

CHARLES HAHN: Report after assignment in England 12/72

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Charles and I left here on Easter Sunday afternoon in the spring of 69 and arrived in London on Easter Monday morning, which is a very quiet time to arrive in England. The only time that might be more quiet would be on boxing day which is the 26th of Decemeber. Every thing really closes down on those two days. We were sent principally to England but to Europe to have a look for 3 months to see what was going on there and - quit giggling - that'w what our assignment was. That makes the luggage just right. And we were there from then until this fall. Our basic tools as we went were a grad list on a print out and anot another list of key contacts which the last teaching team had made for us after they had left there. so what we were doing was basically following two teams which had preceded us as penetnation teams during the fall of 68 and the fall of 69. That list of key contacts we found to be invaluable and that became really the ~~WAAA~~ grid off which we worked initially. Some of those contacts turned out to be the ones that should have been on avoid at all costs list, but that was valuable too. and for the next 9 months, we were gagabonds, nomads literally. We didn't set down our suitcases anywhere for more than a few hours, or at best a few days. We traveled the length and breadth of Britain and went onto the continent 3 times during that time. Then for the next nine months after that we were more like migratory nonads, seasonal migrants, we would set down, instead of for 2 hours or two days more than 2 weeks to 2 months, ~~w~~ here and there. and then during the next year we were more established, in a religious house. ~~AAA~~ in the North of England, but during this time initially we contacted people that were on our key contact list, talked with them, and through them set up any kind of meetings that we could set up, additional clergy meetings, etierh while we were there or some time in the future, out of those we squeezes courses, one why or another, set those up and then they did the recruiting of them, We basically were going around feeling what the climate was, what had happened as a consequence of our having been there, going back and sustaining, writing letters of thanks

and of encouragement, and gridding and gridding and gridding the whole area one way and another. It was really rather a Pauline image that we worked out of. initially especially. Just trying to get back in touch with the people where we had been in touch and then to encourage them any way possible and to build on what was there ~~was~~ a base already. If ~~you~~ you want to talk about the grid that we came up with and we worked off of and this was really our prayer chart the whole time that we were there. basically it was this, and this is the London region, this is AREA LONDON this whole business. and this is the London region and this is the Bristol region and this the Birmingham, this one Manchester, this Glasgow and this one is Dublin,

For you edification at this point in history, there are two houses in this area. One house is here in the London region, just south of the Thames about a ²⁰ 30 minute British rail ride into the heart of London and the other house is up here in the Manchester region, though not near Manchester and not a suburb of London as many phone calls have indicated. during the last year or two people were always calling us up, thinking they were going ~~to~~ to come visit us and that we ~~were~~ were on the edge of London somewhere. We were up here on the North east coast. Manchester is over here and we were across the island. We were up here at a place called Teaside about 40 miles south of Newcastle. that's the kind of grid that we were operating off of in the British Isles in area London and we want to talk about this a little bit historically just to get a bit of perspective of the way it looked. This is Scotland, this is England basically here, Wales is this part here. the main part of the Bristol region and of course here about 1/6 of the Irish grid is Northern Ireland and Ulster, and sometimes when you are ~~at~~ this distance, these things fade a little bit but the Irish republic is a separate

all on its own. Northern Ireland is a part of the United Kingdom and that is a very painful reality for the whole area in this day, the pain of what is going on in U-ster, just completely overshadows every thing else in the newspapers day in and day out and it is a very difficult thing, not simply externally for Great Britain to deal, but internally, it is a extremely difficult reality to acknowledge and even to acknowledge, ~~must~~ ~~must~~ ~~less~~ ~~to~~ ~~say~~ ~~yes~~ ~~to~~. And of course it is extremely complex situation that has been created here over the centuries, with no simple solution. That is very difficult too.

