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Book Reviews

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Samuel Wilson, 1997-99

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T. V. Thomas,   2001-03

Scott J. Jones, 2003-2004

Hal Poe, 2004-2006

Ron Johnson, 2006-2008

In This Issue

It has been said, "Whoever wins the city, wins!" This issue of the journal begins with Ronald Johnson's call for a renewal of mission interest in the city. As a former district overseer in Miami and pastor in Boston, I enthusiastically encourage you to read it. He makes his case well.

I have lost count of the times students in evangelism classes have cited St. Francis supposed saying, "Preach the gospel everywhere you go; if necessary, use words." When I tell them Francis didn't say that, they look at me in disbelief. (They have heard it too many times!) Well, now Jack Jackson sets us straight, not only on the quotation but on the character of Francis' mission. You'll be as intrigued as I was by his investigation.

Robert Coleman's article on revival is redolent in places of his Master Plan books. But it is more sweeping, helping us to see God's work of revival from beginning to end. But that's just it—it doesn't end! It is ongoing says Coleman. Revival isn't something we look for in the past; like Habakkuk, we look for God to bring revival in our own day too.

Donald McGavran and Church Growth focused our attention on research and getting the facts. But what was the genesis of McGavran's interest in research. In our fourth article, we learn that, before McGavran, was J. Waskom Pickett, who led the largest social survey ever done outside the U.S. or the U. K.—an in-depth survey of nearly 4,000 Untouchable Christians. Read how McGavran became interested in, and learned about, the contribution of research for effective evangelism.

Imagine Wesley in conversation with an emergent church leader. That is what Paul Chilcote does in his "blogersation," *Wesley and Emergent Christians in Conversation.* His article is of special interest to United Methodists, but it is relevant and informative for all who think and teach about evangelism. Note, particularly, his eight "talking points," which I think you'll find as useful as I did.

Finally, Byungbae Hwang summarizes his study of a widespread problem in the Korean church, but certainly not limited to Korea: an underdeveloped, unequipped laity. He studied thirteen contrast churches—churches with strong lay involvement and mobilization. See what he found out.

Editorial: Tracking Missional Ecclesiology

Book reviews come at the back end of journals like this, so, though we read, appreciate, and use the reviews to make decisions about purchases and course reading, our attention tends more to be on the articles. But worthy of our notice this time, is the number of books reviewed that focus on the postmodern scene and so-called emerging churches. Of course, that is the focus of an article too---Paul Chilcote's "blogersation."

I, for one, have been interested in the substantial attention of so-called emerging churches to the *missio Dei* and missional ecclesiology, themes which, after a long journey from Karl Barth's famous address at Brandenburg in 1932, have gained broad acceptance (but none more enthusiastic than from this new conversation and genre of congregation).

Since the 1980s, the *missio Dei* conversation, once largely limited to elite settings, has broken free of its missionary conference sequestration. Via the writings of Lesslie Newbigin and, since the 1990s, the Gospel and our Culture Network in North America, the conversation has become mainstream under the banner of "missional church." As of this writing, Googling "missional theology" garners more than a million hits, and "missional community" results in an astonishing 146 million hits.

Central to this ecclesiological phenomenon is the "reinstatement" of God as the Protagonist in mission, with mission driving the church, not vice-versa, leading proponents like Norman Goodhall to say, "There is no participation in Christ without participation in his mission to the world."

But where do we stand overall in this recovery of first-century apostolicity? If the *raison d'être* of the church is *to be sent*—to do the will of God by being on God's errand to the world—then, for those of us called to college and seminary classrooms to equip leaders for tomorrow's churches, the time has surely come to move on from merely laying out the concept to helping find practical ways to encourage and implement the shift from church-driven mission. The example par excellence of course is the One who was sent by the Father and who now sends us. How different is his example of selfless servanthood and suffering sacrifice from today's entrepreneurial models. How humbling it is to look again at his pattern of looking to the Spirit to shape each decision and ever show the way.

– Art McPhee

The Ends of the Earth Have Come to Town: A Theology of Mission and Evangelism

Ronald W. Johnson

"And out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden … " (Genesis 2:9-10a)

"Then he showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city … " (Rev. 22:1a)

Stafford, Texas has a problem. The town of 19,200 is the largest city in Texas without a property tax according to an article in the Los Angeles Times. Stafford is finding it increasingly difficult to pay for police services, ambulance and fire services and city improvement. The city has relied over the years on sales taxes and fees to fund the operations of the local government. And the city is growing.

Stafford is near Houston, so it is a rapidly expanding edge-city, anxious to absorb the overflow of Houston business and citizens who wish to live in a smaller city. One would think the sky would be the limit, even without a property tax.

But the sky is not the limit. The city of Stafford has a real problem. It has too many churches. The mayor was quoted as saying, "Our city has an excessive number of churches." In fact, the city of seven square miles has 51 churches and other religious institutions, all of them tax exempt. So the

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city is rushing to find some way to prohibit any more churches from being built on the 300 potentially revenue-producing acres left in Stafford. Said the mayor, "With federal laws, you can't just say, "We're not going to have any more churches … we respect the Constitution, but 51 of anything is just too much."[1]

You might think that 51 churches are the typical ones you might find in Texas: Baptists (bunches of those in Texas), Methodists, Presbyterians, Catholics and the like. But when the forty-fifth church settled into the city, public meetings were held to discuss the emerging problem, and along came the Buddhists looking to add their voice to those who did not want the city to prohibit the growth of religious institutions.

Stafford is not alone in figuring out what to do about faith in the city. In east Orlando, Florida there are dozens of churches packed into a limited area, and Sunday morning's traffic jam is as frustrating as the Monday morning work commute. One mega church has paid a one million dollar impact fee to build a church that will seat 6,000. It is across the street from another mega church and people are complaining about the increased traffic load the church will present. A city planner said that the problem is that you cannot simply zone against churches like you can houses of ill-repute, even though both have high traffic patterns.[2]

In recent decades there were reports of churches leaving the inner city and moving to the suburbs, largely trying to follow the wealth or to escape the problems of the city. In his book, *The City, What is it Really Like*? Vern Miller suspects that many churches have left the city because they suspect that the city is the graveyard of faith.[3] Some of the most difficult people to reach are those whose lives are made even more complex by urban pressures that hobble the poor and urban advantages that lure the comfortable, but the trend of churches escaping to what they believe to be the ease and security of suburban life may be slowing. The reason is simple. You cannot outrun the city. It is futile to try. A church that moves to the comfortable suburbs today may find itself surrounded in only a few years by the ever expanding neighboring city. And try as they might, there is no way to escape what is now reality—most of the world's population are city folks, either by location or by vocation.

On the surface, we may suspect that negative attitudes toward the city are somehow being justified. After all, just read the secular doomsday books that indict the city[4] or better still, just tune into the evening news.

Magazines like *U.S. News and World Report*[5] have carried special editions that speak of the peril of the city. One only has to revisit the trauma of New Orleans to be reminded that for some who live in cities there is no escape. So, for a lot of people the city is not a beacon of light, but a whirlwind of despair.

We should be careful, however, to not judge too harshly. What we are dealing with are ingrained attitudes that may lie just below the surface of a lot of people, especially within those who were not raised in the city. John Alexander has commented that denial of the problems of the city are so real that most evangelicals have become scarcely aware of the suffering in our cities. And being unaware they continue to replicate attitudes passed along to them by parents and others. "Our abilities at selective perception, distortion, and self-deception are so great that we seem to be able to hold on to almost any belief, providing we learned it at our mother's knee," he says.[6] So, the challenge of turning the hearts and minds of our corporate churches and, indeed, individual Christians toward the city may call for a rather dramatic conversion: to envision a theology of mission for the city through the eyes of Jesus rather than through the eyes of our ingrained attitudes.

Ray Bakke, in *A Theology As Big As The City,* rightly places the focus of attention to the city within the sphere of missiology. In the spirit of scholars like Lesslie Newbigin, David Bosch, Harvie Conn, and the like, Bakke has emerged with a strong voice reminding us that, "mission is no longer about crossing the oceans, jungles, and deserts, but about crossing the streets of the world's cities. From now on, nearly all ministry will be cross-cultural amid the urban pluralism caused by the greatest migration in human history from Southern hemispheres to the North, from East to West, and, above all, from rural to urban."[7] This is the great new fact that redefines mission today. To be on mission with God is to recognize that the river out of Eden now flows through the streets of the cities of the world.

If the *missio Dei* is defined as God's redemptive enterprise, holistically expressed as redemption for the cosmos, and if God has chosen for humanity to participate with God in that mission, then we must take seriously Jesus' attitude toward that mission and to examine how Jesus lived out the *missio Dei* in terms of the city. Listen to Jesus for a moment:

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you.... How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not!"(Luke 13:34)

Do we hear in Jesus' voice the missional concern of God? Do we hear our mission as well?

When Swiss Anabaptist George Blaurock faced expulsion from Zurich during the Reformation, he reportedly told the officials of the town, "I would rather die than leave the city."[8] He went on to espouse a biblical mandate for his city and claimed that it needed to be redeemed by God. Without that kind of conviction, our churches will remain with addresses in the downtown but in reality existing only as black holes, sucking into themselves sanctified suburbanites while being invisible to the masses who walk the city streets.

A theology of mission in the city must ask itself, would we rather leave the city than die in it? Are we fighting in our churches to keep the world from infecting our churches, or are we ready to plunge headlong into the city streets and pour the light of the gospel into every corner?

It will require us to cry over the city and to cry out on behalf of the city. A missional theology must learn to cry as Jesus cried for the city. Jim Perkinson has said in an article recently, that a city represents a structure of dependence on various elsewheres. A city does not grow its own food but depends on ecosystems outside it. Its needed metals and minerals do not come from the city center, but from far away. Cities live off ecologies at a distance from their own visible architectures.[9] If this is the case, the city is looking for Christians to bring resources to it instead of taking resources away from it and then retreating to use them elsewhere. Churches, therefore, must give up self-interests for the sake of the city. Human need has to transcend at all times the vested interests of beautiful sanctuaries and padded pews and turn attention to a major theme found in the book of Luke which is God's preferential option for the poor.

As followers of Christ, we are challenged to embrace a preferential option for the poor, namely, to create conditions for marginalized voices to be heard, to defend the defenseless, and to assess lifestyles, policies and social institutions in terms of their impact on the poor. The option for the

poor does not mean pitting one group against another, but rather, it calls us to strengthen the whole community by assisting those who are most vulnerable.[10] Jesus gave a definitive reason for his ministry in Luke 4:18 as he quoted Isaiah:

> *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has appointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."*

If this is Jesus' ministry, certainly it should be ours. The city is often the place where we find not only the poor, but those who are captives to poverty, economic conditions such as underemployment, substandard living conditions and neighborhood violence. Roger Greenway has suggested several agendas in addressing the problems of poverty in the city that the church should note. One agenda item would shock most of our churches.

It is an epidemic that is overlooked in most cities. It is very observable in major cities outside the United States. The problem of children in the cities is at a crisis point. Last year, our mission immersion class traveled to Brazil where we encountered the street kids in Rio and Salvador by the dozens. These children, many abandoned, live on the streets, beg for food, and lack any education. They are victims of crimes, sexual exploitation and short lives exacerbated by malnutrition. Estimates from UNICEF cite some 100 million children living in the streets of the world today.[11] In the United States, according to the National Runaway Switchboard, 75 percent of runaways will become involved in theft, drugs or pornography. One out of every three teens on the street will be lured into prostitution within 48 hours of leaving home. In Seattle alone, there are more than 1000 children on the city streets every night. They sleep in abandoned cars, under bridges, and in back alleys. According to Richard Estes, many of these children are actively being recruited for the sex industry.[12]

The United States has about 5.5 million children living in extreme poverty, approximately one million of whom are on the streets. A study conducted by the Luxembourg Income Study shows poor children in the United States are poorer than children in most Western industrialized countries since the United States has fewer generous social programs, the

widest gap between rich and poor, and high numbers of poor immigrant and unwed teen mothers. The poverty and social conditions many American children face lead to large numbers of homeless and street children.[13]
The Atlanta Children's shelter reports that 13,000 people go to bed each night without a home. At least 2,500 of them are children.

In his book, *Urban Ministry*, David Claerbaut refers to poverty in the city as invisibility.[14] When poverty is an abstraction, it is exceedingly difficult for most middle-classed people to understand the severity of poverty. Since so many cities are segregated with strategically placed superhighways that travel through affluence, it is possible to drive to work every day and see only wealth and high-rise apartment buildings, and to avoid the poverty-stricken neighborhoods and their narrow unkept roads.

The city can be the place where people are blinded by hopelessness and government structures that keep people in cycles of dependence. Jesus comes to advocate for the whole community and to address oppressive structures that exist everywhere. And although these structures can exist outside the city, and certainly need addressing there as well, it is in the city where dense populations reside that may heighten the immediacy of the problems.

Bakke has clearly indicated that issues like urban unemployment, poverty, violence—all things that make Jesus weep over the city—should make us weep, and cause us to realize that in terms of our faith we are never more like God than when we are living in relationships with people and working in partnership for the re-creation and redemption of God's world. A missional theology will focus on such issues, seek to struggle with the city to find solutions and partner with all of the resources a city needs. Jeremiah 29 instructs us to, "seek the welfare of the city and pray to the Lord on its behalf; for in its welfare you will have wholeness."

A missional theology requires to us to not tear down the city, but to build it. We have to learn to celebrate the beauty, richness, diversity, and creativity of today's urban world. Rather than to decry the changes that are emerging due to massive immigration, why not celebrate the gifts that are brought to the city in the process? Churches should never again have to look for mission projects: they are right there in front of our noses. Rather than outdated clothes and endless cans of green beans in a closet somewhere that have often defined the missional outreach of some churches, why not see opportunities for teaching language to folks in our churches who need

to learn Spanish or Vietnamese so that they can relate to newcomers or to newcomers who wish to learn English. Why not minister to immigrant families who miss their families back home? Why not help them navigate the complexities of immigration policies and citizenship? Why not help them know more fully the love of Jesus Christ?

Why not immerse our churches there and along all the corridors of our cities that can promise us an immersion into the larger world? Then perhaps, when our church mission committees decide to partner with others in a different nation, we will know how to properly contextualize the gospel and relate more authentically to those we meet.

It should be the case that in the immersion of ministry and mission in our cities, church members equip themselves to be immersed in other areas of the world. The city can be the training camp for mission. Rather than take a group of church people on a mission trip to another country having no idea what to expect, but armed with ministry techniques and a gospel that they believe works at home, we might first immerse them along the corridors of our inner cities where the ends of the earth have taken up residence.

There they will meet people from the Southern Hemisphere—people from Mexico and Venezuela, from Vietnam and Laos, from Liberia and Kenya, from Palestine China, and Iran. They will encounter Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists, as well as homeless persons and wealthy business people. It is in the city where varied lifestyles are most prevalent. Singles, gays, lesbians, swingers, gang members, egalitarian and commuter marriages, find residence in the city and provide a challenge to evangelistic witness of which the modern church has little to no knowledge.

If our churches would immerse themselves in the city, it would change the definition of mission away from the neat mission sending agency model to the Biblical model where Jesus sends disciples out to the hard places of life. Such a model of mission immersion will bring new meaning and purpose to the mission of churches in the world.

It is in the city where our distinctively moralistic formula of salvation meets its greatest challenge. Evangelism among today's varied or alternate lifestyles cannot be limited to a set of cognitive beliefs that merely invite gays or secular people to abandon the community where they have found resonance and join another that may be completely foreign to them. William Dyrness writing in the *Urban Face of Mission*, reminds us that we might be

wrapped up in the truth of our message, but those within communities that embrace them care deeply about their own identity.[15] Hence, the transition away from a chosen community that provides acceptance for those in a varied or an alternate lifestyle, requires much care and sensitivity.

Benjamin Tonna has said in *A Gospel for the Cities*, that salvation must penetrate the city by being incarnated in the multiplicity of roles that city life involves. This will take place through the mediation of the Christians who live there. The methodology of this mediation is both communitarian and personal.[16] It must be communitarian in the sense of offering authentic community with relationships that support the transition into a new worldview and personal in establishing relationships that draw liberative, redemptive and salvific energy from Christ the Liberator, Redeemer, and Savior.

The articulation of the good news has to address the deepest longings of people who are often forced into alternate communities as a result of rejection they have experienced within the larger community, and quite possibly within the church community itself. Those who live within these communities are often viewed or related to by some as the equivalent of lepers in Jesus' day, forced to rummage for community outside the walls of the city. But today's outcast from polite society do not bemoan their plight; they have instead created their own communities right in the middle of downtown.

Christians have to commit to an evangelism that is no less than transformative. It must present to those with alternate lifestyles the opportunity and resources to explore the Christian journey at the most foundational level. It cannot be assumed that secular people understand the Christian faith at all. George Hunter has said that secular people have little to no Christian memory. Many of them do not know the stories of our faith. Even in the United States, where religion is in the air, there are, according to Hunter, millions who have no idea what we are talking about when we speak of our faith.

What can be assumed is that a caring and loving Christian mentor will be required to assist in explaining Christianity and modeling the essence of Christian living. We should not assume that this model is limited to the poor or those in alternate lifestyles. The affluent who tend to be locked away in their condos, sports clubs, and business clubs also may have no idea what Christian faith entails. I remember the story of a very affluent person who

lives on Boston's Beacon Hill in Boston who was led to faith and then told some of us that we would have to help him learn of Christ. He said, "no one on Beacon Hill knows what you mean when you speak of Jesus."

It will likely be a long journey filled with progress and at times, regression. But a lesson from the New Testament might encourage us as Christ both encouraged, taught, mentored, and watched his disciples advance and retreat from their commitment to his kingdom. For those whose alternate community provides them support, the journey into the Christian worldview may prove challenging to all the neat and orderly categories we presume about evangelistic witness.

Evangelism in the city cannot be successful unless it is ministry based. The total person has to be engaged with the Christian message. Therefore, evangelism cannot be reduced to a gospel presentation, but rather must focus on discipleship. Our view of discipleship will need modification. Again, to engage Jesus' model, discipleship was the process of learning of Christ to the extent that a life commitment could be made. The early New Testament characters followed Christ and learned daily about him, but it was not until his death and resurrection that they emerged able to stand in full confession of him as their Lord. Likewise, those who do not know the rules of Christian faith will journey into the life of Christ, they will test drive before they buy, and have the potential when properly mentored and ministered to by loving congregations to fully embrace the Christ they have come to know.

Perhaps a model of this kind of conversation and ministry can be found in John 4:39-42 where we are led to believe that Jesus spent time in the city talking among the people. I have always been led to believe that the testimony of the men with whom Jesus talked, might have been in a relationship with the woman Jesus met at the well. In this case, they could be said to be part of an alternate lifestyle community. But though her words impacted them, as they journeyed with Jesus for two days, they came to see him, not just through her words, but for themselves. This is the goal for evangelism among all lifestyles in the city. The city is not only a place where post-modern lifestyles, alternate lifestyles, and varieties of ethnic groups converge, it is the place where these lifestyles and worldviews are most strongly asserted, therefore, as Harvey Conn has assumed, urban evangelism must be about heralding grace and doing justice. We embody

the grace of Jesus toward each lifestyle and worldview, and do justice in making sure that no community is cast aside as lepers outside the wall.

Roger Greenway has inspired the title of my paper in a book with Timothy Monsuma entitled, *Cities, Missions' New Frontier*. Their thesis is clear. The urbanization of Christian mission is an urgent and serious need. As cities grow in number, size, and influence, it is incumbent on those responsible for world evangelization to focus attention on the cities. Baptists with their historic concern for mission and evangelism need to step away from their preoccupation with denominational politics and assorted struggles and once again rally around the image that Jesus taught most clearly during his lifetime … the image of the kingdom of God. If we are to participate with God in God's mission and if we are to be faithful to Jesus' image of the kingdom, then our churches simply must recommit to a model of 21st century mission that is distinctly focused toward the urban agenda.

I want to suggest some things that this agenda should seek to accomplish. And there are other agendas that churches need to pray about and seek to accomplish within the sphere of their influence. First, churches should commit themselves to building community in the cities. A deliberate effort needs to be made to open up the church to the process of community building. Churches should use their considerable presence in the cities to provide social links to those in the city who are looking for friendship and community. This will not be an easy sell. It will bring into the church people who do not necessarily fit the mold of "good church going folks."

But to provide community for homeless people, for the abused, for those of an alternate lifestyle, and those who are secular, will give an opportunity for Christian witness where there is currently little to no conversation occurring. Each church has to decide how best to provide community structure and support, but it will need to be accomplished with specific goals and objectives in mind. One such example was encountered by our mission immersion class in Cuba. The church in Matanzas saw an opportunity to develop community in the poor marina district— a district plagued with poverty and filth. It had been used by other people as a garbage dump. Self-esteem in the area was at an all time low, so the church in Matanzas organized baseball teams, built a baseball field and worked with the youth on the ball fields. They helped the poor people there learn to grow vegetables; they cleaned up the area by hauling away the garbage on

the streets. Soon the marina district won ball games as they played other communities, the people started showing off their gardens, and the area developed pride they had not had in years. The church in Matanzas helped to restore community. That is the task our churches need to accomplish within their sphere of influence—and, in a cumulative way, cities can begin to be restored.

There is a second possibility. Churches can become advocates financially for those who need help. Of course, this is an area that needs great wisdom, but our churches are filled with people who have gifts in helping others restore their credit, and start over in life. Clinton Stockwell has advocated the church linking in with other agencies scattered throughout the city to aid people who need a new start.[17] Developing housing initiatives in low income areas can be a priority of churches who wish to help others financially. Creating skills development programs are essential toward changing life in the inner city. Advocacy for fairness in wage must be a priority for the church seeking to live out its missional calling in the city.

An overlooked group of people in the city are those caught in drug abuse and alcohol dependency. Currently, there is only one Baptist facility in the state of Georgia to deal with people who are drug dependent and who wish to be set free. Penfield home renders a valuable service to drug addicts. However, the need overwhelms Penfield. Here's a suggestion. There are over 90 Baptist associations in Georgia. Every association in the state of Georgia should support an agency such as Penfield. Instead of the association, which is supported by the churches in the area, acting merely as a purveyor of endless and I would argue mostly meaningless programs that keep churches in inwardly focused busy work, why not turn outward toward the community with drug rehab programs. Why not be on mission with God to set people in bondage free?

The church on mission in the city should not forget its considerable political influence. Instead of being political, it should focus on advocacy and work with city governments. Stockwell points out that poor people are usually under-represented. Being an advocate for them is part of Jesus' mission. Walter Brueggemann has pointed out that Jesus spent his time as an advocate for alternative consciousness.[18] The church is charged by kingdom ethics to advocate for the poor and oppressed, for the under-represented. It is not about getting preachers elected to political office; it is

about reminding city hall that they must serve the entire city, not just the political action groups.

Social capital is also important. The church has considerable influence to determine the ability of local communities to attract opportunity where there is blight. Ministry in those areas says a great deal about the church's concern that communities be whole and that the least of these are not overlooked.

Finally, churches must invest in ecumenical cooperation for the sake of the city. We cannot remain isolated as people of God. Cross-cultural dialogue, contextualized ministry, shared economic resources, and shared advocacy should be the goal of all churches for the sake of the city. Joining forces is critical. There are formidable challenges to be faced. With a commitment to the kingdom of God and all its righteousness, the city can become a light to the nations. "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done!" is the transformational motivation for the church in all ages and in all nations. It is the power of the gospel that brings sinners to repentance and that produces societal transformation. What better place to begin than where the ends of the earth have come to town?

Notes

1. http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/ la-na-churches31 jul31,0,6286040.story?coll=la-home-nation

2. http://www.csmonitor.com/2006/1205/p02s02-ussc.html

3. Miller, Vern, The City: What is it Really Like? (Scottdale, Penn: Herald Press, 1970) p.17

4. See *Future Shock*, *The Third Wave*, or *The Meaning of the City* among others.

5. "Cities in Peril.," *U.S. News and World Report*, April 1975

6. Ellison, Craig. *The Urban Mission*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), pp.83-84

7. Bakke, Ray. *A Theology As Big As the City*. (Downers Grove: IVP, 1997), p.13

8. Ekkert, Henry, "Reconstructing Our Urban Theology." *Direction Journal*, 1984

9. Perkinson, Jim. "Theology and the City: Learning to Cry, Struggling to See." *Cross Currents*, Spring 2001.

10. University of Notre Dame, http://centerforsocialconcerns.nd.edu/mission/cst/cst4.shtml

11. http://www.cyc-net.org/cyc-online/cycol-0904-Homelessness.html

12. Richard J. Estes. Principal Investigator, University of Pennsylvania School of Social Work Center for Youth Policy Studies, 3701 Locust Walk, Philadelphia PA

13. http://www.cyc-net.org/cyc-online/cycol-0904-Homelessness.html

14. Claerbaut, David. *Urban Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983), p.69

15. Conn, Harvie. *The Urban Face of Mission*. (Pittsburgh: P&R, 2002), p. 121

16. Tonna, Benjamin. *A Gospel for the Cities*. (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 1982), pp. 158-160

17. Stockwell, Clinton. "The Church and Justice in Crisis: The Social Reality of the Church and its Role in Proclaiming Justice" (for, *The Urban Face of Mission*, P and R Publications, edited by Manuel Ortiz and Susan Baker, 2002).. P.164-165

18. Ibid

St. Francis: Patron Saint of Evangelism through Social Ministry?

