The Disintegration of Jamaican Slave Society,* 1787–1834 (Kingston, Jamaica: The University Press of the West Indies, 1998); and Robert D. Kaplan, *The Arabists* (New York: The Free Press, 1995).
- Watch the news, read missionary prayer letters, and talk to returning missionaries about how U.S. foreign policy effects people in others countries and prayerfully consider contacting government representatives if reforms seem necessary.

Endnotes

[1] This work has been made possible through funding by the Spiritual Capital Research Program, sponsored by the Metanexus Institute on Religion and Science, with the generous support of the John Templeton Foundation. For detailed citations of evidence presented in this paper see: Robert D. Woodberry, *The Shadow of Empire: Christian Missions, Colonial Policy, and Democracy in Postcolonial Societies* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 2004) *[Editor's note: This dissertation is available for download from ijfm.org/archives];* Mary Turner, *Slaves and Missionaries* (Kingston, Jamaica: The University Press of the West Indies, 1998); and the *Project on Religion and Economic Change* website: www.prec-online.com.

[2] Exeter Hall was the headquarters of various nonconformist missionary organizations and social reform movements.

[3] See William R. Hutchinson, *Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), p. 1.

[4] For example, *The Baptist Magazine* (1832) reports on a speech by the missionary William Knibb: "[T]he Society's missionary stations could no longer exist in Jamaica without the entire and immediate abolition of slavery. He had been requested to be moderate but he could not restrain himself from speaking the truth. He could assure the meeting that slaves would never be allowed to worship God till slavery had been abolished. Even if it were at the risk of his connexion [sic.] with the Society, he would avow this: and if the friends of missions would not hear this, he would turn and tell it to his God nor would he ever desist till this greatest of curses were removed" (p. 325).

[5] See Seymour Drescher, *From Slavery to Freedom: Comparative Studies in the Rise and Fall of Atlantic Slavery* (New York: New York University Press, 1999).

[6] Buxton led the campaign to abolish slavery. Several of his major abolitionist allies were Joseph Butterworth, treasurer of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (WMMS), Jabez Bunting, founder of the WMMS, and Richard Watson, secretary of the WMMS.

[7] Cited in George W. Stocking, Jr., *Victorian Anthropology* (New York: Free Press, 1987), p. 241.

[8] For example, in conjunction with pressure from British missionaries, James Stephen, an evangelical undersecretary at the colonial office, banned all legal distinctions based on race in the Cape Colony. These laws remained in effect until Boer settlers took over the South African government in the 20th century and instituted apartheid.

[9] James Johnston, ed., *Report of the Centenary Conference on the Protestant Missions of the World Held in Exeter Hall (June 9th–19th)*, London. (Vol. II) (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1888), pp. 536, 546, 548, 550.

[10] Long after the French and Belgian nations were democracies they continued to use forced labor in their colonies. In fact in French and Belgian Congo these campaigns were so brutal that during the early 20th century scholars estimate that about 50% of the population died in the rubber growing regions. These abuses were primarily exposed by American and Swedish Protestant missionaries.

[11] For example, compare the spread of Christianity in Korea where Japan was the major colonial threat, with Japan where Western powers were. Also compare the spread of Christianity in China during the colonial period with the post-1970s, and the spread of Christianity in Africa before and after independence.

[12] Kidd, Colen. 2006. *The Forging of Races: Race and Scripture in the Protestant*