Well, you look at this and it is clear that what we have in an Island, two islands actually, of course, but there is ~~but~~ ~~all~~ ~~water~~ all around, and that is a critical issue in terms of what is going on there and has for a long long time. The last time this Island was successfully invaded was in 1066 when the Normans came and stayed, and that is a long time ago, and people all around are clear that that is an island and there is that kind of mindset going on in great Britain. We picked it up either latently or obviously referred to that way, when we traveled outside this area. over in Scandinavian and on the rest of the continent of Europe, people are clear that there is something different there in terms of mindset and a kind of island tradition, and history that they have, but the amazing thing is, that in the mist of that island set, they are global, there is an unsurpassed global awareness and experience. When I was very small one of the things that I remember from looking on the globe and having it interpreted was that all the pink places where the British Empire, and that the sun never set on the British empire. And there were just loads of pink places all around that globe. that sat in our living room. That kind of history is incredible. and now it has all been handed over, that is all gone, and this island exists in a post empire age. ~~with~~ ~~with~~ ~~unsurpassed~~ ~~global~~ ~~experience~~, what they did was to take western civilization at its ~~highest~~ ~~and~~ ~~its~~ ~~best~~ and to export it all over the globe. and it was that

kind of exporting ready that was the drive. Now, what is happening is that they are getting the imports from all of that. and that is very frightening to them, because they stood in a very liberal tolerate kind of position for a long time and now to have people from the former colonies pouring in at a rapid rate day in and day out from the sub-continent of Asia and from Africa and from the west Indies, is a very awesome experience indeed and one which address you as you move thru the centuries and you see that people don't know how to handle it and there is fear and there is concern and there is excitement in the midst of that. Napoleon called this people a nation of shop keepers and objective that is true, if you just walk around and see it, that is what you see, shops, shops, baker shoper, butcher shops, green grocer shops, and when you go shopping that is what you are aware of, you take your little bag and you q-up at the butchers and you q-up at the bakers and you q-up at the green grocers and but there is something deeper deeper than that going on and somehow, they have taken this and turned in on themselves a bit, and you see it in lots of ways, we were talking about this and one of our colleagues there suggested that maybe that is what goes on in germs of their own history of theology, or theologians, what you have, what Britain has produced basically has been a kind of shopkeeper theology, I don't mean to degrade that, if that is what it might sound like, but theology for popular consumption. You have J.B. Phillips, who did a fantastic job, but it is a shopkeepers job, and you have ~~J.T.~~ J.T. Robinson, who really was the way the whole theological stew got in across Britain, For an mass suggestion at all. There are Biblical scholars of note, but basically this is the kind of work that has been done, in terms of theology. Theology for popular consumption. Theology that is readable. Theology that is understandable. And yet, ver wolid stuff in the midst of that.

You have ~~ath~~ this kind of (and I think it goes along with the shopkeepers image, a kind of classic awareness that it is extremely difficult for an American to be aware of to get inside of, it goes back centuries, and you talk about the working class and you know what you are talking about when you say the working class, the people down at the hour laundrette, down the street from the Teaside house, that is grassroots working class people. And that ~~is~~'s been sustained in very subtle ways, but the language reflects it and sustains it and you learn when you are talking to somebody that he is working class, almost inevitably you know.

One of our greatest spirit colleagues, was down there in the bottom on the Manchester region and we went ~~back~~ by to visit Jim one day and we got to talking about this, and how, we were getting names from him really, and one of the clergy he gave us, he said, well, I never trusted him much, he is very Oxford, and I never liked the way he talked but the last time I saw him I decided something was going on with him, and probably you wught to see him. He said, to me: Well, Jim, the first time I ever heard you open your month, I said Lancaster working class. Well, that is deep, deep, deep. YOU just can't imagine and it goes on now on thru the schools and is often perpetuated by the kind of schooling that is there which screens very early and makes specialization come at very early ages and perpetuates this kind of a system. When Lawrence wrote how Beatsly the Bourgiouse, it took me some time to be able to read that and ~~it~~ begin to hear it thru English ears but it is a different thing to hear as an Englishman than it is an an American. How Beastly the Bourgeoise is.

Well, that kind of class consciousness prevades.

And in the midst of it, the history length of it you begin to get hold of the kind of sense of history that the people have, and that is another aspect. a deep deep sense of history. I mentioned the other day

to someone, that at the 5th grade here kids took American history and she was silent for a minute, and she said, you know what I thought, I thought What History? and she was history, what history could you study in America that would take a fifth grader a whole year? It was that kind of long, long, and it begins to work on you both positively and negatively. Last week when we were having people name the churches and talk about how old some of the churches were ~~and~~ ^{that} some of the galaxy people come from and it was said, this church is 75 years old and 92 years old and it was a jolt for me again. when you look at some of the cathedrals. Teaside is only a half hour drive from Durham, it goes back to Norman days, the architecture, Unbelievable and you drive thru and there is village church after village church that go back to 1300, 1200, There is one on the Green where we lived that had some kind of I don't know whether you would call it sculpture or not, but something chiseled out of the rocks on the wall that go back to Saxon days, ~~that~~ ^{That} kind of history is just ~~is~~ all pervading. and you participate in it. and the fear and fascination.