Jack Jackson

In recent years St. Francis has become the patron saint of proponents of evangelism through social ministry. A phrase often attributed to him has become a rallying cry for people who argue that social ministry is as important as, if not more important than, words when it comes to the evangelistic task. A common formulation of the phrase is, "Everywhere you go, preach the gospel, and when it is absolutely necessary, use words."[1] This particular version comes from Brian McLaren, one scholar and practitioner who turns to St. Francis as a model of his framework of evangelism. For McLaren, Francis provides a venerable authority for the contemporary attempt to combine verbal proclamation of the gospel and social ministry for evangelism within the postmodern matrix.

Word Versus Deed Debate and the Appeal to St. Francis

The tension between verbal proclamation and social ministry in evangelism is a subject for ongoing discussion. On the one hand, many Christians believe that the gospel must be announced verbally. But others, though often advocating the importance of verbal proclamation of the gospel, are rightly concerned about the failure of many evangelistic Christians to embody the gospel, and therefore seek to broaden evangelism beyond verbal proclamation. Yoder describes this tension, "…there will be times when the only thing we can do is to speak and the only word we can speak is the word clothed in a social ministry, a word that can command attention from no one and that can coerce no one."[2] Angela Shier-Jones expresses similar sentiments: "Christians know that Christ proclaimed as much, if not more, by his actions as by his speech."[3] In support of this argument, many turn to St. Francis to justify substituting social ministry for verbal proclamation in the evangelistic task. The result is to diminish the

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importance of verbal proclamation, and in many cases to dismiss it. This paper proposes that this off-quoted phrase is both incorrect and a misrepresentation of St. Francis' thought. Through an analysis of a few important stories from Francis' life, it will be demonstrated that, though he was in favor of a thorough discipleship that includes efforts for peace and servanthood, along with a consistent verbal proclamation of the good news of the gospel For Francis the task of Christian ministry is in every place and in every time to live the gospel, both in word and deed. One can never substitute for the other in the church's overall ministry and an individual's Christian discipleship.

To begin with, the appeal of St. Francis for evangelism by social ministry is powerful. He is one of the church's greatest saints, known for preaching to the birds of the air and flowers of the field. The specific phrase, "Everywhere you go preach the gospel and if necessary use words," is also appealing to those concerned with postmodernism. In the first place, it seems to encourage a nonthreatening, nonjudgmental evangelism that allows for acts to be considered evangelistic that never actually make specific reference to Jesus. The phrase seems to acknowledge concerns raised in postmodern literary theory about the limits of language to communicate meaning.

"If Necessary Use Words?"

Those who attribute this quotation to St. Francis, however, rarely mention his clear emphasis on the verbal proclamation of the gospel, especially through preaching. Preaching was central in Francis' ministry. The scholarship is united on this point. As Musto writes, Francis "…went from village to village announcing the kingdom of God, preaching peace, teaching salvation and penance and the remission of sins."[4] Furthermore, despite his pastoral image, Francis' preaching was not marked by gentleness or avoidance of difficult issues. Rather, his critics portray his preaching more as haranguing than a genial, comforting message.[5] Verbal announcement of the gospel through preaching was Francis' trademark, and was central to his understanding of Christian discipleship. In view of these facts, it seems strange that anyone can argue that St. Francis supported preaching through social ministry. That is why many commentators turn to the famous quotation.

One problem in turning to this quotation as justification for evangelism being both an act of verbal proclamation and social ministry, however, is that nobody cites it directly from Francis himself. Indeed of all the references I have read, nobody ever gives a citation for the phrase. Its first occurrence is around two hundred years after his death, but even there it is an uncited quotation.[6] Today, there does not seem to be a single Franciscan scholar who believes this quotation to be original to Francis. Rather the phrase has become part of a kind of folklore that surrounds Francis, which many like to believe, but with no effort to investigate the truth of the situation.

Four Stories

There are, however, four stories from Francis' life that demonstrate the possible genesis of this phrase, and reveal how it mischaracterizes his normative understanding of the importance of verbally proclaiming the gospel. The first example comes from a story in a collection of Franciscan sayings, the Omnibus of Sources. In this example, Francis talks with his brothers about the struggle of trying to preach in communities where a local priest forbids them from preaching. The brothers clearly understood their call to verbally preach the gospel, and want permission to defy priests who hinder them. But Francis, who believed in pastoral authority, tells the brothers that when prevented from verbally preaching, to "…preach by their social ministry."[7] In this case, social ministry is elevated in relation to verbal proclamation in order to stay under the authority of the local priest. But the clear emphasis in the story is on the Franciscan brothers' desire to preach. Only when this option becomes impossible is the proscription to "preach with one's life." The two are not equated in the evangelistic task.

A second example, also from the Omnibus, involves a time St. Francis took some of his brothers to a nearby village. Before setting out, he told the brothers that the purpose of the visit was to preach. They had been to the village many times before and the villagers almost certainly would have already had some sort of relationship with the brothers. As they entered the village, they were known by their distinctive garb and familiar faces. As they walked though the city, the people turned and acknowledged their acquaintances, clearly identifying who they were and the God they represented. St. Francis and the brothers proceeded to walk through the

village and out the gate on the other side without saying a word. When the brothers inquired why they did not preach in the village, St. Francis told them, "we did preach."[8] In this case verbal proclamation did not take place when it could have, but preaching almost certainly had occurred in that city on previous occasions. St. Francis and his brothers clearly represented Christ. They were known as preachers and their clothing marked them as such. They were signs of Christ and brought his presence to the city. There was no question in the minds of those who saw the brothers of either their purpose or whom they represented. They were associated with the gospel because they had verbally preached the gospel previously.

A third story comes from Francis' comments on the haughtiness of a certain academic. Evidently this academic possessed knowledge of the gospel and was aware of its intellectual intricacies. Unfortunately he failed to live out the faith he so eloquently preached. St. Francis warned his brothers of the dangers of knowing the faith but not living it, "If he is a scholar himself, far from priding himself on his learning, let him be diligent above all to be humble and simple, endeavoring to preach by example rather than by word."[9] In this case, social ministry, or preaching by example, is not offered as a substitute for verbal proclamation, but as a sign that the proclaimer actually believes the gospel story and has attempted to integrate it into his or her life. This example demonstrates that both living and speaking the gospel are critical to Christian discipleship; one does not seem to substitute for the other.

The fourth, and in many ways most pointed story that provides a glimpse into how this phrase developed took place in 1219 when Francis went to the Holy Land. During the crusades he traveled to the Holy Land to preach the gospel to the Muslims seeking peace and conversion.[10] At one point he was given a pass through the enemy lines, whereupon he went to the Sultan, Melek-al-Kamil. According to the story Francis preached to the Sultan and told him the story of Jesus Christ. The Sultan replied that he had his own beliefs and that Moslems were as firmly convinced of the truth of Islam as Francis was of the truth of Christianity. In response Francis proposed that a fire be built, and that he and a Moslem volunteer to walk side-by-side into the fire to show whose faith was stronger. When the Sultan said he was not sure a volunteer could be found, Francis offered to walk into the fire alone. The Sultan was deeply impressed but remained unconverted. Francis concluded his time with the Sultan by proposing an

armistice between the two warring sides. Francis drew up terms for peace to which the Sultan agreed, but unfortunately the Christians did not.

These examples seem to provide the basis for the phrase so often attributed to St. Francis regarding preaching with one's life. Virtually every other example from Francis' life and ministry, including his preaching to the animals of the forest, demonstrate the importance he placed on verbal proclamation of the gospel. These four stories, instead of supporting the idea of social ministry as a substitute for verbal proclamation, actually solidify the idea that verbal proclamation is the critical act of evangelistic ministry. Taken as a whole, these stories from St. Francis' ministry reveal three enduring lessons for evangelism that are still pertinent to the contemporary church's mission.

Three Lessons

The first is that the social gospel and evangelism are both part of one ministry. For St. Francis, there was no such thing as the "social gospel" in contrast to any other manifestation of the gospel. There was simply the gospel of Jesus Christ. For Francis, response to the gospel in faith led to a radical and complete reorientation of life. This reorientation led him to respond with peace and proclamation. He never seems to divide evangelism into a verbal and a nonverbal act; rather for him it is Christian ministry or discipleship that is both verbal and nonverbal. The story of Francis and the Sultan demonstrate this point most clearly. When Francis went to the Sultan, both social ministry through efforts for peace, as well as verbal proclamation are in evidence. The church's mission, and Francis' discipleship, required both. Working for peace was not a substitute for evangelism and evangelism was not a substitute for working for peace. Both were critical to Francis' efforts. They worked hand in hand together. The story regarding pastoral authority also shows the importance of both social ministry and verbal proclamation in the church's mission. Neither can substitute for the other. Arguing that one is more important, or can substitute for the other denies a critical component of the church's overall ministry and an individual's discipleship.

For Francis, it was not evangelism that took place in word and social ministry, but Christian mission and discipleship. In Francis' eyes, working for peace, though valid in and of itself or as a response to the gospel, was

not in and of itself an announcement of the gospel. For Francis the gospel had to be verbally announced in order to be known and social ministry, though valid in and of itself, only became evangelistic in nature when linked with the verbal proclamation of the gospel. For Francis, modeling Christian discipleship was encouraged when preaching either was not allowed, or when the marks of discipleship were not evident in a person's life. These examples demonstrate that it is Christian mission and discipleship that takes place in word and deed, not evangelism.

The second lesson is linked to the first, namely that the gospel must be verbally announced in evangelistic ministry. Francis' quotation is most often used to advocate the idea that proclamation/preaching/evangelism can take place without words. The corresponding idea is that social ministry in the absence of verbal announcement is still a form of proclamation/ preaching/evangelism. This seems to be a misrepresentation of Francis' understanding and practice of verbally announcing the gospel. The announcement of the gospel was critical to Christian ministry because without announcement, one could not fully transmit the faith. This is what drove Francis to the Muslims. He ventured to the east because he knew so many had never heard the gospel and because he knew war was antithetical to the spirit of the gospel. Failure to work on both fronts would have been a denial of the essence of the gospel. The only time a Christian's presence or ministry is evangelistic without proclaiming the gospel occurs when that person had previously been associated with the verbal proclamation of the gospel. This seems to be why Francis could say he did preach after walking quietly through the town. The brothers had preached there so many times previously that their mere presence represented the gospel. Notably, this example of silent preaching only occurs in a place where the gospel had been previously proclaimed on a number of occasions.

This need for verbal announcement helps us understand the ministry of evangelism in our post-Christian culture. When Francis went to the Muslims, his person and garb were unknown. They only signified him to be an intruder. In postmodern culture the motivation for Christian acts is no longer intuitively grasped. The motivation behind Christian social ministry has been severed from the gospel. Up through the modern era, Christianity was often assumed in the West to be the motivating factor behind acts understood to be for the good of all people. Whether in the case of building a hospital or taking a team of doctors to a developing country, the

motivation, even if not explicitly stated, was usually understood to be Christian in nature. But this link between good deeds and Christian motivations has now been almost universally severed because of the decline of metanarratives as guiding cultural stories. Lyotard's observation of the declining influence of metanarratives in Western culture is most notable in religious stories with exclusive claims. Previous to his work, the motivations behind social ministry were often assumed to be Christian in nature. This was not always in fact the case, but certainly it was much of the time. This assumption, however, is no longer valid.

An example of this change is found in the dramatic rise of what Business Week calls "Vacations with a Mission" or what another magazine calls "Volunteer Vacations."[11] Today groups as varied as college reunion groups and neighborhood associations are involved in acts that serve the world in positive ways, acts that were previously understood in much of the West as motivated by a Christian worldview. People travel all over the world to participate in projects, for example, in impoverished communities, where the goal may be medical relief, food, education, or adequate housing, to name just a few. The motivations for these projects are rarely, if ever, cited as specifically Christian. Rather, they are attributed to good will or general service to humanity. These projects should be applauded, but many of the participants in them would disagree, and perhaps even be offended, if the work was thought of as Christian in nature, for that is not their motivation. Therefore if a Christian social ministry today hopes to be associated with the faith that motivates it, the motivation must be verbally proclaimed. The link can no longer be assumed.

Francis knew that social ministry is valid in and of itself as a command of Christ. The Franciscan brothers fed the hungry and clothed the naked because of their love for God and neighbor. This social ministry was valid in and of itself, regardless of any additional evangelistic results. But the brothers never seemed to substitute social ministry for verbal proclamation. For Francis, the gospel is to be verbally announced so that some might believe. If the intent of social ministry in contemporary culture is in any way evangelistic in nature, then it must include a verbal announcement of the gospel.

The third lesson is that holiness, though not specifically evangelistic itself, does relate to evangelism. Christians are called to the holy life as reflected in Jesus' call to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. This

holiness embodies the gospel and demonstrates both God's love for the world and God's presence in a person's life. This embodiment of the love of God through practical, active service, is important in postmodern culture because it demonstrates in a tangible way that Christians believe what they say. These acts of love do not validate the gospel itself because the gospel is true regardless of adequate Christian discipleship. These acts do, however, demonstrate to the postmodern world that Christians believe their faith to be authentic. The failure by so many Christians to live a holy life is part of the reason for the rejection of the Christian faith by so many contemporary people, and almost certainly would be critiqued by Francis himself. Surely it is in response to this failure that so many embrace the phrase attributed to St. Francis. Arpin-Ricci supports this claim when she writes of Francis' famous dictum, "What Francis was challenging in [this] statement was not the use of verbal proclamation of the Gospel, but rather when the words of our message fail to find reflected authority by the lives we lead."[12] Without distinctive holiness, evangelism loses some of its power and authority.[13] McLaren writes, "Words of faith without works of love will not survive; no one will listen."[14]

At the same time Christian holiness does not in and of itself proclaim the gospel. In our postmodern culture words, as incomplete as they are, must be used to communicate the gospel. Holy living, in turn, authenticates those words. Part of holy living is the church's social ministry. This social ministry is valid, and part of our Christian call, whether people ever notice it or not. The embodiment of the gospel through social ministry is critical to evangelism because it serves to authenticate the message proclaimed. The motivation for the love must be verbally announced to be a complete act of evangelism. In this way it seems best to understand holiness as integral to the church's ministry and Christian discipleship, rather than as the central act of evangelism. Nevertheless holiness can take on an evangelistic flavor when it is specifically linked to the verbal proclamation of the gospel.

Conclusion

In conclusion, St. Francis gets it right, but the phrase associated with him falls short of expressing the essence of his ministry. Both verbal proclamation and social ministry are critical to the church's mission and an individual Christian's discipleship. The gospel must be announced both to

those who have heard it and those who have not. In turn, this announcement leads to a profound love of God and humanity that results in radical service to humanity. This service is valid in and of itself, but it also serves to support the authenticity of faith in a believer. The evangelistic task itself, as modeled by St. Francis, is an essentially verbal task that is critical to the church's overall ministry. As McLaren makes clear, the relationship between social ministry and evangelism today is not that social ministry is a form of evangelism but that both are critical aspects of ministry. Mission and discipleship take place in word plus social ministry, not word or social ministry.[15]

Notes

1. B.D. McLaren, *The Church on the Other Side: Doing Ministry in the Postmodern Matrix*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000), pp. 88-89.

2. B. Stone, *Evangelism after Christendom: The Theology and Practice of Christian Witness*, (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2007), . 238. (Quotes from J.H. Yoder & M. Cartwright, The Royal Priesthood: Essays Ecclesiological and Ecumenical, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), p. 204.

3. A. Shier-Jones, *A Work in Progress*, (Werrington: Epworth, 2005), p. 5.

4. R.G. Musto, *Catholic Peacemakers: A Documentary History*, (New York: Garland Pub., 1993), p. 490.

5. Ibid., p. 519.

6. O.F.M. Father Pat McCloskey, "Where Did St. Francis Say That?" St. Anthony Messenger, Ask a Franciscan, 2008, 18 September 2008, http://www.americancatholic.org/messenger/Oct2001/Wiseman.asp.

7. M.A. Habig, *St. Francis of Assisi: Writings and Early Biographies: English Omnibus of the Sources for the Life of St. Francis*, (Chicago, IL: Franciscan Herald Press, 1983), Chapter XVII of his Rule of 1221.

8. As related to me in personal correspondence with F.J. Linden, 'St. Francis Quote', to T. Jackson, Personal e-mail communication, 18 April 2008.

9. O. Englebert, *St. Francis of Assisi: A Biography*, (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Books, 1979), p. 262.

10. Ibid., p. 262.

11. "Vacation With a Mission," *Business Week*, 2006, 1 August 2008 http://www.businessweek.com/bwdaily/dnflash/jun2006/nf20060615_6604.htm. Also see, Y. Crous, "Volunteer Vacations," *Travel and Leisure*, November (2008), pp. 159-60.

12. J. Arpin-Ricci, "Genuine Evangelism - Friday With Francis," A Living Alternative: Our Missional Pilgrimage, 2008, 23 September 2008, http://missional.blog.com/3095849/.

13. J. Wallis, *The Call to Conversion*, (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981), p. 19.

14. McLaren, *The Other Side*, p. 88.

15. Ibid., p. 88.

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The Changing Pattern of Revival
in the Apostolic Church

Robert E. Coleman

Revival can be variously understood. Some think of it as a series of meetings designed to whip up interest in the church. Others regard it as some kind of religious emotionalism, often among the irreverent seen as fanaticism. These popular associations, however, bear little resemblance to how the concept is used in Scripture, and the way I use the term in this paper.

Restoring Life's True Purpose

Revival essentially means to come alive. The Old Testament word transcribed revival comes from a root meaning "to live," which originally conveyed the idea of breathing. Hence it could be said of the dry bones in Ezekiel's vision, "I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life" (Ezekiel 37:5, cf. 37:6, 14; Job 33:4; I Kings 17:22). Revival, or life, was "breathing in the breath of God." As used here, the source of this life is in God.[16]

A comparable New Testament word means to "come to life" (Revelation 20:5; Romans 14:9; cf. 7:9). As Jesus used the term, it denotes the change in the life of a penitent prodigal who returns to the Father's house, in the sense that the son who was "dead" is now "alive again" (Luke 15:24, 32). Other words, which convey much the same idea, liken it to the rekindling of a slowly dying fire (2 Timothy 1:6) or to a plant that has put forth fresh shoots and "flourished again" (Philippians 4:10, KJV).

The basic concept is the return of something to its true nature and purpose. From a biblical perspective, then, revival refers to the sovereign work of God reanimating and restoring his people to the worship and service for which they were created–to know him, to adore him, and, in a

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relationship of love, to enjoy him forever. When this reason for our existence is not being realized, we need to be revived (Psalms 85:6). God wants his people always to live in communion with him.

Revival in the Old Testament

To make his will known to the world, our ancestors in the Garden of Eden were told to increase in number, to "fill the earth and subdue it" (Genesis 1:28). Here is the beginning of what has come to be called the Great Commission. Though the mandate was largely ignored in its spiritual application, God's plan for humanity has never changed.

Our forebears, however, turned to their own way, losing their pristine holiness in disobedience to God, thereby bringing degradation and death to the human race. Conditions eventually deteriorated to the point that the Lord was "grieved" that he had made man (Genesis 6:6). Still God loved those created in his image, and sent a "preacher of righteousness" (2 Peter 2:5) to help them come to revival, but they refused to respond, and finally they were given up to destruction.[17] God took the "blameless" Noah (Genesis 6:9), with his family, and started over again. The Sovereign of the universe will not be defeated in his purpose to fill the earth with the knowledge of his glory (cf. Habakkuk 2:14).

As history unfolded, and sin spread across the earth, God's love never left his people. It came into bold expression in the summons of Abram to leave his old life and go out with the Lord. Through his obedience of faith, God promised to raise up a new posterity through which "all peoples on earth will be blessed" (Genesis 12:3; cf. Hebrews 11:8). Thus, his descendants were chosen to be God's witnesses to the nations. His evangelistic strategy was to make them so morally different from the degenerate nations about them that people seeing their holy lifestyle would want to follow their Lord (Zechariah 8:23; Isaiah 55:4-5).

It does not appear, however, that the offspring of Abraham generally grasped their responsibility, and in consequence their spiritual vitality languished. Apart from a faithful remnant who never bowed their knee to Baal, there were times when true worship of God all but vanished in Israel.

Yet, God still sought their fellowship and there are occasions when, heeding his word, people return to the faith of their fathers. This revival-like activity usually emerges in a crisis when disaster threatens from a powerful

adversary, and the distraught Jews begin to cry out for help. An anointed leader calls the people to put away their false gods, turn from their wickedness, and renew their covenant relationship with God. Upon their obedience, deliverance comes and they experience again joyful worship.

Examples of this pattern can be seen through the Old Testament. Each account has its own fascination and will richly reward serious study.

The revivals invariably begin with a person close to God whose witness impacts those under his influence. Where his authority extended to large numbers of people, as with Moses, or Joshua, or Samuel, or the kings, a whole nation may be caught up in the movement.

These awakenings had limitations. Obviously, for the most part, among the masses they were short-lived. The people may have been sincere initially, but all too often they soon fell back into their former ways. There are times, too, when the leader steps out of the will of God, or dies, which left their followers without direction. Failing to reproduce persons of vision to preserve the movement is apparent. Clearly there seems to be a breakdown in the normal Jewish concern for discipleship.[18] Lack of understanding among the people about the ministry of the Holy Spirit may be another factor.

One other failure must be noted–their insensitivity to evangelism. Though God had made plain their strategic role in making his character known to the human race, and kept before them the vision of a coming kingdom in which their Messiah King would reign over every tongue, tribe and nation (e.g., Daniel 7:13-14), the people seem preoccupied with their own interests.[19] With the exception of Nineveh–and that only by God's overruling the reluctance of Jonah–there is no indication of revival significantly reaching any Gentile country.

Still, despite their shortcomings, these recurring seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord were the high peaks of corporate worship in Israel. They served again and again to bring into focus the holiness intended for the chosen people through whom Immanuel would come and bring salvation to the world.

Revival in Jesus' Ministry

In the fulness of time the promised Savior arrives. As the time draws near for him to begin his public ministry, suddenly a mighty prophet comes

calling upon the people to repent, and prepare the way for the Lord, who "will baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire" (Matthew 3:1-12).

A revival such as Israel had not seen in four hundred years begins to sweep the land. At the height of the awakening, Jesus appears and is baptized by John. There he is identified by the prophet as "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29; cf. 1:36). The Baptist is now willing to decrease so that attention will center on Jesus. The stage was set for a mighty world reformation.

At this point one might expect Jesus to seize the moment to proclaim himself king and establish a rule of righteousness by decree. Certainly the opportunity is ripe for a great popular revolution. The people are fed up with the oppressions of Rome. They are eager to have their stomachs full and their national pride satisfied.

Yet, incredible as it may seem, Jesus walked away. The movement that begins to gather around him takes a different course. Contrary to the pattern seen so often before, the Son of God does not seek the immediate following of the masses. Of course, large crowds do attend Jesus' public services, sometimes numbering into the thousands (Mark 6:44; Matthew 14:4; Luke 9:14; John 6:10). He feeds them. He heals them. He instructs them. Indeed, his deeds of mercy are so genuine that "everyone" clamors for his attention (John 3:26). Once the people want to take him by force to make him king (John 6:15).

Had Jesus given encouragement to this popular sentiment, he could easily have enlisted a vast army and taken the country by storm. In all honesty, we must ask: why doesn't Jesus do it? Why doesn't he use his invincible power to overthrow all his enemies and establish a society that would never again know suffering or pain? That was the kind of Messiah the people were looking for–someone who would satisfy every temporal desire for personal pleasure and security. That is the kind of Messiah the world is still looking for.

But Jesus had a greater objective in view. He had not come to receive the superficial plaudits of the self-centered multitudes; He came to save a people from sin and to build a hold church against which the gates of hell could not prevail.

So, in his infinite understanding of the human problem, He concentrates his attention upon a few disciples destined to be the nucleus of the Spirit-filled church. It is this practical concern that characterizes Jesus' approach

to revival. Holiness, as in the Old Testament, dominated his teaching, but discipleship and evangelism are given a new emphasis. While he plants and cultivates seeds of revival in the present, He is always preparing reapers for the harvest in generations to come.

