

1-2006

Via Media: The Necessity of Deeper Theological Reflection for the Genuine Renewal of Church in the Emerging Culture and Context

Jason Clark

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/dmin>

 Part of the [Christianity Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Clark, Jason, "Via Media: The Necessity of Deeper Theological Reflection for the Genuine Renewal of Church in the Emerging Culture and Context" (2006). *Doctor of Ministry*. 478.
<https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/dmin/478>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses and Dissertations at Digital Commons @ George Fox University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Doctor of Ministry by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ George Fox University. For more information, please contact arolf@georgefox.edu.

GEORGE FOX EVANGELICAL SEMINARY

VIA MEDIA:
THE NECESSITY OF DEEPER THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION
FOR THE GENUINE RENEWAL OF CHURCH
IN THE EMERGING CULTURE AND CONTEXT

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF GEORGE FOX EVANGELICAL SEMINARY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY
JASON CLARK

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM
JANUARY 2006

PORTLAND CENTER LIBRARY
GEORGE FOX UNIVERSITY
PORTLAND, OR. 97223

All Scripture references are from the New International Version

Copyright ©2005 by Jason P. Clark
All Rights Reserved

DISSERTATION ACCEPTANCE CERTIFICATE

JASON CLARK

PRESENTED: MARCH 15, 2006

TITLE:

**VIA MEDIA: THE NECESSITY OF DEEPER THEOLOGICAL
REFLECTION FOR THE GENUINE RENEWAL OF CHURCH IN
THE EMERGING CULTURE AND CONTEXT**

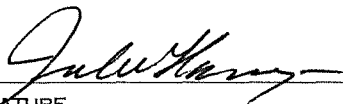
***WE THE UNDERSIGNED CERTIFY THAT WE HAVE READ THIS
PROJECT AND APPROVE IT AS ADEQUATE IN SCOPE AND
QUALITY TO COMPLETE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY IN
LEADERSHIP IN THE EMERGING CULTURE DEGREE***



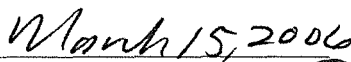
SIGNATURE



DATE



SIGNATURE



DATE



GEORGE FOX
EVANGELICAL SEMINARY

Via Media: The Necessity Of Deeper Theological Reflection For The Genuine Renewal Of Church In The Emerging Culture And Context

Jason Clark
Doctor of Ministry
2006
George Fox Evangelical Seminary

The thesis of this paper is that genuine church renewal in a postmodern context is possible based on biblical principles and deep theological reflection rather than simply repackaging church activities. Without this biblical base and theological reflection, many responses will attract disaffected Christians but will fail to produce genuine mission and connection to contemporary culture.

Chapter 1 will explore the interplay between message, medium, and marketplace, and demonstrate that most church renewal responses are theologically uninformed. Without adequate biblical and theological reflection, the church communicates a message in new mediums, but in ways people cannot connect.

Chapter 2 will explore a theological issue behind the church's inability to connect with postmodern people and offer an alternative theology in response to this problem. Chapter 3 will apply the alternative theology described in Chapter 2 to contemporary Christian conversion and maturation. This chapter adopts the faith stage development theory of James Fowler, which is congruent with this paper's theology, and the chapter suggests methods that produce authentic church growth.

Chapter 4 will apply a theology of spiritual formation to the preaching and teaching roles of the church. Chapter 5 will describe effective leadership techniques related to the theology introduced previously. Leadership is vital to church renewal in the emerging, postmodern context.

The paper will record the successful application of effective pastoral leadership in the author's church context, a church plant that has seen significant growth among new and existing Christians. The application demonstrates the effectiveness of this theology and has been the testing ground of the incarnational leadership concept.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation took about 2,000 hours of reading and writing, mostly in the early hours of the morning, over a 5-year period. It also took many years of interactions with people and hours beyond counting. As a Doctor of Ministry dissertation it took shape from many thousands of hours in planting and growing a church. Whilst this is my dissertation, it is the work of many other people who made it possible, and to them I give thanks and dedicate this work.

To Andy Hickford who introduced me to Jesus, not with a propositional sales pitch but an invitation into a life of meaning, purpose, and adventure. You were right; it has been that and much more. Thanks for being my mentor, friend, guide, and one who frequently calls out the things of God in my life including this journey into theology, teaching, and coaching.

To Nick Mercer, for being one of the main reasons I began to study theology so many years ago, for always making me uncomfortable with your questions in a way that caused me to grow, and for being the one person I could go to in safety to talk about my doubts and questions when things were their darkest.

To MaryKate Morse, for being the best doctoral supervisor I could ever have hoped and prayed for. You have been available, interested, supportive, and made my supervision like a process of spiritual direction.

To Jim and Edena Seaton, for all your love, support, and for showing me what parents should be, praying for me so often, and for letting me grow up.

To Todd Hunter who introduced me to why theology was the way forward, introduced me to Stanley Grenz and Brian McLaren all those years ago, and gave me the heads up on this course at George Fox University.

To Stanley Grenz, for that one private conversation several years ago, where I asked if doing some more theological study would be helpful, and for your kindness and affirmation to do so. I wish I could thank you in person, and one day I will.

To Brian McLaren, for your friendship, for modeling so much of what I aspire to be, for making theology come alive for me, for being one of the most wonderful human beings who lives what he teaches, and for being broken, open, and vulnerable. Thank you for being my friend, supporter, mentor, coach, rabbi, and constant encourager.

To Antony Billington and Graham McFarlane for the first lunch in 1999 at which I picked your brains and asked for direction in exploring this further. Thanks for being great friends in this journey and setting me on the path of theological exploration. Graham McFarlane, thank you also for the subsequent endless hours of talking, conversation, and theological reflection over coffee in your office leading me in the theological direction that has been the basis for this dissertation.

To Len Sweet, who began as an author I admired and respected, and is now someone who has shaped my mind and thinking. Thank you for your generosity, inspiration, and embodiment of all you teach.

To Sheila Bartlett for making being a student at GFU more like being part of a caring family

To Jules Glanzer, for being my second reader, for taking such an interest in my writing, and for making my oral defense so meaningful.

To Chuck Conniry and staff at George Fox University for making this program available, for your personal interest and care of me, and for providing something so far beyond a doctorate: a life changing learning experience.

To Loren Kerns, a technological wizard, pedagogical genius, and above all , a sharp, insightful theologian. Thank you for all your support of the program.

To my fellow ‘co-hortians,’ Rick Bartlett, Tony Blair, Winn Griffin, Rick Hans, George Hemmingway, Nick Howard, Todd Hunter, Randy Jumper, Eric Keck, Mike McNichols, Ken Niles, Craig Oldenberg, Rob Seewald, Rick Shrout, Dwight Spotts, Dave Wollenberg. Thanks for making the trip so much fun, and life giving, and for all you kind words, and encouragements over my research.

To Jim and Hannah Dean whose editorial assistance was inestimable.

To Emergent people around the world, for your input on my blog, interactions at speaking events, e-mails, cyber and real relationships. Thanks for questioning my research and providing a readership and voice of support.

To those who have encouraged me to research and write as part of my life and future, in particular: Jim Henderson, Stephen Shields, Caroline Ramsey, Steve Gee, Graham Old, Alan Jamieson, Rob Leitch , Keith Judson, Dave Eaddie, Sivin Kit, Conrad Gempf, Joe Davies, Jon Harris, Steve Chalke, Mark and Faith Allpress, Duncan and Lorna Owen, Dan Barnard, Russell Powter, Simon Skinner, Wendy Sullivan, Scott Pedersen, Alan Mann, and Robin Parry. I know I have forgotten someone.

To my wife Beverley and our children, Anna, Cameron and Leah, for supporting me being up so early, and for traveling so much as I share these ideas. You are the embodiment of the healing God has brought in my life, my sign of the Kingdom, and my hope for eternity.

To Tim Keel, thanks for your love, support, and encouragement and friendship.

To my staff colleagues, Becky, Murray, Bev, Jon, and Joy, for believing in me and for understanding why this was important.

To John and Ele Mumford, for giving us room and the encouragement to plant a church and do some things differently. Your support is something I will always treasure.

And lastly to Vineyard Church Sutton. You embody this research, without you it would not exist. Thank you for being a church I love being part of, a community that does life together in all its pain and messiness. For letting me learn, grow, and make so many mistakes.

And lastly to my Nan, for always letting me know you are proud of me.

PREFACE

PERSONAL NARRATIVE

In agreement with the author's supervisor no third person narrative will be used in this dissertation. The author will tell his own story here.

Shortcomings + Confessions+ Audience + Autobiography

Unashamedly I must confess that the main person I had in mind for my dissertation was myself. The problem I have sought to address has been very personal. How can I maintain my own faith in the face of the emerging culture and context? Then, how can I as a pastor and leader enable our church to grow, with genuine renewal?

As I look back on this research process, and illustrate it with stories from the life of our church community, I have had in mind three questions. What does it mean to be a Christian, what does it mean to be Church and what does it mean to be a leader/pastor, in the face of the seismic emergence of postmodernity? Three impossibly large questions.

When I set out on my research, even before this doctoral programme, I imagined finding so many answers to those questions, but now realise they are a questions for a lifetime of research, reflection, application, and most likely the task at least, of this generation of Christians.

I doubt my dissertation will offer much in the way of illumination to these questions, but I hope it will inspire others, as it has done me, to continue to pursue

theological reflection in the service of forming communities and churches that are vibrantly and naturally connected to Christ, His Church and his mission and creation, in our postmodern world.

I must declare some of my bias. I love the church, in the plurality of its forms. It was a church that enabled me to meet Jesus, and begin a life of following him, and helping others to do the same. For all the problems of the church, and they are well documented, I believe the renewal of our churches is our hope for the future of Christianity. Whilst many have been hurt by church, I think the church has been just as hurt by those leaving it, criticising it, and declaring it as irrelevant to the future. Whilst I understand the pain of Christians who have been denied a life-giving faith, for their homes, work, and families, I have found the anger and rage in many voices unpalatable.

As I write, seek to assess the church and its theology and practice, and suggest critique and a way toward renewal and change, I know that I must inevitably end up stereotyping, misunderstanding, and making suggestions from a place of ignorance. I hope my voice will not add to the burden of leaders and churches, who are mostly wonderful people, trying their hardest to serve.

So I hope readers will find a voice of optimism, hope, and construction in this dissertation. I hope they find theological thought and tools that will enable the deconstruction and reconstruction of many of churches, which is I believe the process, road, and path to renewal.

As I have interacted with other pastors and church leaders from my undoubtedly limited perspective, I have had the privilege to share my research and stories from our church. In this I have found key readers for my writing, people who know that church is

not working, who are tired of being told they are irrelevant, that they should pack up and close their services and buildings, get rid of their staff, and have immediate relevancy.

For they know that this is not the case, and these axiomatics do not produce the promised mythical new postmodern nirvana of church. The future of church is not in anger and endless deconstruction, but the hard daily grind of generous submission to each other, hope and dependency in the church Catholic, and engaging one another in the hard task of theological reflection brings genuine renewal.

Most of all, I hope my writing and the story of our church will inspire others to see that church is not primarily about making it relevant to my postmodern needs, but about recruiting people who will in the face of all the churches shortcomings, decide that they will serve, give, pray, minister, and share, and thereby see others come to and grow in faith, which is a blessing and reward in itself.

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
PREFACE.....	vii
INTRODUCTION.....	1
Chapter	
1. THE POSTMODERN CONTEXT.....	4
Modernity and Postmodernity Defined	
Where is the Message?	
Consequences of Cultural Change on the Message	
A New Message	
Conclusion	
2. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE DOCTRINE OF CREATION.....	22
Tracing the Development of the Doctrine of Creation in Church History	
Martin Luther, John Calvin, Isaac Newton, and Emmanuel Kant	
The Biblical Doctrine of Creation	
The Greeks' Notions of Creation	
The Christian Doctrine of Creation	
Salvation, Spiritual Formation, and the Connection to Emerging Culture	
3. SPIRITUAL FORMATION IN THE EMERGING CHURCH.....	43
A Description of Healthy Growth	
James Fowler: Person and Publications	
Do Current Models Facilitate Faith Stage Growth?	

Applying Webb-Mitchell to Fowler's Synthetic-Conventional Stage	
Preferred Learning Styles	
The Faith Stage Growth Habitat and Curriculum	
Curriculum Examples from Vineyard Church, Sutton	
4. THE ROLE OF PREACHING IN THE EMERGING CHURCH	69
The History of Preaching: From Jesus to the Modern Church	
An Assessment of Preaching in the Modern Church	
Additional Issues	
Summary of Traditional Preaching	
An Assessment of the Call to Abandon Preaching	
Toward a Postmodern Philosophy and Method of Preaching	
The Role of the Emerging Preacher	
Preaching Helped an Emerging Church Grow	
Summary	
5. THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP IN THE EMERGING CHURCH.....	101
Leadership Problems in the Modern Church	
Paralysis of Leadership in the Emerging Church	
A Postmodern Philosophy and Method of Leadership	
Emerging Leadership Methods and Practices	
Leadership in the Emerging Church: Metaphors for Transformation	
Application: Examples from an Emerging Church	
Conclusion: Wisdom	

CONCLUSION.....	131
APPENDIX.....	134
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	144

INTRODUCTION

The modern church in the United Kingdom is experiencing a continued major decline, and church attendance may reach 1 percent by 2016 if current trends continue.¹ Over recent years a number of responses have been suggested to counter this decline, including the recent growth of the “Emerging Church.”² Many of these responses have been sociological in nature and are a repackaging of church beliefs and practices that do not produce genuine renewal. Genuine renewal can produce church growth and add new Christians from the postmodern context. The thesis of this paper is that genuine renewal is possible based on biblical principles and deep theological reflection rather than simply repackaging church activities. Without this biblical base and theological reflection, many responses will attract disaffected Christians but will fail to produce genuine mission and connection to contemporary culture.

The thesis of the paper will be supported by biblical and theological investigation and theological reflection. From that reflection, the paper will identify three key areas of church life as targets of renewal to which the concepts can be applied effectively. Finally,

¹ Stuart Murray, “The End of Christendom,” <http://www.anabaptistnetwork.com/endofchristendom> (accessed January 14, 2004).

² The emerging church developed in the late twentieth Century in Western Europe, North America, and the South Pacific in an effort to adapt to postmodernity. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emerging_Church (accessed December 21, 2005).

the paper will report how this approach produced genuine renewal within a particular church. Chapter 1 will explore the interplay between message, medium, and marketplace, and demonstrate that most church renewal responses are theologically uninformed. Without adequate biblical and theological reflection, the church communicates a message in new mediums, but in ways people cannot connect.

Chapter 2 will explore a theological issue behind the church's inability to connect with postmodern people. The western church has held a platonic doctrine of creation that does not affirm life, the world, and the nature of humanity, and these issues are valued by postmodern culture and people. In other words, current theology does not naturally lead to growth in existing and new Christian disciples, who must live and grow in a postmodern environment. This chapter provides an alternative theology in response to this problem.

Chapter 3 will apply the alternative theology described in Chapter 2 to contemporary Christian conversion and maturation. This chapter adopts the faith stage development theory of James Fowler, which is congruent with this paper's theology, and the chapter suggests methods that produce authentic church growth.

Chapter 4 will apply a theology of spiritual formation to the preaching and teaching roles of the church. This will include a history of preaching, recent developments in preaching, and the insufficiency of two current responses, one that reasserts conservative preaching techniques and the other that calls for its abandonment. The chapter proposes abandonment of preaching as a sociological response, will assert

that both responses are not genuine acts of theological reflection and renewal, and will describe an effective alternative.

The final chapter will describe effective leadership techniques related to the theology introduced previously. Effective ecclesiastical leadership is necessary because leadership is responsible for the message, media, and marketplaces. Leadership is vital to church renewal in the emerging, postmodern context.

The authoritarian, controlling, and mechanistic leadership of the modern church mimics secular CEO business techniques. These sociological responses produce leadership paralysis characterized by abuse and manipulation. The theology of this paper affirms the necessity for incarnational leadership that is missional and a catalyst for authentic spiritual formation. Much current leadership thinking outside the traditional church embodies and enables this theology, and promotes positive spiritual formation. This paper will explore the nature of this leadership and key practices and behaviours that facilitate the paper's theology and goal of spiritual formation.

The paper will record the successful application of effective pastoral leadership in the author's church context, a church plant that has seen significant growth among new and existing Christians. The application demonstrates the effectiveness of this theology and has been the testing ground of the incarnational leadership concept.

CHAPTER 1

THE POSTMODERN CONTEXT

The thesis of this paper is that genuine church renewal in the postmodern era is possible based on biblical and theological reflection that avoids a simple repackaging of church activities. This biblical and theological foundation provides support for authentic mission and connection to contemporary culture. A number of authors have speculated about the future of Christianity, and their conclusions are generally pessimistic.¹ The pessimism is highlighted against 2,000 years of success that saw the church grow from an inner circle of twelve disciples to over two billion adherents. The pessimism is based on the assumption that the shift to postmodernity is so seismic that modernity's unstable ground can no longer support the church and its operations. Walter Truett Anderson writes: "We are in the midst of a great, confusing, stressful and enormously promising historical transition, and it has to do with a change not so much in what we believe as in how we believe."² Contemporary churches function in a culture and belief system produced by modernity, but the western world has become increasingly postmodern in its

¹ For instance see Stuart Murray, *Post-Christendom after Christendom* (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 2004), Michael Riddell, *Threshold of the Future: Reforming the Church in the Post-Christian West* (London: SPCK, 1998), Darrell L. Guder and Lois Barrett, *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1998), and Alan Jamieson, *A Churchless Faith: Faith Journeys Beyond the Churches* (London: SPCK, 2002).

² Walter Truett Anderson, *The Truth About the Truth: De-Confusing and Re-Constructing the Postmodern World* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1995), 2.

assumptions. Robert Webber suggests there is nothing new in this situation.³ The church experienced the monumental transition from a pre-modern medieval worldview to the modern worldview, and survived and grew.⁴ In the past, the church rediscovered its purpose, mission, and meaning, and it formed new responses to dramatic cultural changes. Leonard Sweet describes this ecclesiastical reaction as “Ancient Future Faith” which he defines as “ a Faith that is both ancient and future, both historical and contemporary . . . the church [can] camp in the future in the light of the past.”⁵ The writings and models formed around this belief are commonly labeled “Emerging Church.”

A single definition of the emerging church is difficult because “attempting to define the ‘emergent church’ betrays the essence of the movement because the emergent consciousness questions the notion that there is such a thing.”⁶ Sweet suggests no two emergent churches are the same, but they have several common characteristics: “missional in orientation [and] grow out of indigenous soils.”⁷ Sweet says emergent churches use flexible spaces, hymns, liturgy, and Eucharist, and “the key words for

³ Robert Webber, *Ancient-Future Evangelism: Making Your Church a Faith-Forming Community* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2003), 12.

⁴ A detailed overview of one such time is contained in Curtis Chang, *Engaging Unbelief: A Captivating Strategy from Augustine and Aquinas* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000).