In the midst of that we could talk about some of the kinds of gifts and problems, and I don't have long enough. But I would want to characterize them this way, and we worked on this and gestalted and re gestalted the whole time we were there, but you might talk about the Feel of the people in terms of the sanctity of the individual, that is deep and you see it in terms of people's life and they will do anything to keep an expressway from disenfranchising one single person, the walls that go between the rows of terraced houses, where they are just row upon row of little houses, right on the street, but there are walls between them at the back, between the yards, or gardens and they go back for centuries. It is that kind of ~~sanctity~~ sanctity of the individual Or you could talk about a kind of, I would to link these two pretty

closely, but PROPRIETY, you just know what is proper and that is what is important. that you do what is proper. You be what is proper, you act what is proper. They know this from birth, but you eat the way that is proper you q-up because that is proper and on and up, it is a whole sense of law and of obedience that is extremely deep.

and then I would want to talk and dogged determination, the bulldog image, getting a picture of what has to be and then sticking with that holding onto it, with dogged determination, see thru to the ending, step by step and in the midst of this a kind of rational approach that is unbelievable, a kind of rational analysis. This is in everything they do. This is the way they speak. This is the way they take apart what you say. It is difficult to talk there, the way we do in this country. You just do not talk in great imaginal pictures that pull things with little fuzzy edges. It has to be precise and it has to be exact and it has to have an analysis that makes sense and their whole contribution to philosophy, of course, has been linguistic analysis where you just step back. But what you have really, (well, we'll talk about that in a minute but that is what is going on).

The other thing that I would want to say about who they are is this sense of history. And I have already filled that out. But then you want to flip that and see the kind of spirit malaise that exists in the midst of it, because what goes on here, or the spirit issues as we have talked about it. And we have talked about it as Privatism. Boiling every thing down to so that that finally people are not simply cut off from their neighbor with the giant walls that are every where but they become cut off from themselves, from their own deaps, not willing to have a look at what goes on, what's way deep in their own internal live. That kind of privatism has just been imploded that way, and it comes out in popular phrases which help to hold it. One of them is he just doesn't want to

that is a popular way of talking about people anytime any place. He doesn't want to know, and he doesn't. He does not want to look at the pain of life, or the deeps, or to ground life and is cut off at that point. And very close to this, but the flip side of the propriety, would be a kind of guilt that issues out of this. It is tied to other things too but a kind of guilt, unresolved guilt because it is very hard to confess because it is not proper, really, to live in the kind of world, to have participated in what went on in the colonial world, it is not proper to hate, it is not proper to be greedy, and there is no way of grasping the deeps, either of the grandeur or being able to say yes to it, because it is cut off in a kind of overriding guilt that goes on in the post-empire world, which has been tied closely to the last one, which keeps them cut off from a vision of the future. And the other side of dogged determinism is what you might talk about as Bloody-mindedness. That is hard for an American to get. So what. But that is brutal. It is getting caught in your own model. It is getting trapped in seeing only your own limited vision. It is moving with a kind of inflexibility and that I think is being related to the kind of analysis that was talked about which would be only seeing the parts, being trapped in analysis. A very liberal kind of stance, thru out the whole of Great Britain, but trapped in analysis and you see the pieces clearly this way, and you see how they relate one to the other in rational sequence, but it is very hard to keep the big picture. It is hard to have the overall. It is nigh on to impossible to be aware of the mystery, because your system is so neat, there is no need for the mystery. Life is the totality of its parts and it is cut off from that which, there is no room there, there is no space, it is all glued together, and then I think if you would have to talk about the sense of history, you can see how these are all

closely entwined. What that has done is to cut them off from the future. You go around and it is with deep pain, you just see the problem. How would you like to decide which ones of those cathedrals ought to be maintained and which ones you need to let go, or which piece of great architectural, or whatever, and you see the time and energy and life that is poured in to sustaining the past, or the monumental task, that leaves people cut off from the future, and that is where you encounter the spirit pain.