Jesus' method of training this vanguard was simply to draw sincere learners around himself. He doesn't establish a formal school, nor does he prescribe a creed. His teaching is incarnated in his own servant lifestyle.[20] By following him they know the truth, the way, and the life. As they grow in self-confidence and skill, He involves them in work suited to their gifts, and he checks to see how they are coming along.

After several years together, He sends them out to replicate in principle what he had been doing with them–to "make disciples" and to teach them in turn to do the same, until through the process of multiplication, someday "all nations" will hear the Gospel (Matthew 28:19,20). In these final instructions, Jesus makes clear both the world scope of their mission and the disciple-making strategy by which it can be accomplished.

The Power of the Spirit

One more factor in revival must be recognized–the power of the Holy Spirit. Before leaving his disciples, Jesus reiterated that "Another Counselor . . . the Spirit of truth" will come to take his place in their midst (John 14:16). Though the Spirit was already active in their lives, as he had been in the Old Testament with chosen leaders at special times, in a more prominent and wonderful way they were to experience his presence (Matthew 28:20; John 14:12,13; 16:23,24). Having enunciated this truth clearly, the glorified Jesus ascends into heaven, leaving his expectant disciples waiting for the promised outpouring and baptism of fire (Luke 24:49-53; Acts 1:1-8).[21]

The mighty infilling of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost inaugurates the revival for which Jesus had been preparing (Acts 2:1-47). It marks the beginning of a new era in the history of redemption. For three years he had been working for this day–the day when his church, taught by his example, redeemed by his blood, assured by his resurrection, would go forth in his name to be his witness to the "ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

Holiness, which has always been God's design for his people, overflows in spontaneous evangelism. Without any exhortation or church

growth seminar, that entire Spirit-filled congregation in the Upper Room moved into the streets and began to declare the wonderful works of God. When a crowd gathers, Peter lifted up Jesus, and about 3,000 were converted.

What is more, they grow in the life of their Lord (Acts 2:42). Brotherly concern (Acts 2:44), generosity (Acts 2:45), and unity of spirit characterizes their life together (Acts 2:46). The love of God fills their souls with praise (Acts 2:46-47). Miracles happen (Acts 2:43). They are alive to God! "And the Lord added to their numbers daily those who were being saved" (Acts 2:47).

It's a foretaste of what is to come. The revival continues to spread across the city of Jerusalem. Every day–in the temple, in the marketplace, and in their homes–"great power" and "great grace was upon them all" (Acts 4:33). Thousands more came to Christ, including many of the Jewish priests (Acts 4:4; 6:1,7). Works of faith and love continue to witness to the world the transforming power of the Gospel (Acts 4:34-37; 5:12-16). And within their fellowship "all the believers were one in heart and mind" (Acts 4:32).

Overcoming Difficulties

Yet they have their problems. One couple among them, Ananias and Sapphira, are deceitful in their profession (Acts 5:1-10). Whenever this many people get together, there are likely to be some who do not belong. But the way God judges these hypocrites only serves to draw the church closer together in holiness and to bring more people from the outside to believe in Jesus (Acts 5:11-14).[22]

There is the problem, too, of a few Greek speaking widows who feel that they are being neglected by the Hebrews in the daily ministrations. When this situation is brought to the attention of the apostles, they wisely call a congregational meeting to discuss the matter. Out of this discussion they decide to initiate the order of deacon to assist in the administration of the local church (Acts 6:1-6). Again the way the issue is handled enhances the unity as well as the reputation of the Christian community, and, not surprisingly, the number of disciples in Jerusalem greatly "multiplied" (Acts 6:7, KJV). Problems confronted by the church in the strength of revival became stepping stones to more spiritual progress.[23]

One must not assume that the Christians had it easy. Most of the time they witness under the threat of punishment by the ruling aristocracy (Acts 4:1-31; 5:17-42). They are beaten. They are imprisoned. One of their leaders, Stephen, is stoned to death (Acts 6:8-7:60). Yet their adversities never restrain their zeal or temper their joy. In fact, they rejoice that they are counted worthy to suffer for Jesus' sake (Acts 5:41). The persecutors succeed only in scattering the revival across the land (Acts 8:1-4; 11:19).

The Apostolic Pattern

As the years move on, the events that are recorded in Acts show the Spirit of God attending each breakthrough of the Gospel into new regions. It moves into Samaria where the first congregation is raised up outside the Jewish nations (Acts 8:5-25). The revival reaches into the house of Cornelius at Caesarea, which marks the beginning of the work among Gentile believers (Acts 1:-11,18; 15:7-28). The same Spirit brings together a congregation of both Jews and Greeks at Antioch (Acts 11:19-36). As this church becomes well established, the Spirit speaks to their listening hearts, and two of their staff are sent out as missionaries to the world (Acts 13:1-4).

Following the Spirit's leading, the missionaries begin work in each new city by going to the most likely place to find spiritually hungry people–usually the synagogue. There they present the claims of Christ and draw out those the Spirit has prepared. From this nucleus a congregation is established and their own people discipled for leadership. In turn, they evangelize the surrounding area in the same way until "the work of the Lord was published through the region" (Acts 13:49; 19:20-26; I Thessalonians 1:8-9).

Acts reads like one long narrative of Pentecost. Nothing could stop these new believers–not the anger of the mobs or the irritations of daily trials–but as rivers at flood tide, they go on their way praising God and scattering the seed of the Gospel. Although some local congregations lose the vision that gave them birth, and doubtless many individual Christians fell below their privileges in the Spirit-filled life, nevertheless the apostolic church as a whole maintains a remarkable fervency of spirit and outreach to society. Holiness in their lives, overflowing in love, makes the watching world aware that they "had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13). And as men and

women see Christ lifted up in their lives, revival spreads from the center to the circumference in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The reality of personal communion with God–living as we were made to be–has many dimensions. But however conceived, woven through the pattern will be the lifestyle of the Great Commission, cultivated in relationships, developing reproducing disciples displaying to the world the beauty of holiness. What was initiated at creation, realized variously through the erratic history of Israel, clarified in the personal life and ministry of Jesus, is finally brought into powerful focus through the Holy Spirit in the apostolic church.

The Acts of the Apostles has no close. It simply breaks off the narrative by reporting that "preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ" continued "with all confidence" (Acts 28:31, KJV). That is the way the New Testament leaves the record of revival. There is no finish. And, indeed, wherever the true Spirit of Pentecost prevails in any age, there will be no end to revival.

Notes

16. Altogether the word is used in its various forms more than 250 times in the Old Testament, of which about 55 are in the Piel or Causative Construction in Hebrew. Some examples may be found in Genesis 7:3; 19:32, 34; Deuteronomy 6:24; 32:39; I Kings 20:31; 2 Kings 7:4; Nehemiah 4:2; Job 36:6; Psalms 41:2; 71:20; 80:18; 119:25, 37, 40, 50, 88, 93, 107, 147, 154, 156, 159; 138: 7; 143:11; Jeremiah 49:11; Ezekiel 13:18; Hosea 6:3; 14:7; Habakkuk 3:2, to cite a few. Only a few times will the word be translated revival. Usually it is rendered as live, restore, preserve, heal, prosper, awaken, save, or some other similar term. In this definition, as throughout this paper, I draw heavily upon my book *The Coming World Revival* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1989, 1995). Persons wanting to explore further the subject will find many helpful references in the footnotes. A succinct statement of the underlying theme is a recent article of mine, "Revive Us Again: Revival and the Great Commission." in *Decision*, Volume 46, Number 6, June 2005, pp. 12-14.

17. Another account of wicked people given up to destruction after scorning revival is at Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18:14-19). It is noteworthy that in both of these incidents, cited by Jesus as examples of God's judgment, ample warning was given before the final execution of justice (Matthew 24:37-39; 10:15).

18. As with God's plan in creation, discipleship rests with the family, which, of course, is the most natural way to teach children. Lest the Jews forget, this principle was written into the laws of Moses (Deuteronomy 6:4-25). The observance of this policy explains why God was never without a faithful remnant in Israel, even when sometimes the priesthood and religious leadership was corrupt.

19. Some people were so thoroughly degenerate, like the Canaanite civilization, and were beyond repentance by virtue of their rejection of the true God. They were totally given over to idol worship, sexual perversion, even the slaughter of infants. To protect the heritage of Abraham from their pernicious influence, Israel was told to destroy completely the evil nations around them (e.g. Joshua 6:17-19; 8:1-2; 10:16-21, 29-42. Al.). But in other situations, the Jews were under no such mandate and had every opportunity to show God's wholeness in seeking the welfare of their neighbors. God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezekiel 18:32; 33:11).

20. My treatment of Jesus' ministry is taken from my book, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1964, 1993). The principles of discipleship outlined in that book form the basis for much of my thinking about revival.

21. For a more complete discussion of this subject, see my book, *The Master Plan of Discipleship* (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1987). In this study of the Book of Acts, the principles of the Great Commission in Christ's ministry are seen to take contextualized form in his rapidly growing church.

22. No effort is made in the accounts of the New Testament church to conceal the shortcomings of persons identified as believers. Also clear is the forthright manner misguided or reprobate persons are reproved and warned of impending judgment (I Timothy 1:20; 2 Timothy 4:10,14,15; I John 2:19; Revelation 2:1-7, 12-29; 3:1-6; 14:22).

23. Other problems noted in the Book of Acts include: the greed of Simon (Acts 8:9-24), the resistance of the church to forgive and accept the converted Saul (Acts 9:26), legalism (Acts 11:10-18; 15:1-35), friction between ministers (Acts 13:13; 15:36-40), and fear (Acts 21:12). In our fallen state, revival does not prevent all conflicts, but it does give spiritual stamina to overcome them. A helpful treatment of this is in C.E. Autrey, *Evangelism in the Acts* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1964, pp. 43-78).

How Research Became a Signature Factor in Church Growth and Evangelism

by Arthur G. McPhee

Among the most important legacies of the 20th century Church Growth Movement was its emphasis on research. In the 1970s, for example, hundreds of churches in North America came to understand the shortsightedness of depending on membership statistics alone for determining the health of the church. Under the tutelage of Donald McGavran, C. Peter Wagner, and other Church Growth leaders, pastors began to develop what McGavran called "church growth eyes." They embraced new concepts and an expanded vocabulary that included terms like conversion growth, transfer growth, biological growth, internal growth, expansion growth, extension growth, and many more.

The Genesis of McGavran's Interest in Research

Donald McGavran, father of the Church Growth Movement, never tired of underscoring the importance of proving or disproving assumptions by gathering research data. In part, he built his reputation on his analyses of data gathered in various missionary settings. But where did this emphasis on research come from? What was the source of McGavran's conviction about the importance of solid research and careful analysis of facts? The answer is no secret. McGavran consistently pointed to a Methodist bishop in India, J. Waskom Pickett, of whom he said, "I lit my candle at his fire."

The story of McGavran's reading of Pickett's *Christian Mass Movements in India* is well-known. McGavran called it "a book sent from God." Not the least of what impressed him about the book was its dependence upon a massive social survey and masterful analysis of the data gathered in the survey. As result, McGavran arranged to accompany Pickett on a future survey and collaborated with him on still another, the Mid-India

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Survey, later republished as *Church Growth and Group Conversion.* But where did Pickett learned how to do a social survey? How did the massive survey on which his Christian mass movement book depended come about? Largely unknown until recently, that is the subject of this article.

The "Mass Movements"

In 1928, J. Waskom Pickett, an American missionary in Lucknow, India, was the editor of the well-known *Indian Witness.* One day he got a note from John R. Mott, who was coming to India to interpret the recent Jerusalem IMC conference to India's National Christian Council. Mott wondered if, ahead of that meeting, he could meet with Pickett for a day or two to discuss the state of missions in India, particularly the debate over mass movement work. The so-called mass movements were what McGavran would later call people movements. Although missionaries had originally come to India with the idea of reaching Brahmins, they found over time that the bulk of people coming into the church were Untouchables who were deciding as groups to become followers of Christ. In fact, in the late 1920s, at least 80 percent of India's Protestant church members were Untouchables, and the percent of Untouchable Catholic members was even higher. This largely spontaneous phenomenon, which was happening in pockets throughout the subcontinent, was not without controversy. Some missionaries, like Pickett, were very much in favor of receiving as many Untouchables as wanted to come into the church. However, other missionaries questioned the motives of the new converts, the ability of the church to adequately disciple the large numbers that were coming, and even their understanding of what they were doing.

John Mott and the Institute for Social and Religious Research

Mott was the leading missions spokesperson of the day. One missionary described him as, "the father of us all."[1] When he came calling, Mott was 63; Pickett was 38. Mott wanted to know about Pickett's experience in mass movement work. Pickett related his missionary experience in Bihar, where he had worked with a small mass movement from 1916-23. Mott said that he was anxious for the church to come to one mind about the Christian mass movements. Were they, as some said, from God? Or were they, as others

insisted, the main obstacle to the evangelization of India? He wondered what Pickett would think of asking the National Christian Council to conduct an impartial, scientific survey of ten or a dozen Christian conversion movements in India. Since Pickett that very spring and fall had published two editorials underscoring the need for sound social research,[2] Mott probably already knew his answer! The aim, said Mott, would be to gather the facts needed to respond, once-and-for-all, to the long-standing conflict of opinion about the value of mass movement work.

Mott was not alone in wanting to gather data on the mass movements. In fact, the Church Missionary Society had just assembled surveys of its mass movement work in the central Punjab, Travancore, Tinnevelly, the Telugu area, Western India, and the United Provinces.[3] But although informative, the CMS surveys were meant as much for financial supporters of the mission as for those directly connected to the work. The surveys in the series typically included historical and descriptive overviews, some statistics, generalizations about issues and trends, and an assessment of needs. But though they purported to be dispassionate and free from "purple patches of eloquence or emotion,"[4] in fact, they frequently lapsed into just that, as the following paragraph illustrates:

> Would that we could transport you . . . to the plains of Tinnevelly. There you would see the long lines of laborers, men and women, in the fields—their backs bent, their faces to the soil. It is a parable of their life. As they go to their work, the unimaginably lovely lights of early dawn surround them, but their souls are dark. The singing of birds is heard, but their ears are deaf to the songs of liberty. At evening the flags of sunset stream across the sky and the mountains stand in holy stillness, but not for them![5]

Mott envisioned a more thoroughgoing, objective survey—one less susceptible to misapprehension and distortion in its production.[6] In the United States, the Social Survey Movement was flourishing. A new kind of survey had come into its own, one that employed combinations of direct observation, interviewing, onsite data-gathering through questionnaires and schedules, and data-producing experiments.[7] A contemporary description of this new kind of survey defined it as

> . . . a cooperative undertaking which applies scientific method to
> the study and treatment of current related social problems and
> conditions having definite geographical limits and bearings, plus
> such a spreading of its facts, conclusions and recommendations as
> will make them, as far as possible, the common knowledge of the
> community and a force for intelligent coordinated action.[8]

It was this sort of survey—including: (1) data gathering with a view to
resolving a specific issue, (2) tabulating and summarizing the data, (3)
drawing conclusions or "findings," (4) making recommendations, and (5)
publishing the results for those who stood to benefit from them—that Mott
was contemplating, and with which, as chairman of the board of the New
York based, Institute of Social and Religious Research, he was intimately
familiar. The organization's roots lay in the Interchurch World Movement's
survey department.[9] When the IWM closed shop, the department survived
through the vision of Mott and four other incorporators (and Rockefeller),
as the new ISRR.[10] Their goal, said the incorporators, was to apply
"rigorous scientific methods" for the advancement of the religious,
educational, charitable, and moral well-being of society.[11] Throughout its
history, Mott served as president of the ISRR and as chair of its board of
directors. From start to finish (1921-1934), Rockefeller money undergirded
the organization.[12] Most of its research projects involved the Protestant
church in the U. S., but some of them—the *World Missionary Atlas*, for
instance, and the *Fact-Finding for the Laymen's Foreign Missions
Inquiry*—reflected Mott's global interests. So when Mott broached his idea,
he was not projecting the CMS genre of surveys but a study that would
employ the state-of-the-art social survey methods being applied in the
projects of the Institute of Social and Religious Research—one that
promised to provide the data needed to settle mass movement fact from
fiction once and for all.[13]

Background of the Mass Movement Study

Pickett's reaction to Mott's scheme was enthusiastic. Such a study, he
said, would be invaluable. That was exactly what Mott wanted, and
probably expected, to hear. But Mott wanted to know if Pickett be willing

to support it at the upcoming National Christian Council assembly at Madras? Pickett said he would.[14]

Although it would be funded by the ISRR, the proposed project needed India-based sponsorship. At the National Christian Council's Madras conference, with Mott present, Pickett pressed for the study as the way finally to resolve the perennial mass movement debate.[15] His argument proved creditable. The project was approved, with Pickett as the project director.

Pickett outlined the goals as follows: (1) agreeing on a definition of the mass movement; (2) obtaining more detailed information on the involved tribes and castes and the mass movement's impact on them; (3) coming to a better understanding of the causes of group lapses and reversions; (4) assessing the degree to which oppression intensifies for converted depressed-class people; (5) a review of the relationship of converts to their kin-groups and communities; (6) getting a read on whether the mass movement tends to produce churches divided along caste and tribal lines; (7) analyzing the influence of the mass movement on higher caste Hindus and Muslims; (8) and assessing general public reaction to mass movement conversions.[16]

After Pickett got word that the ISRR board had approved and funded the proposed study, the next step was selecting a technical consultant. But, in India, some were concerned that a technical consultant from America might hinder as much as help the study—that such a person might exert too much Western influence on it. Mott, therefore, wrote to the new NCC president, V.S. Azariah, assuring him that appointing a consulting expert was customary and was "in no way [meant to] fetter or embarrass Pickett and those associated with him in the actual conduct of the survey."[17] However, Warren Wilson, the person finally decided upon, had, for twenty years, been used to directing studies on his own and was not used to serving in an advisory capacity. Moreover, he was very much a take-charge person. Pickett would also learn after his arrival that Wilson came with definite preconceptions about mass movements motives.[18]

But, of course, Pickett was partial too. He was not chosen to direct the study, as some have supposed, because he had been critical of it.[19] Upon the contrary, anyone who knew his seven-year history with the small mass movement in Shahabad or had read his *Indian Witness* editorials knew that he was an advocate of mass movement work. Why, then, did the NCC

choose Pickett? They chose him, in part, because he had a reputation for getting things done. Also, he had brought the proposal to the NCC. However, one suspects that the main reason Pickett got the job was because John R. Mott wanted him to have it!

Background of the Social Survey Movement

In a way, the tradition of social surveys into which Pickett was about to plunge was very old: as old as the survey of England ordered by William the Conqueror in 1085 and recorded in the *Domesday Book*, as old even as the census of Caesar Augustus, which brought Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem. Still, the contemporary survey movement's roots were relatively new, beginning in England with Charles Booth's 17-volume study—begun in 1866—of London's poor, and in America with the Russell Sage Foundation's Pittsburgh Study in the years around 1907, which sought to supercede theoretical conjecturing about urban social and economic forces with a truly objective collection of the facts of labor and life in the city.[20] By the 1920s, the American Social Survey Movement, in many ways the offspring of the Pittsburgh Study, was in full flush, with new theoretical and methodological innovations coming in an almost continual flow.[21] The staff of the Institute of Social and Religious Research kept abreast of these, routinely seeking the best possible matches of procedures and instruments to surveys under their sponsorship.[22] In addition, they adopted the correlative practice of tailoring what they borrowed to the specific needs and contexts of each survey.

Pickett's pioneering mass movement survey would be very much in this tradition. With the help of Warren Wilson, interview schedules (questionnaires) modeled on suitable American models would be field tested and adapted to the Indian context. Each day teams would interview Christians in the villages and record the responses for tabulation and review. They would obtain additional information from church records, censuses, and other public records. All of this information would find its way into compilation books, which would eventually be used to tell the story of the survey and provide the basis for the findings. These would be published in book form, along with a set of recommendations. Although the book would generalize on the overall study, as each survey area was

completed, the director would prepare special reports for sponsoring agencies and their workers on the ground.

Field Testing the Interview Schedules

Pickett and Wilson arrived in Etah, a city in northern India, northeast of Agra, on Saturday, November 8, 1930, as did E. Graham Parker who would serve as sub-Director, and Parker's wife who would serve as host.[23] Additional helpers arrived Monday. Etah would not only be the first mass movement area surveyed but would be where the Pickett team would field-test the several surveys they planned to use. The survey team spent the initial two weeks studying 52 nearby villages. They used only the Household Schedule the first week. Two supplemental survey instruments, still with the printer, were expected any day.

The Household Schedule, used with each family in the study, and supplying in some instances more than 350 pieces of information, would remain the primary instrument of inquiry.[24] In its revised form—all the questionnaires underwent substantial rewriting and revamping—its questions covered family members, religious status, church participation, religion in the home, creedal knowledge, caste relationships, moral and social stances, idolatry and superstition, house and lot, animals owned, sources of income, record of income, debts, and contributions to the church.[25]

Besides the Household Schedule, a Village Schedule obtained information about each village and a sense of what higher class Hindus and Muslims knew and thought about their Christian neighbors. A third schedule collected facts on the pastors: their work, their congregations, their families.[26] Besides these, the staff developed schedules and insertable sub-schedules to obtain data on local economic systems, Christian women and their families, and work. They also prepared a questionnaire for superintendents of churches and missions.

Weaknesses of the Study

Despite the attention given to the questionnaires by Wilson, Pickett, and the survey staff, weaknesses remained. The Household Schedule for example, the most important of the three main questionnaires, and a model

of the innovation and flexibility Wilson commended,[27] nonetheless had its flaws. For example, it centered on the nuclear family and practically ignored the extended family—an astonishing omission when recalling that the study's overall aim was to look at group movements. The same questionnaire linked spiritual achievement to Bible memorization (specifically, the ability to recite the Lord's Prayer and Ten Commandments). But in some villages, the emphasis was not on Bible memorization but Bible knowledge (familiarity with Bible stories).[28]

There were almost certainly other areas of weakness too. For example, beyond explaining how to use the schedules, neither Wilson nor Pickett reported what instruction or training they gave the interviewers. Yet, survey design can never be better than the interviewers.[29] No matter how good the interview schedules were, the interviewers—by how they conducted themselves (for example, how they entered a village), by how they recorded the responses they got, and even by whom they were (Westerners, high-caste persons, women, strangers) could not avoid influencing the responses they got. Likewise, neither Pickett nor Wilson reported how much consideration they gave to the likelihood of a favorable bias in responses given to interviewers whose reputations were at stake. For example, would an interviewee be likely to offer criticism of the church if either the pastor or a missionary was asking the question?[30] Yet another problem the interviewers in the NCC study faced was the frequent need of asking their questions in the vernacular, which meant that they needed to translate the questions from English into the local language and the response back into English.[31]

How the Study was Conducted

Once the interviews were well underway, Pickett would leave for the next survey site. His advance work required several weeks in each study area. Among other things, he needed to: consult with the local superintendents and pastors about the logistics of the survey; recruit the best possible persons to serve on the staff; explain how to use the interview schedules; arrange for lodging and cooks; find a vehicle or two for transportation, and arrange for the purchase of needed supplies.

A few days before the survey staff were to begin their interviews, local church leaders (usually superintendents and pastors) called on the village

headmen to explain and arrange for the visit of one of the teams. So when the interview team arrived, they typically found village representatives waiting outside the village for them—often as not with a welcoming band! After greeting the team, the local leaders and the band would lead them circuitously through the village so that everyone knew they were there. When they arrived in the Christian section, the church members washed their hands, offered them *charpoys* to sit on, or made them feel welcome in some other way. Then the interviewing began, with the questionnaires being filled in by the interviewers since most respondents were illiterate. This was the general pattern in each area studied.[32]

Without computers and modern tabulation procedures, the prospect of transcribing and assembling the data (ultimately representing 3,800 households) must have seemed overwhelming. Nevertheless, besides Wilson's help on the field, Pickett could afterwards count on the assistance of ISRR staff members in New York, whose statistical expertise promised an accurate interpretation of the data. With this ensemble, and Pickett's rich knowledge and insights about the problems of mission work in India, they devised and carried the study out according to the best social research methods available in those days. By today's standards, it had several significant weaknesses, some of which were recognized even then.[33] Nevertheless, it was good enough to give Pickett evidence for generalizations about the mass movements that was more useful by far than what had been available before the study was undertaken.