⁵ Leonard I. Sweet, *Post-Modern Pilgrims: First Century Passion for the 21st Century World* (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 2000).

⁶ Tamara Cissna, “God Bent a Person, Not a Proposition: A Conversation with Len Sweet,” *George Fox Journal* (Fall 2005): 15.

⁷ Ibid.

emerging churches are incarnational, missional, and relational.”⁸ Emergent churches are flexible and organic, outward looking, and see truth as absolute, relative, and relational. These characteristics allow for an evangelical, personal gospel and the social gospel of “justice and kingdom ministries.”⁹ The emergent church “is an ongoing conversation about how new times call for new churches, and that the mortar-happy church . . . is ill-poised to face the promises and perils of the future.”¹⁰ Sweet does not suggest the gospel is relative truth, but he believes its presentation and proclamation are relative to culture and eras.

Modernity and Postmodernity Defined

For the purposes of this paper, modernity is defined as an intellectual approach rooted in the enlightenment which assumes “humanity has progressed to the highest pinnacle of achievement under the aegis of Enlightenment Euro-American efforts . . . and the world is getting better and better.”¹¹ Kenneth Scott Latourette writes of the Enlightenment:

The eighteenth century is often called the age of reason. What seemed to be a prevailing belief in Western Europe was confidence in man’s [*sic*] mind. Man, so it was held, had heretofore been bound by ignorance and superstition. Now, by the use of reason he was achieving emancipation and there was nothing that, with this tool, he could not accomplish.¹²

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid., 17.

¹⁰ Ibid., 15.

¹¹ A. K. M. Adams, *What is Postmodern Biblical Criticism?* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 1-2.

¹² Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christianity* (New York: Harper and Row, 1953), 1003.

Peter Gay describes the growth of modernity as an optimistic belief that “life [was] getting better, safer, easier, healthier, more predictable- that is to say, more rationale.”¹³ Gay described this as a “recovery of nerve”¹⁴ which was “infectious: progress in one sphere generated progress in others.”¹⁵

Postmodernism, or postmodernity, operates from assumptions that are different from modernism, or modernity. Although postmodernism is not a single philosophy with a common voice, it holds several tenants in common. It is “antifoundational, antitotalizing, and demystifying.”¹⁶ It is antifoundational:

In that it resolutely refuses to posit any one premise as the privileged and unassailable starting point for establishing claims to truth. It is antitotalizing because postmodern discourse suggests that any theory that claims to account for everything is suppressing counterexamples . . . Postmodernism is also demystifying: it attends to claims that certain assumptions are “natural” and tries to show that these are in fact ideological projections.¹⁷

Where is the Message?

Many contemporary writers describe the intellectual move from modernity to postmodernity without reference to the impact of postmodernity on the church’s message and the communication of its message. George Cladis provides a list of nine characteristics of postmodernity with no reference to the philosophical, cosmological, and

¹³ Peter Gay, *The Enlightenment: An Interpretation*, Vol. 2, *The Science of Freedom* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1969), 12.

¹⁴ Ibid., 8.

¹⁵ Ibid., 25.

¹⁶ Adams, 5.

¹⁷ Ibid.

Brian McLaren describes postmodern thinkers' hunger for a message they can relate to and their distaste for merely re-packaging the existing message:

I don't care how slick and hip the methods are to package, produce, and promote a message like this. That message, constricted to the cramped dimensions of a shrink-wrapped, trite sound bite, is not the one I want to dedicate my life to . . . And since neither our message nor our methods are currently perfect in their articulation, and since even if they were perfectly suited to address the questions and needs of our culture today (here), they will need to adjust to our new situation tomorrow (or somewhere else), I believe we are being most faithful when we are constantly open to change on both fronts.²³

Marshall McLuhan's dictum that the medium is the message has become a misunderstood paradigm about how individuals connect with the church. McLuhan's assertion was made in the context of demonstrating how the user of media is the content.²⁴ McLuhan did not mean that the content of messages is unchanging, but that the way individuals communicate them reveals the message to the user. In other words, McLuhan's dictum supports this paper's thesis that changing the medium of communication does not change the message communicated. The methods of communication are found lacking by users of the medium if the methods are projected as relevant, but essentially unchanged.

There are important cultural realities the church must understand related to how the culture communicates, dresses, values music styles, and other aspects. The emerging church must understand, inhabit, and incarnate ecclesiastical methods that connect to the culture. Arlene Sánchez Walsh explores this necessary cultural assimilation process, and concludes: "Christianity has an almost limitless ability to harness its message to nearly

²³ Leonard I. Sweet and Andy Crouch, *The Church in Emerging Culture: Five Perspectives* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003), 191.

²⁴ For a summary of McLuhan's dictum that supports this thesis see Eric McLuhan and Frank Zingrone, eds., *Essential McLuhan* (London: Routledge, 1997), 151.

every facet of popular culture: bobby-soxers, hippies, *cholos*, tattooed, body-pierced college students searching for God—if there is a song to be co-opted, a style to be transformed, a ministry will seek to do just that.”²⁵ Two distinct groups are engaged in this sociological response: those churches that revamp their services with relevant cultural tools, and those who have broken with the modern church and create new ecclesiastical forms in their own spaces.²⁶ The two groups value cultural relevancy toward postmodern culture, and lack the means to communicate the message in relevant ways. Os Guinness discusses these issues in an interview:

Whether though creating trendy worship services, writing books about how Christ can be seen in current movies, or mirroring hot bands playing on MTV, Christians often try to make their faith more culturally relevant. But Os Guinness says that this desire to be fashionable is exactly why Christians are now becoming marginalized. In a lecture for the C.S. Lewis Institute in 2002, he said that the only thing that is always relevant is the Gospel.²⁷

It appears that the gospel is the one thing Christians and the church are afraid to rethink for the postmodern culture. In the book, *Planting Churches in a Postmodern Age*, Stetzer describes how church relevancy techniques have been reduced to a discussion of culture with chapters on choosing a logo and name.²⁸ *The Shape of Things to Come* by Michael Frost and Alan Hirsch describes church techniques designed to reach the

²⁵ Richard W. Flory and Donald E. Miller, *GenX Religion* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 74.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 139.

²⁷ Dick Staub, “The Dick Staub Interview: Trusting in a Culturally Relevant Gospel,” *Christianity Today*, August 26, 2003, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2003/134/22.0.html> (accessed January 14, 2004).

²⁸ Ed Stetzer, *Planting Churches in a Postmodern Age* (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 2003), 232.

Cultural Neutering

One of the criticisms of the modern church is the cultural neutering at work in the church. Brian McLaren and Anthony Campolo reflect this in their question:

Are our churches and broadcasts and books and organizations merely creating religious consumers of religious products and programmes? Are we creating a self-isolating, self-serving, self-perpetuating, self centered subculture . . . However unintentionally, we can neuter the very Gospel we seek to live and proclaim³¹

The author of this paper contends that those who attempt to avoid the neutering process actually perpetuate it. They may create a new emerging church subculture that is culturally neutering for modern church people and postmodern people outside the church. Relevance is important, but in many cases it is largely superficial and focused on re-branding and marketing. The church becomes obsessed with the acceptable and trendy, and becomes more self-focused and irrelevant.

The cultural neutering takes several forms:

Faddishness

There is a danger that people will view the emerging church as a fad. Generation X members did not deliver the changes and growth expected by the church. The author of this paper believes cultural relevancy or an emphasis on emerging church culturalism may also not provide results. What might happen is that many emerging church groups may become as culturally exclusive as the groups from whom they distance themselves.

³¹ Brian D. McLaren and Anthony Campolo, *Adventures in Missing the Point: How the Culture-Controlled Church Neutered the Gospel* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003), 11-12.

Dan Kimball's book, *Emerging Church* is a good example of this. He includes a chapter entitled "Beyond Postmodernism, Candles and Cool,"³² and the chapter, "How I Moved From Being Seeker-Sensitive to Post-Seeker Sensitive," describes how he went from being seeker sensitive to post-seeker sensitive. He does this by claiming his church is different from Rick Warren's at Saddleback, but he sounds as seeker-sensitive as Rick Warren.³³

Impulsive Arrogance

Duffy Robbins writes:

I'm concerned that our youth ministry culture has the same kind of adolescent arrogance that thirty years ago led to the maxim, "Never trust anyone over thirty," except that now it's "Never trust anyone who doesn't define himself as *postmodern*." Unfortunately, that kind of narrow chronological and ideological landscape leaves us vulnerable to momentary fads and fashions.³⁴

This way of thinking may lead groups who practice the emerging church model to label those outside or who disagree with them as "not getting it" or "not postmodern." This paper argues that the goal of relevancy is not appearing or becoming postmodern. "Christians should not embrace a postmodern worldview; we must not adapt to postmodernity . . . but we do need to incarnate the timeless in the timely."³⁵

Mistaking Authentic for Being Real

³² Dan Kimball, *The Emerging Church: Vintage Christianity for New Generations* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003) , chapter 4

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Duff Robbins, "Postmodern Youth Ministry in Adolescence: A Look at the Culture of Youth Ministry," *Youth Worker*, November/December 2003, <http://www.youthspecialties.com/articles/topics/postmodernism/adolescence.php> (accessed January 14, 2004).

³⁵ Sweet, *Post-Modern Pilgrims*, 14.

Emerging church groups can become gatherings of isolated individuals who seek cultural expression, but true community moderates individual isolation for the benefit of all. In insisting on individual desires to express and create, “we miss the mark of participation in the community of God which the creator desires for his creatures.”³⁶ The emerging church may react to the aesthetic deprivation of the modern church and develop a theology and expression of the arts.³⁷ This creativity, however, can develop within communal boundaries and benefit others.

The Death of Public Space

Many emerging church communities under the pressures of trying to do church in our emerging culture, are exploring simple and sustainable forms of church, having no advertising, no teaching, minimal programs, and no obvious leaders.³⁸ However this means that attendance at an emerging church group may include the risk of uncertainty, food, and relationship. These groups run the danger of involving people into in the group’s worst fears: forced intimacy, sharing, and lack of public space.³⁹ People want to watch, listen, and observe without pressure because “very few relationships are intimate . . . we tend to think of intimacy as the ‘Mecca’ of relationship. But would all relationships in your life be better if they were intimate?”⁴⁰

³⁶ Stanley J. Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God* (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 1994), 486.

³⁷ For a discussion on this topic, see: Robert Webber, *The Younger Evangelicals: Facing the Challenges of the New World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2002), 205.

³⁸ Murray, *Post-Christendom after Christendom*, 217.

³⁹ For an outline of the theory of proxemics, see: Joseph Myers, *The Search to Belong: Rethinking Intimacy, Community, and Small Groups* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003), 15.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

Emerging churches by their nature necessitate intimacy. As a result visitors often do not return, and may be seen as consumers, whereas group members validate themselves as committed and “real” Christians, in comparison with those who do not join. Rather than being open communities, they can become closed and as culturally exclusive. These new groups become small communities made up of tired, frustrated Christians who reject the church and view the new community as an ideal place.

A primary axiom of some groups is in the area of gathering. Using the works of writers including Pete Ward⁴¹ and James Thwaites,⁴² many emerging church groups move away from any form of public, congregational space. Joe Myers, however, suggested that public space is vital for postmodern people to connect. Gathering has been vital to pre-modern, modern eras, and will be in the postmodern church. It can be argued that fear of congregations may restrict the size of many groups.⁴³

Dehumanizing Spirituality

For the modern evangelical church, Christianity focuses on a personal religious decision, concern for the eternal destiny of others, and “personal and intimate communion with Jesus.”⁴⁴ Christians are saved out of the world and transformed (Rom 12:2), and the goal of their lives is salvation from a fallen world that will be destroyed (2 Pet 3:10). Heaven is the Christian’s destination, and evangelicals emphasize separation

⁴¹ Ward, *Liquid Church*.

⁴² James Thwaites, *The Church Beyond the Congregation: The Strategic Role of the Church in the Postmodern Era* rev. ed. (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 2000), 292.

⁴³For a detailed discussion of the history and place of congregations see, James F. Hopewell, *Congregation: Stories and Structures* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1987).

⁴⁴ Nancy T. Ammerman, “North American Protestant Fundamentalism,” in *Fundamentalism Observed*, eds. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 2-3.

from the world and its vices. Spiritual formation is understood as a search for piety and holiness, of being more like Christ, the divine being. Modern evangelical worship with its “Jesus is my friend” (*What a Friend We Have in Jesus*) style of worship is the fulfillment of this trajectory.

The postmodern culture views these evangelical concepts as shallow, self-seeking, and dehumanizing. In the postmodern context, “community is integral to epistemology,”⁴⁵ but the emerging church proclaims a gospel message of hyper-individualism in which community is not integral to epistemology. The result is that evangelical Christianity is often viewed as dehumanizing. For those hungry for community connections with God and each other, and who seek a whole-of-life alternative, the reductionist message of the western church is unappealing. It remains the message of the emerging church, and the Emerging church is in danger of being rejected by the postmodern culture in the same way as the evangelical church.

A New Message

This section describes a potentially relevant and engaging message for the emerging church. It includes four elements: a missional spirituality with a holistic perspective, a community hermeneutic, social justice, and power issues.

Missional Spirituality: Holistic Spiritual Formation

Membership in the Christian community calls believers into active discipleship, which seeks growth and maturity (Col 1: 28-29). Growth as a disciple involves becoming

⁴⁵ Stanley J. Grenz and John R. Franke, *Beyond Foundationalism: Shaping Theology in a Postmodern Context* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 209.

a better person, more Christ-like, and practicing Christian disciplines. Faith based primarily on intellectual knowledge is less valued than being a Christian in thought, word, and deed. Michael Riddell argues for this as a “missional spirituality:”

What is needed is the forging of a new and vibrant spirituality which is adequate to the call to mission. . . . [I]t will be a mission spirituality. . . . [I]t will need to be earthed, conversant with human suffering, attainable within the complexities of life, holistic, creative, communal and contextual.⁴⁶

In the past, mission was viewed as churches sending people to practice in distant places. Christians no longer inhabit a dominant Christian culture that sends missionaries to unchurched peoples. Christians are now all missionaries who live in an unchurched/post-church culture. “Missional churches [and individuals] are focused on what God is doing in the world. Their circles face outward, not inward.”⁴⁷

The Hermeneutic of Community

A community of people who adopt Christianity as an alternative basis for living, beyond a set of propositional beliefs, becomes a powerful apologetic in the postmodern culture. Truth is found when individuals live in an authentic life-changing community because, “what brings together absolute truth and relative truth is relational truth.”⁴⁸

Stanley Grenz in an interview in *Cutting Edge Magazine* explains this hermeneutic as:

In the postmodern context, we are moving toward the community evaluating a mosaic's pragmatic usability. The community has tremendous power in the postmodern context. Individualism is a modernist concept. The individual in the postmodern context becomes a person-in-

⁴⁶ Riddell, *Threshold of the Future*, 26.

⁴⁷ Cissna, “God Bent a Person, Not a Proposition,” 17.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 16-17.

relationship. So it's not like I can stand as an individual observer looking at alternate communities and subjectively determining which is right or which mosaic happens to be intellectually best. Rather, it is only as I participate in community, involved in the give-and-take of that community life, that I see what its mosaic is all about.⁴⁹

Social Justice

Stuart Murray Williams describes the holistic, social justice mission as people

who:

[C]hose to be identified with the poor, the weak, the marginalized, those without voices or status. They adopt as their agenda the Nazareth Manifesto: *The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.* What might this mean? Holistic mission which refuses to separate social justice from evangelism? Decades of Justice as well as Decades of Evangelism?⁵⁰

Christ identifies care for the poor and socially abused as one of the highest values; he identifies ministry to the poor, social action, and justice as normal parts of Christian faith and expression. He spoke about this in Matthew 25:31-46 when He said those who take care of the hungry, thirsty, strangers, unclothed, sick, and imprisoned actually care for the Son of Man. Christ's consistent pattern of healing and feeding individuals and befriending outcasts and sinners confirms His social sensitivity and activity.

⁴⁹ Jeff Bailey, "Theology for the New Millennium: A Conversation with Stan Grenz," *Cutting Edge*, Winter, 2000, http://www.vineyardusa.org/upload/Winter_2000.pdf (accessed January 14, 2004).

⁵⁰ Stuart Murray, *Church Planting: Laying Foundations*, (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 2001), 195.

Power from the Margins

The issues of missional spirituality, community hermeneutic, and social justice combine into a powerful voice from the margins of postmodern culture. The church can speak from the margins of society and is perhaps most eloquent while in that posture. Christ speaks about this as salt that flavors the whole earth (Matt 5:13), and as light that cannot be hidden (Matt 5:14). The church speaks from the margins of society and can affect it profoundly, and the margins are where the church is increasingly finding itself in western culture.⁵¹

Liberal and evangelical churches find themselves sharing the margins, and this reality can stimulate hope and vision.⁵² Alan Roxburgh writes:

Unless . . . leaders recognize and understand the extent to which they and their congregations have been marginalized in modernity, they will not meaningfully shape the direction of congregational life for missionary engagement.⁵³

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that the church has engaged in a primarily sociological response to postmodernity and has used communication tools and new structures to become more relevant. The church in the postmodern era has not seriously engaged in rethinking the message it attempts to communicate. The sociological response

⁵¹ Alan J. Roxburgh, *The Missionary Congregation, Leadership, and Liminality*, Christian Mission and Modern Culture (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997), 4.

⁵² For an overview of the decline of liberal churches and the articulation of hope see: Martin B. Copenhaver, Anthony B. Robinson, and William H. Willimon, *Good News in Exile: Three Pastors Offer a Hopeful Vision for the Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1999).

⁵³ Roxburgh, *The Missionary Congregation, Leadership, and Liminality*, 5.

Third, a market assessment reveals techniques and methods that connect with others. This involves peer groups that communicate with the culture and use of symbols and language people understand.

This paper develops and explores these core issues and provides the process to integrate message, medium and market. Jesus is the prime example of this integration because He used message, medium, and market to connect people to God, others, and the world around Him.

Vincent Donovan recalls the words of a missionary who had real experience in communicating Christianity to other cultures. The missionary said:

In working with . . . people . . . do not try to call them back to where they were, and do not try to call them to where you are, as beautiful as that place might seem to you. You must have the courage to go with them to a place that neither you nor they have ever been before.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Vincent J. Donovan, *Christianity Rediscovered* 25th anniversary ed. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2003), xiii.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE DOCTRINE OF CREATION

The Bible and Greek cosmologies and cosmogonies have played vital roles in the Christian development of the doctrine of creation. Both are distinctive but have similarities, and the Bible is a collection of complex cultural diversity.¹ This chapter discusses them separately by tracing their development biblically and then philosophically, and understanding the historical development of the doctrine of creation is key in this paper.

Tracing the Development of the Doctrine of Creation in Church History

“The Christian doctrine of creation was developed when Christian thinkers entered the world of Greek thought, and struggled to articulate their creeds in its shadow.”² For example, the Creed of Nicea (A.D. 325,) which was probably based on earlier creeds from Jerusalem and Antioch, was drafted to refute the Arian claim that the son of God was the highest creation of God and thus essentially different from the Father.