I need not say anymore. But in the midst of this, I think one of the greatest things to happen to me while I was there, was the study of Otto. Otto could not have had the kind of impact that he had, anywhere else. But the awe of the past, with the awe of the monuments that are there and not - no way of grasping awe in our time and in our day. The kind of appreciation I had for the spirit tools which we worked on relentlessly and which Britain needs. Well, it's the only possible ^{ity} for the salvation of the people. That is not to say that the spirit is not there. Obviously it is. You are always running across it, but our job is to create it, to create the awe, that gives people a way of standing present to the keeps and the wonder of the mystery, which is not only in the past and not only in the future, but -- Well, that was for us the mountain of care and that is going to continue to be the mountain of care as we work in this area. The thing that happened was that one day I woke up realizing that I was singing over and over again, the second verse of Mighty Fortress and the words that I found myself singing were, did we in our own strength confide our striving would be losing. You can put that on any level that you want to put it. But - I sense here that it was, that it was the order, that it was the necessity of creating a spirit community there, that it was life over against the mystery and in that a strange kind of wonder and confidence and certitude which I was over against in the midst of the mountain of care. And

we want to talk a little bit more about how that, how we have been particularly engaged and what the future seems to look like.

CHARLES HAHN: The movement first come to Britain, that is to Great Brit that is the Island on the west, about 1500 years ago when a strange little Irish monk got expelled from Ireland fro being irresponsible and disobedience and they put him in a boat and shoved him off and St. Columba landed on a little island off the west coast of Ireland called Iona and set up a little community there and from there began to evangelize the Island of Great Britain and soon efter that another community was set up on the other side over here, at a place called Holy Island and from here a pincher movement began to move this way and of course up here to thse people in the scottish area. Shortly after that another monk from the mediterranean showed up down here in tis corner and began to push up from this way and the movement was really on the move. from both the North and the south the pincher movement began to happen across here, those people met somewhere along in here, somewhere around the middle of the island and there they just permeated every area. You can imagine when you walk across the fens here in Lancasthisre and you walk acorss or drive across in the slightly undulating plains and you see that you are never out of sight of a church steeple or a church tower of some kind, you can just imagine somebody like, Ethylbert, and someone walking around and just imagine what went thru their minds as they began to think about griddin ghat place, and just think, what if we went into this whole area and saw that no metter where you walked you were never ~~out~~ out of sight of one of those steeples, to remind you of who you are and what you are about. Those two idlands are gridded that way, to where you are never out of sight of some steeple. The movement was fantastic, there.

No, a little bit of history. Just to get a feel after the fact that the people of the British Isles, always walked with the saints. It is impossible for us to get the feeling that the churchman has there. St. Columba is a friend, or St. who came down from, or St. Cuthbert. They are close colleagues for the churchmen, they are very much in the consciousness and memory and people know what they did. They know their martyrdom, and this sort of thing, yet the sense of the whole history of the church is present. Now, just one anecdote. Not too far from the house here at Teaside, is Whitby. In the year 666, there was a council of Whitby and at the council, all these Celts up here the one's from the north, the ones who were successors to Columba and Aidan and the ones who were successors to Augustine, got together at Whitby and in 666 they fought it out over which calendar they would use. Would they use the ancient Celtic calendar, or the Latin calendar coming out of Rome. Rome won, and so the Roman calendar was taken on. But that Council of Whitby is a part of people's memory. It is a part of their consciousness. You get some feel. By the way, those of you interested in the women's history in the church, the person who was chairman of that council was St. Hilda who was the Prioress of the Priory here at Whitby. That is really, I couldn't believe it, but that is true. She was the one that presided. How that happened, I don't know. And all the Celts say that is why the Romans won. There is - to get some feel after how people experience that. If we came up leaping, leaping, leaping, and you have to talk about the movements that came and the reformation came, and then the non-conformist churches came, the Methodist Wesleyan movement came, and in the last century the Oxford movement came, the sectarian movement, and this was a return to the classical forms if you will. And this was a return to appropriating the great Catholic forms of the church and that was a movement and today the church of England is radically permeated by that