Significance

After Wilson's departure in May 1931, Pickett carried on the survey, finishing in October in the Ghaziabad district near Delhi.[34] Pickett's "report" would be *Christian Mass Movements in India*, the book that would make Pickett's name a household word among South Asian Christians. For some time to come, it would remain the largest social survey conducted outside the U.S. and Great Britain. Not only would it become the foundation for Donald McGavran's church growth thinking, but for Church Growth's signature emphasis on research. To this day, it remains the most important chronicle of the Indian mass movements.[35]

Notes

1. Maclean (1929:63).

2. See "Wanted, Facts!" *Indian Witness* 58(11):1; "The Need for Sound Social Research" *Indian Witness* 58(37):1.

3. In fact, these "surveys" (1926-1927) were not even the first ones done by the CMS. (Hare 1927:3).

4. In the Bishop of Tinnevelly's Foreword to the Tinnevelly survey (Bennett and Neill 1926).

5. Bennett and Neill (1926:11).

6. Some would not call surveys of the CMS variety surveys at all but "general investigations" See Bulmer, Bales, and Sklar (1991:31).

7. The combining of methods did not necessarily, or even often, include all four. But most of the time the surveys were the product of several of these. As indicated by Charles Luther Fry, who was for a time director of the Bureau of Standards of the Institute of Social and Religious Research, the majority of the 2,775 studies listed in Eaton and Harrison's exhaustive *Bibliography of Social Surveys* (1930) employed "a whole series of research tools" (1934:126). This was a step beyond the method employed in earlier community research studies, in which investigators utilized the simplest form of survey method: going to the field, asking questions, tabulating answers, and producing a product that combined straight statistics and description (Brunner 1957:145).

8. Bennett and Neill (1926:11).

9. Brunner (1957:9).

10. The other incorporators were Ernest DeWitt Burton, Charles R. Watson, Raymond B. Fosdick (brother of Harry Emerson Fosdick), and Chauncy Belknap (Fisher 1934:6). However, Charles E. Harvey, in his unpublished piece on the institute, figured that John D. Rockefeller, Jr. was the original stimulus. Cited by Hopkins (1979:603).

11. Fisher (1934:14).

12. In fact, Rockefeller paid its bills from the start (Hopkins 1979:603), and when he ended his support, the Institute for Social and Religious Research closed shop (Fisher 1934:7).

13. The CMS-type "survey" proceeded according to an outdated conceptualization of the task of social investigation. It relied heavily on annual church tabulations and the views of a few select informants. It did not fuss much about the agenda of the investigator or the methods of analysis. In contrast, "state-of-the-art" surveys such as Mott envisioned—though "state of the art" was a moving target— were a new breed. From their advent in the final years of the nineteenth century, they had been continuously evolving. By 1930, several distinguishing characteristics had emerged: (1) they depended on field work—i.e., on the on-site collection of data—rather than previously published reports and tabulations; (2) they offered a detailed look at personal and group facts (including family and household data) in place of wide-ranging generalizations; (3) to an increasing degree, they emphasized quantitative measurement and review; (4) they aimed to solve a problem, or else affirm or alter extant policies. However, this increasing sophistication and narrowing of focus is not to suggest that we should, today, read 1930s-era social surveys through the lenses of contemporary statistical theory or modern survey sampling techniques. (For starters, the modern sample survey and the geographically local survey of the first third of the century are distinct.) Nor is it to obscure the fact that by this time the American Social Survey Movement was beginning to lose its momentum. Rather, it is to affirm that the kind of survey Mott had in mind represented a quantum leap in applicative value over older methods of social investigation. Cf. Bulmer, Bales and Sklar (1991); Platt (1996).

14. J. Waskom Pickett handwritten draft for *My Twentieth Century Odyssey.* Asbury College Archives 13:16.

15. J. Waskom Pickett handwritten draft for *My Twentieth Century Odyssey.* Asbury College Archives 13:16.

16. "Some Problems Connected with the Christian Mass Movement in India," a personal memorandum from J. Waskom Pickett to Galen M. Fisher. January 8, 1930. Asbury College Archives. Cf. Pickett (1933a:12-13).

17. J. R. Mott to V. S. Azariah, February 14, 1930. International Missionary Council Archives, Box 406. School of Oriental and African Studies.

18. Address of J. Waskom Pickett to the North India American Presbyterian Mission, Mussoorie, India, June 1931.

19. Harper (2000:281).

20. The Pittsburgh Survey, called by some, "the first survey," (e.g., Eaton and Harrison 1930:xvii and Fry 1934:129), arose from social workers' convictions that social problems proceed from society, not individuals. It had more kinship with investigative journalism than modern methods of social research (Chambers 1971:33ff.; Cf. Eaton and Harrison 1930:xxiv-xxv and Cohen 1991). Its sweeping approach soon gave way to more narrowly focused surveys, zeroing in on specific areas of community life (see Eaton and Harrison 1930:xxvi). Nonetheless, its impact was key to the rise of the Social Survey Movement.

21. This did not include the contemporary advent of social sampling methods, which did not find their parentage in the Social Survey Movement but emerged alongside, in the milieu of academia (Converse 1987). For background on the early twentieth century history of the Social Survey Movement, see: Martin Bulmer, Kevin Bales and Katherine Kish Sklar's *The Social Survey in Historical Perspective: 1880-1940* (1991) and Jennifer Platt's *A History of Sociological Research Methods in America: 1920-1960* (1996).

22. As C. Luther Fry (1934:25) wrote: "The Institute of Social and Religious Research has frequently spent weeks studying sources and canvassing various possibilities before drawing up even the preliminary outline of a project." Note: For the most part in this chapter, I am intentionally limiting my sources on social survey methods to standard works on surveys from this period, particularly those that mirror the philosophy and approach of the Institute for Social and Religious Research—thus, the use of Fry's *Technique of Social Investigation* (1934) which contains a substantial annotated bibliography of period texts and sources, and reflects as well as any other book the methods of the Institute for Social and Religious Research. See also: F. Stuart Chapin's *Field Work and Social Research* (1920), an especially helpful source for understanding how schedules were used and tabulated by a student—like Wilson—of Giddings; and Allen Eaton and Shelby M. Harrison's *Bibliography of Social Surveys* (1930), containing the most comprehensive list of significant social surveys through 1928.

23. "Journal of the Mass Movement Study of Etah" (ca. January 1931). Prepared by Warren for the Institute for Social and Religious Research, NCC, and others connected with the survey. Warren Wilson Papers, Presbyterian Church (USA), Department of History and Management Services. Copy.

24. Pickett (1933a:17). See Cook (1998:204-208) for a photocopy of the Sudra Movement Household Schedule, which Cook found in the McGavran Collection, The Billy Graham Center, Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois.

25. See Pickett (1933a), where the responses to all these are tabulated and/or summarized, and the Sudra Movement Household Schedule, used in Pickett's next study. A detailed comparison shows that the Sudra Movement Household Schedule

was a near twin to the Household Schedule used in the original study.

26. Pickett (1933a:17).

27. Warren Wilson: "I have never before surveyed households but after conversations with Missionaries in Gujerat and Kolapur State, I recommended a schedule of investigation of Households which we have steadfastly followed." "Report to the National Christian Council" (ca. June 1931). Warren Wilson Papers, Presbyterian Church (USA), Department of History and Management Services. Copy.

28. The reality was that, while in some mass movement areas memorization was emphasized, in other areas content familiarity was deemed more important by church leaders. See William Dye to J. Waskom Pickett, November 10, 1931 (International Missionary Council, Box 406:104, School of Oriental and African Studies) in response to J. Waskom Pickett's report on the mass movement around Ghaziabad. See J. Waskom Pickett to R. E. Diffendorfer, November 5, 1931. International Missionary Council, Box 406:104. School of Oriental and African Studies.

29. See "Problems in Interviewing" by Allan F. Hershfield, Niels G. Roling, Graham B. Kerr, and Gerald Hursh-César (Hersh-César and Roy 1976:299-346).

30. Today, "disinterested" interviewers would be required.

31. I want to acknowledge here, with much appreciation, the help of Dr. Howard Kauffman, an expert in the sociology of religion and a highly regarded social researcher. Dr. Kauffman examined several key documents, including two of Pickett's survey reports and one of the survey instruments, and offered me a number of valuable insights, several of which are herein interwoven or interspersed with my own observations.

32. Pickett (1933a:18).

33. See, for example, "Statistics Do Not Tell the Whole Truth" (Pickett 1933a:219).

34. J. Waskom Pickett to Diffendorfer, November 5, 1931. UMCA.

35. Ingleby (2000:226).

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Wesley and Emergent Christians in Conversation: A Modest Proposal

Paul W. Chilcote

Rather than a presentation or paper, I think I would prefer to think of this present exercise as a "blogersation." My title – Wesleyan and Emergent Christians in Conversation – identifies a potential interface in our time that just might be worth some exploration. I confess only nascent interest in the emerging conversation/Emergent Village phenomenon, primarily identified in Western evangelical Christianity today. My knowledge of the literature lacks both breadth and depth. My connections with actual emerging communities remains extremely limited. My own social location and responsibilities limit first hand experience of emerging worship and mission. I am deeply moved, however, by what I see, hear, and read about these developments and, as a Wesleyan scholar, cannot help but intuit fascinating points of connection between this contemporary breath of renewal in the church and that which swept across 18th century Britain by virtue of the Methodist Revival. In light of these intuitions, my modest proposal is to suggest the possibility of a fruitful conversation between Wesleyan (specifically United Methodist) and Emerging or Emergent communities.[1] After clarifying some of the nomenclature and rehearsing some of the basic historical developments with regard to both movements, I will suggest eight particular points of contact around which conversation might emerge.

Towards Definition

In my title I have used the term "emergent Christians," but this growing movement within the Christian family still defies easy definition.[2] Some would argue that it is still much too early to attempt clarity with regard to

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developments not even yet clearly discernable as a "movement." Despite the dynamism of the times and the dangers of oversimplification, a language concerning these developments has already evolved, and provides some clues with regard to what the Spirit is doing in these winds of change. The earliest language associated with this new wind blowing through the life of the church was "emerging conversation."[3] Proponents of these developments preferred this language, emphasizing the amorphous and decentralized nature of the movement and the profoundly personal and engaging character of the Spirit's work. The phrase "emerging church," the next stage in the evolution of the terminology, connoted a wide range of attempts to manifest authentic Christian community that developed during the past twenty years or so, primarily in response to rapidly changing cultural contexts in the Western world. David F. Wells, Mutch Distinguished Professor of Historical and Systematic Theology at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, goes so far as to describe this "emerging church" as a third major constituency of evangelicals, distinguishing them from the traditional postwar evangelical generation and the later, pragmatic seekers.[4] More recently, many distinguish between "emerging," a broad term for generic usage, and "emergent," connoting a more narrowly defined community linked to the so-called "Emergent Village" of Brian McLaren and Tony Jones.[5] So the language has moved progressively, and very rapidly, from emerging conversation to emerging church to emergent church or village. In these reflections, I will use the term "emergent" to refer to all those who seek to associate themselves with these efforts at Christian renewal, in any way.

Several proponents of emergent Christianity have helped to define all of these developments more precisely. Eddie Gibbs and Ryan Bolger provide the most comprehensive and coherent definition in their book *Emerging Churches: Creating Christian Community in Postmodern Culture*. Their definition revolves around four critical terms, namely, practice, Jesus, postmodernity, and community. Accordingly, "emerging churches are communities that practice the way of Jesus within postmodern cultures."[6] Their book explores nine particular practices that add greater substance to this definition:

Emerging churches (1) identify with the life of Jesus, (2) transform the secular realm, and (3) live highly communal lives. Because of

these three activities, they (4) welcome the stranger, (5) serve with
generosity, (6) participate as producers, (7) create as created beings,
(8) lead as a body, and (9) take part in spiritual activities.[7]

In a February 2007 *Christianity Today* article, Scot McKnight identifies
"Five Streams of the Emerging Church," describing the key elements of
what he considers to be "the most controversial and misunderstood
movement in the church today."[8] This movement is (1) prophetic,
provoking the church to change, (2) postmodern, embracing the need for
Christians to speak with integrity to a new cultural situation, (3) praxis-
oriented, fashioning a new ecclesiology around worship, orthopraxy, and
mission, (4) post-evangelical, protesting against the propositional theology
and exclusivity practiced in current evangelical circles, and (5) political,
connecting the gospel to the issue of the reign of God in the public sphere.
Len Sweet defines emergent Christianity with reference to the postmodern
values that shape its worship and mission – what he describes as the EPIC
church: experiential, participatory, image-rich or image-driven, and
connective or communal.[9] In his examination of twelve "emerging
congregations," Bob Whitesel coins the term "organic church" in relation
to these developments. Employing the metaphors of melodic patterns and
shared rhythms, he characterizes these communities by virtue of their
melodies of orthodoxy, authenticity, engagement, and missional church
growth and their rhythms of place, worship, and discipleship and the
Word.[10]

In response to the changing nature of Sundays, changing relationships
and culture, changing understandings of Christianity, and changing attitudes
that shift from the religious to the spiritual, leaders of the emerging
movement in Britain sometimes describe these new developments as "fresh
expressions of the church," borrowing the phrase from the Initiative of
Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams.[11] "A fresh expression," in this
context, "is a form of church for our changing culture established primarily
for the benefit of people who are not yet members of any church." These
communities come into being "through the principles of listening, service,
incarnational mission, and making disciples."[12] For one of the leaders of the
emergent church in Australia, several streams that characterize the
movement include targeting networks rather than neighborhoods for
mission, using small groups as the context for church, creating alternative

spaces for church, and embarking on community development.[13] One critic
of the movement, Southern Baptist missiologist Ed Stetzer, divides the
movement into three discreet groups, relevants, reconstructionists, and
revisionists, on the basis of how they relate the Gospel to the changing
cultural context.[14] Regardless of the plurality of definitions or the differing
perspectives on this movement, the "emergent" emphases on the
rediscovery of authentic Christianity, a missional church, and accountability
in the way of Jesus pervade the expanding network of these communities.
Emergent Christians seek to be postmodern, missional, contextual, and
alternative.

The Wesleyan Tradition, Renewal, and Emergent Principles

The Evangelical Revival arose from within the Church of England in
the 18th century as a movement of spiritual renewal.[15] Although spearheaded
by Anglican clergymen, the two brothers, John and Charles Wesley, in
particular, the Revival was essentially a grass-roots, lay-oriented movement
of renewal, breathing new life into both the evangelical and sacramental
experience of the Church. In *The Wesleyan Tradition* I delineate six primary
emphases of early Methodism that constitute that particular paradigm of
renewal – the rediscoveries of the living Word, saving faith, holistic
spirituality, accountable discipleship, formative worship, and missional
vocation. While many of these characteristics can be found in other
movements of renewal in the history of the church, they combined in the
Wesleyan Revival with unusual effect. Certainly, the ecclesial and cultural
context in which communities made these rediscoveries shaped the early
Methodists and the practices associated with them. At a time when inertia
within the Church seemed to be oriented in the direction of institutional
preservation, intellectualism, and social respectability, Wesleyan Anglicans
recaptured a vision of the church rooted in God's transforming power and
mission in the world and manifest in a Christian praxis that sought
solidarity with those who stood on the periphery of society. In many
respects, the contemporary quest for an experience of God that transforms
lives and speaks with integrity to a changing cultural situation parallels the
Wesleyan passion for authentic life in Christ modeled on the way of Jesus.

It is important to acknowledge that others have recognized a potential
interface of Wesleyan and emergent Christianity. The last several years, in

particular, have witnessed a frenzy of activity connecting these movements. A rehearsal of selective events serves to illustrate the importance of these developments, for individuals, communities, and United Methodism as a denomination. On October 8, 2004, energized by the application of emerging principles within the churches under her charge, a United Methodist District Superintendent in Kansas City, Missouri, established a blog simply entitled "A United Methodist Emerging . . ."[16] The United Methodist Publishing House authorized spending $62,000 to research the emerging church in March the following year. An "emerging church" conference in May 2005 drew 650 religious leaders, pastors and Christians to Nashville for four days of discussion and worship. In June 2005, Amy Green published a United Methodist Communications feature entitled "Whatever it is, the emerging church is turning heads," in which she identified a Methodist congregation in Nashville as an emerging church.[17]

Just last year, the Mission Education unit of the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church launched a website that provides samples of Christian resources, curricula, and activity ideas "for use in the emerging and reemerging church."[18] This agency also recently inaugurated an Executive Secretary position for Resourcing Emerging Churches. Emergent Methodists held a UMerging Colloquy, October 5-6, 2006, in conjunction with the annual Leadership Institute of the Church of the Resurrection in suburban Kansas City. Its leaders delineated the purposes of this historic assembly:

> 1. To gather together United Methodists who are interested in the emerging church conversation in order to meet one another and to discover what is going on in various parts of the Church.
> 2. To hear presentations by emerging church leaders (Brian McLaren and Dan Kimball, for example) and to think together about the relationship between emerging thought and Wesleyan thought, including the similarities and dissimilarities between emerging ecclesiology and Methodist ecclesiology.
> 3, To organize a network of United Methodists interested in strategizing about effective evangelism in postmodern America and reaching the emerging generation with the gospel of Jesus Christ.[19]

In anticipation of this event and in response to local developments, the *Virginia Advocate*, house organ for the largest United Methodist Conference in the United States, devoted its October 2006 issue entirely to the emerging church and two questions: What is it? And what does it mean for our churches? Connections with things emergent in United Methodism span the gamut from simple links to "emerging church" sites on local church web pages[20] to more fully developed emergent communities springing out of or living alongside traditional congregations.[21]

The General Board of Discipleship of The United Methodist Church has spearheaded and monitored much of this conversation and the developments surrounding it. Having established a blog in 2006 concerning matters related to "emerging worship," Taylor Burton-Edwards, Director of Worship Resources and a rising "emergent Methodist," continues to oversee these ongoing dialogues from inside the institutional church.[22] He describes the GBOD blog as "a place for United Methodists and others to explore and share their ideas, resources, visions, and dreams of or about mission, ministry and worship in the emerging church." This site provides emerging church resources and links to communities identified with this growing network. From among three groups specifically highlighted on its web page "whose models are most compatible with our United Methodist ethos," only one traces its roots specifically to a United Methodist congregation. The Church of the Apostles, based in Seattle, relates most closely with the Episcopal and Lutheran traditions but advocates a conjunctive vision of Christianity linking mission and friendship, community and hospitality, authenticity and economy, service and mercy, tradition and innovation, beauty and wisdom, truth and becoming, joy and serendipity.[23] The Artisan Church of Rochester, New York, emphasizes encountering God, embracing people, and engaging culture in a communal life that values awe, beauty, roots, community, and justice.[24] The Gathering, inaugurated at Crievewood United Methodist Church in Nashville, emphasizes the conversational nature of the emergent vision in all aspects of its life. Worship provides the strongest evidence of this value. "Where some worship services engage in one way communication," the Gathering leaders claim, "we seek to engage one another and learn from this relationship. By sharing our experiences we hope to broaden our perceptions of God."[25]

It is highly significant that as we meet here this weekend in Ashland, Ohio, two major emergent events will gather together hundreds of

committed followers of Jesus to engage in conversation around these very issues in the life of contemporary North American Christianity. For almost a decade now people have been making pilgrimage to the annual Emergent Gathering in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Sponsored by Emergent Village, and closely connected to the ministry of Brian McLaren, Tony Jones, and Doug Pagitt, this event embodies what the leaders describe as "generative friendship." The purpose of the Emergent Gathering is to "conspire and collaborate together to create hospitality, conversations and common action." Participants engage in conversation around six broad themes: theology, whole life, leadership, community, socio political [issues], and arts & culture. This year the Emergent Gathering is being held October 2-5 at Glorieta Conference Center.

At the same time, "emergingumc: a gathering" is meeting in Nashville to provide an opportunity for United Methodists "to explore and birth the emerging missional church."[26] It seeks to share what emergent communities are doing and learning, to build stronger networks across the connection, and to amplify emergent voices so as to strengthen and deepen the practices of the emerging missional church. It promises to be eminently practical, deeply spiritual in ways relevant to the postmodern context, institutionally challenging (exploring the sub-theme of "What we want the mainline church to know about the emerging missional church"), and authentically missional. The event models conversation and cohortation, mapping streams in the emerging landscape such as missiology, worship, spiritual formation, and theology.[27]

The very fact of these concomitant events, so similar in purpose and scope, in and of itself suggests the possibility of a fruitful conversation between these two potential partners, namely, Wesleyan and emergent Christians. Birthed as movements of Christian renewal and reacting against the irrelevance and inflexibility of religious institutions in their unique historical and cultural settings, both movements sought or are seeking to rediscover a missional church paradigm and envisage genuine Christianity as a dynamic *via* – the way of Jesus. I would like to suggest eight primary talking points between Wesleyan and emergent Christians, all of which reveal a particular facet of the dynamic way of Jesus: discipleship, incarnation, apostolicity, koinonia, orthopraxy, narrative, iconography, and authenticity.[28] The first letters of these key terms spell out the word "diakonia" – the Greek word for "service." Diakonia sounds the key note

of both movements. If authentic Christian discipleship derives its essential nature from the person and work of Christ, then there could be no more consistent theme than that of "servanthood." The hallmark of Jesus' life was the way in which he served and demonstrated compassionate love towards all; in their rediscovery of a missional paradigm, both Wesleyan and emergent Christians seek conformity to this image.

Eight Critical Talking Points

1. *Discipleship: following the way of Jesus*. Early Methodism can be summarized in two words, "accountable discipleship." The Wesley brothers sought to invite people into the way of Jesus. Indeed, the spirituality of the movement revolved around a *via* more than a *confessio*. The Methodists understood Christianity to be a life lived more than a religious system to which one adheres; life in Christ reflects a relational journey rather than a propositional assertion. While many themes pervade the Wesleyan corpus, perhaps none stands out quite so dramatically, therefore, as faith-as-trust. Those who entrust their lives to Christ embark on a pilgrimage of faith. Faith is a source of knowledge concerning God and the way in which God offers salvation, hope, and healing to humanity. While never employing the classical terminology, the Wesleys distinguished between the "faith in which one believes" (*fides quae creditur*) and the "faith by which one believes" (*fides qua creditur*).[29] The contrast here is between an objective faith (what might be described as *the* faith, or a system of belief) and a subjective faith (what John Wesley describes as a living or saving faith). In the Wesleyan tradition, the "enpersonalization" of faith remains the key to the journey into authentic life in Christ; *the* faith must become, at some point and in a dynamic way, *my* faith. Discipleship involves entrusting one's life, in other words, to the way of Jesus.

2. *Incarnation: fleshing out the way in context*. The Wesleys understood that for the way of Jesus to become real in people's lives, it must be fleshed out – it must be incarnated – in a specific context. The founders of Methodism actually possessed an amazing ability to navigate their way through different cultural and social contexts and to translate their faith into a language or medium easily understood by the common person. In the same way that God entered human history and took on flesh in the person

of Jesus Christ, the Wesleys sought to live incarnationally by investing themselves in the lives of the people wherever they found them. Nowhere was this intention more apparent than in the arena of worship. True "spiritual worship," as Paul made so abundantly clear in Romans 12, has to do with every aspect of our lives. There can be no separation of worship or liturgy (literally, the work of the people) and the totality of life. Worship is, in fact, the grateful surrender of all we are and all we have, the fullest possible integration of our particular context or setting in life with the life of God in our midst. The Wesleys also perceived the intimate connection between this incarnational dynamic and the sharing of meals, in particular, the Eucharist in which God takes the common elements of life and transforms them into holy instruments of love.

3. *Apostolicity: Sharing the way through mission*. The Wesleys attempted to replicate the model of the church they discovered in the pages of the New Testament. They described their movement as a return to primitive or apostolic Christianity. The Church of their day had exchanged its true mission for maintenance. It had become distant from and irrelevant to the world it was called to serve during a time of tremendous change. Its forms and structures had become so inflexible and devoid of life that the weight of its "institutionalism" was quenching the Spirit, suffocating the life of God's people. It is not too much to say that three concepts – church, evangelism, mission – defined early Methodism. The church, the Wesleys believed, is not called to live for itself but to live for others. It is called, like Christ, to give itself for the life of the world. It is not so much that the church has a mission or ministries; rather, the church is mission. The Wesleys firmly believed that God was raising up the Methodists for the task of resuscitating a missional church, to share the way of Jesus through its various ministries in the world.

4. *Koinonia: living the way in community*.[30] On one of many occasions, John Wesley unleashed his fury against those who took religion in an individualistic, privatistic direction: "'Holy solitaries' is a phrase no more consistent with the gospel than holy adulterers," he said. "The gospel of Christ knows of no religion, but social; no holiness but social holiness."[31] In defense of his expanding network of Methodist societies, composed of small groups known as band and class meetings on the model of continental Pietism, he identifies the rediscovery of Christian fellowship as the critical and distinguishing mark of the movement. Mutual encouragement and

genuine care for one another were the hallmarks of Methodism, celebrated in Charles Wesley's many hymns, but particularly in these two stanzas:

> Help us to help each other, Lord,
> Each other's cross to bear;
> Let each his friendly aid afford,
> And feel his brother's care.