¹ Colin, E. Gunton, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Doctrine*, Cambridge Companions to Religion (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 141-157.

² Ibid., 147.

Early on there was not a deliberate combination of Greek and biblical thought, but rather an attempt to disentangle and separate biblical doctrine from the Greek worldview.³

Justin Martyr (born A.D. 100, converted A.D. 130) worked at the process of disentangling Christianity from Platonism. Whilst not talking of creation out of nothing, he suggests in *Dialogue with Trypho* section 307, that to know that God as creator, believers need the Holy Spirit to inform and teach them, rather than rely on a community of being between God and humanity, which was the Greek view. Justin Martyr articulates an essential of the doctrine of creation: everything matter or spirit is created, and nothing but God is eternal and divine.⁴ This is a very different way of viewing the world and its relationship to a creator than the Greek view.

On the basis of the Trinitarian doctrine, Irenaeus explores the doctrine of creation. He develops a view of the value of the material and spiritual created order in reaction to Gnostic, dualistic philosophical opponents.⁵ The Gnostics affirmed that spirit was good and matter was evil, but Irenaeus adopts Christological and pneumatological positions and argues that the whole created order was good.

Irenaeus writes about eschatological dimensions of creation and asserts that all creation, not just mind or soul, are redeemable, and he articulates a definitive expression

³ The church developed creeds and theologies as means to communicate, not as static doctrinal ends in themselves. See, Robert Webber, *Ancient-Future Faith: Rethinking Evangelicalism for a Postmodern World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 199.

⁴ See his doctrine of *logos spermatikos*, “seed-bearing-word,” discussed in Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, 3d ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2001), 10-11.

⁵ Colin E. Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, Edinburgh Studies in Constructive Theology (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998), 52.

of creation out of nothing, *ex nihilo*. The God who creates through His two hands, through the son and by the spirit, requires neither assistance from intermediate beings, nor force of necessity.⁶ This was a complete contradiction of the Greek view of creation and is a unique philosophical and intellectual achievement which emerged from early theologians' affirmation of the goodness of creation and createdness.

Two other key theologians expanded these ideas. Basil of Caesarea, A.D. fourth-century, articulates the concept of the homogeneity of creation.⁷ Basil insists that everything other than God is created and contingent and consists of the same reality. There is no hierarchy of mind and matter. He denies the Aristotelian notion, later adopted by the church, that heavenly bodies were divine and eternal. John Philoponos, A.D. sixth-century, writes similarly, and is an important influence on Galileo.⁸ His affirms creation out of nothing, denies heavenly bodies are eternal, and challenges some Greek views on the infinity of the universe.

The theologians discussed so far are noted for their resistance to Greek dualism, but others, like Origen and Augustine, set the tone and development of the doctrine of creation in another direction. Origen and Augustine combined creedal and Greek elements in their theologies of creation expressed in “*On First Principles, City of God, and Confessions*.”⁹

⁶ Colin E. Gunton, *Christ and Creation* (Carlisle.UK: Paternoster, 1992), 56.

⁷ Gunton, *The Triune Creator*, 68.

⁸ Ibid., 72-73.

⁹ Chang, *Engaging Unbelief*, 66-93.

Taking his inspiration from Philo of Alexandria's allegorical interpretation of Genesis, Origen taught a two-stage creation. The first creation was a higher world of spiritual beings who fell, which then formed the second creation, the material world. While he does not deny the goodness of this material creation, it is chiefly seen as the instrument and means of salvation. Origen contributed to the understanding of divine action in creation and its relation to redemption, but his concession to Platonism made an affirmation of the created world as good, very ambiguous.

Origen's synthesis is rather simplistic and raises a significant problem of God's relationship to time and eternity. If the first creation was eternal, how can this be reconciled with the Christian view that creation entails an absolute beginning? Origen's view suggests that God is somehow limited by time.¹⁰

Augustine deals with this issue. He is more complex in his assimilation of Greek philosophy and makes contributions to philosophical problems that are still discussed.¹¹ Augustine blends Platonism and the Christian creeds. He anticipates Einstein's theory of relativity and he suggests that space and time are created with the

¹⁰ For a discussion of the issues of timelessness and omni temporality, see: Gregory E. Ganssle, *God and Time: Four Views* (Nottingham, UK: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 153-160.

¹¹ "When nobody is asking me, [what is time?] I know what it is, but when I try to explain it to somebody who asks me, then I don't know." Augustine, *Confessions* XI.14.17, as cited in: Colin E. Gunton, *Trinity, Time, and Church: A Response to the Theology of Robert W. Jenson* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2000), 62.

world. This is an important concept in Christian theology because it frees God from time constraints. Time is a result of the created universe.¹²

Augustine's concepts result from his battle with the Manichaeism heresy which held that all matter was evil.¹³ In spite of this struggle, he asserts a two-stage, hierarchical view of creation in which God creates Platonic forms and the lower material world. Unlike Irenaeus, Augustine could not affirm the goodness of the material world fully.¹⁴ By teaching that the material world was created in the light of the previously created order, Augustine allows Christ to be displaced from the effective framework of creation.¹⁵ Unlike Irenaeus, Augustine appeals very little to Christology in his creation doctrine.

The effects of Augustine have continued across the centuries in two key areas. First, the relation of creation and redemption are locked in a platonic embrace which contributes to development of the predestination doctrine. In this concept, God chooses a limited number of people from the lost, and salvation is no longer the redemption of individuals in and with the universal created order, but something apart or separate from it. Redemption becomes a human project without a universal impact contrary to New

¹² David Novak, "Theology and Philosophy: An Exchange with Robert Jensen," in *Trinity, Time, and Church: A Response to the Theology of Robert W. Jensen*, ed. Colin E. Gunton (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2000), 52.

¹³ Chang, *Engaging Unbelief*, 16-17.

¹⁴ Gunton, *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Doctrine*, 149.

¹⁵ Gunton, *Trinity, Time, and Church*, 195.

Testament promises of “redemption of all things, not merely the human race.”¹⁶ Second, creation appears more like an arbitrary act of will rather than the ordered expression of a loving God.¹⁷

Christology and pneumatology had little place in the development of the doctrine of creation and were treated as aspects of natural theology, rather than as part of the confessional creeds.¹⁸ For example, William of Ockham in the fourteenth-century refers to the first verses of John's gospel and does not mention Christ's place in creation.¹⁹ For Ockham, creation becomes an arbitrary act of God's will.

Ockham's predecessor and intellectual opponent was Thomas Aquinas who focused his cosmology on a doctrine of causes. God is the uncaused cause, and all of creation is dependent upon God. Aquinas' system is based on the Aristotelian doctrine of causes, and the universe in his system is a hierarchical structure of interlocking causes, of agents rather than platonic forms.²⁰ While he affirms creation out of nothing, he provides little discussion on the need for pneumatology or Christology to make sense of the doctrine of creation. In his *Summa Theologiae*, Aquinas elevates the divinity of Christ

¹⁶ Gunton, *Christ and Creation*, 33.

¹⁷ “St. Augustine appears largely as the culprit who made a proper understanding of matters soteriological impossible . . . thus he has no way of explaining the saving relationship between God and his creatures . . . God is conceived as a ‘substance’ who acts casually on his creatures,” Gunton, *Trinity, Time, and Church*, 131-132.

¹⁸ Gunton, *The Triune Creator*, 122.

¹⁹ Ibid., 124.

²⁰ McGrath, *Christian Theology*, 45-46.

above his humanity so that the restoration of humanity is a restoration to a perfect state of compatibility with God.²¹

Ockham develops his predecessor Duns Scotus' thought and eliminates the intermediate world of forms and causes that had dominated medieval theology. Ockham and Scotus, however, replace it with the doctrine of the world as a contingent outcome of God's un-necessitated free will.²² Although they reject causes and forms, creation out of nothing is affirmed, and the world and God come adrift, with no Christological or pneumatological connection. The ongoing possible continuing relationship between creator and creation are questioned.²³

Martin Luther, John Calvin, Isaac Newton, and Immanuel Kant

Luther and Calvin reconsidered the relationship between the creator and creation. They look back to Basil and Philoponos and draw on a Trinitarian model. At this time, creation is viewed as non-contingent, allowing it to be studied in its scientific relationship to the creator. Scientists, however, replace theologians as authorities on creation, and Enlightenment thinkers returned to Greek dualism and overwhelmed the reformers as the main source for an understanding of the world.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid., 282.

²³ Colin E. Gunton, *The Doctrine of Creation: Essays in Dogmatics, History and Philosophy* (Edinburgh: T and T Clark, 1997), 151.

The marginalization of the doctrine of creation continued through the nineteenth-century. Frederick Schleiermacher, under the influence of Kant, returned to a form of Platonism whereby the world exists in a timeless dependence on God.³³ While he tried to avoid the Deistic machine metaphor, he developed his theological positions about the world through the notion of human experience.³⁴ This resulted in absolute dependence, which was close to mechanism, and some would say pantheism.³⁵ He noted that creation is reduced to a form of providence that operates timelessly.

Karl Barth re-engaged with the doctrine of creation.³⁶ Although he did not deal with the question of science, his reading of Irenaeus helped his attempt to re-integrate the doctrine of creation with the doctrine of redemption. According to Barth, God's relations with the world are determined by His covenant of love, which creates a world out of nothing where the covenant can be realized. Barth returned to patristic roots and asserted that the doctrine of creation is not the result of philosophical speculation, but one of the articles of the creed.³⁷

Other approaches to the doctrine of creation have been attempted by scientists of various Christian beliefs. For example, Arthur Peacocke and John Polkinghorne view

³³ Gunton, *The Triune Creator*, 178-180.

³⁴ Heyduck, *The Recovery of Doctrine in the Contemporary Church*, 143.

³⁵ Gunton, *The Triune Creator*, 180.

³⁶ Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* (Edinburgh: T and T Clark, 1960), 3.

³⁷ Gunton, *The Doctrine of Creation*, 154

creation as the very basis for a doctrine of creation.³⁸ With the development of chaos theory, string theory, and M theory, a flourishing debate and dialogue is emerging between scientists and theologians and may move the doctrine of creation beyond the “god of the gaps” approach.³⁹

Most recently, Colin Gunton has suggested that the creation, rather than a mere given, should be seen “as a gift, to be cherished, perfected and returned.”⁴⁰ Gunton rediscovers Irenaeus, the two-hand motif of Basil, and draws on Barth.

Gunton suggests three ideas. First, the existence of the universe is distinct from, but has a continuing dependence upon the creator. Second, the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ are at the centre of God's providential redemptive and perfecting action in and towards the world. Third, the Holy Spirit was sent by God the Father and enables the world to be restored and directed toward perfection through Jesus Christ, the mediator of both creation and redemption.⁴¹

The Biblical Doctrine of Creation

Genesis describes creation in its first three chapters and Genesis is often the focus of attention in science and religion discussions. A review of Scripture reveals, however, that there are many other creation-related texts in the Bible. The Old Testament is not

³⁸ Arthur Peacocke, “The Cost of New Life,” in *The Work of Love: Creation as Kenosis*, ed. J. C. Polkinghorne (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001), 21.

³⁹ Gunton, *The Doctrine of Creation*, 180.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 55.

⁴¹ Gunton, *The Triune Creator*, 155.

built on Genesis, but Genesis crystallizes other Old Testament texts in a different form.⁴² For example, Psalms 104 and 139: 13-18 celebrate God's creation of the cosmos without mentioning days or a human couple. In Job 38-39, God speaks out of a whirlwind and celebrates His sovereignty over all He has made. The centrality of God in creation is asserted in the Bible, but is not as prominent among the Greeks who placed constraints on the divine.⁴³

Once the New Testament canon was formed, the church viewed the Old Testament through the lens of the New Testament, and this influenced the church's understanding of creation. A theology of creation is more prominent in the New Testament than is often recognized, even though there is no specific creation story. Hebrew 11:3 describes creation as a result of "the word of God" who made something from that which does "not appear," and Revelation 4:11 asserts that God "created all things, and by His will they existed and were created." Hebrews 1:2 and Revelation 10:6 confirm these assertions.

John 1:1-3 celebrates Jesus as the agent or mediator of creation, the one through whom the Father created and upholds the universe. Colossians 1:15-17 describes Jesus as the first—the one through whom "all things in the cosmos were created," and the one who holds all things together.

⁴² Ibid., 14-20.

⁴³ Ibid., 24.

The doctrine of creation is implicit in Romans 4:17. Paul wrote about Abraham as the “father of many nations” and refers to God as the “one (who) calls into existence the things that do not exist.” In raising Jesus from the dead, God demonstrates His lordship over the created order and asserts God’s freedom and sovereignty described in the Old Testament.

The work of the Spirit in creation is less prominent in the New Testament than the Old, but it is implicit in crucial respects. For example, Paul claims in Romans 8:11 that the Spirit raised Jesus from the dead, and the Spirit is mentioned in its role of transforming creation later in the chapter. Luke’s gospel asserts that the Holy Spirit formed Jesus in Mary’s womb as an act of divine creation.

The Greeks’ Notions of Creation

Greek preoccupation with necessity differs from the Bible’s concept of sovereignty.⁴⁴ For example Homer and Hesiod referred to two sets of forces: gods and goddesses who compete for influence and power, through impersonal forces such as chance, necessity, and fate. Greek philosophy never freed itself from dependence on the notion of necessity, and this includes Plato who is often seen as very close to the Christian view. Plato was not a static thinker, and his concepts evolved and changed. Two key features of his writing helped shape Christian theology.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 25.

First is the concept of forms discussed in the *Republic*.⁴⁵ This notion suggests there are sets of eternal realities, discerned by the mind, which are incorporated in the material things human perceive with their senses. These forms comprise the world of being, which is unchanging, eternal, and beyond the material.⁴⁶ Against them is the world of material things, which cannot be objects of final knowledge because they change and disintegrate.

Plato is dualistic because he divides the world into two orders of being: the material or sensible versus the ideal or intelligible. In Plato's view, the ideal is real and the material is a shadow of the ideal. Neo-Platonist took this concept further and suggest the notion of degrees of being that views reality as a hierarchy, with pure matter at the bottom and pure form at the top. The potential for intellectual clashes on the nature of matter result from these concepts. For example, Plotinus, a Neo-Platonist asserts that matter is evil and becomes good only when informed by the higher realities.⁴⁷ Contrary to Plotinus, Genesis states that all things God created are good (Gen. 1:31).

In *Timaeus*, Plato reduces this tension where he asserts the created order is good, but its maker is limited by necessity.⁴⁸ God is the *demiourgos*, a workman in the weak

⁴⁵ For a summary of Platonism and the doctrine of "forms" see McGrath, *Christian Theology*, 224-225.

⁴⁶ N. G. L. Hammond, *A History of Greece* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), 589-590.

⁴⁷ For details of Christian sympathies with Plotinus, and use of the concept of emanation as the higher reality, see McGrath, *A Christian Theology*, 300-301.

⁴⁸ Gunton outlines a summary of Christian doctrine of creation distinctives in *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Doctrine*, 141.

sense of the word, and the *demiourgos* does not create but forms that which is already created.

The Christian Doctrine of Creation

The Christian doctrine of creation is distinctive because it views creation: (a) as an article of creed, i.e. not self-evident, (b) as created out of nothing, and (c) as the work of the Trinity.⁴⁹ Colin Gunton draws on Karl Barth's work on Irenaeus and suggests possible doctrine of creation key features:⁵⁰

1. "Creating out of nothing" reveals that God needs nothing outside Himself, and creation is an act of God's personal, sovereign freedom. This suggests the universe, unlike God, is not eternal and has a beginning and end. This contradicts almost every cosmology that other faiths and cultures have produced. The Bible stresses the sovereignty of God, which is demonstrated in Christ's resurrection, and to attribute eternity to anything other than God assumes those things are divine.

2. Creation has a purpose because it was done out of love and has a divinely ordained goal. It was created for its own sake and not because God needs it. The doctrine of the Trinity asserts that God exists in advance of creation as three persons in loving relationship, so God was not contingent or dependent on creation. Whilst the universe is the product of God's love, its creation not a necessary and dependent outcome.

⁴⁹ Gunton details these as seven distinctives of the Christian doctrine of creation in much more detail in *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Doctrine*, 142-143.

⁵⁰ These are summarized in Gunton, *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Doctrine*, 141-144.

3. Creation derives from the Trinity's actions and interacts closely with God, but is free to be itself. The two hands motif, suggested by Irenaeus demonstrates that creation is the work of God the Spirit. The world relates to God the Father through Jesus, and God enables creation to and move toward completion, as God intended. Basil of Caesarea saw the Holy Spirit as the perfecting cause of creation with an eschatology because creation has a destination.

4. There is a forward-looking aspect to providence and redemption, how God meets the needs of creation, and enables it to achieve its divinely determined destination. The two hands concept shows how the Trinitarian God, through the Spirit and Son, is involved in the world and cosmos. God works in and towards creation to reconnect humans to Himself and in His likeness, and the incarnation is at the centre of this process. The incarnation is the centerpiece of the doctrine of creation,⁵¹ and this relationship to creation demonstrates the close connection between conservation, preservation, providence and redemption.

5. Greek philosophy traced the origin of evil to matter; early Christian theology did not because it saw the universe as created good, with an end in view, and a purpose for the creation. Within the Christian context evil becomes that which corrupts creation and prevents it from fulfilling its purpose and end. Evil, therefore, is parasitical or extraneous, but not intrinsic to creation.

⁵¹ Athanasius, *On the Incarnation* trans. and ed. a Religious of C.S.M.V. (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1996), 25-26.

In the Christian context, the Fall is the explanation of the subversion of the created order.

[Evil's] existence means that creation's purpose can only be achieved by its redirection from within by the creator himself. Here we encounter the centrality of Christology and Pneumatology. Given the all-polluting nature of evil and its centre in human sin, redemption can only be achieved by the action of the one through whom the world was created.⁵²

The incarnation of Christ, and His death and resurrection by the Creator Spirit provides creation redemption hope and potential freedom. Ultimate redemption occurs at the end of creation, when God takes creation to its purposed end.

6. The discussion of these issues draws attention to humankind's role in the theology of creation. Genesis 1:26-27 links humanity's ability to reason and exercise freedom to the creator and His image. In the Christian framework, the whole person exists in relationship to the creator and the creation reflects the image of the creator.

Human creation cannot be understood apart from Christology, and Christ's role as a human being is placed within that doctrine. Genesis demonstrates that humanity is the culmination of creation (Gen. 1:29-30), and is responsible for the ongoing shape creation takes. Jesus is the true image of God and humanity takes its intended shape through Him.

7. Ethical issues surface in human activities that involve the doctrine of creation and the relationship of creation to being: sex, abortion, genetic engineering, cloning, war, and environmental issues. Since God seeks the redemption and perfection of creation, all human activity involves God and raises ethical questions.

⁵² Gunton, *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Doctrine*, 143.

