Lesslie Newbigin on a Pilgrimage of Dialogue: 
Or A Pilgrim’s Progress Through Interfaith Dialogue.

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“(The reader) finds in the tales of Christian and Christina more practical or living theology than can be hoped for from our latter day systematic theologies”
~Richard R. Niebuhr

The late Lesslie Newbigin was one of the more extraordinary protestant theologians of the past century. Extraordinary not necessarily for what he wrote, though his work has been extremely influential, but extraordinary because of the effect and impact Newbigin bestowed upon the ecumenical subjects in which he dealt with, particularly within missiology. Missionary, ecumenist, theologian, evangelist, apologist, and social ethicist are just a few of the many hats Newbigin exhibited throughout his celebrated life. Born in Britain in 1909, Newbigin spent forty years in South India as an “ecumenical” missionary. It is during this time that Newbigin established himself as more than a mere theologian. The Presbyterian Church of Scotland sent Newbigin to India as a missionary in 1936. 1947 in Southern India the Presbyterians, Anglicans, and Methodists collaborated together to form The Church of South India a month after India gained independence from Britain. Newbigin was ironically elected Bishop.

In this paper I will discuss the importance of interfaith dialogue using Newbigin’s trinitarian justification for interfaith dialogue; I will explain facets of how Father, Son,

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2 This paper is not the venue to unpack all of Newbigin’s teaching on missiology, however I would be remise to not mention Newbigin’s six characteristics of a “missional community” from chapter 18 of The Gospel in a Pluralist Society.
1. it practices corporate praise, thanksgiving, gratitude, and grace; 2. it declares truth that challenges the reigning plausibility structure 3. it establishes relationships within a local neighbourhood 4. it encourages mutual service in the priesthood of all believers 5. it expects mutual responsibility rather than individualism 6. it nurtures hope and a re-imagined vision of the future
and Holy Spirit are catalysts for interacting with those who do not claim Jesus as Lord. I will draw out aspects of John Bunyan’s “Christian” and use of dialogue in pilgrimage with that of Newbigin’s. In many ways this paper will not only provide description and justification for dialogue, but also instruct a “proper” means by which dialogue is accomplished. I will play on notions of Pilgrim’s Progress in the sense that interfaith dialogue is both dialectical and part of a living theology. Ultimately I will apply Newbigin’s method of “trinitarian dialogue” to the Muslim - Christian conversation, then offer an application of how Muslims and Christians can cooperate in a “Newbiginian” sense that promotes the advancement of truth and of the common goals both faiths seek.

I choose Newbigin in light of his influential footprint upon the World Council of Churches as well as the ecumenical project in general. Furthermore, Newbigin along with other Christians in India felt it necessary to unite the Christian in southern India to act as a witness of togetherness amongst the growing conflict between the feuding Muslim and Hindu populations of India. In many ways Newbigin’s life was a lived pilgrimage with the same remarkable lessons gained from Bunyan’s Pilgrim’s Progress. Bunyan and Newbigin make for an appropriate cohort in comparison as Newbigin’s work in ecumenism and missiology is demonstrative of key aspects of Pilgrim’s Progress. Furthermore, Newbigin offered a remarkable methodology of dialogue that Protestant and Catholic leaders have gained knowledge from and utilized towards a commonality with Muslim counterparts.

Dialogue
Here I will succinctly define what Newbigin means when he uses the language of “dialogue” in relation with people of other faiths. Newbigin does not merely imply that dialogue is a simple exchange of words, but and exchange of livelihood which entails personal interaction; dialogue is very much a part of his missiology. Newbigin discusses in *The Open Secret* the manner in which dialogue becomes more than words; dialogue is the development of relationships that necessitates one, both conversations about each other’s faith convictions and two, opportunities to work together for a variety of common causes. In such an encounter with one another, trust is developed in ways that conventional and at times, superficial conversation lacks. Dialogue then is not evangelism but the pre-text to evangelism.