> Help us to build each other up,
> Our little stock improve;
> Increase our faith, confirm our hope,
> And perfect us in love.[32]

The purpose of life lived in community was the cultivation of truly holy lives which, for the Methodists, meant happy lives. They lived the way of Jesus in community.

5. *Orthopraxy: Nurturing the way through means*. The Wesleys emphasized nurturing the way of Jesus through the historic means of grace – what we might describe today as classic spiritual disciplines. They viewed right practice, or orthopraxy, as the proper fruit of orthodoxy, right belief. They preached and embodied a vision of the faith in which the practice of Christianity begins in grace, grows in grace, and finds its ultimate completion in God's grace. But while God's unconditional love and grace function as the cornerstone of all practices in the Wesleyan spirit, the "instituted means of grace" sustain the pilgrim in the journey. Among these means of growth in grace and love, also known as "works of piety," they included Christian fellowship, prayer and fasting, Bible study, and participation in the Sacrament of Holy Communion. These practices fueled the Wesleyan movement as a powerful religious awakening that was both "evangelical" (a rediscovery of God's word of grace) and "eucharistic" (a rediscovery of the sacrament of Holy Communion as a way to experience that grace). But the Wesleys found it impossible to separate their personal experience of God and devotion to Christ from their active role as ambassadors of reconciliation and social transformation in the world. They also practiced "works of mercy," such as active social service, commitment to the poor, and advocacy for the oppressed. A matrix of holistic

spirituality, characterized by both acts of devotion and worship and acts of justice and compassion, shaped the early Methodist people.

6. *Narrative: engaging the way as story*. Narrative shaped the early Methodist people profoundly, the story of God's relationship to God's people in scripture and the stories of individuals transformed by God's love in Christ. The Wesleys rediscovered the Bible as a place of divine/human encounter, a place to engage God's narrative of creation and redemption. "I am determined to be a Bible Christian," John Wesley once claimed, "not almost but altogether."[33] Essentially, this meant that he permitted the biblical narrative to shape his life, to become a living Word. Hundreds of spiritual accounts fill the pages of *The Arminian Magazine*, one of the most important apologetic publications related to Methodism in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The claim has been made that the early Methodist people produced more spiritual autobiography than any other religious community in their time, and perhaps, since.[34] In *Her Own Story* and *Early Methodist Spirituality* I have discussed women's narratives at length and assert that in the Wesleyan heritage the life of faith is by its very nature autobiographical.[35] These narratives confirm that whenever the Christian faith becomes *my* faith, there lies behind that transformation a story that begs to be told, a narrative to unfold the mystery of life. Methodist spirituality is by definition a narrative spirituality – the writing of my story within the broad framework of God's unfolding narrative of love.

7. *Iconography: conceiving the way through images*. The Methodist movement was born in song. The early Methodist people learned their theology by singing it. The hymns of early Methodism enabled many people to experience God. St. Augustine one time said that to sing is to pray twice. He recognized that sacred song possesses a particular power that elicits some of the most profound experiences of God in our lives. Wesley's hymns invite the worshiper through a tangible, lyrical form of art to share in the vision and experience of God. They provide images through which one can perceive and conceive the way of Jesus. In an incisive essay by S T Kimbrough, Jr., entitled "Wesleyan Hymns as Icons of the Wesleyan Tradition," he explores the relationship between the icons of Eastern Christian tradition and the hymns of the Wesleyan heritage.

Like the creator of an icon, Charles Wesley has caught a glimpse of the incarnate Child of God, Jesus Christ, and it is this vision

which drives his literary art. . . . The vision, however, is more than merely a vision, just as the icon is more than the material substance that transmits it. One is invited into a transforming spiritual experience. . . [Charles Wesley] writes with such depth and comprehension of the Incarnation that through the Wesleyan hymn the community of faith encounters Christ on its pilgrimage. . . . in its singing, the human mind, its senses, and the feelings of the heart are engaged as one meets Christ and the saints.[36]

The hymns, like the Orthodox icon, invite the worshiper into an experience of God.

8. *Authenticity: reflecting the way with integrity*. Perhaps nothing was more important to the Wesleys than the restoration of the image of God in the life of the faithful. Genuine Christianity meant the rediscovery of the true self as created by God for the purposes of love. This process of renewal begins most certainly in Baptism, but extends through one's life toward the goal of holiness of heart and life – the fullest possible love of God and neighbor. In a sermon published late in his life, John Wesley proclaimed: "How great a thing it is to be a Christian, to be a real, inward, scriptural Christian! Conformed in heart and life to the will of God!"[37] This journey of faith working by love leading to holiness of heart and life was inconceivable apart from honesty, integrity, without being real. In Charles Wesley's estimation, one of the early Methodist women, Mrs. Lefevre, exemplified the fullest possible realization of this Christian authenticity:

> She *was* (what words can never paint)
> A spotless soul, a sinless saint,
>   In perfect love renew'd;
> A mirror of the Deity,
> A transcript of the One in Three,
>   A temple fill'd with God.[38]

A "transcript of the Trinity," she was fully known and fully loved by God and sought to become transparent to the light that illuminated her soul. She reflected the way of Jesus with integrity and authenticity.

Not only are these eight themes central to the Wesleyan vision of authentic Christianity, they are also embraced by emergents as well.

Likewise, the eight action verbs that link these characteristics to the way of Jesus reflect the values of emergent Christians, namely, following, fleshing out, sharing, living, nurturing, engaging, conceiving, and reflecting. Many of these values are transparent in what I have presented above in an effort to define more clearly what the emergent movement represents, but a brief exploration of the interface between the two movements in these particular areas, drawn primarily from "conversations," adds texture to what appears to be a shared paradigm.

The Interface with Things Emergent

"The way of Jesus" is one of the most distinctive phrases associated with emergent Christianity. Emergents are not concerned about how to do church; they are interested in walking the way of Jesus in the world. Artisan Church expresses this devotion to the way by employing the language of journey, a pilgrimage shaped by biblical values held in common. According to Doug Pagitt, "Christianity is just simply not a stagnant belief."[39] This concern for vital faith discovered and explored in a pilgrimage shared with others led Brian McLaren to develop the concept of "generous orthodoxy," a non-dogmatic view of doctrine that embraces a continual reexamination of the received faith tradition and emphasizes faith as a journey rather than a destination. Commitment to God in the way of Jesus, according to the Emergent Village includes:

> seeking to "live by the Great Commandment: loving God and loving our neighbor"
> understanding "the gospel to be centered in Jesus and his message of the kingdom of God, a message of reconciliation with God and among humanity"
> and committing to "a 'generous orthodoxy' in faith and practice—affirming the historic Christian faith and the Biblical injunction to love one another even when we disagree."[40]

Attention to the paradigm shifts in Western culture – listening to the sounds and attending to the images of emerging culture – gave rise to emergent Christianity. The primary language associated with these changes, of course, has to do with the transition from modern to postmodern culture.

Attentiveness to context, in other words, has been a driving force in this movement. Emergent Christians take context with utmost seriousness. The assumption is that if the Christian community remains inattentive to contextual dynamics, there will be no way for the gospel to penetrate the hearts and minds of its "cultured despisers." As one commentator says:

> Emergent folks talk a lot about context, by which they mean local culture, be it suburban, urban, techie, street or Goth. . . .[They] participate enthusiastically in the world around them. The emphasis is less on heaven and more about reaching out to help those in need in the here and now.[41]

Much of the energy related to these concerns revolves around worship. In this regard, many emergents seek to revive ancient practices, viewed as more genuine and meaningful. In his book on this subject, Dan Kimball describes emergent worship as participatory, organic, multisensory, and imaginary, emphasizing many of the values of contemporary postmodern culture. It reflects the concern to incarnate the gospel anew in changing and plural contexts.[42] Len Sweet has used a helpful image to communicate this incarnational nature of emergent Christianity:

> Christianity does not go through time like water in a straw. It passes through cultural prisms and historical periods, which means that Christianity is organic. And like with any living thing, in order for things to stay the same, they have to change.[43]

The opening chapters of the Youth Specialties Youth Workers Convention of 2002, *Rethinking Church for Emerging Generations*, focus on the need to "understand the times" and the "emerging generations." Emergents believe that without attention to context there can be no authentic expression or embodiment of the gospel.

The Youth Specialties document on *Rethinking Church* also places ecclesiological concerns front and center in the movement. The heartbeat of the emergent movement is the rediscovery of the church as a missional community of God's people. Brian McLaren maintains that the growing interest in mission grows out of the desire to better perform the work of the church in the world. Emergent Christians focus their energies, therefore, on

the prophetic work of seeking justice, showing compassion, and walking humbly with God alongside the redemptive work that bring healing and reconciliation to a hurting world through God's grace. Len Sweet uses the posture of the church as a means to identify its self-understanding.

> Does the church face inward or outward? A missional church faces outward toward the world, not like a porcupine stands against its enemies, but like water fills every container without losing its content. . . . The church is measured, not by its seating capacity, but by its sending capacity.[44]

"We are captivated by the heart of God for hurting people and a suffering creation," claims one emergent community, "seeking to bring compassion to those needs and a just end to their underlying causes."[45] Rather than isolating itself from the world, the Emergent Village seeks to "practice faith missionally" by following "Christ into the world."[46] Emergent Christians seek to immerse themselves in the context of daily life so as to function as agents of healing and transformation.

According to Sweet, "the gospel is all about the formation of community. . . . The African word *ubuntu* is often used, which literally means 'It takes a "we" to make a "me."' Emerging churches are discovering the 'we' part of 'me.'"[47] According to one emergent community, "We are a covenantal family of authentic relationships and reconciliation in the image of God, who exists in perfect communion as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – yet One God."[48] This statement of the Artisan Church demonstrates the way in which the communal connects inextricably with the relational. Doug Pagitt describes how the setting of worship in emergent communities enhances this connection: "When you sit on a couch as opposed to a bench or a pew or something else, you just sort of have a sense that you're supposed to talk to that person. Because who do you sit on a couch with, other than a friend? And so, it implies a relationship."[49] "Whatever the diversity of spiritual practices," concludes Len Sweet, "the key words for emerging churches are incarnational, missional, and relational."[50]

Spiritual disciplines figure prominently in the multifarious spiritualities of emergent communities. From the contemplative strains of Taizé to the improvisational rhythms of Jazz, from the pensive movements of the labyrinth to the physical labor of building homes for the poor, from the

devotional approach to scripture in *lectio divina* to the ascetic practice of fasting from food or from television – in all of these spiritual practices, emergent Christians are laying claim to time honored traditions of spiritual nurture and renewal. Emergents prefer narrative presentations of faith and the dramatic reenactment of stories related to God's creative and redemptive love to the often reductionistic and academic presentation of biblical truth. It should never be forgotten that this movement first claimed the language of "conversation." The sharing of stories, both biblical and personal, characterize in the nature of interaction and formation in these new communities of faith.

In the postmodern context, image has become the gateway to experience. No emergent leader has identified this salient theme more poignantly than Len Sweet, "experience" being the first aspect of his EPIC paradigm.[51] "Starbucks understands the culture," he claims. "Starbucks is not selling coffee . . . they're selling an experience."[52] In a Religion & Ethics interview of emergent leaders, Brian McLaren and Kim Lawton explain this dimension as it relates to worship:

> Pastor McLaren: It's not just a matter of coming and sitting in a pew and enduring 50 or 70 or whatever minutes of observing something happen. But it's saying, "I want to experience God. I'm interested in coming into an experience here."

> Lawton: Worship is participatory and multisensory. People are encouraged to tangibly express their spirituality. Many are weaving together elements from different religious traditions, especially Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy. Some are discovering medieval mystical practices such as walking the labyrinth, but adding decidedly modern twists.[53]

There is a certain sense in which image, in fact, *is* everything, especially in the sense that images have the power to lead people into a more profound experience of the divine.

In her article on "The Emerging Church: Ancient Faith for a Postmodern World," Marcia Ford provides this helpful description of some cohesive factors in the movement:

What all these groups have in common is this: They believe Jesus intended his followers to interact with the culture around them, not become an alien subculture. They adhere to the ancient creeds of the church. They emphasize the visual and performing arts and acknowledge the enormous influence pop culture has on society. As much as anything else, they believe in the communal and missional aspects of the church—the responsibility Jesus-followers have to each other and to those outside the faith. And they believe that as we draw closer to God, we draw closer to each other, despite the denominational boundaries that divide us. Emerging church evangelicals comfortably draw on the rich traditions and practices of the diverse streams of Christianity, believing that by genuinely living where our common faith intersects, we can surpass the efforts of even the most successful ecumenical programs.[54]

This is the shape of authentic Christianity from the perspective of the emergent disciple: authentic lives that are simple, transparent, engaged, and faithful to Jesus Christ.

Emergent Methodist Connections

United Methodists and those associated with the Wesleyan heritage have already begun to manifest these connections between the emergent and Wesleyan vision of the Christian life in a multiplicity of settings across the United States and beyond. They have birthed new, emerging ministries from Virginia to Michigan to Pennsylvania. Faith Renaissance sprang from a United Methodist congregation in Arlington, Virginia.[55] First and foremost, the founders intended to "help close the gap that is often present between Jesus and organized religion." They desired to pattern their lives after Jesus and open their imaginations to what might be. The defining values of authentic relationships, missional living, and love shared in tangible ways, as well as the centrality of the arts to the fabric of community life, arose from their earliest conversations together. Their worship space enables and enhances conversation, and all are invited to share their thoughts, questions, doubts, and insights. "Time for prayer and silent reflection," their website claims, "are vital life lines to the

community. Sharing a meal is important too -- so communion is offered at every gathering."

One of the most interesting manifestations of this interface of Methodism and emergent Christianity is Emerge Community, launched initially as a ministry of the First United Methodist Church of Birmingham, Michigan, and now a growing movement throughout the Detroit metropolis.[56] Emerge describes itself using the following images:

> Emerge is a budding community of young followers of Jesus. We are built up from existing young adult communities in our area United Methodist Churches, and from new and growing communities dreamed-up and begun by people looking for authentic expressions of their understandings of Christ. We are young people seeking deep relationships, authentic worship experiences, and life-changing mission opportunities that will help us be radical disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. In short the Emerge Community is networked communities of young people gathering, growing, and going in the love of Jesus Christ.

Jim Walker is a United Methodist pastor on the pastoral leadership team in one of the most vibrant emergent communities, Hot Metal Bridge Faith Community in Pittsburgh.[57] While not connected directly to the denomination, the interface with the Wesleyan heritage is profound. This community, which meets in the Goodwill building on the south side of the city, frames its vision around the image of the bridge, seeking to "bridge the gap between people and Jesus Christ by helping them experience the Kingdom of God." It's mission, therefore, is to create bridges between God and others by living in authentic community with all. Worship revolves around the "loves of Jesus," utilizing a style that "shares the story of God through drama and the arts." Since Jesus loved a good story, narrative and drama figure prominently in their gatherings. Jesus loved to eat, so Bridges honors the sacred nature of meals and the table fellowship that defines their community. "Above all Jesus came to serve and love others," they claim, "and he expects no less from us. We seek to serve those that are in need throughout the community around us." The practices of the community undergird its diaconal vision.

All three of these groups ring the changes on the themes of relationality, authenticity, mission, radical discipleship, and network or community – all manifest in and directly related to emerging postmodern culture. In response to the prompting of the Holy Spirit, the Wesleys launched a movement of Christian renewal that now stretches around the entire globe; what the Spirit will do with this emergent movement, the potential of which appears to be great, remains to be seen.

Notes

1. The "Wesleyan tradition" includes many denominations, the World Methodist Council consisting of no fewer than 75 ecclesial communities around the globe. For my purposes here, and for the sake of space, however, I will restrict my reflections to my own denomination, The United Methodist Church.

2. As in the case of many movements within the life of the church, this one can be defined on one level in terms of those persons identified with it. "Emerging/emergent leaders" include Rob Bell, founder of Mars Hill Church in Grandville, Spencer Burke, founder of www.THEOOZE.com, Mark Driscoll, pastor of Mars Hill Church, André Jones, founder of www.TallSkinnyKiwi.com, Tony Jones, national coordinator of the Emergent Village in the United States, Dan Kimball, pastor of Vintage Faith Church in Santa Cruz, Scot McKnight, professor of North Park Theological Seminary, Brian McLaren, founder of Cedar Ridge Community Church in Baltimore, Mark Oestreicher, president of Youth Specialties, Doug Pagitt, pastor of Solomon's Porch in Minneapolis, Mike Sares and Eric Bain, co-pastors of Scum of the Earth in Denver, Chris Seay, pastor of Ecclesia in Houston, Leonard Sweet, professor of Drew University Theological School, Rob Toews, founder of the sol café in Canadian Alberta, and Karen Ward, pastor of Church of the Apostles in Seattle. Some of the more critical studies, all from the first decade of the 21st century, that track these developments include Spencer Burke, *Making Sense of Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), Don A. Carson, *Becoming Conversant with the Emerging Church: Understanding a Movement and Its Implications* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), Eddie Gibbs and Ryan K. Bolger, *Emerging Churches: Creating Christian Community in Postmodern Cultures* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), Stanley J. Grenz, *Created for Community* (Grand Rapids: BridgePoint Books, 2001), Alan Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating the Missional Church* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2006), Tony Jones, *Postmodern Youth Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), Dan Kimball, *Emerging Worship* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), *The Emerging Church*

(Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), Brian D. McLaren, *A Generous Orthodoxy* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), *A New Kind of Christian* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2001), *The Church on the Other Side* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), and *The Secret Message of Jesus* (Nashville: W Publishing, 2006), Erwin McManus, Greg Russinger, and Alex Field, *Practitioners: Voices from within the Emerging Church* (Ventura: Regal Books, 2005), Ian Mobsby, *Emerging & Fresh Expressions of Church* (London: Moot Community Pub., 2007), Doug Pagitt, *Church Re-Imagined* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), Pete Pillinger and Andrew Roberts, eds., *Changing Church for a Changing World* (London: The Methodist Church, Freshexpressions, 2007), Leonard Sweet, *Post-Modern Pilgrims* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2001) and *The Church in Emerging Culture* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), Leonard Sweet, Brian D. McLaren, and Jerry Haselmayer, *A is for Abductive* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), Bob Whitesel, *Inside the Organic Church: Learning from 12 Emerging Congregations* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2006), and Mike Yaconelli, *Stories of Emergence* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003).

3. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emerging_Church.

4. See *Above All Earthly Pow'rs: Christ in a Postmodern World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005).

5. See www.emergentvillage.com.

6. Gibbs and Bolger, *Emerging Churches*, 44.

7. Gibbs and Bolger, *Emerging Churches*, 45.

8. http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/207/february/11/35.html.

9. Leonard Sweet rings the changes on this theme in a number of settings. See http://www.pbs.org/wnet/religionandethics/week846/interview.html and http://www.next-wave.org/may00/sweet.htm and his book, *Post-Modern Pilgrims*, as well as his book authored with Brian McLaren and Jerry Haselmayer, *A is For Abductive*, 111-13.

10. Whitesel, *Inside the Organic Church*, see ix-xxxvii. Whitesel also provides a table of sixteen postmodern patterns and organic church reactions.

11. Pillinger and Roberts, *Changing Church*, 42-43. See also Mobsby, *Emerging & Fresh Expressions*.

12. http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk/section.asp?id=1768.

13. http://www.emergingchurch.info/reflection/georgelings/index.htm.

14. http://www.sbcbaptistpress.org/bpnews.asp?ID=22406.

15. See Paul W. Chilcote, ed., *The Wesleyan Tradition: A Paradigm for Renewal* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2002), 23-37 in particular.

16. http://aunitedmethodistemerging.blogspot.com/. The blogasphere is filled with conversation within Methodist circles concerning these issues. As a consequence of his participation in "Exploration 2006," a gathering for young people considering ordained ministry in The United Methodist Church, a seminary student established an emergent blog and gave impetus to conversation around emerging issues related to the Methodist tradition (http://adamgordonlauck.blogspot.com/). A similar and typical blog includes postings entitled "Making Methodism a Movement Again," "New Churches: the Future of the UMC," and "The New War on Methodist Mediocrity" (http://www.wesleyblog.com/emerging_church/index.html).

17. See http://web.umc.org/interior_print.asp?ptid=2&mid=9040&pagemode=print.

18. http://new.gbgm-umc.org/about/us/me/resources/sundayschool/.

19. http://umerging.org.

20. See, for example, the site of Grace United Methodist Church in Urbana, Illinois, http://www.urbanagrace.org/; see also http://www.squidoo.com/nexusumc/.

21. See the concluding section of this study.

22. See http://www.emergingumc.blogspot.com/.

23. http://www.apostleschurch.org/home.php.

24. http://www.artisanchurch.com/.

25. http://www.thegatheringsite.net/worship.asp.

26. http://www.gbod.org/worship/emergingumc/. Included among the United Methodist leadership of this event are Taylor Burton-Edwards, Elizabeth Buxton (Emergent Village women's work), Susan Cox-Johnson (District Superintendent of the Missouri Annual Conference), Carl Thomas Gladstone (Emerge Community

of Detroit), Don and Pat Heatley (Vision Community Church in Warwick, New York), Melissa Rudolph (leader of an indigenous ministry in rural Leetown, West Virginia), Jim Walker (Hot Metal Bridge Faith Community of Pittsburgh), and Billy Watson (emergent leader of St. Peter's in Katy, Texas).

27. The conversations/workshops include topics such as "Emerging in a Traditional Congregation in West Virginia," "Indigenous Mission in an Urban Arts Community," "What Jesus is Teaching Us in New York," "An Emerging Regional Youth Adult Network," "Emerging and the UM Connection," "An Emerging Methodist," "Emerging and Arminianism," "Emeringumc and GBOD: Confessions and Hopes," and "Emerging in an Institutional Church." Formational activities include Morning, Evening, and Night Prayer, celebrations of Eucharist, and experiences of Love Feast, Lectio Divina, Confession, Labyrinth, Healing, Intercessory Prayer, and Study.

28. In an address delivered in August 2006, entitled "John Wesley and the Emerging Church," St. Paul School of Theology professor Hal Knight identified seven features that characterize most emerging churches: discipleship, mission, incarnation, alternative community, proclamation and teaching, worship, and generous orthodoxy. I express appreciation for this contribution and will adjust slightly and amplify some of the conclusions drawn by Dr. Knight.

29. In his discussion of "the faithful life," Craig Dykstra observes: "To many people, faith means belief. Faith is, indeed, closely related to belief, but the relations between the two are complex. . . . Faith involves more than believing *that* something is true, it also involves believing *in*, having confidence in, trusting. Trust and confidence in God and in God's promises have been classical Protestant emphases in describing faith" (*Growing in the Life of Faith: Education and Christian Practices*, 2nd edn. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2005), 19-20).

30. See my discussion of community in *Recapturing the Wesleys' Vision*, 43-65.

31. Thomas Jackson, ed., *The Works of the Rev. John Wesley, M.A.*, 14 vols (London: Mason, 1829-31), 14:321.

32. Franz Hildebrandt and Oliver A. Beckerlegge, eds., *The Works of John Wesley. Volume 7. A Collection of Hymns for the use of the People called Methodists* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983), 677.

33. Albert C. Outler, ed., *The Works of John Wesley. Volume 4. Sermons IV. 115-151* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1987), 93 (hereinafter, *Works*, 4).

34. Ward and Heitzenrater observe that "the sheer bulk of the surviving evangelical self-representation and confession is a broad hint of the huge volume of class-meeting testimony and the like which never moved from oral to literary form" (W. Reginald Ward and Richard P. Heitzenrater, eds., *The Works of John Wesley. Volume 18. Journals and Diaries. I (1735-1738)* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1988), 24). Cf. D. Bruce Hindmarsh, "'My chains fell off, my heart was free': Early Methodist Conversion Narratives in England," *Church History* 68 (1999): 910–29 and *The Evangelical Conversion Narrative: Spiritual Autobiography in Early Modern England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

35. See Paul W. Chilcote, *Her Own Story: Autobiographical Portraits of Early Methodist Women* (Nashville: Kingwood Books, 2001), 14-18, 39-41 and Paul W. Chilcote, *Early Methodist Spirituality: Selected Women's Writings* (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 2007), 15-23.

36. S T Kimbrough, Jr., "Wesleyan Hymns as Icons of the Wesleyan Tradition," in *Charles Wesley's Hymns: "Prints" and Practices of Love Divine*, ed. Maxine E. Walker (Point Loma, CA: Point Loma Nazarene Press, 2007), 6-8.

37. *Works*, 4:121.

38. Thomas Jackson, ed., *The Journal of the Rev. Charles Wesley, M.A.*, 2 vols. (London: Mason, 1849), 2:334; Pt. I, s. 5. Charles Wesley frequently used the image of the "transcript of the Trinity" to depict the person who loved God and neighbor as fully as possible.