Salvation, Spiritual Formation, and the Connection to Emerging Culture

The author of this paper believes that for the modern evangelical church redemption is about removal from the world, and to become like Christ is to become more divine (as shown in the modern churches doctrine of creation, outlined earlier in this paper). This platonic, overly dualistic doctrine of creation results in the evangelical viewpoint which asserts that Christians are saved out of the world, and their goal is salvation from a fallen creation that will be destroyed. The new creation is heaven where saved Christians go. There is little or no integration with the world and created order and little focus on issues such as ecology, social action, and war and peace. In the evangelical substitutionary atonement, Christians are cut adrift from creation and Christ need come only on Good Friday and rise from the dead on Easter Sunday.

For the evangelical, spiritual formation is an issue of piety, holiness, and becoming more like Christ. This leads the modern church to its “Jesus is my friend” style of worship. At the same time, the consumerist trajectory of contemporary culture influences postmodernity and modernity. The concentration on the individual is supported by the individualistic character of the evangelical doctrine of salvation, and its goal of separation from the world and sinners. The evangelical church becomes a collection of individuals without a holistic, cosmos-affirming mindset. If church is focused on individual salvation and one’s place in heaven, the church becomes secondary to personal needs and narcissism.

In its crudest form, the creation-fall-redemption motif encapsulated these concepts. God made the world; humans fell and need salvation or redemption to a higher order of being. In this model, human beings can have an otherworldly spiritual experience and an alternative perfect place. Salvation is about getting back on track and reaching a destination. Why be distracted with discipleship, character transformation, attending to human nature, when the destination is assured? The author of this paper believes this doctrine of salvation leaves nothing to be done; it is all done by God. There is no reason to learn and grow.

The author of this paper believes that postmodern culture intuitively finds this theology as shallow, self-seeking, and de-humanizing. Community is vital in postmodern culture,⁵³ but the church proclaims a gospel message of hyper-individualism, where community is not integral to epistemology. The result is that this Christian approach is often de-humanizing. For those hungry for connection to community and God, and who seek a whole-of-life alternative basis for living, the modernity gospel of hyper-individualization is unappealing.

The doctrine of creation articulated by Irenaeus and developed by Barth and Gunton focuses on creation-incarnation-recreation. God made the world, people sin and require salvation, and creation is a project with a destination which it has not reached. God calls His creation toward the future and eschatologically draws it back toward its intended goal. "Redemption or salvation is that divine action which returns the creation to

⁵³ Grenz and Franke, *Beyond Foundationalism*, 209.

its proper direction, its orientation to its eschatological destiny, which is to be perfected in due course of time by God's enabling it to be that which it was created to be.”⁵⁴

The incarnation is the culmination of the Trinitarian God's work in the world, through the two hands of the Son and the Spirit. The incarnation is the ultimate identification with God's creation, and Jesus is the second Adam, fully human and fully divine (1 Cor. 15:22, 45-48). Christ is the second Adam who brings creation and humanity back on track and reconnects them to God. Salvation is about becoming more human in God's image, participating in the creation project as an ecological and ethical reconnection.⁵⁵

Sin management becomes not about being divine, but about being fully human, and overcoming the effects, power, and patterns of sin through dependence on the Holy Spirit.⁵⁶ Many evangelicals believe Christ overcame sin through His divinity. He overcame sin, instead, through total reliance on the Holy Spirit working in and through His life to connect God and the world.⁵⁷ The created order with its goodness, and human nature, and flesh is essential to salvation and redemption. Christ demonstrated what being human can be and how to live authentically.⁵⁸ Christians with God affirm and engage the

⁵⁴ Gunton, *The Triune Creator*, 56.

⁵⁵ Graham W. P. McFarlane, *Christ and the Spirit: The Doctrine of the Incarnation According to Edward Irving* (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 1996), 77.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 137.

⁵⁷ Gunton, *Christ and Creation*, 69.

⁵⁸ David F. Ford, *Self and Salvation: Being Transformed*, Cambridge Studies in Christian Doctrine (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 248,.

world as gardeners in a creation project. Heaven is not “pie in the sky” after death; but is the present creation that longs and groans (Rom. 8:19-25), and will be perfected by the Holy Spirit with believers’ participation. Instead of a perfect creation that fell and should be abandoned Christians can understand that God’s creation is good and has the potential to become better.

The modern church missed the process that Luther and Calvin began, in reconnecting redemption to the doctrine of creation.⁵⁹ The modern church’s obsession with penal substitution as its transactional center could re-image and rediscover its connection to creation and humanity. As a result, Christianity could become a world and life-affirming faith that proclaims all are spiritual beings and can have fully human experiences through Christ. The church can recover a gospel message that “concerns the relation of Christian faith to ‘the natural’, all the ordinary elements of human existence (material, social, cultural, economic, moral and so on) which . . . make up a great deal of daily life.”⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Gunton outlines this contribution by Luther and Calvin, and how the reformation failed to move their theology forward in *The Triune Creator*, 147-154.

⁶⁰ Ford, *Self and Salvation*, 246.

CHAPTER 3

SPIRITUAL FORMATION IN THE EMERGING CHURCH

A Description of Healthy Growth

Paul writes that Christians are “to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ” (Eph 4:15). This chapter describes Christian growth, the growth process, and what healthy growth looks like. It describes Christian transformation into Christ-likeness. The term spiritual formation describes the process and stages through which believers become more like Christ and grow in the Christian faith. Spiritual formation is an integral element of this paper’s thesis that genuine church renewal is possible when built on biblical principles and deep theological reflection rather than simply repackaging church activities. The chapter focuses on how the Christian content of faith is appropriated for spiritual growth and development. This paper uses James Fowler’s work to understand and access healthy, spiritual growth as described in *Faith Development and Pastoral Care*¹ and *Faithful Change*.² Fowler suggests that “patterns of struggle, growth, and change . . . characterize human beings in the process of becoming aware, conscious, and increasingly responsive and responsible selves, as partners with

¹ James W. Fowler, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care*, Theology and Pastoral Care Series (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987).

² James W. Fowler, *Faithful Change: The Personal and Public Challenges of Postmodern Life* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996), 57-67.

God.”³ When this process is identified, it is possible to ask: (1) if current methods facilitate spiritual formation, (2) if the methods are inadequate, and what strategies are more effective, and (3) what curriculum promotes spiritual formation?

Fowler describes features of healthy Christian growth in the context of Christian theology and postmodern challenges to growth. Fowler focuses on the process of Christian growth, not on the contents of faith. His emphasis harmonizes with the purpose of this paper in both research and method. He worked extensively with Alan Jamieson. Jamieson provides evidence from interviews with Christians that support Fowler’s faith stage process and how the modern church does not facilitate individual spiritual growth.⁴ Jamieson examines why many Christians leave the church and concludes that churches do not provide adequate spiritual formation methodologies for Christians in the postmodern context.

James Fowler: Person and Publications

Fowler is a theologian, ethicist, and developmental psychologist who developed and combined Christian thought and psychological developmental theory. The roots of Fowler’s thinking can be traced to the psychological and educational work in Piaget’s Cognitive Structural Development Theory, Erikson’s Stages of Life Theory, and Kohlberg’s Moral Development Theory.⁵

³ James W. Fowler, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care*, 54.

⁴ Jamieson, *A Churchless Faith*. The whole of Jamieson's work in this book explores this thesis.

⁵ Fowler, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care*, 22-25.

The field of faith development was a relatively new concept in the study of the psychology of religion when Fowler began writing in 1981. While spiritual formation was not a new concept in Judeo-Christian thinking, the integration of theology with psychology was largely undeveloped.

Fowler's Stages of Growth

Drawing on the earlier work of Lawrence Kohlberg,⁶ Fowler presents the development of faith in six stages: intuitive-projective faith, mythic-literal faith, synthetic-conventional faith, individuative-reflective faith, conjunctive faith, and universalising faith. Fowler's faith stage theory details the process people go through psychologically and spiritually as they move through each stage.

The first three stages in Fowler's model are based largely on a child's evolving cognitive abilities, which correspond to the first three stages of Piaget's theory (sensorimotor, preoperational, and concrete operational).⁷ During these stages, a child's faith is determined largely by its immediate circumstances and peer/parental relationships. Stage three, which Fowler calls synthetic-conventional faith, represents a critical stage in faith development.

With the arrival of adolescence, the young person uses logic and hypothetical thinking to construct and evaluate existing and new ideas. Many people, however, choose

⁶ For example Lawrence Kohlberg, "The Development of Modes of Moral Thinking and Choice in the Years 10 to 16" (Ph.D. diss. University of Chicago, 1981).

⁷ For an outline of Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development see: <http://chiron.valdosta.edu/whuitt/col/cogsys/piaget.html> (accessed February 22, 2006).

to conform to others' beliefs, including peers and influential adults. Fowler writes: "At stage three a person has an 'ideology,' a more or less consistent clustering of values and beliefs, but he or she has not objectified it for examination and in a sense is unaware of having it."⁸ Fowler's research reveals that 25 percent of adults age twenty-one or older in his survey sample were classified at stage three or lower.⁹

The key indicators of stage four faith development, individuative-reflective faith, is the formation of independent beliefs and ideas based on critical reflection that are different from the views of the significant others who were extremely important in the previous stage. Fowler explains stage four as the stage that "typically translates symbols into conceptual meanings. This is a 'demythologizing' stage."¹⁰

Fowler continues: "[F]ew people ever reach Stage five . . . without first suffering major life tragedies or defeats. "The oppressed," Fowler writes, "get to Stage five before the comfortable."¹¹ Fowler calls stage conjunctive faith, whereby "one is alive to paradox. One understands that truth has many dimensions which have to be held together in paradoxical tension."¹²

⁸ Fowler in James W. Fowler, Karl Ernst Nipkow, and Friedrich Schweitzer, *Stages of Faith and Religious Development: Implications for Church, Education, and Society* (New York: Crossroad, 1991), 21.

⁹ Ibid., 318.

¹⁰ Ibid., 183.

¹¹ Fowler, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care*, 68.

¹² Harold Kent Straughn, "My Interview With James W. Fowler on the Stages of Faith," *Life Spiral Communications*, <http://www.lifespirls.com/TheMindSpiral/Fowler/fowler.html> (accessed November 12, 2004).

The Limitations of Fowler's Theory

Fowler's theory has several limitations, which he acknowledges. One critique is that his faith stage development requires an individual to be completely at one stage or another. In fact, one reality of postmodern life is that people are at many different stages of their lives at the same time. Fowler has acknowledged this as a shortfall of his research and is currently reworking his theory about this issue.¹³ Fowler cautions that his descriptions of stages are "still shots" in a complex and dynamic process.¹⁴ In other words this development is not a straight-forward, linear process, and he suggests the stages are not concrete or absolute.

In addition, in whatever stage a person might be, it is not pejorative, and it does not measure the worth of an individual. Fowler states, "In no way will we be suggesting that a person characterized by one of the less developed stages is any less a person than one described by a more developed stage."¹⁵ The stages of development are not used to measure someone's soteriology (status of salvation), only their growth in faith.

Conversion and Development

Fowler believes spiritual formation occurs through two processes: conversion and development, and he calls these two processes the "dance of faith development in our

¹³ Alan Jameison, interview by author, January 2004, London.

¹⁴ James W. Fowler, Sam Keen, and Jerome Berryman, *Life Maps: Conversations on the Journey of Faith* (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1978), 39.

¹⁵ Fowler, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care*, 54-55.

lives.”¹⁶ Fowler defines conversion as “a significant recentering of one’s previous conscious or unconscious images of value and power, and the conscious adoption of a new set of master stories in the commitment to reshape one’s life in a new community of interpretation and action.”¹⁷ He distinguishes between conversion and subsequent spiritual formation and Christian growth. For Fowler conversion is not just the orientation of life towards Christ, it also encapsulates the ongoing process of the “contents” of faith. Every time an individual learns new content and believes it, a conversion experience occurs. This compares with his faith stage development, which deals with the operations of faith: knowing, valuing, and committing.

Fowler believes the purpose of faith development is not to have everyone arrive at the terminus of faith because people can experience deep fulfillment wherever they are located in their faith development.¹⁸ Instead, Fowler describes the goal of faith development as the growth potential that occurs as an individual moves from stage to stage. “Each new level affords enriched possibilities for knowledge of self and for intimacy with others and with God.”¹⁹

The author of this paper believes that spiritual formation occurs as people become aware of these stages, and the church’s role is to facilitate their growth and movement

¹⁶ Ibid., 95.

¹⁷ James W. Fowler, “Stages of Faith: Reflections on a Decade of Dialogue,” *Christian Educational Journal* (Autumn 1992): 16.

¹⁸ Fowler, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care*, 54-55.

¹⁹ Ibid, 57.

from stage to stage. The next section of this chapter reviews current models of spiritual formation in the church and asks if the models aid Christians in the conversion and development stages of growth Fowler suggests.

Do Current Models Facilitate Faith Stage Growth?

The next section uses the research of Brett Webb-Mitchell into the learning practices of churches to assess whether current models of church education assist faith stage growth.

Overview of Current Growth Practices

Brett Webb-Mitchell provides a model for the assessment of current church practices.²⁰ He writes that modern churches use an educational system, which is cognition based, almost to the exclusion of any other system or model. This produces individual Christian growth that is limited and inadequate in the postmodern environment.

Based on his analysis, Webb-Mitchell concludes that contemporary church educational mythology is based on two processes: socialization/enculturation and intentional/cognitive.²¹ In the socialization model, Christian education is understood as education-as-entertainment.²² While recognizing that Christians need to be in a context where relationships and social culture support their beliefs and growth, churches often

²⁰ Brett Webb-Mitchell, *Christly Gestures: Learning to Be Members of the Body of Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2003).

²¹ Ibid., 24.

²² Ibid., 7.

adopt a consumer culture notion that Christian growth is based on “what is most pleasing, emotionally speaking, to the learner.”²³

The intentional/cognitive approach is based on knowledge and facts that are transmitted to the learner over short periods of time. Thom and Joani Schulz evaluated this educational approach and process and conclude that the technique may cripple learning results.²⁴ “Whilst reading, listening to lectures, studying, and memorizing have their worthy places in education in general, such approaches may ultimately fail because they do not create a connection with the rest of one’s life.”²⁵

The result of the socialization/enculturation and intentional cognitive models, according to Webb-Mitchell, is growth based on selfish learning, and intellectual enlightenment is the goal of educational technique. As a result Christians cannot develop patterns of life that are connected to each other and the world around them. Webb-Mitchell suggests, “Little is needed from others in communities—such as the church—in this pursuit of knowledge.”²⁶ The author of this paper believes the church’s use of the cognitive model, identified by Webb-Mitchell, causes congregants to remain at Fowler’s synthetic-conventional, stage three level of growth.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Thom Schultz and Joani Schultz, *The Dirt on Learning* (Loveland, CO: Group, 1999); Thom Schultz and Joani Schultz, *Why Nobody Learns Much of Anything at Church: And How to Fix It*, rev. ed. (Loveland, CO: Group, 2004).

²⁵ Webb-Mitchell, *Christly Gestures*, 4.

²⁶ Ibid., 13.

Applying Webb-Mitchell to Fowler's Synthetic-Conventional Stage

The author of this paper believes the limitations of the cognitive model which Webb-Mitchell reports is used in the church, can be linked to Fowler's faith stage model. Fowler's model of pilgrimage catechesis provides opportunity to move beyond the cognitive approach to facilitate Fowler's faith stage model. Webb-Mitchell defines pilgrim catechesis, as a process that "literally re-sound . . . echo, or . . . hand down, implying gestures of speaking, hearing, and physically handing down the traditions of the church."²⁷ This holistic educational process can be used by the church and "harks back to an ancient understanding of catechesis for the entire pilgrimage of our life in the body of Christ."²⁸

Fowler uses the term "synthetic-conventional." He defines "synthetic" as the level an individual attempts to draw together disparate elements of his or her life into an integrated identity. His use of "conventional" indicates that the values and beliefs individuals hold are derived from a group of significant others and for the most part are accepted examination.²⁹ At this stage, individuals are very sensitive to the opinions of others, particularly their peers. This connects directly with Webb-Mitchell's socialization model in which an individual's self-awareness is not strong enough to construct a perspective independent of other persons' opinions. According to Webb-Mitchell, "the

²⁷ Ibid., 23.

²⁸ Ibid., 152.

²⁹ Fowler, *Faithful Change*, 63-64.

significant danger of this stage . . . is that the expectations and beliefs of others can be so deeply internalized that later autonomy of judgment and action can be jeopardized.”³⁰

Individuals at this stage are so strongly directed by others’ opinions that they may not break free from those opinions and make decisions and growth based on their own self-awareness.

According to Fowler, when conflict of beliefs, opinions, and experiences arise, the individuals at this stage employ two strategies. Fowler calls the first strategy “compartmentalizing.” Individuals behave as they believe appropriate with one group and act differently with another. An example is a Christian’s behavior at work or school which is inconsistent with the beliefs and practices exhibited at church.

The second strategy Fowler describes as a “hierarchy of authorities,” whereby the expectations and authority of one group is seen as primary and others must fall below the expectations.³¹ In the church, Fowler describes people at this stage as “looking for a relationship with God and with the important persons of their lives in which they feel that they are living up to the expectations these important others have of them.”³² In this stage, an individual’s relationship with God is filtered through relationships with others, and this accurately describes the dynamics at work in many modern churches. The author of this paper believes many modern churches operate at the synthetic-conventional stage,

³⁰ Ibid, 62.

³¹ Ibid, 63.

³² James W. Fowler, *Becoming Adult, Becoming Christian: Adult Development and Christian Faith* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1984), 19.

which provides strong socialization and information compartmentalization due to the cognitive educational approach based on a hierarchy of authority.

An individual can move on from stage three to the next stage. The progress requires that an individual experience a “breakdown” of the current model, whereby the individual realizes the current strategies no longer work effectively. Fowler describes the breakdown process as one of contradiction and reflection:

The factors that contribute to the breakdown of a Synthetic-Conventional stage may include: serious clashes or contradictions between valued authority sources; marked changes by officially sanctioned leaders, or policies or practices previously deemed sacred and unbreachable, or the encounter with experiences or perspectives that lead to critical reflection on how one’s beliefs and values have formed and changed, and on how relative they are to one’s particular group or background.³³

Fowler describes this as a process where: “There must be a shift in the sense of the grounding and orientation of the self.”³⁴ This takes place when the definition of self, which has been derived from relationships and roles, develops into the self differentiated from these people and roles. “There must be an objectification and critical choosing of one’s beliefs, values, and commitments, which come to be taken as a systemic unity.”³⁵

³³ James W. Fowler, “James W. Fowler,” in *Faith Development in the Adult Life Cycle*, ed. Kenneth Stokes (New York: W. H. Sadlier, 1982), 116-120.

³⁴ Fowler, *Becoming Adult*, 62.

³⁵ Ibid.

movement from stage three to stage four involves an awareness of one's own psychological condition and situation. It seems reasonable, therefore, that psychodynamic tools can be used to help people develop self-awareness. Psychodynamics refers to the science of mental forces and motivations that influence human behavior and mental activity; it analyzes the role of unconscious and conscious motivation in the causation of human behavior.