Why should Christians dialogue; is the witness of the church through individuals and the corporate body not enough? Newbigin claims, “Anyone who knows Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior must desire ardently that others should share that knowledge and must rejoice when the number of those who do is multiplied. Where this desire and this rejoicing are absent, we must ask whether something is not wrong at the very center of the church’s life.” Part of the church’s witness that declares Jesus as Lord and Savior entails the necessary role of dialogue. Lack of dialogue then inflates suspicion of the

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5 From this point forward when I say “church” I mean the church universal unless otherwise specified.
church’s focus and calls into question the individual’s integrity as a follower of Christ.⁷

Dialogue is action and discipleship in practice:

…the matter of action, and not only thought. Therefore I think that the most fruitful kind of interfaith dialogue is one in which people of different faiths or ideologies who share a common situation and are seeking to meet ordinary human needs, are enabled to share the insights which their different give them for contemporary action. It is in this situation of active discipleship, where we cannot take refuge in established formulation of doctrine but have to probe new and unexplored territory, that we learn what it means to trust Jesus as the way, the truth and the life and as one who can lead us into truth in its fullness.⁸

So then how are Christians to dialogue? There are three important components for which Newbigin implores the Christian to incorporate in the dialogue process. The first of these three involves the art of honestly listening to what the “other” has to say. “The Christian partner in dialogue of the religions will certainly put his or her ‘Christianity’ at risk.”⁹ If one is genuinely participating in dialogue, they must be willing to reject their own belief system in response to the belief system of which they are engaging. A primary portion of listening entails a compliance to share in the context, culture, and customs of the dialogue partner.¹⁰

“The Christian must be ready to face the possibility of radical reconsideration of long-accepted formulations.”¹¹ Thus the second variable is (re)consideration of faiths being exchanged. Putting one’s own faith at risk may seem illogical for a follower of

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⁷ In his book Household of God Newbigin relates the sin of the individuals as being then the sin of the Church. For Newbigin the dichotomy between individual Christian and community of Christians is blurred to the point that to refer to one is to refer to both.
⁸ Wainwright, Lesslie Newbigin: A theological Life, 232 (a quote from the Henry Martyn Lectures)
⁹ Newbigin, The Open Secret, 186.
¹⁰ Michael Barnes SJ in Theology and the Dialogue of Religions further describes interfaith dialogue as the “negotiation of the ‘middle’” by which he means a “mediation of the context of otherness” page 21
¹¹ Newbigin, The Open Secret, 186.
Christ; however, there is no other way to maintain integrity in dialogue if neither side is willing to accept what the other has to communicate as being truth. If the Christian’s hope for the “other” dialogue partner is to accept the message of the Cross (or at minimum to ponder Jesus’ divinity), then the Christian too must be willing to accept as ultimate truth the differing beliefs received. One cannot expect someone to offer more than what they themselves are willing to offer in return. There is sense of vulnerability that requires a faith that God will continue to sustain the faith of which He has begun; which leads me to the third component in dialogue, faith. “But he or she does so (listens and reconsiders) within the ultimate commitment to Jesus Christ as finally determinative of his or her way of understanding and responding to the experience.”¹² There must be faith that the Divine will illuminate the heart and mind (of both dialogue partners) toward the ultimate truth.¹³

One last character in the processes of dialogue pertains to the caution of evangelizing, here I am thinking specifically of proselytization, before dialogue has taken place. As discussed above, dialogue is the precursor of and toward evangelism; dialogue is not evangelism itself. As mentioned in regards to receptiveness on both sides, there is a risk of losing integrity in the dialogue when the premise solely becomes an evangelistic endeavor. This type of evangelism that proselytizes entails a lack of reception toward the beliefs and truths brought forth by the “other side”.

¹² Newbigin, The Open Secret, 186.  
¹³ Concerning faith, I am reminded here of the words from Resident Aliens page 53 that “faith begins, not in discovery, but in remembrance. The story began without us, as a story of the peculiar way God is redeeming the world.” This notion of “faith as remembrance” is applicable for all three of the Abrahamic traditions, not just Christianity.
Trinitarian Dialogue\textsuperscript{14}

Already at New Delhi I had recognized that the missiology of One Body, One Gospel, One World was not adequate. It was too exclusively church-centred in its understanding of mission. Only a fully Trinitarian doctrine would be adequate, setting the work of Christ in the Church in the context of the over-ruling providence of the Father in all the life of the world and the sovereign freedom of the Spirit who is the Lord and not the auxiliary of the Church.\textsuperscript{15}

Newbigin further justified the act of dialogue in terms of the trinity. Here I will explore this justification by examining the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit’s roles within dialogue. In his book \textit{Sin and Salvation}, Newbigin examines what is meant by “created in God’s image”. Newbigin is similar to Karl Barth\textsuperscript{16} in that the principal way in which humanity bears God’s image is found the characteristic of relationships and relational needs. “When God created man He did not create an individual: He created man-and-woman. For God is not an individual; God is personal but He is not a person. He is Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God; one personal being in whom love is perfect and complete because love is both given and received.”\textsuperscript{17} In Genesis 1:26a we read, “Let \textit{Us} create man in \textit{Our} image, after \textit{Our} likeness.” Biblical scholars and theologians alike

\textsuperscript{14} This mode of justification is adapted from Newbigin’s \textit{Trinitarian Faith and Today’s Mission} in which he details a Trinitarian approach to missions. See also Wainwright’s explanation in \textit{A Theological Life} pages 178-179.