39. "The Emerging Church, Part One," *Religion & Ethics Newsweekly*, 845 (July 8, 2005).

40. www.emergentvillage.com.

41. *Virginia Advocate* 174, 10 (October 2006), 4.

42. See Dan Kimball, *Emerging Worship*.

43. *Virginia Advocate* 174, 10 (October 2006), 6.

44. *Virginia Advocate* 174, 10 (October 2006), 6.

45. http://www.artisanchurch.com/.

46. www.emergentvillage.com.

47. *Virginia Advocate* 174, 10 (October 2006), 6.

48. http://www.artisanchurch.com/.

49. "Emerging Church," *Religion & Ethics Newsweekly*.

50. *Virginia Advocate* 174, 10 (October 2006), 6.

51. See Leonard Sweet, *The Gospel According to Starbucks*, among his several books that explore this theme.

52. Quoted in "Several Virginia Churches are 'Emerging," *Virginia Advocate* 174, 10 (October 2006), 3.

53. "Emerging Church," *Religion & Ethics Newsweekly*.

54. http://explorefaith.org/ford/emerging.html.

55. www.arlingtonumc.com.

56. http://www.emergedetroit.org/.

57. http://www.hotmetalbridge.com/.

Five Pillars of the Equipping Church

Byungbae Hwang

Introduction

Donald McGavran described *discipling* and *perfecting* as separate stages in the process of Christianization (cf. McGavran 1955, 13-16; 1990, 123-124). He thought of *discipling* as the making of disciples, as mandated in the Great Commission, and *perfecting* as the teaching-equipping of disciples for spiritual growth, and working together in the kingdom (cf. McGavran 1955, 14-15; Moreau, ed. 2000, 199). Applying that analogy to the Korean Protestant church, *discipling* has been embraced with enthusiasm since its beginning, but perfecting has been neglected. As a result, the Korean church faces the serious problem of an underdeveloped laity.

Concerned about developing lay people for mission, McGavran argued that the creation of lay leadership is an essential characteristic of a growing church (1955, 132). In that conviction, he has not been alone. In *Radical Outreach* (2003), George Hunter criticizes Richard Baxter's "chaplaincy model" for church leadership, which prevents the implementation of the priesthood of all believers and suffocates any real lay movement. In contrast to Baxter's model, Hunter supports John Wesley's model of leadership in the church, which maximizes the potentiality of the laity for effective ministry. He writes, "John Wesley's movement claimed the world as its parish and implemented Luther's priesthood of all believers. This was, strategically, the supreme reason for Methodism's unprecedented growth as a lay movement" (Hunter 2003, 107). Hunter gives specific examples of local churches that currently implement the priesthood of all believers, and he contends that lay ministry will be an important theme in the coming century. Thus, the church should focus more on equipping lay people to be effective lay ministry partners.

In *Sharing the Ministry* (1999) Jean Morris Trumbauer gives several reasons for equipping the laity. First, it helps lay people grow in their

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understanding of their unique gifts and call to ministry. Second, it provides them with opportunities to build and to experience a sense of belonging. Third, it offers them the chance to clarify expectations, roles, and processes necessary for their working as a team. Fourth, it helps to ensure that lay people feel comfortable with their ministry tasks, and it helps them do their ministry more effectively. Fifth, it provides them with special opportunities to grow in their knowledge, ministry skills, attitudes, and values (Trumbauer 1999, 147-8).

Traditional churches in Korea are hierarchical, institutionalized, and clergy-driven; they generally do not have a well-organized, sequential lay-equipping process. As a result, lay people remain as bystanders, subordinates, and receivers of ministry, rather than becoming creative participants in ministry. However, in contrast, a few churches in Korea do have well-organized sequential phases of lay training and are deploying lay people in various ministries according to their spiritual gifts. These churches may be called "equipping churches," in that they focus on developing laity for ministry and leadership, and on implementing shared ministry.

In the summer of 2007, I decided to study some of these equipping churches.[1] I had learned that a few Korean churches had formed a lay disciple training network in cooperation with the International Disciple-Training Institute." I got in contact with the General Secretary of the institute, Rev. Gunwoo Kim, and obtained the names of several churches with a good reputation for lay development and shared ministry. I selected several additional churches I knew to be lay equipping churches, making a total of thirteen. I then contacted the pastors for permission to study their churches, and to arrange for interviews with them. I discovered five things in common. I now call them, "Five Pillars of the Equipping Church." They are as follows: (1) an Equipping Pastor, (2) an Equipping Process, (3) Equipped Lay Ministers, (4) Shared Ministry, and (5) a *Laos*-Driven Structure.

1. Equipping Pastor

Equipping churches need equipping pastors. In fact, C. Peter Wagner argues that the primary role of a pastor in the church is as an equipper (Wagner 1984, 76-79). So do Greg Ogden (1999, 96-116) and Patricia Page

(1993, 42) among others. Bill Hull observes that "pastor" in English came from the Hebrew, *roeh* meaning feeding, keeping, and leading, and the Greek, *poimen* meaning herding, tending, and pasturing (Hull 1988, 75). He maintains that the pastor in the local church should, therefore, be a leader who feeds, oversees, disciplines, teaches, and particularly equips the people of God for ministry (1988, 87-92).

Stott (1982), Snyder (1983), Stevens (1985), Hunter (1996), Schwartz (1996), and Steinbron (1997) point to Paul's description of the pastor's primary role of equipping God's people for the work of ministry (Eph. 4:11-12). In *Liberating the Church,* Paul Stevens states, "[T]he function of professional ministers is to make themselves dispensable by equipping others for ministry. They are called to equip the saints for the works of the ministry, ministry of and by the saints" (Stevens 1985, 33-34). John Stott also contends that clergy's primary task is equipping the laity for ministry, particularly for laity's witness (*maturia*) in the world. Stott argues that the laity should be trained for service (Stott 1982, 47-52). In *Natural Church Development,* Christian A. Schwartz emphasizes the importance of empowering leadership. According to him, leaders of growing churches concentrate on empowering other Christians for ministry. As servants of God, these leaders empower congregations to participate in God's ministry as partners (Schwartz 1996, 22). If persons are to be involved in fruitful ministry, then someone needs to prepare them.

All the equipping church pastors interviewed in my research agreed that the pastor's primary task in the church is equipping all the people of God to be effective lay ministry partners for God's kingdom work. For instance, Pastor Chang Don Bae says the essence of the pastoral ministry is to train lay people to produce lay leaders. So he spends most of his week days doing discipleship training (CDB, 12). Pastor Young Min Kim also says pastors must focus on training lay people to effectively participate in ministry along with the church's leadership, and lay people must focus on doing ministry with the pastor in a spirit of mutual trust and cooperation (YMK, 8). These equipping pastors meet with small group lay leaders every week for visioning, praying, and growing in faith. Additionally, these pastors offer continuing education programs for lay leaders several times every year. They recognize that the equipping pastor is an essential component of the equipping church.

2. Equipping Process

As Leroy Eims suggested (1978), true growth is gained over time. Restated, change occurs through process. He builds an equipping process of helping lay people go from being a convert or an untaught Christian to becoming a disciple, a worker, and a leader (Eims 1978, 181). In *The Complete Book of Discipleship,* Hull defines "Disciple-Making" in terms of a process based on Matthew 28:19. According to him, disciple-making is composed of three sub-dimensions: the first step is "deliverance" which is evangelism. The second step is "development" to equip individuals' character and capacity for ministry. The third step is "deployment" is to deploy the equipped people in ministry where they live, work, and play (Hull 2006, 34).

In *The Purpose Driven Church* (1995), Rick Warren proposes a lay-equipping model, called "Life Development Process Diagram," which is a sequential process for equipping lay people to be effective lay ministers/missionaries: (1) turning attenders into members (congregation); (2) developing mature members (committed); (3) turning members into ministers (core); and (4) engaging in mission (Warren 1995, 309-393). In *The Master's Plan for Making Disciples* (1998), Win Arn and Charles Arn delineated a sequential process of lay development that produces an active Christian lay leader: (1) non-Christians; (2) new Christians; (3) regular attender; 4) growing in Grace; (5) getting more involved; (6) active church leader (Arn 1998, 160). In *The Equipping Church,* Sue Mallory also proposed six sequential phases of lay development: (1) assimilation; (2) bible foundations; (3) discovery; (4) matching and placement; (5) growth; (6) recognition and reflection (Mallory 2001, 197-201). All these equipping models stand on a common understanding that entrepreneurial Christian lay leaders are not born or are produced by a day event; rather, these leaders are developed through a process over time. Good preparation of lay leaders will greatly increase the possibility of long-term, effective ministry (Trumbauer 1999, 148).

"Leader-Member Exchange" (LMX) theory is one of well-developed leadership theories. Graen and Uhl-Bien, two proponents of LMX theory, assert that the leadership-making process is a mature relationship-building process between leaders and followers, and it occurs progressively over time in three phases: the stranger phase, the acquaintance phase, and the

mature partnership phase. Through these phases, people move from strangers to partners. As Graen and Uhl-Bien say, the relational quality in relationship-building stage is usually unstable in the early stage, but its quality becomes more stable as the relationship becomes more established over time. (Uhl-Bien, Graen, and Scandura 2000, 148). The equipping church pastors interviewed in my study recognized that lay people change through an equipping process and that lay-equipping is not a short-term program, but instead a long-term process. They also knew the importance of the well-planned, sequential process of equipping. Based on my research and the leadership-making process of LMX theory, a sequential process for lay-equipping could be proposed as follows.

Stage 1: Assimilation

The first phase of the lay-equipping process is assimilation. Assimilation refers to the connection between the person and the church in helping people feel part of the church community and in providing an intentional pathway to grow as a Christian in his or her relationship with God (Mallory 2001, 245). In this respect, this phase can be called "a fellowship-building phase." Assimilation provides a way for people to feel connected in the church and learn more about Christianity. Gay McIntosh and Glen Martin state, "Assimilation begins right at the heart of our need for relationship. Many churches are inclusive in outreach, yet exclusive in fellowship" (Gay McIntosh and Glen Martin 1992, 75). According to Schaller, at least one-third or one-half of church members do not feel a sense of belonging in their respective congregations (Schaller 1978, 16). For this reason, the assimilation stage needs to focus on helping newcomers experience fellowship with other members in the church, feel part of the congregation, and learn the vision and value of the church. Providing a basic understanding of what it means to be a Christian offers newcomers the opportunity to move to the next step. In this stage, lay people learn the truth of Christianity and develop their identity as a member of the church. The role of pastor/church leader is particularly important in the assimilation phase in that creating an atmosphere of trust depends mostly on the leader, who often has to take the first step in developing trust by demonstrating trust" (McNeal 1998, 44).

According to the LMX theory, newcomers are "out-group members" or

"strangers." In this phase, newcomers have lower-quality exchanges with other people in the church, especially with the leader of the community. Their motives are directed toward self-interest rather than the goal of the community (2004, 151). Thus, the highest priority in this phase is building intimate relationships and learning community values. In particular, the activities of leader and member in this phase are related to "role-finding," a sampling phase in which a leader evaluates a member's behavior and motivation to decide how much future time and energy to invest in the member (Bauer and Graen 1996, 1547).

My research shows that equipping churches in Korea that develop laity for ministry and leadership have a well-planned assimilation phase in the lay-equipping process. This phase usually consists of four to six weeks, and each week provides an introductory course offering newcomers a comprehensive understanding of basic Christian faith and the church. They also focus on helping newcomers adjust to their church successfully and experience real fellowship in Christ. For instance, Manna Church provides a four-week New Family Course to all newcomers to help them to adjust to a new environment successfully. At Eun-Hae-Yei Church all newcomers are required to attend New Family Class which consists of five weeks. At Jangchung Church, every newcomer voluntarily completes a six-week New Family Class in which they learn about basic Christian doctrine and are introduced to the church by the senior pastor. Through an effective assimilation phase, newcomers come to decide to start their faith journey in the faith community and are ready to move to the next step which leads to more committed circle. It is true that newcomers gain a sense of acceptance and belonging in the community moving from the circles of "Them" to "Us" through successful assimilation (Schaller 1978, 83).

Stage 2: Disciple-Making Phase

Christopher Adsit defines disciple-making as "seeking to fulfill the imperative of the Great Commission by making a conscientious effort to help people move toward spiritual maturity –drawing on the power and direction of the Holy Spirit, utilizing the resources of the local church, and fully employing the gifts, talents and skills acquired over the years" (Adsit 1993, 40). This phase is consistent with the second phase (acquaintance) in the leadership-making process of the LMX theory, featuring movement

from one stage to another. For this reason, this phase is characterized as middle stage in the lay-equipping process.

According to the LMX theory, those who are in this "acquaintance phase" are on the way to the inner group from the outer group of the community. In this stage, the quality of exchange between people (a leader and a member) is improved, and they develop greater trust and respect for each other. "They also tend to focus less on their own self-interests and more on the purposes and goals of the group" (Northouse 2004, 152). Their activities are related to "role-making," a continuation of the developmental process in which further exchanges between the leader and individual members occur. According to Bauer and Graen, "this is the stage at which behavioral aspects of trust come into play. The leader is taking a risk by delegating work to the member" (Bauer and Graen 1996, 1547). My interview shows that equipping church pastors in Korea test lay training class (the discipleship-training class) members by entrusting tasks in small groups or other ministry settings. Those who go through this passage successfully move into the higher level of leader-member exchange.

Accordingly, this phase is a testing period in which the member's identity moves from "out-group" toward "in-group," and their interest moves from self to others. Their exchange quality is medium and their influences generally are mixed. Persons in this "acquaintance phase" are on the way to the inner group from the outer group of the community.

The equipping churches that were researched concentrated on training lay people in stage two. These churches provide various ministry skills and help lay people develop their leadership abilities. As a result, this stage can be described as a growth-informing phase. For instance, at Manna Church once newcomers finish the first stage, "New Family Course," they go into the middle class that consists of biblical studies and discipleship training. Then the new members continue to the high class, studying principles of leadership and studying Scripture book by book. Finally, the emerging leaders take the minister training class, where they learn in detail about the ministries of this church (SSO, 9). All these training courses belong to the second stage in the lay-equipping process. Phase two takes longer than phase one because the latter focuses on the assimilation in the initial stage of belonging to the faith community, but the former concentrates on training laity for ministry and leadership. Passing through this phase generally takes at least one year.

Another crucial characteristic of this phase involves discovering spiritual gifts. The equipping church and pastor help lay people to discover their gifts, and encourage them to test their gifts in various ministry settings. Entrepreneurial Christian lay leaders discover their gifts in this phase. For example, the lay leader of the Medical Ministry for Foreign Workers says that he discovered his gifts in a lay training course and decided use his gifts for God's kingdom work (SKD, 5). As Sue Mallory insists, this phase is crucial because success or failure of leadership making depends mainly on how well people know their spiritual needs, gifts, interests, and readiness to serve (Mallory 2001, 107). Therefore, in this phase the pastor of the church needs to focus particularly on assisting lay people to discover their own spiritual gifts and become ready for ministry.

Stage 3: Ministry-Partnership Phase

This phase is also called "mature partnership." According to the LMX theory, "mature partnership is marked by high-quality leader-member exchanges" (Northouse 2004, 152). The leader and the subordinate have a high degree of mutual trust, respect, obligation, and reciprocity toward each other. They have a high degree of reciprocity for each other. "Leaders, for example, may rely on subordinates to do extra assignment, and subordinates may rely on leaders for needed support or encouragement" (2004, 153). Individuals in this stage are closely tied together in productive ways that go beyond a traditional hierarchically defined work relationship (2004, 153). Their relationship is not hierarchical, but equal. Their dialogue is about personal-related topics. The subordinate recognizes himself/herself as an "in-group" person. Activities between leader and member are related to "role-implementing" that is the mature partnership state. In this stage, leaders delegate more responsible activities to members and depend more upon members who have entered the in-group. In this phase, "mutual trust, respect, and obligation toward each other empowers and motivates both to expand beyond the formalized work contract and formalized work roles, to grow out of their prescribed jobs and develop a partnership based on mutual reciprocal influence (Graen and Ulh-Bien 1995, 232). In this phase real teamwork occurs. As Eims mentions, "[T]he ministry is far more effective when it carried on by a team. There is power in a united effort. Teamwork

is one of the keys that unlocks and unleashes the power of God" (1978, 116).

The case studies shows that equipping church pastors in Korea delegate ministry leadership to lay leaders who have passed through an equipping process for ministry and leadership even though all the ministry opportunities are open to all lay people. They observed that only equipped lay people can fully understand the vision, purpose, and mission of the church and have higher level of partnership with their pastors as ministry partners. Thus, true shared ministry takes place in this phase. They are friends, fellow partners, and brothers to each other. At this point, a leader and a member share their opinions, plan their strategy together, and support each other, as characterized by the mature status in Argyris's Immaturity-Maturity Continuum. As he mentioned, in this mature stage, individuals are not any more in subordinator position, but equal position. (Argyris 1962, 43). When their partnership is maximized, true shared ministry occurs in the faith community. In addition, as Northouse stated, "partnerships are transformational in that they assist leaders and followers in moving beyond their own self-interests to accomplish the greater good of the team and organization" (2004, 153). Through the partnership among the people of God ($\lambda\alpha\acute{o}\varsigma$ qeou/), the church can accomplish greater things than expected. The better equipped ministry partners are, the more effective ministry will occur. The following figure depicts an overview of the equipping process for developing laity for ministry and leadership.

3. Equipped Lay Leaders (Entrepreneurial Christian Lay Leaders)

Darrell Guder argues that the church must be led by equipped and committed people in the covenant community (Guder 1988, 208). Hunter also points out the importance of equipped lay leaders (entrepreneurial Christian lay leaders) in ministry (Hunter 1996, 127). Snyder argues that the church experiences a shortage of effective ministers when it fails to train believers into leaders (Snyder 1983, 247). The equipped and committed lay leaders are an essential factor of the inner-circle that leads a faith community. In the inner-circle of the Church a team leadership takes place between clergy and laity.
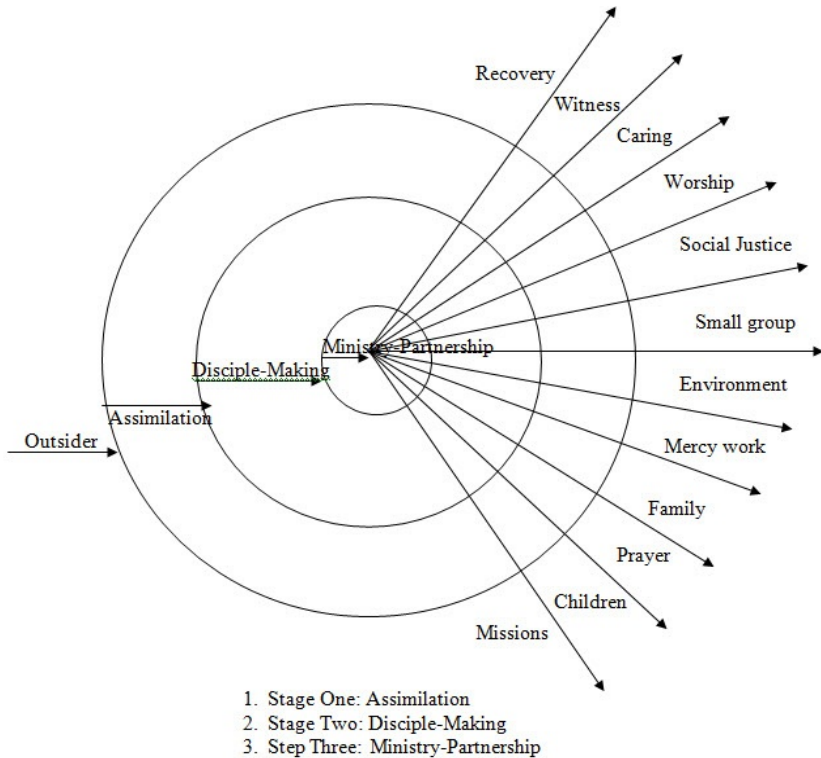
1. Stage One: Assimilation
2. Stage Two: Disciple-Making
3. Step Three: Ministry-Partnership

Figure1. A Process for Equipping Laity for Ministry and Leadership

The interview responses indicated that equipping church pastors are convinced that anyone can participate in ministry, but ministry leadership should be delegated only to those who have received training to be lay leaders. The responses of the equipped lay leaders indicated that they have higher levels of partnership and commitment. They also have higher levels of reciprocity, team-interest, willingness to do extra work, readiness to make an effort, emotional attachment to the church, and concern for church growth. Furthermore, I found that the equipped lay leaders strongly support the vision of their church emotionally and financially. They have a clear

identity as God's ministers/missionaries, and share their visions, plan ministry, and work together. They lead small groups, worship, social services, recovery ministry, and bible study groups. According to their spiritual gifts, disciplined lay ministers practice leadership in various kinds of ministries inside and outside of the church.

Equipped lay leaders discover the needs of the community and establish ministries to meet them. The various ministries were led by equipped lay leaders, such as the Handicapped Ministry of Manna Church and the Ministry to North Koreans and Chinese Korean Ministry of Junglim Church. All of these ministries reach out and help others in need. Equipped lay leaders are also highly involved in recovery ministries such as the Singles' Ministry of Hosanna Church and the Prison Ministry of Sunhan-Mokja Church. They have a heart for lost souls and pursue holistic mission. The Foreign Workers' Ministry of Jiguchon Church and the Medical Ministry of Jeja Church focus on meeting physical needs as well as saving souls.

Equipped lay leaders maintain their spirituality through small group activities, grow together with other ministry partners, and experience maturation of faith through their ministries. These entrepreneurial Christian lay leaders do ministry together with their pastors, not as subordinates but as fellow ministry partners. When the church develops lay people for ministry and leadership, the equipped people provide a solid foundation for successful shared ministry.

4. Shared Ministry

Ministry should be shared. This simple statement has been argued and supported by numerous theologians and church leaders, such as Congar (1957), Kraemer (1958), Ayres (1962), Neill (1963), Eims (1978), Stott (1982), Ogden (1990), Hunter (1996), Stevens (1999), Rowthorn (2002), Snyder (2004). They insist that all people of God are called to God's kingdom work and thus they need to work together as ministers. They criticize the unbiblical dichotomy between clergy and laity that prevails in the church today. There exists no an ontological split between the clergy and the laity (Hunter 1996, 121). Thus, as Leroy Howe argues in *A Pastor in Every Pew* (2000), ministry must be shared by mature and gifted lay people.

Equipping churches in Korea overcome the unbiblical dichotomy between clergy and laity through shared ministry, which results from lay-equipping. Through the lay-equipping process, lay people are transformed into effective lay ministers who utilize their gifts and resources for ministry. As mentioned previously, lay ministers who discovered their spiritual gifts through the lay-equipping process utilize their gifts to serve the needy. A pastor cannot do all the kinds of ministries needed in the church and in the community, but when responsibility for the various ministries is shared with lay ministers who have discovered their spiritual gifts and trained for ministry, God's kingdom work will prosper.

The thirteen equipping churches in this study offer various bridges for lay outreach. The Reading and Healing Ministry of Hosanna Church and the Cultural Practicum of Jiguchon Church are good examples. The various practicums, such as art, movie, drama, or music courses have functioned as "side doors" through which the unchurched enter and become the churched. Lay ministers who are medical doctors or nurses give free services to impoverished children living in the church's neighborhood. For elderly people living alone, the church matches each elderly person with a lay minister's family in the church. This family assists the elderly person with cleaning, laundry, food preparation, etc. Some of the matched families and elderly people even travel together. Those lay ministers who are beauticians serve and reach out to laborers from foreign countries as well as to lonely elderly people living in the outer skirts of the city. Those lay ministers who are construction workers not only share the gospel, but also repair the homes of the people who could not afford to make necessary repairs. No pastor could undertake all these ministries; but they are skillfully and compassionately implemented by lay ministers who discover their spiritual gifts and utilize them for God's kingdom. Findings from the case studies and interviews support the conclusion that shared ministry with equipped lay ministers is an essential factor that shapes the equipping church.

5. Laos-Driven Structure

The equipping church has a *laos*-driven structure. In *The New Reformation* (1999), Ogden contrasts the dependency model of ministry (church as institution) and the interdependency model of ministry (church

as organism). The former could be called the clergy-driven church and the latter the *laos*-driven church.

The traditional church follows the institutionalized church model which is clergy-driven and hierarchical. In this church structure, there is an ontological dichotomy between clergy and laity, which is inconsistent with the original design of church that all people of God are called as ministers of God's kingdom. In this hierarchical church, the pastor always takes the top position, with the elders forming the first rank of the laity, exhorts the second rank, deacons in the third place, and layperson in the lowest classes. In this church, lay people cannot expect open and reciprocal communication with their pastor. There are often conflicts and divisions between classes, and thus the church cannot respond effectively to the various challenges it faces from the world. When lay people participate in ministry, they do so because they are deployed to the ministry post by their pastor. The pastor does not consider the individual's spiritual gifts. Lay people are viewed as mere helpers and assistants for the clergy; in such churches holistic ministry—responding effectively to the various needs of the world—is impeded.