Psychodynamics is an evolving multi-disciplinary field, which analyzes and studies human thought process, response patterns, and influences. Research in the field is providing insights which can be applied in a number of ways, including: 1) Understanding and anticipating the range of specific conscious and unconscious responses to specific sensory inputs (e.g.: images, colors, textures, sounds, etc.); 2) Utilizing the communicative nature of movement and primal physiological gestures to affect specific mind-body states; 3) Understanding and utilizing the capacity for the mind and senses to directly affect physiological response and biological change.³⁹

Psychodynamic tools might include self-assessments such as the Myers Briggs Type Indicator,⁴⁰ the Enneagram,⁴¹ DISC⁴² test, or guided work with a trained professional with tools, therapy, and analysis.

The tools are cognitive style inventories, and they help people assess, reflect, and develop their self-awareness. Many churches can use these and similar tools for spiritual

³⁹ Harold Finkleman, "Psychodynamics: An Introduction," <http://members.shaw.ca/finkleman/psychoDYN.htm> (accessed December 3, 2005).

⁴⁰ Naomi L. Quenk, *Essentials of Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Assessment* (New York: J. Wiley and Sons, 2000).

⁴¹ Don Richard Riso and Russ Hudson, *The Wisdom of the Enneagram: The Complete Guide to Psychological and Spiritual Growth for the Nine Personality Types* (New York: Bantam Books, 1999).

⁴² Mels Carbonell, *Uniquely You: Understanding Personalities from a Biblical Perspective* (Fayetteville, GA: Personality Wise Ministries, 1993).

formation, and emotional intelligence development. As people understand the nature and process of healthy growth, they may experience such growth.⁴³

Preferred Learning Styles

Preferred learning styles takes into account the plurality of intelligences, spaces, styles, modes, and places people learn. It includes three concepts and areas of focus:

Space: Joseph Myers demonstrates that people connect, belong, and form relationships in four key spaces: public, social, private, and intimate. Any effort to encourage growth in faith stage development must include these four spaces.

Mediums: This area includes classroom teaching, books, one on one coaching, mentoring, listening, and physical movement. People can identify the style most effective for their learning process. For example, some people learn through lectures, others need conversation and dialogue.

Time: The contemporary culture teaches few time management skills, but also offers many conflicting options and choices. It is important to understand and use effective time management techniques⁴⁴ including the nature and spirituality of time.⁴⁵

⁴³ Henry Cloud and John Sims Townsend, *How People Grow: What the Bible Reveals About Personal Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001).

⁴⁴ Stephen R. Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Families: Building a Beautiful Family Culture in a Turbulent World* (New York: Franklin Covey/Golden Books, 1997).

⁴⁵ Christine Aroney-Sine, *Sacred Rhythms: Finding a Peaceful Pace in a Hectic World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2003); Joshua Heschel Abraham, *Sabbath* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1983).

This assertion would warrant much further study and investigation in it's own right, but is beyond the scope of this paper.

Socialization

Webb-Mitchell and Fowler describe the necessity and power peer groups have on the growth of individuals. It is vital, therefore, that people wishing to grow form supportive relationships with others who also seek growth because relational experiences and sub-cultures support the growth process. For example, Fowler writes about the egotistical danger of the individual stage, which can be avoided through accountability with supportive peers.

Rodney Clapp has also asserted that Christians cannot grow unless they are supported by their sub-culture.⁴⁶ He warns, however, that this subculture can also inhibit growth when the person wishes to grow beyond the stage of the peer group.

Doubt-Questioning

Using Fowler's model, Jamieson suggests that growth includes the understanding that doubt and uncertainty are necessary and vital.⁴⁷ This paper argues that the synthetic-conventional structure of the modern church restrains the elements necessary for spiritual growth. Instead, in the modern church certainty is espoused as a sign of faith and

⁴⁶ Rodney Clapp, *A Peculiar People: The Church as Culture in a Post-Christian Society* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 95.

⁴⁷ Jamieson, *Journeying in Faith*.

maturity.⁴⁸ According to Fowler and Jamieson, churches can become places where doubt, mystery, pain, and uncertainty are accepted and contribute to growth and exploration. This is a key theological issue that deserves attention. In *The Cost of Certainty*, Jeremy Young explores how psychological growth and maturity are inhibited by an environment that avoids honest, open questioning explores in detail how psychological growth and maturity is inhibited by lack of an environment of honest and open questioning.⁴⁹

Psychodynamic tools, preferred learning styles, socialization, and doubt-questioning have been identified as key areas for a holistic approach to growth. The next section examines how these factors might play in the life of a church. How does the holistic approach compare with the current linear, cognitive models of the church? How might these factors be organized and programmed into the life of the church? The next section offers suggestions for this new church organization.

The Faith Stage Growth Habitat and Curriculum

The modern church uses cognitive learning methods that result in people staying at stage three of Fowler's growth model. The author of this paper believes a holistic approach enables people to progress beyond stage three. This movement is essential, and when combined with biblical principles and theological reflection, church renewal is possible in the postmodern era. If the current modern church growth is likened to

⁴⁸ Jeremy Young, *The Cost of Certainty: How Religious Conviction Betrays the Human Psyche*, (London: Darton, Longman, and Todd, 2004), 43.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

building a wall of knowledge, the metaphor for the postmodern context is a web. The web, and the use of the internet, has been embraced as a learning model in most organizations.⁵⁰

A web has nodes of connection. Growth takes place by movement between nodes, and nodes have multiple connections to one another unlike a wall. A wall is monolithic, stable, and unmoving, but certain. A web, on the other hand, is fragile, able to flex, move, and allows multiple location sites.

Nodes

Rather than a typical ten-week discipleship course based on a cognitive learning model, the web model employs nodes that include spaces and times. This includes intentional learning courses/spaces, and spontaneous relational places for food, discussion, and relational experiences in formal and informal places. Participants connect at these nodes in two ways. First, they connect by choice, when they decided to connect. Second, they meet accidentally in nodes in the manner of a spider's web, during their interactions. As a result, their development and learning are intentional and unconscious.

To avoid people staying in comfortable places, they are challenged to move out and interact with others. Steven Covey's work confirms the notion that individuals grow best when they focus on their strengths and weaknesses. In a church, this is as simple as helping people decide to pursue growth through a technique they prefer such as

⁵⁰ For several examples of this see Schultz and Schultz, *Why Nobody Learns Much of Anything at Church*.

conversations with a coach, and then pursue those they find difficult, such as personal, private reading and study.

Habitat

In modern church programming, the church is viewed as a machine programmed to produce desired outcome(s). A review of the literature raises the question: “Is this a healthy environment?” This paper suggests the church move away from programming and recovers habitats that are natural for Christian growth and development.⁵¹

The concept of the church as habitat promotes the church as a place where individuals and groups interact, live, and grow. This requires the inclusion of many environmental factors and elements that cause growth. This compares to conventional programming where a system repeats tasks whether or not the programming produces growth. There are huge possibilities for research into this concept that warrant further unpacking, which is beyond the scope of this paper.⁵²

Curriculum Examples from Vineyard Church, Sutton

Journey

This was an intentional discussion group for Christians and people wanting to find out about the Christian faith. Rather than a cognitive approach like alpha, we used the

⁵¹ For the a classic text on habitat see Steven Johnson, *Emergence: The Connected Lives of Ants, Brains, Cities, and Software* (New York: Scribner, 2001).

⁵² Joe Myers explores this concept in detail in a forthcoming book, *Organic Community: Creating a Place Where People Naturally Connect* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, forthcoming).

idea from ‘Socrates Café’,⁵³ of allowing people to ask the questions and offer answers themselves. In practice this meant meeting with 50 people in the function room of a pub for one night a few weeks in a row.

At the start of one evening, we put people into groups of ten and asked each group to come up with the most difficult questions they could think of about Christianity. Then, rather than offer the correct answers to these questions, we asked each group to take one question and try to answer them themselves.

My role in this situation was to act as a commentator, offering input from Christian history and doctrine. At no time did I assert “you must believe this” or “this is the truth,” rather I offered multiple answers that the church might have and the one with which one I was most comfortable.

This was a deliberate stage 4 type of questioning and faith stage modeling.

DISC - Elders Retreat

We took our eldership team away for a weekend that included food, relaxing, games and relational learning. We also had a consultant come in and spend a day with us, using the DISC analysis to help us understand each other and look at how we deal with conflict as a team.

This was a wonderful experience of developing our emotional intelligence, acknowledging each others’ diversity, and working together to mature in handling issues.

⁵³ Christopher Phillips, *Socrates Caf  : A Fresh Taste of Philosophy* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001); Christopher Phillips, *Six Questions of Socrates: A Modern-Day Journey of Discovery through World Philosophy* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2004).

Red Button

This was an eight-week course on Monday nights that had about 50 people in attendance. It focused on various aspects of emotional intelligence including anger, grief,⁵⁴ boundaries,⁵⁵ transactional analysis, and life stages.⁵⁶ Most of the evening was spent receiving input from a trainer and then in interactive work on issues people face.

A great deal of this program comes out of the premises from *Emotional Intelligence* by Daniel Goleman.⁵⁷

EPIC

Using the idea of EPIC (Experiential, Participatory, Image Driven, and Connected) from Len Sweet,⁵⁸ we have modified our Sunday service considerably.

We now have a media-arts team that produces video, reflections, interactions, and activities around the theme we are exploring each Sunday. My talks have changed to a more interactive approach whereby I act as commentator and facilitator and we read a passage together and ask people to share what they think, see, and hear in the passage. I

⁵⁴ James Hollis, *The Middle Passage: From Misery to Meaning in Midlife*, Studies in Jungian Psychology by Jungian Analysts (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1993); James Hollis, *The Eden Project: In Search of the Magical Other*, Studies in Jungian Psychology by Jungian Analysts (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1998).

⁵⁵ Cloud and Townsend, *Boundaries*.

⁵⁶ Gail Sheehy, *New Passages: Mapping Lives across Time* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1996).

⁵⁷ Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence* (New York: Bantam Books, 1995).

⁵⁸ Sweet, *Post-Modern Pilgrims*.

act as a summarizer and give commentary and suggested application. The work of Edwin Schlossberg was also very influential upon my development here.⁵⁹

God@Work

We have started a group for people who want to explore how they can develop their faith at work. This is not about “witnessing” but about helping explore what they are called to, what they are good at, how they can have impact at work, support their colleagues, and help their companies.

Creative Arts

We have gathered a group of people from our church community who are exploring the creative arts. They use creative arts to explore understanding the spirituality of their interests, train and develop their skills, and applying them to their lives, our community, and our church. Our hope is that our church will be known as a place to connect to explore the creative and artistic.

Hospitality and Discussion

We have existing small groups, composed of people of different ages in multiple locations who seek to meet weekly and who invite friends, neighbors, and people new to our church into their community life. These groups focus on eating, relaxing together, and talking honestly and openly about life. We have developed a culture where questions

⁵⁹ Edwin Schlossberg, *Interactive Excellence: Defining and Developing New Standards for the Twenty-First Century*, Library of Contemporary Thought (New York: Ballantine, 1998).

Socials

We have parties, discos, music nights, X-Box LAN games nights, potlucks, bowling matches, and theatre nights. People in our community “do life” together and invite their friends and family. There is no desire to bait and switch; we do not use the opportunities to share propositional messages. We encourage our church members to have fully orb-ed lives and to include their friends. Joe Myers *Search to Belong*⁶³ has been instrumental in us seeing these spaces as places people connect and belong to our community outside of more formal church places like Sunday services.

Rule of Faith

Using the Benedictine Rule of Faith,⁶⁴ we have explored what it means to live a more intentional and disciplined life with daily prayers, and closer to each other. We are exploring the possibility of some of us living in community for short periods to help people to grow. We have also found the Benedictine approach to faith and work very applicable to our lifestyles.

We have also been exploring what Jonathan Wilson describes as “new monasticism”⁶⁵ to develop faith in a fragmented society.

⁶³ Myers, *The Search to Belong*.

⁶⁴ Eric Dean, *St. Benedict for the Laity* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1989); Wil Derkse and Martin Kessler, *The Rule of Benedict for Beginners: Spirituality for Daily Life* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2003).

⁶⁵ Jonathan R. Wilson, *Living Faithfully in a Fragmented World: Lessons for the Church from Macintyre's after Virtue*, Christian Mission and Modern Culture (Harrisburg, PA.: Trinity Press International, 1997).

QUEST

QUEST is an acronym for Questioning, Understanding, Exploring, Seeking and Teaching.⁶⁶ Quest is a program we are about to introduce, the format of which is based around the questions *people* submit. In other words a learner centered space and opportunity for Christians to grow through the submission of questions.

It will include discussion and learning together, and is not about trying to give correct answers, but to help each other express doubts, ask questions safely, and grow in understanding of Christianity together. People are able to submit questions by e-mail, online web submission, post, phone, text messages, and in person. I will act as commentator and facilitator for these discussions and learning times. We hope that it will be a space to find peace, God's presence, and comfort.

This is an example of a course for learning about the Christian faith in a non-propositional, learner-centered, non-dogmatic, question-based process to facilitate faith stage development.

Conclusion

This paper uses Fowler's faith stage model to define healthy spiritual growth. Webb-Mitchell asserts that the modern church uses a cognitive, fact based learning model that inhibits growth beyond Fowler's stage three. To move beyond stage three, people need to deconstruct their faith using doubts and questions, as opposed to modern

⁶⁶ QUEST can be seen online at <http://www.vineyardchurch.org/sutton/quest.htm>, also a QUEST information leaflet is available as PDF download from <http://www.vineyardchurch.org/jason/file>.

churches that focus on building faith through notions of certainty. In the postmodern context, doubts and questions are the fabric of everyday life. People seek life-long learning and are reluctant to hold unquestioned, unchallenged beliefs. The postmodern cultural context provides opportunities to nurture the growth process, but modern churches resist this cultural change and reality.

As churches incorporate learning processes other than the cognitive model, and become spaces where people can question and doubt in multiple spaces and styles, opportunity for growth exists in the church. This chapter identified several factors of a holistic growth process and described how these elements can help people grow toward more advanced stages in Fowler's model. The church served by the author of this paper has experimented with this approach, and the growth in numbers and depth of faith by church members confirms its validity.

Having shown the need for theological reflection, and suggested a theology that is key to church renewal in our emerging culture, and then in this chapter a sociological model that enables that theology to be incarnated with genuine renewal and Christian growth, I will now apply this learning in my next chapter to the issue of preaching and teaching.

John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the good news of God” (Mark 1:14). “When they found him, they said to him, ‘Everyone is searching for you.’ He answered, ‘Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came to do’” (Mark 1:37-28).

The Greek words that describe Jesus’ manner of speaking include: *kerusso* “to proclaim,” *aggello* “to announce,” *euaggelizo* “to bring good news,” *propheteuo* “to prophecy,” and *didasko* “to teach.”⁴ The New Testament refers to preaching in many different ways. Sidney Greidanus writes: “The New Testament uses as many as thirty three different verbs to describe what we usually cover with the single word *preaching*.”⁵

Paul describes his role as primarily a preacher, “For Christ did not send me to baptize but to proclaim the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power” (1 Cor 1:17). Paul’s preaching is different from that of Jesus, and it is most often delivered in the context of a church worship service or in letters to churches. His preaching is, according to Paul Scott Wilson, “Primarily centered in conceptual argument, not narratives which dominate the Jesus tradition.”⁶ A detailed study of Paul’s preaching by Roland Allen in 1912 demonstrates the contextual

⁴ William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of The New Testament* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), 432, 7, 317, 730, 191.

⁵ Sidney Greidanus, *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text: Interpreting and Preaching Biblical Literature* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1988), 6.

⁶ Paul Scott Wilson, *A Concise History of Preaching* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1992), 25.

nature of Paul's preaching and how far removed it is from the classical sermon stereotypes attributed to Paul.⁷

C. H. Dodd makes sense of the multiple methods of preaching by suggesting:

"Teaching (*didaskein*) is in a large majority of cases ethical instruction. . . . Preaching, on the other hand, is public proclamation of Christianity to a non-Christian world."⁸ This has led to a debate in homiletics on the distinction between *kerygma* and *didache*. *Kerygma* is the proclamation or announcement of faith to those who do not yet believe, while *didache* is seen as something that follows *kerygma*. In other words, *kerygma* leads someone to faith, while the examination and catechism of faith is *didache*.⁹

The Early Church and the Middle Ages

Key figures from the early church history are examples of preachers and include Origen, Jerome, John Chrysostom, and Augustine.¹⁰ Until A.D. 529 and the Second Council of Vaison, only bishops were allowed to preach.¹² Partly due to the Second Council of Vaison, preaching was elevated to a new position of prominence. At this council, priests were given permission to preach, and in the absence of a priest, a deacon was allowed to read a sermon from one of the church fathers.

⁷ See Roland Allen, *Missionary Methods, St. Paul's or Ours: A Study of the Church in the Four Provinces* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1962), 62-80.

⁸ C. H. Dodd, *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments, Three Lectures* (Chicago: Willett, Clark and Company, 1937), 7-8.

⁹ For a definition and distinction see Fabian W. Bruskowitz, "The New Catechism of the Catholic Church," *Catholic Faith Magazine*, March 4, 1996, <http://www.catholic.net/RCC/Periodicals/Faith/0304-96/catechism.html> (accessed March 24, 2005).

¹⁰ Wilson, *A Concise History of Preaching*, 17-59.

The minister of the church validly discharges the office of teaching (a) by accurately investigating the true meaning of the divine Word, through legitimate methods of interpretation, but surely exegeting and clearly expounding the Word, and (b) by fittingly applying the Word as thus expounded for purposes of instruction, reproof, education, edification and consolation.²³

Words like persuasion and transmission of a sermon's message are the foundation of preaching that seek to convince, inform, explain, and persuade people of something to which they give intellectual ascent.²⁴ This understanding of preaching has problems and can be challenged in several areas: epistemology, content, language, and format.

Epistemology

Preaching, in which the preacher transmits truths to which people give intellectual ascent, is based upon the foundationalist²⁵ epistemology of modernity. In the modern world, where propositional knowledge was the basis for belief and reality, foundationalist preaching was acceptable and an effective way to communicate with people.²⁶ This philosophy of preaching is often called "biblical," but people in the postmodern world do not form beliefs based on propositions.²⁷ No matter how much preachers believe this is a

²³ As quoted in Karl Barth, *Homiletics* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1991), 19.

²⁴ Rose, *Sharing the Word*, 15.

²⁵ Foundationalism is a philosophical approach to knowledge i.e 'epistemology' which asserts that not all beliefs are equal, but that some are basic, and 'foundational' to all others, in order to ground all knowledge and eradicate uncertainty. For a detailed outlining of foundationalism see Stanley J. Grenz, *Renewing the Center: Evangelical Theology in a Post-Theological Era*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000), 185-190

²⁶ For an excellent introduction to and understanding of foundationalism and the changes in epistemology in postmodernity see Stanley J. Grenz, *A Primer on Postmodernism* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1996).