\textsuperscript{16} Though Newbigin did not develop his theology from Karl Barth or Emil Brunner (another theologian who shared this teaching based off of Genesis 5:1-2); Newbigin was familiar and even worked with his contemporary Karl Barth and shared the same notion of \textit{Imago Dei} which was contrary to some of their contemporaries who believed that humanities’ \textit{Imago Dei} is found the ability to create (i.e. Paul Tillich amongst others). The classical views of \textit{Imago Dei} taught that humanity had the ability to reason and use free will, but the most of this ability was lost as a result of the fall and only fragments remain (i.e. Luther and Calvin).

grant this use of “us” and “our” as Trinitarian language\textsuperscript{18}, therefore exegetically one can postulate a theory of \textit{Imago Dei} that says humanity is “trinitarian” pertaining to her image of God.

The Father has created all, all of the universe, all of the earth, and all of the inhabitants of the earth. As creations of the Father, humanity is the direct recipient of the Father’s love. This love is seen in the act of Him sending His Son for the sins of humanity and then raising Him from the dead in order to conquer death. Consequently, since God both loves and creates within the realm of humanity, it is the Christian’s responsibility, as those who are created and loved, to dialogue and share the good news of God with His very creation.

“God has placed in the very constitution of man the need for and possibility of love.”\textsuperscript{19} There is a common goal between all people of all faiths. The fact that humanity has instilled in her the capacity and desire for relationships, implores those who have found Christianity to share and build relationships in order that this common need is met. Not only is this common need relational, it is also inclusive of the longing for purpose, which is “inescapable to human life.”\textsuperscript{20} Thus in offering relationship, purpose is defined to the extent that the relationship encompasses purpose within it.

Therefore this need is first met in the act of relationships between the created; sequentially and ultimately it is then met through relationship with the Creator. Christians are to love, love both neighbor and enemy. When Christians engage in the “Newbiginian” dialogue, they are initiating the love and relationship that is commanded from the Father.

\textsuperscript{18} This argument is expounded upon in greater detail Miroslav Volf’s \textit{After Our Likeness}.
\textsuperscript{19} Newbigin, \textit{Sin and Salvation}, 18.
\textsuperscript{20} Lesslie Newbigin \textit{Foolishness to the Greeks} (Grand Rapids: WM. B. Eerdmans, 1986) 35.
through the Son. From the initial relationship between individuals the subsequent process of meeting this need is catalyzed. Through relationships built by interfaith dialogue, Christians can bear witness to the relationship of Christ to the church, thus demonstrating then enabling the faith, “remembrance”, and perhaps the conversion of the dialogue partner.

The love of the Father is most visible in the act of and through the Son; the act of the death, burial, and resurrection. Here Newbigin adamantly emphasizes the historical event of the cross. “We are talking about a factual statement. Namely, that at a certain point in history, the history of this world, God is who is the author, the sustainer, the goal of all that exists, of all being and all meaning and all truth, has become present in our human history as the man Jesus, whom we can know and whom we can love and serve: and that by His incarnation, His ministry, His death and resurrection.”

This event is the life force that moves the church to act in the world. Since Christ has died for all, and salvation for all comes through His death, the good news of this cataclysmic event must be shared with all of the creation, a creation atoned for through the Son.

“Whatsoever else we do for people – to come to know Jesus, to love Him, to serve Him, to honor Him, to obey Him – that is the greatest thing that we can do for anyone and it is the specific thing entrusted to us. It must be the center of our missions” and thus is the center of our dialogue. Through the Son dialogue is not merely justified or justified or justified. Through the Son dialogue is not merely justified or justified or justified.

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22 Newbigin recognizes, in *Foolishness to the Greeks* page 127, the event of the resurrection as not being a “reversal of a defeat but the proclamation of a victory.” This event of resurrection is greatly emphasized by Newbigin and his contemporary Karl Barth. Barth uses the same language of “event” and further states that it is what all other histories are measured against.
warranted, but dialogue becomes a necessary means by which the church can share and incorporate the enduring truth, the enduring story of Jesus the Son acting in the history.