In contrast to clergy-driven churches, *laos*-driven churches are circular, not hierarchical in structure. While the clergy-driven church emphasizes the institution, order, and class ranking, the *laos*-driven church focuses on people, ecological relationship among people of God, spiritual gifts, the priesthood of all believers, and shared ministry. Jang proposes seven advantages of the circular structure of the church: (1) various ministries can occur both inside and outside the church; (2) the lay people's potentiality can be enlarged; (3) the church can be a charismatic community; (4) the church can reach the unchurched more effectively, because various kinds of small groups attract various kinds of people from outside the church; (5) the church can effectively respond to the radically-changing world; (6) the church can answer the various needs of the community; (7) the church pursues ecumenism by working together with other congregations (2001, 147-149).

In this horizontal dimension, all the people of God are deeply interrelated as the parts of the body of Christ, which is the Church. This interrelation makes the church truly living organism, in which people build higher partnership with and commitment to each other. In this church equipped lay ministry partners are deployed multidirectionally according to

their spiritual gifts and thus the church can effectively respond to the needs of the world in more creative way. The horizontal (circular) church structure is more appropriate than the hierarchical (pyramidal) church structure today, because the various small groups in the horizontal network church can respond more effectively to the multi-needs of the rapidly changing world. As a result, the church inevitably grows and strongly impacts the world around it as well. The biblical understanding of the church teaches that the church is not merely an institution, but a living organism, the body of Christ with Jesus Christ as its head (Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18). This ecological understanding of the church rejects a hierarchical clergy-driven structure, but pursues a horizontal *laos*-driven structure.
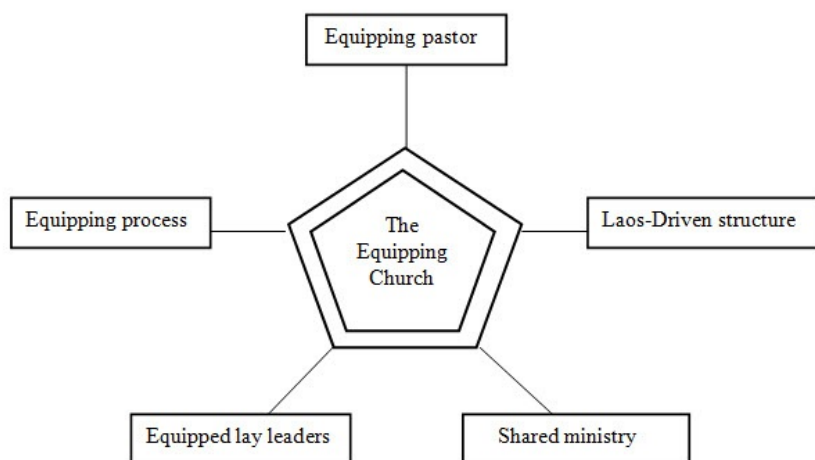
Figure2. Five Pillars of the Equipping Church

Conclusion

Let me conclude by simply rehearsing the five key pillars I discovered in the thirteen churches I studied: (1) an equipping pastor and (2) equipping process, (3) a lay-driven structure, (4) shared ministry, and (5) equipped lay leaders. These pillars, I am convinced, would go far in correcting the perfecting problem in present-day Korean churches, and no doubt in many non-Korean churches too.

Note

1. The participating churches were: Boondang Woori Church, Eun-Hae-Yei Church; Hosanna Church; Jang-Choong Church; Jeja Church; Jiguchon Church; Junglim Church; Kangnam Church; Manna Church; Saeronam Church; Sunhan-Mokja Church; Taekwang Church; and Yung-Ahn Church (See appendix A, Demographics of the Research Community).

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Book Reviews

Beyond Cheap Grace. A Call to Radical Discipleship, Incarnation, and Justice
By Eldin Villafañe
Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2006. xiv+ 98 pp.

Originally sermonic lectures and responses by three faculty members given in April 2004 at Fuller Theological Seminary, these authors explore the cost of being faithful to God's call to discipleship. Ricardo Tañon Distinguished Professor of Hispanic Christianity, Ethics, and Urban Ministry at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Villafañe, summarizes the book on page 5: postmodernity demands that Christians live a cruciform life in favor of the redemption of the world; to do so requires, "you got to *think* differently to *act* differently, so as to make a *difference.*"

Villafañe derives his paradigm from Philippians 2 where Paul exhorts Christians to adopt the attitude of Christ by incarnating the Gospel in costly discipleship that people might see in our lives the marks of the cross. Richard Peace responds to the first chapter, "Christian Mind-set and Postmodernity." In contrast with the search for comfort, prestige, power or fame characteristic of some Christians, Peace highlights "emerging churches," a movement generally marked by integrity, imagination, confession of sin, celebration of new relations, and renewed commitment to the dream of God. Congregations and intentional communities feature the centrality of Jesus Christ; communal life; vital worship; use of the visual arts; care for creation; concern for youth; and ministries among the marginalized and are more apt to be informed by missional concerns than by purpose-driven thinking.

The second chapter explores the incarnation and theological education. Villafañe urges seminaries to be more intentional in preparing students to think globally and act in the light of their local context. Juan Francisco Martinez responds that the curriculum of Fuller [Fuller alone] is tuition driven with the result that the seminary is crippled in its effort to demonstrate a "preferential option for the poor."

The third chapter cites Amos 7:10-15 and calls Christians to do justice in a culture that worships the good of wealth (p. 73). In his response Veli-Mattí Kärkkäinen highlights the issue of spirituality. "In order for our *devotionals* to become meaningful, we need to *devote* ourselves to the cause of God" (p. 85)

Today, the challenges are real for Christian witness in North America. Postmodern people will respond to the Gospel, especially if they see the pattern which Amos anticipated and Jesus realized evident in the lives of Christians. I wish the authors had mined challenges and possibilities more fully. However, they realize their goal in generating fruitful reflection on the urgent need for Christians to heed the call to abandon cheap grace and embrace costly discipleship.

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Shaping the Christian Life. Worship and the Religious Affections
By Kendra G. Hotz and Matthew T. Mathews
Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006. xii +184 pp.

By religious affections, Hotz and Mathews understand "those deeply seated dispositions that orient us in the world as creatures who were made to glorify and enjoy God" (pp. 164-5). The theme of Part One is that theology is doxological. To the Latin phrase lex orandi, lex credendi the authors add lex bene operandi. Worship, prayer, preaching, sacraments, and music shape belief and ethics, and vice versa. The religious affections provide a crucial link between thought and ethics. Worship shapes religious affections such as awe, humility, gratitude, a sense of mutuality and interdependence, a sense of well-being or direction, delight, obligation, self-sacrificial love, contrition, and hope; in turn, these shape the identities of Christians, renew their lives, and orient them to live to the glory of God and in relationships of beauty and harmony with all creation (p. ix).

This sounds great. How does it operate? For Hotz and Mathews, the practices "work on the state of our souls. This is not magic; it is the simple reality of being embodied creatures. Magic is the practice of manipulating physical elements in an effort to influence God. What Christian worship

does is precisely the opposite of magic. In Christian worship, we trust that God works through the physical world to bring us under God's influence" (pp. 72-73). To highlight the 8th chapter on "The Service of the Word," Hotz and Mathews explore several ways sermons express, evoke, shape, sustain, direct, and order the religious affections. Preaching 1st gathers up the fragmented, disconnected parts of the lives of hearers of the Word and links them with a meaningful past within the grand biblical story of God's redemptive self revelation; 2nd, stirs the imagination; and 3rd helps one to come into a participatory knowledge of the breaking in of God's reign. Hotz and Mathews also explore ways by which music, worship, prayer, and sacraments redirect our desires, restore our sense of well-being, and direct us to right action.

I found three aspects of the book very helpful: the authors' close attention to links between worship and living God's ways; their love of beauty; and their dialogue with theologians of the early church such as Gregory of Nyssa and the writer of the Pseudo-Dionysius. Reading this succinct but elegant book may prompt Christians to be more intentional, humble, cautious, hopeful, and responsible; and to appreciate the beauty of God as a window onto the world of art, film, literature, music, utilitarian pursuits, and worldview. Because beauty seems to characterize the solutions to scientific questions, even scientists and mathematicians search for elegance.

Readers of this journal may find the discussion of evangelism provocative. Often understood as testifying or saving souls, Hotz and Mathews characterize evangelism more as a response to the sovereign grace of God who calls into existence and sustains a covenant community. They describe the church and evangelism covenantally, a view that recognizes that God loves us and makes a claim on our lives. This perspective entails a theocentric orientation for the Christian life. It receives the tradition as a community of memory and hope. It guides us to confession, acceptance of forgiveness, praise, and service.

Bringing ethics and theology into fruitful conversation, Kendra G. Hotz teaches religious studies at Rhodes College and Memphis Theological Seminary; with wide knowledge of the Reformed tradition, Matthew T. Mathews is Associate Professor of Theology at Memphis Theological Seminary. I benefit from their colleagueship and scholarship and trust that educators, students, and those involved in local congregational leadership

will benefit as much as I did from reading in this pastorally and pedagogically challenging book.

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Performing the Gospel: Orality, Memory and Mark
Edited by Richard A. Horsley, Jonathan A. Draper, John Miles Foley
Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006, 236 pp.

This volume contains a series of essays making the case that the New Testament Gospels were spoken orally, in story form, well before they were committed to writing, and that the storytellers relied on their memory to remember and repeat the story. Therefore, the link between the events of Jesus' life and the composition of the Gospels is the memory of the storyteller. Moreover, the line between the story and the written Gospel is not a straight one. Every story teller would tell his/her story in a specific social context and would be influenced by the interests of his/her community. Therefore, the Gospel story is really a cultural memory moderated through social circumstances and community events. The written texts which we have today are only one form of the telling of the story and in that sense probably should not be accepted as the final or authoritative picture of the words and deeds of Jesus. The proper way to study the Gospels is to learn the effects of "cultural memory." To quote from one of the essays: "We need to continue our search for oral texts and traditions in our written remains, and we must construct performance contexts that are not bound d by the frame provided by biblical texts."

The book's ten essays by as many authors is organized in three sections. Part One, "Orality and Literacy," focuses on the history of oral tradition in rabbinic culture, and shows how the Torah was preserved in the male circle of the Jewish academy, away from women, unqualified Jewish men, and Gentiles. Further, through a case study by Jonathan Draper on a Zulu prophetic community in the late nineteenth century, the author demonstrates how cultural memory influences the development of a text.

Part Two, "Orality, Literacy, and Memory," works at describing the way in which memory shapes the way we tell our stories, so that the story

is altered in the actual telling of it. Using some of the examples of story telling attributed to Jesus, as for example the Emmaus passage in Luke 24, the authors seek to show that even Jesus is a performer of scripture. The conclusion of this section is that there may not be any one form of the Gospel text that adequately (or even accurately) describes the activity of Jesus while he was on earth. Jens Schröter writes, "The idea of a fixed, authoritative form of [the Jesus] tradition must be abandoned."

The final section, "Orality, Literacy, Memory, and Mark," seeks to take all that has been premised to this point and show how it works in Mark's Gospel. For example, using Mark 1:1-8 as a text, Vernon Robbins shows that it is a difficult task to tell from the text where the words of John the Baptist, the quoted prophet Isaiah, and the writer of Mark each begin and end. They are interwoven in a rich tapestry in which individual threads cannot be distinguished. In one very interesting essay, Whitney Shiner suggests an image, the façade of the temple, which the author of Mark may have used to help him remember the parts of his story as he wrote them down. That image may account, Shiner says, for the many chiastic structures in Mark's Gospel.

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He Came Down From Heaven: The Preexistence of Christ and the Christian Faith
By Douglas McCready
Downer's Grove: Intervarsity Press, 2005, 349 pp.

Douglas McCready has written this book in response to the modern and post-modern debate about the identity of Jesus Christ. One key issue in that debate is the preexistence of Jesus prior to his incarnation. This doctrine has implications for both the divinity and humanity of Jesus and McCready's goal is to survey the field and point the reader toward McCready's conclusion, which is that the Christ did indeed exist as wholly divine before his coming to earth in the person of Jesus, and that this understanding of the doctrine is essential for a proper practice of the Christian faith. According to the cover, this book is intended "as a supplementary text for theology

courses on Christology or in biblical studies courses on the New Testament witness to Jesus."

The author has a very personal purpose in writing this doctrinal study: "My hope in writing this book is that people might gain a greater appreciation of the immensity of God's love for us in Jesus Christ." Though the book is a scholarly work, it is written in a plain and simple style designed to evoke not only intellectual and theological assent, but a heartfelt response as well. The book helps to answer the question, "Does anyone know? Does anyone care?" with a resounding affirmation.

Organized into ten chapters, McCready begins with an introduction to the topic, followed by four chapters that survey the New Testament literature, beginning with the Pauline corpus, then the synoptics and concluding with the writings of John. Carefully and meticulously, McCready surveys the biblical literature, stopping on individual passages and exegeting them, giving his interpretation while also recognizing the differing response of other scholars to the biblical material. Following the survey, the author devotes one chapter to a summary of the postapostolic development of the doctrine of preexistence, beginning with early Christian hymnody. He then reviews the writings of the early fathers, and follows through church scholars all the way to the Reformation and Calvin's work.

McCready devotes a chapter to the important work of describing how the doctrine of preexistence relates to other important biblical doctrines, such as the Trinity, incarnation and resurrection, the virgin birth, sin and salvation, and so on. In each case, he demonstrates that preexistence is an essential element of these doctrines, amplifying, enriching and completing the meaning of each aspect of the believer's faith.

The author's intention is to engage with other viewpoints in the field, particularly with those who have been critical of the doctrine of preexistence. He identifies the four most common objections too or variant interpretations of the doctrine, and examines the work of one or more proponents of that particular view. The four objections are: that the doctrine of preexistence denigrates the humanity of Jesus; that the doctrine is either inconsistent with the Bible or not taught in the scriptures are all; that it makes Christianity exclusive and cuts off dialogue with any other religious groups; and that Jesus as a human was indwelt by the Spirit of God to such an extent that that preexistence was not necessary.

In a concluding chapter, McCready moves from the theological to the

personal, reviewing the journey on which he has taken the reader, and what the doctrine means personally and ethically in the life of the believer, and of the community of the church.

It is my belief that this book would have value to the reader's of this journal if in their studies or their presentation of the Gospel, they encounter persons for whom the preexistence of Jesus is a major stumbling block to belief. In a postmodern world any claim which sets Christianity off from other religions in an exclusivist sense would be important to understand.

A word about the writing style: the book is easy to follow, simple to understand, and clearly written. If there is an error, it is on the side of being repetitious and pedantic. In his efforts to cover all of the relevant material, McCready has a tendency to restate what has already been written previously. That aside, however, the book is an interesting read for those who want to understand this doctrine more clearly.

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Truth & the New Kind of Christian: The Emerging effects of Postmodernism in the Church
By R. Scott Smith
Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2005, 206 pp.

The discussion regarding the effects of postmodern philosophy in the life and practice of the Christian church continues unabated. There seem to be three primary responses to the dispute. Brian McLaren, Tony Jones, Stanley Hauerwas and others who, on the whole, argue that Western culture is in a new era-one that allows Christians to view and share the gospel without the constraints of enlightenment epistemology represent the first response. The author R. Scott Smith and others who advance the argument that though the church is in a new time of cultural dominance by postmodern philosophy, the role of the church is to combat this wavering foundation and solidify formulations and patterns of church life birthed in the enlightenment represent a second response. A third group is not sure postmodernism has had any real consequence on the church, or at least it should not, and therefore is not participating in the debate. The categories

in which persons identify themselves will probably determine how they respond to Smith's book.

Smith is a professor of ethics and apologetics at Biola University. It comes then as no surprise that he rightly has significant concerns about the discussion of ethics in our culture and its increasingly relativistic foundation not only in the culture, but also in the academy and the church. His work gives a brief overview of postmodern thought, but centers how postmodernism has influenced a segment of the church. The essence of his work is that too many Christians have errantly and uncritically absorbed postmodern thought. Smith centers his philosophical critique on the writings of Brad Kallenberg and Stanley Hauerwas, while his evaluation of the practice of ministry focuses on Tony Jones and Brian McLaren, two leaders in the self described "Emerging Church" or "Emergent" movement.

Smith centers his critique on the postmodern understanding of knowledge and language whose central proponents are the likes of Jacques Derrida and Jean-Francois Lyotard. Smith gives a helpful introduction to their thought and correctly critiques some of their arguments, especially the assumptions surrounding foundationalism. Additionally, he shows some of the ill effects of postmodern thought in the church. His discussion of foundationalism's effects on Christian theology are especially helpful as he successfully demonstrates that knowledge does not need to be proven in order to be justified. But his work falls short in two primary ways.

First, he seems to aim at the wrong target. Though Smith, Hauerwas, Kallenberg, Jones, and McLaren certainly do not agree on all issues, they do seem to share a belief that God has come in Christ, that Christians have a responsibility to share that news, and that it matters how Christians live. So many professed followers of Christ don't share these three beliefs and would seem more natural targets of Smith's critique. This leads into the second primary flaw in Smith's argument, which is his clinging to a foundational knowledge of God rooted in a literal and inerrant interpretation of the Christian scriptures. Those he critiques seem to argue not that God's revelation in Christ is not important, or that the Scriptures are not true, but that in our present culture, the foundation from which we present these truths must be rooted in love because in the end, the Christian life is one of faith more than knowledge.

For Smith, knowledge seems more important than faith. His goal for evangelicals seems to be to hold fast to an inerrant view of the bible in order

to provide a foundation to prove the Gospel's truth. McLaren's camp, on the other hand, prefers a gentle engagement with a world that has strayed from a Biblical worldview and ethic. Their goal therefore is to tell the story of God in Christ in such a way that captivates and draws persons to the life of faith, not in foundational proofs of God, but in honest and unanxious dialogue. McLaren's does not seem to be a relativistic dialogue, but it does allow for conversation to center on love, respect, and faith more than the certainty of proof and knowledge. Smith's anxious attitude is most clear in the book's final sentence where he writes that it is up to Christians to ensure our faith's survival. Those whom he critiques seem more comfortable letting God ensure Christianity's posterity.

In the end, this book does provide a good introduction to some of the pitfalls of postmodern thought, but because of Smith's own epistemological constraints, his work will probably only solidify people's views on one side or the other instead of changing minds.

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The Hip-Hop Church: Connecting with the Movement Shaping Our Culture
By Efrem Smith and Phil Jackson
Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2005. 227 pp.

The conversation du jour in many seminaries and churches swarms around two buzz words, post-modernity and the emerging church. What is missing from those conversations is an articulation about the enormous impact of hip-hop on the "post-soul" generation. *The Hip-Hop Church: Connecting with the Movement Shaping Our Culture* tunes readers into a different station to examine the hip-hop phenomenon that exists simultaneously with post-modernity.

Hip-hop and Christianity. Can they coexist? Should they coexist? Can anything good come out of hip-hop that can be used for the kingdom of God? Efrem Smith and Phil Jackson argue convincingly that Christianity must engage hip-hop by making sense of the seeming conflicts between these two worlds.

Why should the church care about hip-hop?—because hip-hop is ubiquitous. Despite hip-hop's origins in the African American community in the New York City borough of the Bronx, Euro-Americans purchase 70% of hip-hop music. Hip-hop crosses both racial/ethnic and economic divides. Its impact cannot be ignored. This book is a prophetic reminder that churches must have a theology of engaging culture.

Repeatedly, Smith and Jackson emphasize that hip-hop is more than music; it is a culture with economic, political and spiritual philosophies. Hip-hop has a value system that includes authenticity, social commentary, entrepreneurship, fashion, art, and spoken word. The underlying message is clear. Hip-hop as a music genre can be dismissed as a passing fad, but hip-hop as a culture has greater import and must be given serious consideration.

Churches are not neutral about hip-hop. They occupy one of three positions: "collision, compromise or coexist." The collision position pits the church against hip-hop; both battle for the hearts and minds of the unchurched within hip-hop culture. The compromise position believes that incorporating elements of hip-hop culture into the church compromises the church's mission or biblical principles. The coexistence position sees hip-hop as a culture that can be used to relate to the current generation in relevant ways. The book explores the coexistence position extensively.

Skillfully, Smith and Jackson lead readers through a three-part examination of hip-hop and how churches can engage this culture. Part one examines the similarities between hip-hop and the black church. Part two provides an overview of hip-hop as a culture, its elements, founding principles and historical and spiritual influence. Part three presents "Holy Hip Hop" as its own culture by bringing the gospel of Jesus Christ to those living in hip-hop culture.

The Hip-Hop Church directs significant commentary toward the black church. Previously, black music genres such as the blues, soul and R&B traced their roots back to the black church. Aretha Franklin, Marvin Gaye, and Ray Charles grew up singing in church and brought that influence into popular music. By contrast, hip-hop is the first black music genre that originated outside of the influence of the black church. This separatist beginning demands critical examination. Why did this happen? What are the implications of this? What are the pros and cons of Christian hip-hop?

Smith and Jackson explore the significance of hip-hop as part of the

"post-soul" or "post-civil rights" generation. They state that, through hip-hop, the "post-soul" generation offers edgy social commentary. According to the authors, "there is a battle for the mic" between emcees (rappers) and preachers. The church must offer a prophetic, biblical response to hip-hop commentary.

Part three of *The Hip-Hop Church* provides a helpful set of suggestions, strategies and guidelines for churches that desire to engage the hip-hop culture. The authors compare the functions of the DJ, emcee, breakers (dancers) and taggers (graffiti artists) to those of the worship leader, preacher, liturgical dancers and artists. Smith and Jackson propose that churches explore hip-hop culture and explore ways to create a "Holy Hip-Hop" culture.

The authors are clear that not every church can or should become a hip-hop church. Nevertheless, every church can learn how to engage youth within hip-hop culture more knowledgably and effectively.

This book is extremely informative for readers with an "outsider" view of hip-hop; namely, those born before 1965, and those whom have dismissed hip-hop as worldly music to be avoided rather than to be examined for redemptive potential.

The Hip-Hop Church should be used as a practical ministry resource in seminaries and in local churches. It could serve as an intergenerational "talking stick" for clergy and laity and for parents and children.

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See No Evil: The Existence of Sin in an Age of Relativism
By Harry Lee Poe
Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2004. 201 pp.

This book is very readable, using concrete stories and apt illustrations designed to reach a wide audience. It is ideal for both the local church and the college classroom. Yet this seemingly simple book does a superb job of taking the reader into the subtle depths of sin in everyday life and the rich promise of the gospel to give us new life.

A central theme that frames the entire discussion is the shift from a modern to a postmodern culture. Poe raises at the outset a profound question: the problem is not how to explain the presence of evil in the world but the presence of such things of beauty and goodness. Modernity seeks natural explanations for their presence; postmodernity understands them as social constructs relative to particular cultures. Poe does some helpful analysis to show that variation in human values does not mean there are no absolutes. He then proceeds to find that absolute not in concepts but in God. Absolute values, he says, are the judgments of God.

This points to another central theme of the book. Sin is again and again portrayed, in all its complexity and varieties, as ultimately about us—our desires and needs. But after each clear and convicting depiction of the dynamics of sin in human life, he comes back to God. It is the glory or holiness of God that ultimately reveals sin for what it is, but also reveals life as it could be.

Poe's goal is to enable us to see the various forms sin takes and the many dimensions of the gospel of Jesus Christ in response. He strongly and effectively criticizes the cultural tendency to understand sin as breaking a law rather than departing from God and going our own way. He criticizes as well one-dimensional evangelism that sees our only problem as guilt, our only need as forgiveness, and the only result is a happy afterlife. Instead, he explores many metaphors for sin such as darkness, lostness, and shame, as well as how temptation invites us to choose to fulfill legitimate desires in ways that are self-destructive and harmful to others.

He then shows how Jesus deals with these real life issues by enabling our relationship with God to be restored. Poe provides a fine explanation of the substitutionary nature of the cross and explores how each aspect of, among others, salvation--redemption, forgiveness, cleansing, freedom, ransom, empowerment, reconciliation, enlightenment, and sanctification, —addresses the varying effects of sin in our lives. If despair is at the root of sin in someone's life, then hope rather than forgiveness is the remedy.

Readers will be struck by the insights in many of these chapters. I was especially appreciative of how Poe analyzes the portrayal of sin in popular culture, including the program *Cheers*. He shows how the Holy Spirit convinces people that they are sinners (whether they use that word or not). We therefore do not need to tell people what they already know, but to share the good news that through Christ life can be different.