²⁷ I have given an explanation of this non-propositional belief process in my earlier chapters in particular chapters 2 and 3. For more evidence see *Ibid.*, 190-220.

biblical method, postmodern people do not connect with it. This form of preaching is based on the epistemology of the modern world, but its content, language, and form are increasingly impenetrable to postmodern people.

Content

Based on the modernist epistemology, preaching has been understood as speaking the truth. Sermon preparation is focused on finding the Bible's timeless truths, wrapping them in rationalistic arguments, and communicating them to people who believe them.²⁸ This content-making and assent to propositions process has produced the historical critical method of exegesis through which biblical texts are atomized and strip-mined for their core, timeless truths.²⁹ The goal is to find the *kerygma*, truths that support the Gospel message. The search for content within a rationalized Gospel is based on the assumption that Christianity can be proved and explained, simply and clearly. Using this approach, sermons can become repetitive, boring, and simplistic. The listeners of sermons are neglected and faith is reduced to assent to propositions and ideas within the modernist epistemology. Graham Johnston addresses this neglect of listeners in

Preaching to a Postmodern World: A Guide to Reaching Twenty-First Century Listeners:

Yet regard for the Scripture, which is Strength, may also promote a weakness—a neglect of the listeners. Preachers may spend many hours poring over the text, but little or no time considering the people who will receive the message. A key element to Jesus preaching was the recognition and involvement of the listener.³⁰

²⁸ Rose, *Sharing the Word*, 16-17.

²⁹ Ibid., 18-21.

³⁰ Graham Johnston, *Preaching to a Postmodern World: A Guide to Reaching Twenty-First-Century Listeners* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2001), 149.

A rediscovery of the value of scripture in preaching can involve the listener and move away from this avoidable neglect.

Language

The content of preaching is directly linked to the language used in preaching.³¹ Because the focus of modern preaching is on the transmission of truth to people who need to understand it, language focuses on exact, precise expression. The assumption is that if language is clear, congregations will grasp and receive the truth. Linguistic tools such as metaphors and similes are allowed if they support the central idea of propositional preaching. Karl Barth claims: “Nor can it be the task of preaching to expound or present the truth of God aesthetically in the form of a picture, an impression, or an aesthetic evocation of Jesus Christ.”³² This argument reflects a belief that words can convey truth precisely—a belief problematic to postmodern people who operate in a new linguistic environment. In this new linguistic environment, words are not understood as accurate conveyors of truth, but subjective means of communication with multiple interpretations.³³ The timeless truths propositional preachers communicate are not received and believed because the hearers are literally unable to hear what is said. Preachers may as well be speaking a foreign language. Traditional preaching is based on the premise that the word of God must be expounded with the tools of modern

³¹ Rose, *Sharing the Word*, 17.

³² Barth, *Homiletics*, 49.

³³ For an introduction to this environment, see: George Lakoff and Mark Turner, *More Than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 33.

philosophy, and sermon form, but this approach does not engage the listeners in the emerging culture.

Format

Preaching is often constructed on three points built upon a Bible passage or passages. Many points are actually used, however, and the structure of preaching takes on a format similar to the foundationalist purpose, content and language, discussed earlier. The result is that preaching occupies a considerable part of the church service as a monologue and linear argument with points of reductionistic exegesis designed to lead people to proof and intellectual conviction. Stuart Murray raises these questions about monologue sermons:

How many monologue sermons do we need? How many can we digest and act upon? What if we have one well-prepared sermon each month, and spend four weeks reflecting together on its implications? Might we then treat sermons far more seriously than we currently do and make more creative use of our time?³⁴

Thomson highlights the major problem with traditional sermons:

People may listen week by week to the best prepared sermons, given by thoroughly sincere preachers, and yet make little progress in Christian Discipleship. Some preachers blame the congregations for a lack of expectancy that God will speak, for an inability to listen to a “solid exposition,” or even for disobedience to what they hear . . . the problem lies in the concept of preaching itself; preaching has become stereotyped into sermons.³⁵

³⁴ Murray, *Post-Christendom*, 220.

³⁵ Jeremy Thomson, *Preaching as Dialogue* (Cambridge: Hassall and Lucking, 2003), 3.

Additional Issues

Another problem with the theory of preaching in the modern church is its focus on answers. Catholics and Protestants assert that people have problems and preaching provides answers.³⁶ The emerging culture's epistemology is suspicious of answers and rejects proclamations of truth. In other words, preachers provide answers when questions are not asked. Within the foundationalist system of preaching, the preacher is the enlightened expert who expounds truths others must believe. The relationship is primarily one of the knowledgeable person who teaches those who do not know the preacher's truths.

Modern, propositional preaching assumes that a knowledge/wisdom/insight gap exists between the preacher and the congregation. The postmodern, emerging culture operates on a very different basis: one of relationship and connectedness. Since Christianity is fundamentally about relationships and connectedness between people, God, and His world and purposes, preaching can reflect that reality. As Stackhouse notes, "Connectedness is our primary way of being in the world and particularly in the church. . . our approach to preaching is rooted in connectedness."³⁷

³⁶ For several quotes from Protestant and Catholic sources see Rose, *Sharing the Word*, 30-31.

³⁷ Ian Stackhouse, "Negative Preaching and the Modern Mind: A Crisis in Evangelical Preaching," *The Evangelical Quarterly* 73, no. 3 (2001): 115.

Summary of Traditional Preaching

Preaching in the modern church took the epistemology and linguistic tools of its time and connected with people.³⁸ In the postmodern world, however, traditional preaching is often seen as a dry, tedious monologue of propositions that provide answers to questions people do not ask, using language and content people cannot connect to their everyday realities. As described earlier, some writers have called for the abandonment of preaching because they believe it does more harm than good. The position of this paper, however, is that preaching must not be abandoned in the postmodern world. Preaching and the church can be renewed based on biblical principles and deep theological reflection. The church need not repackage church activities when it can instead respond effectively to the postmodern world.

An Assessment of the Call to Abandon Preaching

There is nothing new in the call to abandon preaching. At the end of the nineteenth century, Edwin Hatch suggested sermons had more in common with Greek philosophy and rhetoric than biblical grounds.³⁹ In his 1977 book, *The Mind Changers: The Art of Christian Persuasion*, E.M. Griffiths suggests that preaching move away from persuasion by cognitive methods and embrace the notion that: “a person needs both

³⁸ This is evident in Gethin Thomas, Geoffrey Hunter, and Stephen Wright, *A Preacher's Companion: Essays from the College of Preachers* (Oxford: The Bible Reading Fellowship, 1989), 33.

³⁹ Edwin Hatch, *The Influence of Greek Ideas and Usage Upon the Christian Church* (Edinburgh: Williams and Norgate, 1891), 105-15.

direction (belief) and movement (emotion) to get to God. Belief alone is dry and sterile. Emotion alone can be mere gushiness or sentimentality.”⁴⁰

David Norrington has become an ardent critic of preaching and is extremely influential for those who seek to abandon it altogether.⁴¹ The modern church has responded to the critique with ambivalence and sought to adapt to changing culture by changing its preaching approach. Ian Stackhouse⁴² identifies two streams of response in the modern church, which are described in the next section: charismatic revival preaching and relevant preaching.

Charismatic Revival Preaching

Revivalist and charismatic preaching has moved away from propositional, cerebral traditional preaching and embraced the emotional and experiential. In the search to find ways to hear God, the exposition of the Bible has fallen out of favor. Preaching in these contexts has not been abandoned, but takes less of a central role and is often supportive of the other elements of the church service. Worship experience and prophetic words take center stage, and preaching acts as their support. This approach comes from a desire to address some of the problems with traditional preaching described in this paper.

Revivalist and charismatic churches often use story and emotion in preaching as tools for connectedness. This type of preaching is more reductionistic and seeks to bring

⁴⁰ Emery A. Griffin, *The Mind Changers: The Art of Christian Persuasion* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1976), 15.

⁴¹ Norrington, *To Preach or Not to Preach?*, 103.

⁴² Stackhouse, "Negative Preaching and the Modern Mind," 247-256 asserts and explores this in detail.

people to one experience—conversion—in a revivalist context. The content of preaching focuses on revival as leading people to obedience. The result, according to Stackhouse, is that “revivalist preaching encourages a pietistic devotionism devoid of historicity, and a church culture driven by angst rather than by grace: in short, a loss of confidence concerning the main drama of the gospel narrative.”⁴³ The modern church model of preaching atomized the Bible, and the process continues here with the biblical narrative used in support of revival.

Relevant Preaching

Relevant preaching is another response to the problems of preaching. In this response, preaching addresses the concerns of postmodern culture by making sermons shorter, moving away from detailed biblical exegesis, using stories and linguistic tools of metaphor and simile, and applying content to everyday life. This type of preaching includes functional titles such as “How to Live a Life of Meaning” and “How to be a Good Parent.” The model of relevant sermons is a genuine attempt to renew preaching in a changing culture. Stackhouse identifies this response as largely non-theological and pragmatic, based on the notion: do whatever works to make the church more popular and grow.⁴⁴

The author of this paper contends that Norrington’s desire to see preaching abandoned has more in common with the drive for relevant preaching than a vigorous

⁴³ Ian Stackhouse, *The Gospel Driven Church: Retrieving Classical Ministries for Contemporary Revivalism* (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster Press, 2004), 84.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 90.

fundamentally re-imagined and re-purposed in the postmodern culture. If the modern church's basis for preaching was the transmission of propositions and answers to hearers, preaching in the postmodern context is something very different. The postmodern style has unique characteristics described in this portion of the paper.

Dialogue and Conversation

In the postmodern environment, the church must move away from the role of the preacher as the enlightened expert separated from the audience. Preaching must become a process of connection and dialogue. Scripture is not something to be dissected by monologue, but something discussed and reflected upon in communal conversation. Rose writes: "Because I take the human-human conversations seriously, including those with our deepest selves, I also take the divine-human conversations seriously, including those with biblical texts. . . . in these conversations we are invited to not only listen, but also to speak, question, and probe."⁴⁶

The postmodern, biblical preaching technique invites congregants into conversation; they are not objects or targets of the sermon. The act of preaching is not focused on an individual with a monopoly on God's communication, who dispenses it to individuals for their consumption. It is, rather, the realization that God is present in the whole community and in the community's interaction and insights. Jeremy Thomson argues that the Trinitarian nature of God, and an understanding of personhood rooted in

⁴⁶ Rose, 29.

the Trinity, means that individuals are called and invited into a dialogical interaction with God and each other. Preaching can reflect this theological conviction.

Once this is acknowledged, preaching within the church must be understood as facilitating the growth to maturity of all through the communication of God's words, rather than as channeling of God's word to the people through a single proclaimer.⁴⁷

In the emerging culture, the community has the opportunity and invitation into conversation with and about Scripture.

Part of dialogue involves questions that arise in conversation. Whereas the modern church had an epistemology based upon foundationalism, reality is found through doubt and uncertainty in the postmodern context. Rather than reduce Bible passages to statements of certainty, the preacher presents Bible passages in the form of questions. The chief role of the preacher is to be the initiator of questions. As Johnston writes, "The effective communicator will realize that the task isn't to get the listener inside of his or her head but for the communicator to get inside the head of the listener."⁴⁸ As congregants identify their questions, they bring them into the process of preaching. This might be in the form of mulling over and reflection, or literally asking questions of each other and the preacher.

Postmodern Hermeneutics

The modern church married its preaching to the epistemology of foundationalism and rationalism. Postmodernity, on the other hand, can fall into a subjective and

⁴⁷ Thomsom, *Preaching as Dialogue*, 16.

⁴⁸ Johnston, *Preaching to a Postmodern World*, 152.

relativistic extreme where truth is whatever individuals decide it is. Neither approach, however, is life-giving. A different course can be charted where knowledge is “more relational (less propositional), more experiential (less experimental), more image-based (less word-centered), more celebratory and communal (less cerebral and individual).”⁴⁹

In this situation of questions and discussions, for the preacher fills the role of commentator. The preacher does not impose answers, but offers information skillfully and sensitively about how the congregation might deal with the questions raised in the preaching dialogue. This means preachers bring their entire lives and experiences to the act of preparation: cognitive learning, heart, soul, mind, and experience. This requires a thorough understanding of church history and theology, and the ability to stimulate debate and discussion. These are vital preaching skills. Another vital preaching skill is the ability to summarize congregants’ questions and suggestions in ways that help people connect with each other and Jesus.⁵⁰

Evangelistic

The distinction between *kerygma* and *didache* breaks down in the postmodern world, and the ability to preach at non-Christians while teaching the congregation established in faith has ended. According to Ian Stackhouse, “Given the largely uncatechised nature of the contemporary church . . . Christian gatherings in the post-modern West present the evangelistic opportunity . . . preaching that reconnects churches

⁴⁹ Sweet, *Post-Modern Pilgrims*, 144.

⁵⁰ A comprehensive overview of the skills required for this process can be found in Michael J. Quicke, *360-Degree Preaching: Hearing, Speaking, and Living the Word* (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster Press, 2003), 44-64.

to the main drama of salvation.”⁵¹ In the postmodern context, preaching becomes an experience in which non-Christians and Christians find faith together.

Narrative and Story

Most of the Bible is narrative in form, and Jesus was primarily a storyteller. The apostle Paul’s letters are written within a larger narrative framework embedded in the Jewish worldview and passion narrative. Paul is a good example of someone who preached narratively.⁵² Andrew Walker suggests that the Gospel in its entirety is a story, and he describes how the retelling of the story is the basis for communication in the postmodern world.⁵³

In *Institutes*, Calvin recognizes that the primary way individuals interpret reality is through stories, not propositions, and individuals learn about each other through stories. According to Tod Bolsinger, Calvin “describes the Church as the community where stories that define the community as Christians are told.”⁵⁴ In the postmodern context people reject metanarratives, they become unstoried people, and there is a paucity of knowledge and understanding of the Christian story and its role in church history. The telling and retelling of the Christian story connects individuals with the Gospel story. At

⁵¹ Stackhouse, *The Gospel Driven Church*, 94.

⁵² For instance, in Romans 6 Paul discusses “dying rising with Christ,” this is a meditation on the metaphor and story of Christ dying and rising from the dead, not a clean propositional statement.

⁵³ This the premise and exploration of the whole of his book, Andrew Walker, *Telling the Story: Gospel, Mission, and Culture* (London: SPCK, 1996).

⁵⁴ Cited in Tod E. Bolsinger, *It Takes a Church to Raise a Christian: How the Community of God Transforms Lives* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos, 2004), 98.

a conference entitled *Perspectives on Church, Gospel, and Culture in the 21st Century*,

Brian McLaren examines the contrast between stories and propositions:

Propositions come up and grab you by the lapels so that you can smell the coffee and cigarettes and Altoids on its breath. A story on the other hand, sneaks up behind you, whispers in your ear, and when you turn around to see who's there, kicks you in the butt and goes and hides in the bushes.⁵⁵

Stories express mystery, multiple interpretations, and resist systematization and these attributes make them particularly useful in the postmodern context.⁵⁶

Epic

Rex Miller provides a detailed overview of the media and communication requirements for connecting to postmodern people,⁵⁷ and Leonard Sweet has argued that vital ways churches can meet these changes are to be experiential, participatory, image-driven, and connected.⁵⁸ The use of this template for preaching addresses many cultural concerns and communication issues identified earlier dealing with the form and structure of preaching. Preachers can embrace relevancy in terms of the media and mediums used in communication.

⁵⁵ Quoted in Section 6.7 of Jeff Bailey, "Association of Vineyard Churches USA Board Report: Perspectives on Church, Gospel, and Culture in the 21st Century," (1999), 28. This was an unpublished electronic document from the Association of Vineyard Churches, USA, ed. Todd Hunter, Anaheim, CA.

⁵⁶ For a detailed theological and biblical exposition of narrative preaching, see: Joel B. Green and Michael Pasquarello *Narrative Reading, Narrative Preaching: Reuniting New Testament Interpretation and Proclamation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003).

⁵⁷ Mark Miller, *Experiential Storytelling: (Re)Discovering Narrative to Communicate God's Message*. (El Cajon, CA: Youth Specialties), 95.

⁵⁸ Sweet, *Post-Modern Pilgrims*, 27-109.

Edwin Schlossberg's *Interactive Intelligence: Defining and Developing New Standards for the Twenty-First Century* suggests techniques for interaction between presenters and groups in the emerging culture.⁵⁹ The interaction Schlossberg calls for is vital to the breaking down of the preacher as expert identified earlier in this paper. Schlossberg describes this breaking down of the expert voice: "New media tools enable members of the audience to actively redefine, analyze, and express their ideas in relation to an idea of experience. No longer will only experts be able to voice an opinion."⁶⁰

Communication Skills and Education

There is obvious value in excellent preaching, and preachers can train and practice oratory, presentation, and communication skills. There are many books, courses, and opportunities for preachers to develop these skills.⁶¹ Preachers can understand how people learn, and didactic, cognitive-based teaching is not effective in postmodern culture. Brett Webb-Mitchell's *Christly Gestures: Learning to Be Members of the Body*

⁵⁹ Schlossberg, *Interactive Excellence*, 94-95.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 94.

⁶¹ For example see: Bob Boylan, *What's Your Point? The 3-Step Method for Making Effective Presentations* (Holbrook, MA: Adams, 2001); Dale Carnegie and Dorothy Carnegie, *The Quick and Easy Way to Effective Speaking* (New York: Association Press, 1962); Morton Cooper, *Change Your Voice, Change Your Life: A Quick, Simple Plan for Finding and Using Your Natural, Dynamic Voice*, (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1985); George L. Morrissey and others, *Loud and Clear: How to Prepare and Deliver Effective Business and Technical Presentations*, 4th ed. (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1997).

of Christ examines what postmodern catechesis might entail.⁶² Many other resources draw on the behavioral sciences to facilitate the learning process.⁶³

The Roles of the Emerging Preacher

This paper proposes preaching concepts that have major implications for the preacher's role. No longer does the preacher deliver a monologue of scriptural exegetical interpretation for congregants' intellectual acknowledgement, and this has significance for the preacher who applies these philosophies to teaching and preaching practice. These realities stimulate how pastoral roles including: chief emotional officer, chief storyteller, situation leaning catalyst, and sacramentalist.

CEO: Chief Emotional Officer

The modern world led to the development of cognitive based preaching, but the postmodern world requires preachers who help congregants navigate the emotional turbulence of the emerging culture. In the postmodern context people construct reality on how they feel, not what they believe cognitively, and preachers must connect with people's feelings and interpret them in light of the Christian story.⁶⁴

⁶² His whole book is given to exploring this thesis. Webb-Mitchell, *Christly Gestures*.

⁶³ For example, Howard G. Hendricks, *Teaching to Change Lives* (Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1987); Schlossberg, *Interactive Excellence*; Schultz and Schultz, *Why Nobody Learns Much of Anything at Church*; Schultz and Schultz, *The Dirt on Learning*.

⁶⁴ The suggestion for the Chief Emotional Officer role in all organizations is suggested in Jonas Ridderstraale and Kjell A. Nordstrom, *Karaoke Capitalism: Management for Mankind* (Harlow, UK: Financial Times Prentice Hall, 2004), 230.