The final yet at times neglected facet of Trinity, which includes in it trinitarian dialogue, is the working of the Holy Spirit. “The Holy Spirit who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment may use the non-Christian partner in dialogue to convict the church. Dialogue means exposure to the earth shattering and upbuilding power of God the Spirit.” It is the Spirit of God who converts the dialogue partner not the one who is the agent of dialogue. The fact of Jesus’ death and resurrection for all is not believed unless gifted and convicted upon the hearts through the Holy Spirit. This truth ought to be recognized greater by the church. The church does not accomplish the converting, the Spirit does. And as only the wisdom and power of God could do, the Spirit uses the non-Christian dialogue partner to “expose, shatter, and upbuild” the church thus significantly benefiting both the sides of the dialogue.

Newbigin states that an “obedient witness to Christ means that whenever we come with another person (Christian or not) into the presence of the cross, we are prepared to receive judgment and correction, to find that our Christianity hides within its appearance of obedience the reality of disobedience. Each meeting with a non-Christian partner in

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24 I use the word “neglected” because, as Curtis Freeman taught me, most (protestant) Christians tend to be either binitarianism or unitarianism with the focus on the Father or the Son. Though the Trinitarian view is classical and orthodox, unbeknown to most Christians they misconceive of the Spirit’s role and become wary of sounding Pentecostal. Newbigin recognized that most Christians involved in missions focused and emphasized on the Christological aspect of dialogue and evangelization. Consequently Newbigin on many occasions would expound upon Trinitarian dialogue to emphasize the importance of a Trinitarian understanding and the incorporation of the Holy Spirit.

25 Newbigin, The Open Secret, 186.
dialogue therefore puts my own Christianity at risk.” Newbigin uses the example of Peter and Cornelius in Acts 10 to demonstrate the power and effectiveness of dialogue and how the Spirit uses interfaith conversation for the glory of God in both the Christian’s and non-Christian’s life. Conversion as Newbigin articulates, not only occurs with Cornelius, who most focus on, but conversion occurs within Peter as well. Newbigin says that the “Holy Spirit shattered Peter’s own deeply cherished image of himself as an obedient member of the household of God.” Through this dialogue between Peter and Cornelius, the Holy Spirit converted Cornelius along with changing “Christianity”.27

The conclusion of “Trinitarian dialogue” is that the real labor of the mission is the work of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit:

We are invited to participate in an activity of God which is the central meaning of creation itself. We are invited to become, through the presence of the Holy Spirit, participants in the Son’s loving obedience to the Father. All things have been created that they may be summed up in Christ the Son. All history is directed towards that end. All creation has this as its goal. The Spirit of God, who is also the Spirit of the Son, is given as the foretaste of that consummation, as the witness to it, and as the guide of the Church on the road towards it. The Church is not promised success: it is promised the peace of Christ in the midst of tribulation, and the witness of the Spirit given out of the church’s weakness and ignorance.28

Islam, the “Corrector”29

Why Islam? Here I will begin the focus on interfaith dialogue pertaining to the question of the Christian – Muslim conversation. The Christian may one day find their

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29 Islamic studies scholar Davide Tacchini often states in lectures “if not for Paul, Allah would not have had to send Muhammad to correct the faith of Jesus.” (emphasis mine)
self in conversation with those who wish to show where Christianity needs “correction”.

Toward the end of his life Newbigin recognized that “Islam would be, in the twenty-first century, perhaps the major contender for global power.” This recognition is echoed by many and seen in our current the global climate. Due to the reality of Islam’s growth in number and global power, Newbigin was compelled to address the “Muslim issue” with dialogue. Newbigin recognized that Muhammad had left behind the Qur'an and Jesus left behind a community that would become the church. The Qur'an was the communicated truth that Muhammad understood he had received directly from God. Jesus neither left behind a book nor any writings, on the contrary Jesus left behind a community. “Thus, mission defines the church’s identity: one cannot understand the church apart from its sending. Mission is not merely one (even very important) ministry of the church but defines the very nature of the church.” By engaging Muslims in interfaith dialogue Christians are being the church. Christians are able to respond to the both the global presence and growth of Islam while at the same time enriching and strengthening facets

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31 Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks is in the 2007 Kennan Distinguished Lecture at Duke University presented the argument that the three Abrahamic faiths significantly increased in “power” as a result of new radical developments in communication. In such manner, the increase in power of Judaism was the result of newly formed “written languages”. Christianity had its significant increase in power and influence as a result of the printing press, primarily at the time of the Reformation. Chief Rabbi Sacks then argued that our current age, in which there is for the first time, global communication through the internet and (especially now social media, one merely looks at the Arab Spring and the influence social made had) has resulted in the rise of Islam as major world power. Chief Rabbi Sacks’ conclusion was that the Islamic faith must be interacted with; however, not with violence, but dialogue.