Oxford movement. Movements have come and gone across the British Isles. When we went to the British Isles and to Europe, we discovered that we were just coming home to momma. We were coming home, because the movement began in Europe. The twentieth century movement began in Europe. You remember Barth, Bultmann, Bonhoeffer and you remember the Lay Centers and the Academies. Remember the community experiments, Iona, Tezee, the particular parish experiments, the house church movement. All those fantastic creations, began there in Europe, and it is no wonder that when we launched our selfconsciousness in the movement we went back and Jack Lewis and some of the others a year or two later went back to Europe to just see what was going on. They made the breakthrough. But Europe has not had the tools to do the practical job, we are the edge, the front of what you might point to as a spirit movement in the world today. There is nothing else, there is no place else to point. That is radical. It is hard. But it is true. We have done the practical job. We have done the job of the hard headed strategy of going down to the specific kinds of tactics, We have done the job of welding out a form of corporateness. We have done the job of gridding and building a network and seeing that it is only because we have a global network; that the new church and the new world can come into being. And that is offensive to Momma. That is offensive to Momma. That from across the sea and from America that could happen. ^{it could take} That/the kinds of intellectual breakthroughs and intellectuals and pick them up and wrestle them around and shape for every last man is offensive to momma. But that is sort of the history of the movement up till now. Now, what we bring when we move into Europe, when we move into the British Isles, We bring several things. We embrace the church, which everybody has written off, including the churchmen. We embrace momma church and people are shocked. They cannot quite understand how we say yest/ to the church. That is a shock. We come in with practical tools and it is to the church.

so much given up that there are no more tools that will do the job yet. You know that it is too far gone. And so it like a foregone conclusion that every experiment is going to fail so why even experiment. A corporate style. The third thing that we bring. That is a shock. because all of us in Western civilization are individualists
(turn over tape)

. . . that dimension of life. It is just shocked and at the same time it excites. Those are the kinds of things that we bring to that one going movement of movements that has happened in the British Isles and Europe. Now, I want to just talk about the future in 4 ways and I don't even know. I will make a few quick comments about these 4 areas. One. Strategy. Second. Obedience. Third. Creating Spirit. and fourth. Order Relations. In strategy, I just say to anyone who ^{is preparing} ~~has/attended~~ from a global assignment, in any way, which I suppose everybody is that just take at face values every bit of wisdom, every bit of skill, every bit of experience that you have, ~~do/hot/~~ We have what is needed. And a rational grid and a rational approach to penetrating an area. The wisdom that we have about that is just basic and trust it, trust it. Trust the fact that you want to see that something comes off simultaneously in 6 regions. Not one. Not two, but six and you go to see that they come off all at the same time. And once something happens in all 6 you see that 36 metres are coming off at the same time. We have that methodology. And that grid for us, we have never known the depths of the power of this. This lived before us constantly. People thought we were crazy. Every room we were in we had that grid. Not simply in terms of the abstract outline, but the reason we held to this one was a practical one. I know, in terms of our abstraction that our grid has to be this - I have no problems with that. But for us who are newcomers we had to have this overlaying a map We had to be able anytime we heard a name to go to that grid and locate

what was going on so that you had a way of just being the British Isles and that grid became who we're were and I know the British Isles like I not another Englishman in here knows the British Isles. That is an arrogant statement. But it is because of the methods of the movement, that that is so. Now, the second thing, It is time to stop.

Just outline. Our wisdom says that the first place is that local parish priest, that means that you go and get that clergyman. Visit Visit. Hit the clergymen. Hit the clergymen. This is especially true here. In England, not as much in Scotland or Wales, but in England if you don't touch the clergyman you don't have a ghost of a chance of touching the laymen of the church. And any of you who think that it is necessary to hate clergymen, and brainwash yourself with these images that clergymen are no good and all they do is sit around, and get up at 10 and go to bed at 4 in the afternoon, if you continue to brain wash yourself with that you are going to hate them and you are not going to be able to do the job of going in and awakening them and corralling them, breaking open their vision, and giving them new possibility and penetration then. But we are out to get finally grassroots participation at every point. We. ~~It's/it's/it's~~ Our concern is every last human being, again, the last fat lady, that is our symbol. In being here this last 2 weeks, since we began the order council, the guilding thing has increasingly mushroomed in my imagination to where I am so convinced that this is the right track that I just can't express it. It is so right for Britain. It is so right for Europe. Guilding. Whatever it is, a post or a dynamic. Now, the Christian memory is gone. There is some ways in which the youth get more of the Christian memory than some of us did, because they have religious instruction in school, all the way thru. but that religious instruction is not in the faith, but a bit of memory gets passed on. But the guilding dynamic is what is going to break open this

radically secular island and secular continent. I will not go ahead to deal with Obedience but name ^{four} ~~three~~ things:

Obedience to the world
Obedience to the Times

those have to do with our awareness of our theological insights in terms of sin and ourselves. Obedience to the times, analysis of the revolutions of the 20th century and then obedience to the British Isles, or ~~to~~ obedience to the area where I am and I would call that cautious Abandon. I want to emphasize both of those words. Cautious. Rediscovered. You know we had to do the tripple quadruple reflection about what was happening before we moved into something, but at the same time you ~~abandoned~~ had to demand of yourself some kind of abandon, or you would ~~not~~ move for fear that you would make the wrong step. A cautious abandon. And if anybody wants to say, well, we have to adapt this to the British isles. We have to adapt this. No, the first thing you say is NO. we know about the world, we know about the time and that is the same about the planet, there is no such things as adapting to the British Isles or adapting to Canada or someplace else. Then, on the other side of that the Lord of history. He for some reason created people over here on this Island who are within the context of living in our times and in the world, th ~~what~~ you have to be aware of. What Doris mentioned in terms of this over here about the sense of history and this rational analysis, ^{And if} ~~if~~ you don't know that you will fall ~~off~~ off into pits that are great gaping holes. But your wisdom is that we are obedient to what we know about the world and the times, and then we do whatever adaptation in the ~~kind~~ context of that, instead of saying we have to make something British out of this. If there is anything British ever made out of the spirit movement there, it will be by those British people who ~~are~~ radically abandon themselves thru risking the spirit deeps and are not in the first instance saying we have to make this thing palatable. to the British.

The time is up - 7:30. Just a few comments.
 I'm skipping, creating the church ^{and Order} ~~relationships~~ relations. and just make
 a personal comment or two. . . . ^{The phrase} the journey to the center, 18
 months ago, or whenever that phrase began to come across. in writing.
 And it began to speak to me. I really wasn't clear about how it
 began to speak to me until John Baggett gave a fantastic lecture
~~and~~ in the Academy but it was speaking to me anyway. In 2 and a
 half years in the British Isles, I suspect that I have passed through
 several of those valleys, ~~the~~ Joe, I understand, liked to use me as
 as an illustration at one point in his lecture on passing thru the
 valleys and that is fine, and true. But I think, passed thru several
 values, three or four doesn't seem like enough to describe it. But
 that image became an important one forme. All kinds of personal things
 happened. The experience of seeing colleagues that you thought were
 coming along and developing just turn to ashes. and you thought they
 are the ones who are going to move. That's is one kind of thing.
 Personal - family kinds of things happen and when there are just two
 of you there is nobody else to remind you that the word is the way to
 live, except, I would remind Doris and Doris would remind me. and we
 had our own ways of doing that sort of thing. but the one thing that
 I would say is that our work and our training ourselves in the spirit
 We are absolutely wrong to talk about training ourselves in the spirit
 but I think that is what we do. I think that is probably what sanctifi-
 cation is. Training in it. Already there but training in it. is the
 only thing that will enable anyone to stand. Not only on a global
 assignment but an assignment here. That is the only thing that will
 enable a person to stand today with the kind of intensity with which
 we live, and the kind of missional thrust. ^{I had} ~~the~~ two songs that held
 me during the time that I was in the British Isles. The first one was

How firm a foundation. and that was for about a year. or 18 months, and the second one was, I am a wtranger here, and these two songs were the ones that I continually came back to and sang and sang and sang as that my Solitary office. Again and again and again. And I suppose without those two songs, I might not have made it. Those u two songs were thre.

~~We~~ ~~th~~ you and I have more clarity than anybody else on the planet. Yu go to the German church, they don't know. ~~th~~ The English church doesn't know. We have more clarity and we are the ones that are demanded in the world today. AMEN.