Preachers can learn about emotional intelligence and emotional communication, and their preaching can reflect their engagement in this process.⁶⁵ As discussed earlier, this emotional engagement is something the relevancy stream of preaching addressed. Coupling this with understanding postmodern theology is vital and people connect with it.⁶⁶

Chief Storyteller

This paper described how the charismatic movement undermined preaching, although the charismatic tradition did seek a place for hearing God speak. This trend can be understood as a desire for an ongoing story that brings God into people's lives and churches. Emerging churches can act as facilitators of storytelling.

Storytelling enables congregations and church groups to hear what God is saying and place the message in the larger context of the historical Christian story. This is best accomplished by using the narrative techniques of the emerging culture. Doug Pagitt experienced this in his emerging church context:

The story of God is the story that encompasses our entire life. Our hope for the sermon is that it allows us to find ourselves in that story, to see how others have played their part, and be informed by the ways they followed God. Reading the Bible through this lens offers a tremendous perspective for those of us who tend to get stuck in the much of today.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ For a detailed exploration of this see, Daniel Goleman, Richard E. Boyatzis, and Annie McKee, *Primal Leadership: Realizing the Power of Emotional Intelligence* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2002).

⁶⁶ Sweet, *Post-Modern Pilgrims*, 139-160.

⁶⁷ Pagitt, *Reimagining Spiritual Formation*, 59.

The storyteller preacher weaves together the stories of the church in the past with stories from the current congregation and uses narrative, poetry, testimonies, prophecy, images, and Scripture. This enables the congregation to live as disciples through understanding their place in the biblical narrative.⁶⁸ David Larsen writes:

We need to be specialists in imagery, pictures, symbols, and joyful metaphor. Our speaking needs not only to be explanatory but evocatory. We need to practice the hypothesizing, and anticipating that will allow artistry to communicate passionate urgency.⁶⁹

Situation Learning Catalyst

The emerging preacher can develop skills that facilitate participation, questioning, interaction, preaching, and teaching that goes beyond didactic, cognitive-based methods. The role of the preacher is to be a situation-learning catalyst, which is someone who facilitates people in self-directed learning. The responsibility for learning becomes church-member centered.

The preacher also becomes a participant and fellow learner rather than a solitary expert separate from the congregation. Rather than answer questions no one asked, the preacher offers commentary from history, theology, and church practices that stimulate questions from the congregation and seek joint, cooperative understanding. The preacher's life, the story of the church, and its place in the Church universal becomes

⁶⁸ For some helpful examples of what elements this story telling might include see: Eugene L. Lowry, *The Sermon: Dancing the Edge of Mystery* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1997); Miller, *Experiential Storytelling*.

⁶⁹ As quoted in Miller, *Experiential Storytelling*, 79.

preparation for the preaching time, a different approach from preparation in commentaries for exegetical preaching.

In the past preachers used deductive methods for teaching, and they began with the abstract and moved to a concrete reality. The inductive method of teaching and preaching begins with doctrine and moves to application, a method widely encouraged by authors on postmodern preaching.⁷⁰ Eugene Lowery provides a comprehensive overview of inductive and other forms of homiletic,⁷¹ but postmodern culture requires preachers to be situation-leaning catalysts. They must use abductive learning models. Leonard Sweet describes the process of abduction:

Seize people by the imagination and transport them from their current world to another world, where they gain a new perspective . . . These sermons are so different from either inductive or deductive that some practitioners are calling them not sermons, but “phd’s,” or “post-homiletical discourses . . . in other words don’t build your message around analysis (the A-Word of modernity), but instead, build them around an abductive experience.”⁷²

Craig Loscalzo believes this form enables preachers to be meaning givers, to postmodern people.

Apologetic preaching must be open to new paradigms of homiletic method. Modernism so binds some contemporary apologists that they exclusively use Aristotelian logic, steeped in deductive reasoning . . . the Post-modern worldview transcends any particular logical mode or model of reasoning. Apologetic preaching should broaden the homiletic form to include both deductive and inductive approaches, narrative as well as propositional styles, both diache and kerygmatic goals . . . the particular

⁷⁰ For example see: Johnston: *Preaching to a Postmodern World*, 149-173.

⁷¹ His whole book explores this, Lowry, *The Sermon*.

⁷² Leonard I. Sweet, Brian D. McLaren, and Jerry Haselmayer, *"A" Is for Abductive: The Language of the Emerging Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003), 157.

preaching situation dictated Paul's homiletical form without any compromise of the essence of the Gospel.⁷³

Preachers can become postmodern educationalists who understand communication tools, educational theory, and mastery of new media.

Sacramentalist

Ian Stackhouse argues that there is something sacramental about preaching and that preaching is not just a communication method, but a means by which Christ communicates to Christians.⁷⁴ Luther himself called this act of preaching *Sacramentum Verbi*.⁷⁵ Preaching is a sacramental act, when it is communal, not a solitary experience of hearing a message. Many sacramental acts in the church involve one person giving the sacrament to others. Preachers can adopt this role as they facilitate preaching. A sacramental preacher can be truly Christ-giving to a congregation: "The preacher then voices the speech of crushed human voices, persons too long engaged in denial, too long burdened with superfluous guilt, too long pent-up with rage, speech that must burst open in impolite ways in order to rush against an overstated God."⁷⁶ The sacramental postmodern preacher leads people into interaction, conversation, participation, and connection to God, each other, and the world.

⁷³ Craig A. Loscalzo, *Apologetic Preaching: Proclaiming Christ to a Postmodern World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 27.

⁷⁴ Stackhouse, *The Gospel Driven Church*, 106-115.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 106.

⁷⁶ Walter Brueggemann, *Finally Comes the Poet: Daring Speech for Proclamation* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 50.

Preaching Helped an Emerging Church Grow

The conceptual model of this paper has been field-tested in the life of an emerging church. The church wrestled with the role, nature, form, and viability of preaching, and this section describes the use of postmodern preaching techniques in the church. The change in preaching techniques includes a media-arts team that produces video, reflections, interactions, and activities around the theme explored each Sunday. The pastor changed his preaching approach to a more interactive style as commentator and facilitator. The congregants read a passage together and people share what they think, see, and hear in the passage. The pastor acts as a summarizer, gives commentary, and suggests application. The following section describes four Sundays in the life of the church:

Kinesthetic

One Sunday, the pastor and congregation focused on Bible passages that discussed the importance of personal connections and meeting together as Christians. The pastor made this session as interactive as possible by using colored balls of string. Church leaders stood on their chairs and each took a ball of string and clustered around the leaders to whom they connected regularly. The participants threw their balls of string around to other people to whom they were connected. The result was a 3D representation of people as nodes of connections and lines of color showing how people connected to each other. The pastor/preacher read the Bible passages and asked the question: "What happens when we withdraw and disconnect from people?" He then used scissors and cut some of the string links. The purpose of this teaching is to encourage learning in a non-

cognitive, participatory, and kinesthetic way. Many people reported they would remember the activity and image in their minds for life as a reminder that people need each other.

Semiotics

Semiotics is the process of interpreting through sign and images, and is in stark contrast to the historical critical method of reading scripture.⁷⁷ A Bible passage is read semiotically one Sunday a month. For example, the congregation studied the passage in John 20 in which Mary comes to the tomb and sees angels, while Peter arrives and sees the grave clothes of Christ. The group read the text together, people closed their eyes and imagined the story visually, then shared verbally the sounds, smells, emotions, and other impressions they experienced as they heard the story. No one deliberately taught the “correct” meaning of the passage, and the group attempted to recreate the story together.

The preacher asked questions related to the passage, and congregants asked questions about things they did not understand. The preacher then offered commentary about the images, the linen, and angels. People shared their struggles and dirty linen, and some people came forward for prayer. This process involved retelling the story, using images rather than interpreting the passage, identification through personal experience, and participation through sharing and asking questions. The preacher acted as a commentator and facilitator.

⁷⁷ As already evidenced in this chapter, see Rose, *Sharing the Word*, 13-37.

Bruce Almighty

During a series on prayer, the preacher used three clips from the film *Bruce Almighty*. The clips were viewed and questions were directed to the congregation about questions the film raised about prayer. The preacher used a Bible passage interactively with questions that explored some issues from the film. Participation, imagery, questions, dialogue, and several learning styles were used in the process.

Palm Sunday

On Palm Sunday, the pastor preached in a more conventional way. He did ask the congregation questions at one point, but focused on the passage about Jesus entering Jerusalem on a donkey. While this was a more conventional preaching style, the preacher invited the congregation to explore the imagery of the donkey. He used images on a computer of a donkey and asked the question: “What does it mean for us to be donkeys carrying Christ to the world?” Two couples shared how, despite very hard circumstances of work and illness, they decided to keep serving and found God in that difficult place. Their stories served as examples of how to identify with the biblical story.

Summary

These four typical examples demonstrate the variety of preaching and teaching at Sunday services based on the emergent model described in this paper.⁷⁸ They confirm the paper’s thesis that church renewal can occur based on biblical principles and theological foundations rather than a repackaging of church activities. The Sunday service has

⁷⁸ Examples can be downloaded from the church web site: <http://www.vineyardchurch.org>.

become the most significant evangelistic experience, and non-Christians participate and come to faith during these experiences. Preaching is vital to the growth of the church. There is no distinction between Christian and non-Christian in these preaching activities because everyone can question, share, and participate. Indeed, the suggestions non-Christians make are often profound and reveal and reaffirm that God is at work not only in the preacher's role.

Conclusion

This chapter explored preaching and its future in the emerging church. It provided an overview of the history of preaching and identified some of its key shortcomings in the postmodern context. It discussed how two modern streams of revivalism interacted with these issues, and in some cases made them worse. This chapter demonstrated that the call to abandon traditional preaching is not a valid theological engagement with postmodernity, but the logical conclusion to these adaptations by the modern church. The discussion has shown how preaching practices can respond to legitimate concerns about preaching and offered a philosophy and role for preachers. Examples from the author's emerging church confirm growth is possible among existing and new Christians.

In the author's church context, the renewal of preaching has been vital to church growth and added new and existing Christians to the congregation. Preaching techniques can change and adapt to the postmodern context, and preaching should not be abandoned. Brian McLaren describes the future role of preachers and preaching:

Preachers will use words with great care, also—being careful never to bore, not to overstate or over promise, nor to dishonor logic or truth or

integrity or creativity. They will seek to convey mystery, but not to mystify . . . like Jesus he will be a weaver of parables, a designer of proverbs, more a sage than a technician.⁷⁹

Stackhouse warns the church not to lose its preaching role in the context of pastoral care:

“Here is an unashamed belief that the preacher’s task of exegeting the word, of uncovering the promise of the gospel, is scriptural, historic and necessary.”⁸⁰ Preaching is a tool that can be substantially renewed, vital, biblical, and necessary to the formation of Christianity in the emerging culture. The role of preachers remains vital in the church’s future.

⁷⁹ Brian D. McLaren, *The Church on the Other Side: Doing Ministry in the Postmodern Matrix* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000), 65.

⁸⁰ Stackhouse, *The Gospel Driven Church*, 115.

CHAPTER 5

THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP IN THE EMERGING CHURCH

This chapter discusses and investigates leadership issues. The postmodern culture and theology described in this paper, the process of spiritual formation, and possibilities for teaching, raises issues of who directs, leads, and forms these processes, and how.

Leadership exists in all church groups and is responsible for the church's message, media, and marketplaces. The modern church's leadership style has operationalized its theology and practices successfully in the past, but the move from modernity to postmodernity requires a new kind of leadership. Leadership is vital to renewal in the church in the emerging context, and it can be built upon biblical principles and theological reflection, rather than repackaged, older approaches.

The emerging church literature describes elements and characteristics of postmodern church leadership. Much of this discussion, however, is reactive and identifies what writers dislike about modern church leadership. It is not a positive articulation about postmodern leadership and its characteristics in the emerging context. This paper has demonstrated the negative reaction of postmodern thinkers and what they dislike about the modern church. These critics rarely offer positive, constructive suggestions about the church's postmodern future, programs, and activities. This trend

also occurs on church leadership questions and focuses on reasons people dislike and reject traditional leadership styles. There is a paucity of positive alternatives presented in the literature.

The biblical theology and process for growth and Christian formation identified in this paper provide a positive basis for leadership development in the emergent church. This leadership style enables the implementation and realization of spiritual formation. Many postmodern, secular writers wrestle with leadership style changes necessitated by changes in a postmodern context, and they offer models and practices that support this paper's philosophy and theology.

This chapter examines the problems of leadership style in the modern church and explains why these styles do not facilitate Christian formation. It examines the abandonment of traditional leadership by the emerging church. The chapter surveys current leadership materials for a philosophy and process of leadership that facilitates spiritual formation in the emerging context. Metaphors are identified that embody this philosophy based on the concepts developed in previous chapters. Finally, the chapter provides examples from the author's experience that exemplify the concepts in action. This demonstrates the paper's thesis that renewal can occur based on biblical principles and theological reflection.

Leadership Problems in the Modern Church

There has been a strong reaction against the leadership style of the modern church, which is seen as authoritarian, controlling, mechanistic, and similar to traditional,

secular Chief Executive Officer behavior.¹ In the modern world, leadership uses the philosophy and leadership styles of that culture, but in the postmodern world the traditional leadership approach is often destructive. What worked in the modern church does not work in the postmodern environment. Margaret Wheatley writes about the need for new leadership metaphors and models, “Each of us recognizes . . . [that] the habits of solutions that once worked yet are now totally inappropriate, of having the rug pulled from beneath us.”²

Brian McLaren writes and speaks about the emerging church and identifies ten problematic leadership metaphors/models in the postmodern context. The leader as:

1. Bible analyst: Cognitive knowledge is power.
2. Broadcaster: Leadership is about a powerful and dynamic presentation of truth.
3. Objective technician: The church is a machine, and the leader is the engineer of the mechanism.
4. Warrior/Salesman: Modern leadership is about conquest, “winning souls” and crusades.
5. Careerist: Leadership performance enhances a career within the structure of the church.
6. Problem-solver: The church is a mechanism and people are parts to be fixed.
7. Apologist: Leadership provides certainty for people with doubts and questions.
8. Threat: The use of discipline and exclusion motivates people through fear.
9. Knower: The exhibition of supreme confidence by the leader over and against less mature Christians.

¹ For an assessment of the models of leadership used by the CEO in modern organizations see Manfred Kets de Vries, *The Leadership Mystique: A User's Manual for the Human Enterprise* (London: Financial Times Prentice Hall, 2001), 110-121. Eugene Peterson has criticized the notion of pastor as CEO in many of his books. A summary of his critique can be found at <http://www.ctlibrary.com/5696> (accessed December 10, 2005).

² Margaret J. Wheatley, *Leadership and the New Science: Discovering Order in a Chaotic World* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 1999), 6.

be replaced by something else. Leadership was once understood as central to modern church growth, but now it is seen as a toxin that must be removed from the church.¹²

Stuart Murray describes the situation as “leadership dependency,” and he believes churches must move away from it because “[l]eadership dependency harms leaders and churches alike.”¹³ A key question is, “Is dependency on leadership the problem or is it the kind of leadership used?” Many emerging church advocates distrust leadership deeply and believe leadership is something axiomatic to modernity.¹⁴ Earlier, this paper identified emerging church advocates who believe preaching is axiomatic to modernity. This chapter discusses the same issues about leadership. The question is: “Must the emergent church abandon leadership, or can it be renewed in the postmodern context?”

The author of this paper believes leadership cannot be abandoned or dismissed because a rejection of leadership is a leadership act. To assert that the postmodern church has no dependency on leaders is a leadership declaration. This means that people who insist there should be no leaders, lead from that position and people follow them.

While leadership style must change, the idea that the emergent church should not depend on leadership is fundamentally flawed. Leadership is more vital than ever and a new kind of leader is required who understands postmodern theology and facilitates the development and maturation of spiritual formation. John Kotter suggests the postmodern church needs leadership “with a capital L” more than ever, but the church also needs a

¹² For an example of the obsession of seeing leadership as toxic, and how this response itself can be toxic, see [http://www.the-next-wave.org/stories/storyReader\\$262](http://www.the-next-wave.org/stories/storyReader$262) (accessed December 9, 2005).

¹³ Stuart Murray, *Church After Christendom* (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 2004), 193.

¹⁴ See [http://www.the-next-wave.org/stories/storyReader\\$262](http://www.the-next-wave.org/stories/storyReader$262), (accessed, December 10, 2005).

more modest sense of leadership with a lowercase “l”.¹⁵ Andrew Roberts analyzes Hitler and Churchill, and states: “Leaders are likely to become more rather than less of a part of our daily lives.”¹⁶

The call to move away from leadership has more to do with modern leadership practices and failures than with the postmodern environment. Like the move to abandon preaching, it is a culturally driven response that says: “[W]e will go so far as to change our leadership to accommodate the culture, that we will get rid of it altogether.” This cultural accommodation is more an accommodation to the sub-culture of modern Christians tired of church, than to the postmodern context. To act on this impulse is mistaken because it confuses inappropriate leadership with all leadership. Emerging church writer and coach Todd Hunter makes the same conclusion stating that leadership “remains crucial for authentic spiritual formation,” and that the misuse of leadership is the issue, not its non-use.¹⁷

Dis-incarnational

Chapter 2 of this paper identified the need for incarnational ontology that locates the role of humanity in the creation project. Believers’ humanity is vital to their participation in creation and their role in spiritual formation. Since leadership is about the

¹⁵ John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 1999), 175.

¹⁶ Andrew Roberts, *Hitler and Churchill: Secrets of Leadership* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2003), 153.

¹⁷ Todd Hunter as quoted in, Mark Priddy, “Towards a Missional Community: A Short Reflection,” *Allelon, Companions in the Gospel Article Index*, March 30, 2004, <http://www.allelon.org/articles/article.cfm?id=69&page=2> (accessed June 27, 2005).

facilitation of this process, leadership must be incarnational, which means it is located in human beings.

In the modern church, leadership became disembodied from humanity through a faulty ontology of being, a faulty concept of incarnation, and by acting like God's agent whose humanity had been removed from the world. In the modern church, leadership is understood as a product of being more than human, more like the divine. This stance locates leadership in an ontology of the otherness of the divine.

The move to abandon leadership and see it as non-central is a reaction to this theology, but it is also based on a faulty ontology. The faulty ontology is the belief that leadership is the act of the Spirit, and it is not the peoples' role to exercise leadership. Only the Spirit can exercise leadership through humans.

While the modern church exercised leadership under divine fiat, the emergent church abandons leadership through the same reasoning and theology. Whereas the modern church is a hierarchy where a few individuals wield power and control, the emerging church seeks to renew the process by making everyone the dispensers of power and control.