Goheen has written extensively on this matter.
within the church; such facets that may not otherwise be addressed if not having to answer the questions of a “corrector” and live out as an ecumenical evangelist.

One example of the manner in which the church accomplishes this is seen, again, in (the previously mentioned and Newbigin favorite) Acts 10 passage in which Peter (the rock on which the church is built) has his own conversion-like experience while in dialogue with Cornelius. Interfaith dialogue with Islam brings a conversion of sorts in the Christian as they are confronted with those claiming to worship the “same” God of Abraham while at the same time reconciling one’s own understanding of who God is. In Acts 10 we read “Then Peter began to speak to them: ‘I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.’ Therefore does God show no partiality in the question of interfaith engagement between the Christian and Muslim who both “fear” and “does what is right”? Can Muslims be seen as “acceptable” within our own Christian understanding? I will attempt to answer these questions further below.

A more contemporary example can been see in the extremely important document Nostra Aetate emerging from the Second Vatican Council. This document set the precedent for interfaith relations between the Catholic Church and other religions. It has been used by many in interfaith work (Catholic and Protestant alike) as a cornerstone to build theological understanding in interfaith engagement. Nostra Aetate (along with many other aspects of the Second Vatican Council) can again been seen as a conversion within the church in her understand and engagement with non-Christians, even the

33 Act 10:34-35, New Revised Standard Version
engagement with non-Catholic Christians. A specific example is how after the Second Vatican Council the Good Friday liturgy no longer called for the conversion of the “perfidious Jews”.  

There are significant similarities between Christianity and Islam. Christians and Muslims share in a principle of fiduciary knowledge as noted by Newbigin in the Henry Martyn Lectures. Both place trust in scared texts, the two faiths claim Abrahamic lineage, and most important for Newbigin was the similarity of how God’s will is sought after as the guide and basis for life.

The concept and figure of Jesus is fascinating when looked at through the lens of Islam. Jesus, though viewed as human and not divine, is accepted and revered as the second greatest prophet in Islam. Muslims teach that if any of the prophets are denied or insulted then it’s as if you insulted all the prophets including Muhammad. In Wainwright’s biography of Newbigin he comments on how Muslims in Great Britain protested a television show that portrayed Jesus in a negative connotation and deemed too offensive. Newbigin felt it was convicting how non-Christians believed it necessary to voice an outrage of such a refuse portrayal of Jesus while Christians remained absent from the issue. This small example demonstrates the Muslim reverence for Jesus which no other non-Christian religion possesses. In addition, Islam teaches that Jesus was born

35 For a more in-depth discussion on this see Barnes SJ, *Theology and Dialogue of Religions*.
of a virgin\textsuperscript{37}; and that it will be Jesus returning to earth and his second coming that ushers in a time of peace before the final day of judgment.\textsuperscript{38}

Notwithstanding, Islam does reject the deity and death of Jesus, instead teaching Jesus was taken up into heaven and has remained there in an occultation. Herein lies the absolute difference between the two faiths. For Christians the story culminates in the event of Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection, while the Muslim story ended with the message given by Allah through the prophet Mohammad. However, even though Muslims reject the teaching of Jesus’ death, they agree with Christians that at some point in some manner Jesus ascended into heaven, at some point and in some manner Jesus will return to usher in the eschaton, and there will be a final resurrection of the believers.