The book is greatly enhanced by the presence of a poem at the beginning of each chapter. Written by the author, these poems enable the reader to experience some of what the chapter addresses.

As with all books, there will likely be points of disagreement. Some would want to expand Poe's presentation of postmodernism and see it as creating opportunities for the gospel as well as difficulties. Others may object to the sharp distinction he makes in one chapter between emotion and intellect. But these are very minor points. This is a most helpful and deeply insightful book, which contributes to our understanding of the gospel itself as well as informs our practice of evangelism.

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The Road to Delhi: Bishop Pickett Remembered 1890-1981
By Arthur G. McPhee
Bangalore, India: SAIACS Press, 2005. 394 pp

J. Waskom Pickett is rightly remembered today for his landmark work *Christian Mass Movements in India* (1933). It was this book that provoked a revolution in missiological thinking, made the social sciences an essential tool for understanding evangelism, and, through Donald McGavran, helped launch the church growth movement. This achievement alone would place Pickett in the front ranks of twentieth century mission.

But it would not give us the whole story of this remarkable man. For that we are indebted to Arthur McPhee, who has produced this very informative and highly readable biography. Not only do we get to know the life and thought of Pickett himself, but also much of the discussions, disagreements, and insights of the missionary movement in the last century. We encounter some of the great leaders of modern missions in these pages, including John R. Mott, E. Stanley Jones, and Donald McGavran. We also meet some of the great leaders of India, like M. K. Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, and B. R. Ambedkar. Most importantly, we are introduced to a host of Pickett's Indian and missionary colleagues, relatively unknown to us but in their day seen as gifted, committed, and often courageous.

McPhee does a fine job of depicting the various contexts of Pickett's

life, whether in India or America, enabling us to envision something of
what it was like to live and minister in those places. But even better, in
telling Pickett's story he in effect provides concrete case studies for some
of the perennial issues in mission and evangelism.

The issue of "mass movements" (which for Pickett meant "group
movements") is a prime example. How and why do persons become
Christians? How can the gospel be contextualized? Pickett described
indigenous evangelists who are catalysts for the conversion of entire social
units, enabling them to maintain their existing social integration. Often
those in these social units belonged to poor or oppressed classes, and saw
in the gospel hope for a better future. Critics not only worried about
whether conversions of groups could be as authentic as that of individuals,
but also of the potentially shallow Christian formation that might follow.
The issue of making Western culture normative for non-Westerners is here,
but also the danger of conversions that (whether in the West or the East)
leave cultural practices and discriminatory attitudes in place.

The relation of social ministries to evangelism is another pervasive
theme. Pickett was a strong advocate of women's rights, ending class
distinctions, temperance, and especially providing adequate medical care in
a land afflicted by flooding, famine disease, and poverty. He called social
ministries the "confirmation" of the gospel, the manifestation in human
lives of the love proclaimed in Christ.

Repeatedly, Pickett and his colleagues are forced to respond not only
to natural disasters but to political and social realities. E. Stanley Jones
criticizes Pickett for not supporting Gandhi's movement for independence
from British imperialism. Pickett's sympathies lie with the Untouchable
class, and sees Gandhi's refusal to treat them as a distinct political unit as
only continuing their poverty and indignity within Hinduism.

Once independence is achieved (an event Pickett celebrates), parts of
India fell into violent sectarian strife. What we today would call ethnic
cleansing; the slaughter of men, women, and children; and massive refugee
camps are the result. In Pickett's area the Muslims were being murdered by
Hindu and Sikh extremists. As a Methodist Bishop he organized Christians
to hide, protect, feed, and care for persecuted Muslims and to work in the
refugee camps . Gandhi, who sought to end the violence, is himself
murdered. Pickett had urged Gandhi to seek safety, and joined in mourning
his death.

These are only samples of the issues and events covered in this book. But above all, McPhee has given us an account of a deeply committed, thoughtful, and compassionate Christian witness, who's life and work decisively transformed our practice of mission and evangelism. To read his story is to recognize our debt.

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Like Your Neighbor
By Stephen W. Sorenson
Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005. 160pp.

The central thesis of this book is that you cannot witness effectively to people whom you neither know personally nor understand. The book provides an excellent, interwoven collection of exhortation, personal accounts, and "how to" material for the reader. It is all about loving and getting to know our non-Christian neighbors at work and in the community. Lists of steps appear often in the book, such as the list on pages 102 and 103 that point the way to building relationships with non-Christians.

Concerning the motive for reaching out, the statement in the book that we Evangelicals do not reflect enough on the destinies of Heaven and Hell has haunted me since reading the book. It rings true, for we all tend to act upon vivid and strongly held beliefs. And were we Evangelicals making getting to know non-Christians, who live in danger of eternal condemnation, a serious priority, this book would not be needed or been written. The great motive for reaching out is sacrificial love for the neighbor, reflecting the sacrificial and undeserved love we have received from Christ.

The author does a good job of helping us into the prevalent mind-set of present day non-Christians in our culture, though he does warn us not to stereotype and to give great attention to listening to our non-Christian neighbors for they differ from one another, just as Christians do.

In a context of love, relationship and patience a time will come when God gives the appropriate occasion for the Gospel to be shared. It is

important to be prepared and ready when that time comes. The author points out that in our culture questions will surely arise concerning the authority of the Scripture as the Word of God and about Jesus being the way and not just a way to the Father. It is crucial therefore for us to know why we believe Jesus is the way and the Scriptures are the Word of God in the words of men. He does not however develop those themes for us. He assumes we will have thought that through or have other books that develop those topics.

This well written, practical book makes a needed and urgent point; it will serve well in evangelism training in seminaries and congregations.

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Emerging Churches: Creating Christina Community in Postmodern Cultures
By Gibbs, Eddie and Ryan K. Bolger
Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005. 335 pp.

Gibbs and Bolger, both missiologists at Fuller Theological Seminary, have a two-fold purpose for their book. The first is to let emerging church leaders from the U.S. and U. K. speak through the book to leaders of culturally established churches. Gibbs and Bolger believe that culturally established churches need to hear what the emerging church has to say concerning the role of the church in a postmodern environment. Moreover, without appropriate support from culturally established churches, emerging churches may be silenced altogether, "this is a fragile movement that can be marginalized by denominational leaders and killed with criticism by theological power brokers" (29).

The second purpose is to provide a broad thematic organization to the thoughts of emerging church leaders. Gibbs and Bolger identify "nine patterns [of emerging church practice]…as missiologically significant" (9). The first three practices are common to all emerging church communities: 1. identifying with the life of Jesus, 2. transforming secular space, and 3. living as community. The final six arise out of the first three and are

exhibited by many emerging church communities, though not all: 4. welcoming the stranger, 5. serving with generosity, 6. participating as producers, 7. creating as created beings, 8. leading as a body, and 9. taking part in spiritual activities. The bulk of the book is given to explicating these nine practices in the words of the emerging church leaders.

Appendix B is essential to understanding the book, as it lays out the methodology that Gibbs and Bolger used to gain their data and conduct their analysis. I highly recommend reading Appendix B along with the Preface, as it will help set the expectation for what the reader will and will not find in the book.

The most obvious strength of the book is that it takes the emerging church seriously on its own terms by quoting emerging church leaders extensively. The primary role of the authors is in editing these quotes to fit with the nine patterns they have identified. Otherwise, the authors are nearly invisible, only occasionally stepping in to offer brief explanations throughout the main chapters of the book. The authors move completely to the side in Appendix A, which presents personal reflections written by 50 emerging church leaders.

Another strength of the book is its careful definition of the emerging church as "communities that practice the way of Jesus within postmodern cultures" (44). This definition provides an excellent theoretical framework for separating the emerging church from Gen X churches, seeker churches, and purpose-driven churches. These latter churches are all understood as maintaining the structures of modernity, while the emerging church is thoroughly postmodern. There is a whiff of cultural analysis in this definition—to be expected given the missiological nature of the book.

The book's strengths are also its greatest weaknesses. While quoting emerging church leaders allows for highly ramified descriptions of emerging church communities, it also allows a skewed description of those communities. In part, this is because emerging church leaders have every reason to speak well of the communities they lead. With few exceptions, the leaders have very positive views of the activities engaged in by their communities. Other than acknowledging some struggles with organization and leadership, the emerging church communities are presented as nearly flawless in their execution of postmodern Christian ministry.

The postmodern/modern separation also provides a serious problem. While the positive effects of postmodernism are discussed in detail,

modernity is passed over quickly and in almost exclusively negative terms. Not surprisingly, then, emerging churches, which are by definition the only churches that relate to postmodernism, are assessed as being consistently more faithful to the missio Dei than modern churches. This seems disingenuous. "Modern churches" are set up as a strawman to be knocked down by postmodern emerging churches. The possibility is never considered that a book could be written about 50 "modern church leaders" who successfully incorporate into their "modern churches" the nine practices identified by the authors.

This book would be excellent for theology students studying the impact of postmodernism on the church. Likewise, with proper guidance, it could be used in small groups or classes in local congregations of "modern churches" that are seeking to understand themselves in light of a postmodern critique. For all of its shortcomings, Gibbs and Bolger have provided a highly useful and usable resource for revisiting the nature and the mission of the church in the light of postmodern culture.

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Graduate Program for Religious Studies at Southern Methodist University

A Guide to New Religious Movements
Edited by Ronald Enroth
Downers Grove IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005 220 pp.

Rudyard Kipling's often quoted line, *"East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet"* is increasingly becoming a myth on this continent. No one can deny that North American society is post-modern and it is evolving to become post-Christian in a pluralistic context. This environment has increasingly ripened for a plethora of religious movements to blossom and thrive. Ron Enroth, Professor of Sociology at Westmont College in California along with a team of eleven evangelical experts have provided a handy compendium *"to help serious, caring Christians compassionately understand several contemporary religious movements and equip them to introduce people in these groups to Jesus our Lord."* (p.13)

This may remind readers of an earlier volume, *A Guide to Cults & New Religions* on the same subject edited by the same author and released by the same publisher in1983. Are the books similar? Is there any difference?

In this latest volume, all but two contributors are new. However, these two also are the same authors of the opening and closing chapters in both the new and the older volumes. In the new chapter 1, Ron Enroth writes on *"What is a New Religious Movement*?" as compared to *"What is a Cult?"* while LaVonne Neff tackles *"Evaluating New Religious Movements"* compared to *"Evaluating Cults and New Religions"*. Though the themes are similar both writers have significantly updated their material to offer expanded and fresh insights. What is particularly helpful are Enroth's seven characteristics to identify new religious movements. It is ironically engaging to read LaVonne Neff listing four ways such movements can help the Church and Christians!

Four common elements emerge when one scrutinizes how the nine religious groups are described. Each chapter contains a brief history of the movement, its major beliefs with biblical assessment, and its attractive points to North American seekers, followed by pointers for Christians to respond with truth of the Gospel and in love. The contributors do not expect their enthusiastic readers to turn into cult-busters. The thorough documentation provided for most chapters greatly helps facilitate the eager reader to pursue further study.

The chapters on the Unification Church, The Jehovah's Witnesses, Latter Day Saints and the Bahai have similar titles in both volumes but they are vastly different in content because of different authors crafting them. Chapters on *"Astral Religion and the New Age", "Dalai Lama and Tibetan Buddhism", "The Nation of Islam", "Neo Paganism"* and *"Yoga and Hinduism"* are welcome inclusions in the new volume.

Enroth rightly concludes that secularists tend to ignore the theological aspects of these groups and evangelical Christians often only focus on doctrinal concerns and neglect the psychosocial dimensions (p.13). To ensure a far more holistic approach in understanding the new religious movements, Enroth *"includes insights from social and behavioral sciences"* (p.14). Perhaps this is one major reason why he has adopted the recent trend of scholars who do not use the label *"cult"* when describing emerging groups.

This clearly-written volume can serve as a superb supplementary book in World Religions or Evangelism courses at the college or graduate level. It could also be used as an excellent source for a adult-level class or discussion group in a local church.

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Christ The One And Only: A Global Affirmation of the Uniqueness of Jesus Christ
Edited by Sung Wook Chung
Grand Rapids MI: Baker Book House, 2005, 240pp.

With the rapid globalization of Christianity in all continents the challenges of religious pluralism, secularization, relativism, syncretism and postmodernism are increasing in intensity and complexity. Such challenges attempt to deny or mask the biblical affirmation that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the one and only Lord and Savior of humanity and He is the only Way, Truth and Life. This volume is a collection of essays by an international roster of scholars to powerfully re-affirm Christ's absolute uniqueness in a global context. However, the target audience for their apologetic is the post-Christian Western society which is experiencing declining church attendance and is being persuaded by the virtues of non-Christian religions whose presence and influence are infiltrating it.

This volume is a welcome sequel of several books recently published by Baker Book House of consuming interest to both the theologian and the missionary committed to world evangelization. (*Many Gods, Many Lords: Christianity Encounters World Religions* (1995) by David B. Clendenin; *How Shall They Be Saved: The Destiny of Those Who Do not Hear of Jesus* (1996) by Millard J. Erickson; *No Other Gods Before Me?: Evangelicals and the Challenge of World Religions* (2002) edited by John G. Stackhouse Jr.; and *Christianity at the Religious Roundtable* (2002) by Timothy C. Tennent)

The eleven chapters seemingly have been arranged in three sections. Section 1 constitutes Chapters 1-5 and they focus on the

foundational dimensions of Christology – Christ's incarnation, His life and teachings, His suffering and death, His resurrection and His special revelation. Each chapter is well researched, biblically undergirded and adequately documented.

The longer Chapter 6 is positioned as a bridge between Section 2 and Section 3 by including *"the Trinity in the discussion of how to frame the uniqueness of Christ vis-à-vis other religions"* (p.115). The author of the chapter engages in a refreshing but rigorous treatment of the Trinity and paves the way for an evangelical Trinitarian theology of religions and helps transition smoothly to Section 3.

In Section 3 a chapter each is focused on the uniqueness of Christ in relation to Judaism, Islam, Confucianism and two chapters in relation to Buddhism. At the conclusion of these five chapters each writer provides critical cautions and practical pointers in our evangelism among adherents of the respective faiths. What is noticeably absent is a chapter on the uniqueness of Christ in relation to Hinduism, a world religion with approximately 775 million followers making up 14% of the world's population. However, there are several Hindu themes nuanced in a few chapters.

The following seven themes are embraced unreservedly by all the contributors:

1.   They are all explicitly Trinitarian in their viewpoint.
2.   They acknowledge the awful realities of universal sin and the lostness of humanity.
3.   They readily admit the existence of some elements of truth in other religions.
4.   They are convinced that the truth in other religions cannot be the basis of salvation from sin because the work of Christ is the only means for any person to enter into a saving relationship with the one true God.
5.   They recognize the need to take other religions more seriously by undertaking in-depth study of other religious beliefs and engaging in inter-religious dialogue.
6.   They are convinced that the Gospel of Jesus Christ must be communicated to all people with clarity and conviction because it is the power of God for salvation to ensure personal and community transformation.

7.   They are advocates in avoiding all bigotry and finding common ground in the communication of the Gospel to people of all faiths.

At the graduate level, this book would serve as a primary textbook for courses in Christology and Comparative Religions and as a supplemental text in apologetics, evangelism, theology, missiology and world religions.

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Above All Earthly Pow'rs: Christ in a Postmodern Age
By David F. Wells
Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 2006. 339pp

Few in the West would doubt that we have lived through a philosophical revolution called postmodernism and witnessed massive changes in the beliefs on which people base their understanding of life. A set of emerging social conditions have created the new culture of postmodernity. It is in this context that David F. Wells, the Andrew Mutch Distinguished Professor of Historical and Systematic Theology at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary offers his final volume in a series made possible by a generous grant from the Pew Foundation. His earlier volumes were: *No Place for Truth: Whatever Happened to Evangelical Theology* (1993); *God in the Wasteland: The Reality of Truth in a World of Fading Dreams* (1994); and *Losing Our Virtue: Why the Church Must Recover Its Moral Vision* (1998).

In this volume on Christology, Wells is presenting a fresh defense of orthodox Christian belief with a pastoral concern blended with a prophetic call especially to the American Church. His pastor's heart bleeds to observe *"the current evangelical disposition to shuck off its cognitive structures and minimize the practical place of revealed truth in the life of the Church means that it has brought itself to the edge of a precipice. It is a precipice precisely because as evangelical faith has chosen to minimize itself in these ways in order to become attractive to postmodern seekers, it is losing what makes it distinctive from all other postmodern spiritualities."* (p.123)

The prophetic call is evident from the title of the book which is taken from Martin Luther's famous line in *A Mighty Fortress is Our God*. Wells with his Reformed conviction is pleading for the need of a new reformation when he says that the church must make a distinction from the consumer-satisfying industry by proclaiming revealed truth: *"It is truth about God and about ourselves that displaces the consumer from his or her current perch of sovereignty in the church and places God in place where he should be."* (p.303) He further warns that *"... churches which preserve their cognitive identity and distinction from the culture will flourish; those who lose them in the interests of seeking success will disappear."* (p.308)

The first three chapters outline the evolution and characteristics of modernity, postmodernity and emergent spirituality. It was the ideas of the Enlightenment that *"have come to dominate the thinking of the people about life in the West"* (p.24) and it was the total social reorganization called modernization that transitioned the West from being pre-modern to being modern. Freedom, individualism, capitalism, technology, consumerism, pluralism and relativism flourished. The tragic results of all this are *"the disappearance of God, the disappearance of human nature, and the omnicompetence of the human being"* (p.32).

Postmodern thinkers often conclude they have successfully rebelled against the modern world and have, therefore, achieved a clean break with it. In Chapter 2 *"Postmodern Rebellion"* the author persuasively argues *"that modernity and postmodernity are actually reflecting different aspects of our modernized culture. They are siblings in the same family than rival gangs in the same neighborhood"* (p.62). The postmodern enterprise having assaulted foundationalism makes three affirmations: (1) no comprehensive worldview is possible or valid, (2) no absolute and enduring truth exists to appeal to, and (3)   no immediate or ultimate purpose to pursue.

Massive immigration from the world over in the last decades has escalated religious pluralism making America the most religiously diverse country in the world. The rising spiritual yearning in society is not for organized and structured religion but for a spirituality that is private, subjective, eclectic, impersonal and pragmatic while accepting no truth *"which is not experientially grounded"* (p.110) David concludes that postmodern spirituality is not Agape faith by which God

reaches down in grace but it is Eros spirituality because humans are trying to reach up in self-sufficiency.

The author's theological brilliance and competence shines through in his prescription for the postmodern age in chapters 4-6, *"Christ in a Spiritual World", "Christ in a Meaningless World"* and *"Christ in a Decentered World"*. This is vintage Wells.

Though the author offers a multi-disciplinary critique of postmodernism and the evangelical church's dismal response to it he is heavy on analysis but light on solutions. His concern for the impact of cultural trends of consumerism and individualism prevalent in popular culture being dangerous to the evangelical church is valid. He is therefore leery about seeker-sensitive churches but he hardly addresses the emergent church movement. There is much in postmodern philosophy that should give Christians pause. However taking Well's outright rejection of postmodern philosophy does not allow the Church to be involved in real engagement. Cultural adaptation and faithfulness to Scripture are not alternatives but partners in the work of the Gospel.

This volume would be a valuable textbook for a course in American Church Growth or in Gospel and Culture. It could be a supplemental text in Contemporary Theology or Contemporary Spirituality course. Students need to be warned that they are in for a treat of repetition and density of thought.

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Who's Afraid of Postmodernism?: Taking Derrida, Lyotard, and Foucault to Church
By James K. A. Smith
Baker Academic, 2006. 156 pp.

Read this interesting study of the three scholars, Derrida, Lyotard, and Foucault ("an unholy trinity of Parisians") who perhaps best articulate what it means to be postmodern. James K.A. Smith begins with a healthy critique of postmodernism itself using his considerable philosophical background (along with the story line from several fairly

recent films) as a way into the mind of the reader. He then proceeds to challenge some of the epistemology (or theory of knowledge) that plagues much of modern Christianity. Christianity must be more than a private affair that insists on certainty as its benchmark. It must acknowledge, with humility, "What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived..." (1 Cor. 2:9).

The result is that postmoderns remind us of what apparently many know already, "We cannot *know* that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. The best we can do is *believe*. Why? Because to know would mean being certain. We know that such certainty is an impossible dream [because it is a dream]; therefore, we actually lack knowledge. We don't know; we can only believe, and such faith will always be mysterious and ambiguous" (p. 118f.).

The peculiar genius of the book is not simply Smith's remarkable understanding of the issues but he concluded by not only taking Derrida, Lyotard, and Foucault to Church, he takes radical orthodoxy to Church as well.

The book plays out something like this. Derrida's "deconstruction" claims that there is "nothing outside the text." That is, "everything is interpretation; interpretation is governed by context and the role of the interpretive community" (p.54). Interestingly, this should lead the church to "the centrality of Scripture for mediating our understanding of the world as a whole and the role of community in the interpretation of Scripture" (p. 23).

Lyotard asserts that postmodernity is "incredulity toward metanarratives" (the "big stories"). Since all tell stories, *even science*, postmoderns tend to believe none of it. The challenge for the church is then to tell the story simply, as presented in the gospels (and the confessional nature of that story), rather than making an appeal to a lofty collection of ideas that leave us wondering about the interpretation.

Foucault apparently turns "knowledge is power" on its head by insisting that "power is knowledge." The point here is that power and knowledge directly imply one another and "that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations" (p. 86). Once again the church is challenged "to enact counter-formation by counter-disciplines. Although the link

between power/knowledge and discipline is somewhat obscure the point is that the church needs "to think about discipline as a creational structure that needs proper direction (p. 24).

The application of all this to radical orthodoxy speaks of Smith's own bias. He is obviously an enlightened evangelical but refuses to submit or cower to the bugbear of postmodernism. In his concluding chapter he writes: "The outcome of the postmodernism sketched [here] should be a robust confessional theology and ecclesiology that unapologetically reclaims premier practices in and for a postmodern culture" (p. 116)... as postmodernism "has unwittingly already pointed us to elements of a more incarnational, even radically orthodox understanding of the church and practice" (p. 143).

This book should be important reading for pastors in ministry and for the academic academy as well.

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The Bible and Other Faiths: Christian Responsibility in a World of Religions
By Ida Glaser
Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005. 255 pp.

At the outset Ida Glaser raises the right questions. Not, "Is Christ the only way?" or, "Is there any truth in other religions?" or, "Can people of other religions get to heaven?" but, "How can we understand all religions and the way they affect human beings?" or, "What has God done for people of different religions?" or, "How should we respond to their gods?" or, "How do the two greatest [love] commandments (Mt. 22:34-40) and the Great Commission (Mt. 28:16-20) relate to people of other religions?" and, "How do they relate to inter-religious dialog or even conflict?" (pp.13-14).

Are we not called "to act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with our God" (Micah 6:8)? She then asked the best question of all. Even if those who follow other religions persecute us, what is it in other religions that could prevent us from doing what God requires? Nothing in Islam, or Hinduism, or Sikh, or Buddhism, or atheism can

stop us from being what it is that God has called us to be. "Only what is in us can do that" (p. 15).

Following an early chapter on the "Academic Scene," (including a general discussion of the "theologies of other faiths" without specifically referencing other faiths), Dr. Glaser moves quickly to what the Old and New Testaments say about other faiths. How did our forebears respond to the predominant cultures where peoples worshiped multiple gods?

Throughout this book there is an underlying humility that faces the difficult questions with honest doubt that yields to enduring faith. Her own personal struggle with some of the important issues leads to thoughtful solutions that might not satisfy everyone, but speak of her insight and integrity. I like her periodic questions "for further study" that move the players onto the contemporary stage.

I must confess that at first I was somewhat disappointed with the lack of specific engagement with other "high" religions. Then it became apparent that Ms. Glaser, although obviously proficient with her understand of Islam, was giving us Biblical principles that could be applied to peoples of all faiths.

A solid evangelical Ms. Glaser does not fall prey to the kind of jargon that can easily be dismissed by inquiring minds. She notes that "peoples of all religions are under the judgment of the one and only true God, and that the absolute of Christ makes all religious practice relative" (p. 225). By exploring the entire Bible with the questions of other faiths in mind," she shows us "how the Bible offers resources for understanding, for relationships, for mission and for building the church" (p. 225). She has a way of looking at peoples of other faiths throughout the Bible in an attempt to understand God's ultimate plan for them.

In summary, what does God require of us? Jesus underscores Micah 6:8 with the two great commandments: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and 'Love your neighbor as yourself'" (Luke 10:27). That places the emphasis on "what we should do and be, not what others should do and be" (p. 226). Does that remove our call as evangelists? Certainly not! It does, however, sharpen our focus so that our evangelism can be understood as more

than speaking the right words, but asking the right questions, that the world might believe.

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