Ultimately, Muslims criticize and attempt to correct Christians as being polytheists due to their belief in Trinity.\textsuperscript{39} They also decline the Bible as being the true source\textsuperscript{40} of authority and hold to the belief that the Qur'ān is the exact, literal, inspired word of Allah\textsuperscript{41}. On the whole both faiths believe in the God of Abraham, the existence of a final resurrection and eschaton. Muslims attest that good works done in the name of Allah must outweigh the works of evil in order for one to be granted eternal life. Christians hold the belief that in light of the salvific work of Christ, good works become

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\item see the Qur'ān, sura Maryam the 19\textsuperscript{th} chapter, an entire chapter devoted to Mary, Mother of Jesus.
\item For a more in-depth discussion of Jesus’ role in Islamic eschatology please see David Cook, \textit{Studies in Muslim Apocalyptic}.
\item I do see the irony of a Trinitarian justification of dialogue applied towards engagement with Muslims.
\item Muslims believe the Bible, particularly the New Testament, to be a tainted source altered to conform to the teaching that Jesus was God. However, there are elements of truth to be ascertained in the Bible. The Qur'ān often refers to Jews and Christians as “people of the book (or scripture)”; see for example Q3:110, Q3:113, Q3:199.
\item Sunnis Muslims believe the Qur'ān to be co-eternal with God where as Shi’a believe it to be created.
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the evidence of a life led by faithfulness. At the end of the long pilgrimage does both the Christian and the Muslim not “fear” God and “does what is right”?

A Final Perspective

To conclude I would like to offer a final analysis and perspective pertaining to interfaith dialogue and the issue of soteriology. The very subject is ambitious for a conclusion and could a be paper in of itself; however, I earnestly believe by briefly examining Newbigin’s exclusivity and/or inclusivity of other religions, the context of interfaith dialogue becomes appreciated on a new level and we are able to see Newbigin’s whole endeavor of interfaith dialogue culminated.

In his book *The Gospel in a Pluralistic Society*, Newbigin specifically address this issue with “other” faiths. Newbigin draws on themes of how one can reconcile Christ as the one true way while allowing for faithfulness in other (non-Christian) religions. One approach that Newbigin holds in tension is Karl Rahner’s concept of autonomous Christianity. Newbigin deals with this concept along with other forms of inclusive pluralism in a formidable fashion. Newbigin again places great emphasis on the centrality of Christ. Christ as savior, Christ as creator, and Christ as the resurrected.42

Newbigin’s answer to the tension held with “other” faiths comes in the form of “story telling”.43 Newbigin implores the reader to share the story of Jesus and consequently the story of the Bible. He offers suggestions in how this is done. When

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there is an opportunity for Christians and other faiths to cooperate, it must be done with the purpose of accomplishing “biblical goals”: such as feeding the poor, helping the sick, and other such forms of good. When in cooperation with other faiths, Christians should be an example and witness through the ascertaining of this mutual goal. This notion of cooperation will present opportunities for the Christian to share the story of Christ and incorporate the dialogue partner into that very story. Again the notion of evangelism through ecumenism arises.

Newbigin himself deconstructs the idea that there are only three options in relation to Christianity: inclusivism, pluralism, and exclusivism.\textsuperscript{44} Newbigin did not necessarily appreciate the pigeon-holing and limitation of the categories exclusivism (though Gavin DaCosta labels him as one) or inclusivism (though Stephen DC Corts labels him as one)\textsuperscript{45} and instead seeks a more nuanced paradigm. The foundation of his own claim is “exclusivist in the sense that it affirms the unique truth of the revelation in Jesus Christ, but not exclusivist in the sense in the sense of denying the possibility of salvation of the non-Christian.”\textsuperscript{46} Instead of trying to reveal the mysteries of God’s saving grace, Newbigin offers an educated assessment and allows for the Divine’s work to complete the task. With this concept in mind, the Christian then can proceed in their pilgrimage of dialogue and cooperative good.

\textsuperscript{44} Newbigin, \textit{The Gospel in a Pluralistic} 182-183.
\textsuperscript{46} Newbigin, \textit{The Gospel in a Pluralistic}, 182.
In brief I demonstrated why it is important to be involved in interfaith dialogue in relation to the ecumenism and witness. Using Newbigin’s Trinitarian justification for interfaith dialogue, it was explained how Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are catalysts for interacting with those who do not claim Jesus as Lord. I attempted to not merely offer a summary of Newbiginian dialogue or the growing “concern” of Islam, but I applied Newbigin and used his “Trinitarian dialogue” as the Christian response towards the Muslim along our own pilgrimage in that way we maybe named Christian, Faithful, Hopeful, Help, Charity, Knowledge, and Evangelist. I wish to end with these final remarks from Bishop Newbigin, “The human story is one which we share with all other human beings – past, present, and to come. We cannot opt out of the story. We cannot take control of the story. It is under the control of the infinitely patient God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*47

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