Christian theology for spiritual formation necessitates that leadership is incarnational.¹⁸ Christ exercised His leadership through His humanity, and any spiritual growth process that enables Christians to become like Christ must value peoples'

¹⁸ Chapter 2 of this paper asserts and demonstrates this theory, with incarnational spiritual formation.

because the leadership styles produce cultures that people inhabit.²⁰ Ronald Heifetz describes leadership as the process of making “a holding environment.” “A holding environment consists of any relationship in which one party has the power to hold the attention of another party and facilitate adaptive work.”²¹

A combination of Fairholm and Heifetz provides five leadership environments that are useful in this paper:

1. Leadership as Management: This approach is based on the scientific management concepts of Frederick W. Taylor and the Behaviorists’ hard science approach to leadership.²² Advocates of this discipline believe leadership is about prediction, measurable outcomes, and the control of systems and people. This approach is limited and based upon a mechanistic understanding of people.²³

2. Leadership as Excellent Management: This approach to leadership focuses on the issue of quality. If leadership is behaviorist and mechanistic, the value of the system is to produce quality.²⁴

3. Values Leadership: This view of leadership moves the subject from science to philosophy. Effective leadership articulates and implements individual and group values that drive actions. Fairholm asserts that this approach has been the dominant

²⁰ Fairholm, *Perspectives on Leadership*, xix.

²¹ Ronald A. Heifetz, *Leadership Without Easy Answers* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), 103-104.

²² Fairholm, *Perspectives on Leadership*, xx.

²³ *Ibid.*, 3.

²⁴ A book that typifies, and is an exponent of this concept is Thomas Peters and Robert H. Waterman, *In Search of Excellence* (New York: Harper and Row, 1982).

characteristic of leadership in America.²⁵ Values driven leadership is the dominant style used in modern church, and is fundamental to Rick Warren and the Purpose Driven leadership model.²⁶ The successful modern church emphasizes behaviorism and values in a conceptual base that produces techniques, programs, and processes for church leadership. John Maxwell's publications reflect this trend.²⁷

4. Trust Cultural Leadership: The style of leadership and the culture in which leadership is practiced creates a unique environment. For example, the character and relationships between the leader and followers are vital. The style and character of leadership affect the environment leadership creates. "Leadership becomes of both impacting followers individually and influencing them as groups through shared cultural visions, values and behavior patterns."²⁸

5. Spiritual (Whole-Soul) Leadership: In the last twenty years, a new style of leadership has emerged concerned with "soul development." Advocates of this approach believe leadership is about people who transform themselves holistically, and inspire and facilitate others in transformational change. Organizational goals and objectives are by-products of individualistic transformation.

Leaders need followers to lead, but they need enabled people who are able to flourish in an environment of interactive trust, shared vision and common values. Leaders who are comfortable with themselves as happy

²⁵ Fairholm, *Perspectives on Leadership*, 49.

²⁶ Rick Warren, "Purpose Driven," <http://www.purposedriven.com/en-US/Home.htm> (accessed June 27, 2005); Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995).

²⁷ For example see, John C. Maxwell, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership: Follow Them and People Will Follow You* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1998).

²⁸ Fairholm, *Perspectives on Leadership*, xxi-xxii.

relationship created between two or more elements.”³¹ Transformational advocates believe a task focused philosophy is dehumanizing, but an exclusive emphasis on relationships is debilitating.³² Transformational leadership breaks down this dichotomy; to become is to do, and to do is to become.

Transformational leadership enables the intentional formation of communities, moves beyond the paralysis and pathology of leadership distain, but also avoids the imperialistic use of people to achieve a hierarchical leader’s goals. Transformational leadership has many exponents and different action models.³³ This paper does not endorse a single model or synthesize the group of models. In the next section, it identifies transformational leadership practices based on current transformational leadership theories useful in the postmodern search.

Emerging Leadership Methods and Practices

The preceding chapters of this paper described postmodern leadership methods and practices. This section provides additional examples of transformational leadership for the postmodern congregation.

A Multi-locational Priesthood

Leaders in the emerging church must be multi-locational and inhabit the public, social, private, and intimate spaces of community life. They must demonstrate ways to

³¹ Wheatley, *Leadership and the New Science*, 35-36.

³² Ibid., 37.

³³ Mary Kate P. Morse, "The Relationship of Wisdom to Transformational Leadership," (Ph.D. diss., Gonzaga University, 1995), 31-26.

inhabit multiple spaces, and how the dynamic creates growth. They show that multiple spaces can be valid and that entering into non-traditional spaces is transformational.

Ministry is usual used as a more functional label than priest. Ministry transforms more easily into ministers (a verb). Priest has no verb form. Priest has, therefore, been more exclusive than ministry, which is open to all. But ministry has become functional, and based upon the leadership models of modernity, as shown earlier in this chapter. The author this paper wishes to assert that we recover the nature of priest, and imbue it with verbal attributes to avoid connotations of the modern church leadership whilst using language to subvert metaphors and models of leadership.

Priest for this paper is therefore defined as an action rather than an individual with special qualifications or status. “To priest” is to inhabit and make spiritual locations of life. “To priest” is to live in those spaces and help others find connection to God, one another, and the world. Leaders who “priest” reject Sunday services as the only location of God’s kingdom, and they refuse to live out the opposite concept that everything is church. Leaders who “priest” understand the church as a missional community through which the kingdom of God is made manifest and experienced at home, in private, at work, and in public. As they “priest,” they invite others to do so by the nature of who they are and what they do in those spaces.

Liberator: Life Long Learners

Leaders in the emerging culture are liberators because they engage in life-long, holistic learning, and thereby remain connected and relational in their learning.³⁴ Their personal growth and actions model behaviors and foster growth in others.

The postmodern climate does not allow an individual to be considered learned who spends life dispensing information:

For the oriental mind learning is ongoing...The roots of the English word for learning suggest that it once held a similar meaning. It originated with the indo-European *leis*, a noun meaning “track” or “furrow.” To learn came to mean gaining experience by following a track—presumably for a lifetime.³⁵

In the postmodern context and emergent church environment, Christian growth is life-long learning and the ability of leaders to learn and stimulate learning is vital.³⁶ Kotter describes important elements of life-long learning by leaders as: risk taking, humble self reflection, solicitation of opinions, careful listening, and openness to new ideas.³⁷

Able Enablers

Leaders liberate and facilitate growth based on competence. The competence, however, is not the mechanistic competence of the professional clergy who are self sufficient, disconnected from the world, and have no need of others. In the postmodern

³⁴ Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee, *Primal Leadership*, 255-256.

³⁵ Peter M. Senge, *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook: Strategies and Tools for Building a Learning Organization* (New York: Doubleday, 1994), 49.

³⁶ For a theory and practical workbook based on implementing organizational learning see Peter M. Senge, *The Dance of Change: The Challenges of Sustaining Momentum in Learning Organizations* (New York: Doubleday, 1999).

³⁷ Kotter, *Leading Change*, 183.

environment, people are attracted and influenced by leaders who are learners. Once technical competence was admired, but continued learning is increasingly valued. Senge calls this “mastery” and writes: “It means the capacity not only to produce results, but also to ‘master’ the principles underlying the way you produce results.”³⁸

Those who embrace this postmodern approach value ability and strive for betterment, but also acknowledge individual fallibility and dependence upon others. Ability involves dependence upon others and the enablement of the leader and those who surround the leader. Rudolph Giuliani discovered the vitality and reality of this after September 11, 2001.³⁹ Max DePree describes leadership of this kind as “roving.” Because “no one person is the expert at everything [roving leadership is the] expression of the ability of leaders to permit others to share ownership of problems—in effect take ownership of a situation.”⁴⁰

While leaders possess skills, maturity, and abilities others do not, they do not use these to control people. Rather, they act with deference, bring others on board, and at all times recognize and understand their inabilities and weaknesses. De Vries has identified three clusters of competencies and abilities vital for leaders:⁴¹ (1) personal competencies such as self-motivation, self-awareness, and self directed effectiveness, (2) social competencies such as political awareness and empathy, and (3) cognitive competencies

³⁸ Senge, *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook*, 194.

³⁹ Rudolph R Giuliani and Ken Kurson, *Leadership* (New York: Hyperion, 2002), 98.

⁴⁰ Max DePree, *Leadership Is An Art* (New York: Doubleday, 1989), 49.

⁴¹ Kets de Vries, *The Leadership Mystique*, 221.

that include conceptual and systems thinking. Postmodern leaders have several commonalities; they are: ethical stewards, information alchemists, systems thinkers, and communicators.

Ethical Stewards

Companies such as Enron have collapsed under the weight of their greed and corruption, and the church has elevated people whose character and nature are beyond accountability.⁴² The goal of transformational, incarnational theology is the reformation of self and others to become Christ-like, and this necessitates leadership that lives out what it calls others to do. Transformational living is characterized by honesty, openness, vulnerability, accountability, and integrity combined with stewardship.

Modern leadership that pursued the individual's agenda is being replaced with the notion of stewardship. Ownership in the modern world was about possession and control; stewardship acknowledges that resources are held "in trust for a temporary period."⁴³ Power in stewardship leadership is located in everyone helping each other accomplish others' ends, not self-fulfillment. DePree describes this as "a way of thinking about institutional heirs, a way of thinking about stewardship as contrasted with ownership."⁴⁴

⁴² Chris Seay and Chris Bryan, *The Tao of Enron: Spiritual Lessons from a Fortune 500 Fallout* (Colorado Springs: Navpress, 2002).

⁴³ Fairholm, *Perspectives on Leadership*, 147.

⁴⁴ DePree, *Leadership Is An Art*, 12.

Information Alchemists

Does anyone expect the next 20 years to be any less tumultuous than the last twenty years? . . . If you are an organizational leader you are faced with a daunting task. In effect you are engaged in a great venture of exploration, risk, discovery and change, without any comprehensive maps for guidance.⁴⁵

Sweet talks about leaders being able to navigate a fast-paced and accelerated world, able to sift and interpret multiple forms of information, and bring meaning from that process to people. In the information age, effective leaders bring meaning to a world overwhelmed with conflicting and competing information received through multiple channels and media. Sweet calls this leadership trait “information alchemy.”⁴⁶

Information alchemists sift data, question, articulate, re-articulate, give voice through multiple media, and bring meaning that enables them and others to grow and be transformed. This process is necessary in the postmodern world because people are not able to see the wood from the trees, but when they step back they “just see lots of trees.”⁴⁷ This characteristic reflects the prophetic tradition in the church, and the combination of the priest and prophet may be one of the most important roles for leaders in the emerging culture.

⁴⁵ Senge, *The Dance of Change*, 3.

⁴⁶ Synchronous discussion in LEC D.Min. 2 cohort, via webct.georgefox.edu, 2004.

⁴⁷ Senge, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* (New York: Doubleday, 1990), 126.

Systems Thinkers

The dominant metaphor for modern leadership was the mechanism and machine, but the new approach in the emerging context is systems thinking. Rather than focusing on the parts, systems thinking looks at the bigger picture and how things are interconnected. It deals with the changing interconnectedness of components, and does not seek the correct order imposed by hierarchical structure.⁴⁸

Systems thinking⁴⁹ is an appropriate approach to church leadership based on the biblical metaphor of the church as a body (1 Cor 12:12-31). Leadership in the modern world and church defended, maintained, and protected itself from external, worldly forces. Systems thinking is counter intuitive: “Openness to the environment over time spawns a stronger system, one that is less susceptible to externally induced change . . . Because it partners with its environment, the system develops increasing autonomy from the environment and also develops new capacities that make it more resourceful.”⁵⁰

Tribal Story Tellers: Communicators

The ability to communicate is essential in this information alchemy. This is a complex skill because communication takes place constantly, and is planned and

⁴⁸ For a summary of systems thinking see Senge, *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook*, 87-190.

⁴⁹ “Systems theory is an interdisciplinary field which studies relationships of systems as a whole. Modern systems theory was founded by Ludwig von Bertalanffy, William Ross Ashby and others between the 1940s and the 1970s on principles from philosophy, physics, biology and engineering and later grew into numerous fields including philosophy, sociology, organizational theory, management, psychotherapy (within family systems therapy) and economics among others. Cybernetics is a closely related field. In recent times systems science, systemics and complex systems has been used as a synonym,” http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Systems_theory (accessed December 10, 2005).

⁵⁰ Senge, *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook*, 87.

intentional or involuntary and obscure. Postmodern leaders can use traditional and modern methods of communication to shape and give life to thoughts, notions, ideals, dreams, and visions, and provide space for questions and doubts. “There may be no single thing more important in our efforts to achieve meaningful work and fulfilling relationships than to learn and practice the art of communication.”⁵¹

Postmodern leaders will communicate through cyberspace, but must also communicate through personal, written, and spoken means. Technology is a vital part of the postmodern world, but the use of cyber communication alone is not the panacea for church communication issues. While on the forefront of technology, leadership must inhabit other vital spaces of peoples’ lives, and communication remains a key.⁵²

As they communicate, these leaders can weave meaning from story to story as “tribal storytellers.”⁵³ “The penalty for failing to listen is to lose one’s history, one’s historical context, one’s binding values.”⁵⁴ The tribal storytellers connect their listeners to meaning:

When leaders honour us with opportunities to know the truth of what is occurring and support us to explore the deeper meaning of events, we instinctively reach out the them. Those who help us centre our work in a deeper purpose are leaders we cherish, and to whom we return love, gift for gift.⁵⁵

⁵¹ DePree, *Leadership Is An Art*, 108.

⁵² This thesis is discussed in: Jim Collins, *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap—and Others Don't* (New York: HarperBusiness, 2001), 144-163.

⁵³ The origins of leaders as ‘tribal story tellers’ is explored at <http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/storyorigins.htm> (accessed December 10, 2005).

⁵⁴ DePree, *Leadership Is An Art*, 82.

⁵⁵ Wheatley, *Leadership and the New Science*, 133.

Leadership in the Emerging Church: Metaphors for Transformation

The author of this paper believes the following leadership metaphors⁶⁰ are useful in the emergent church context:

1. The spiritual sage who replaces the Bible analyst obsessed with the cognitive.
2. The listener who leads through listening and develops communal learning and growth.
3. The friend who leads through relationship and conversation rather than through organizational goals and technical means. People are heard rather than used as objects or means toward an end.
4. The dancer who invites others to hear the music and move with its rhythm, rather than march to an organizational drum.
5. The amateur who rejects clerical professionalism and embraces the fact that people can be life long learners.
6. The quest creator who seeks new challenges, asks questions, and invites people into adventure and discovery. Learning takes place in the quest, and individuals are transformed as they ask questions, rather than told answers. Much like Jesus, these leaders answer questions with questions and facilitate growth and learning.⁶¹
7. The apologizer, or alternatively the learner, is a leader who points out how inadequate the leader's ideas are, and is open to learning and direction from others.
8. The includer involves others on the leaders' journey and team.

⁶⁰ These new metaphors in title are taken from Brian D. McLaren, "Dorothy on Leadership."

⁶¹ Conrad Gempf explored this as a thesis in his book titled *Jesus Asked* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003).

9. The seeker who, instead of acting as a know-it-all, recognizes his/her limitations and needs others on life's journey.

10. The team builder who empowers, enables, and avoids pressure to rise to the top as a self-sufficient being. To lead is to need team, to be team, to live and participate as team.

By avoiding the paternalistic dependency models of modernism and the independent tendencies of the emerging church, mutuality and interdependency are possible.

Application: Examples from an Emerging Church

In previous chapters, the author included examples from his emerging church plant and demonstrated the postmodern model in practice. There has been one key area in the community life where the church practiced a leadership model not yet discussed. The pastor and church sought to steward the church's resources as a team, and they worked to be accountable to each other as they developed a less hierarchical and more enabling church structure. Patrick Lencioni's book, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, was an important tool in this process.⁶²

Lencioni suggests genuine teamwork is elusive, the product of working together to achieve more, and vital in postmodern world. He identifies five issues that hinder teams in the emerging culture. The issues are interrelated and can infect each other, although he recognizes a progression and evolution among them. They are:

1. Absence of trust, which stems from a lack of openness about weaknesses and failings, vulnerability, and authenticity.

⁶² Patrick M. Lencioni, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002).

2. The lack of trust sets the stage for “fear of conflict,” where honest, open, and passionate debate about ideas does not take place. People interact with veiled, politicized comments.
3. The lack of healthy conflict leads to a “lack of commitment.” When people do not air their doubts, feelings, passions, and convictions they may feign commitment, and not support the team.
4. A lack of real commitment develops into a lack of “accountability,” and team members will not confront inappropriate peer behaviors and actions which are counterproductive for the team.
5. The lack of accountability produces an environment where people are inattentive to team results and put their needs and goals before the team.

If these issues are not resolved, the team collapses.

The author of this paper believes five mirror-image behaviors will produce a healthy, productive team:

1. Trust one another, be vulnerable and open, ask for help, and be transparent with thoughts and feelings.
2. Engage in unfiltered sharing of ideas and conflict.
3. Commit as a group and individually to decisions and action plans.
4. Hold each other accountable for completing the plans.
5. Focus on team results, not those of individuals.

As a result of commitment to these behaviors, the group experienced the following:

The group engaged in shared experiences over time by sharing personal histories, family stories, challenges, hobbies, and strengths and weaknesses. They saw each other as human beings, and asked each other to share perceptions of individual strengths and weaknesses. This began the process of vulnerability. The group used psychometric tools to learn about each other and the interplay of the team. They received feedback from peers based on team goals and team agreement. Individuals demonstrated vulnerability and created a safe environment where vulnerability was encouraged and respected.

In addition, the group discovered the differences between ideological disagreement and malicious, corrosive fighting. Loyalty is about honest dialogue and interaction; back channel conflict is corrosive and destructive. The group encouraged the identification of interpersonal conflict and brought it to the group so others became aware of it. They coached one another not to retreat from debate, and when people became uncomfortable, they were reminded conflict was positive and useful, and good for the team. Psychometric tests identified how people dealt with conflict, and how they responded to each other during conflicts. The leader learned not to be overly protective of people in conflict, and to allow others to facilitate the conflict process. The leader became more comfortable with non-resolution, which teaches participants important skills. The leader can model these behaviors for the good of all.

A third result of the group's commitment to these behaviors was the realization that team members can accept a decision based on trust and processing feelings, even if they disagree. A desire for consensus and certainty undermines decisions, whereas collaboration does not. Collaboration allows creativity and outcomes for the group guide

the decision-making process rather than individual agendas. Decisions can be made successfully without certainty, but many teams wait, are indecisive, and become paralyzed. The group learned the importance of reviewing decisions made and communicating those decisions to others outside the team. The review clarifies points, identifies confidential matters, and promotes communication and feedback within the church. The experience demonstrates a need for scheduling that avoids ambiguity, and contingency plans for worst-case scenarios. Individuals in the group began making decisions, saw the results, and this built confidence in decisions making without outcome certainty. The leader must also be comfortable with making decisions without outcome certainty even though the decisions may be wrong.

The team learned to hold each other accountable, point out behaviors that undermine the team, engage in difficult conversations, and be comfortable with each other. In order to practice these goals, participants must know the team's goals and who is responsible for them. It also requires regular review of goals, what people committed to do, and open discussion of what each is doing. Individual and team rewards are important, and leaders must encourage the team to be the primary place for accountability and engage in it directly with individuals. The leader serves as the ultimate arbiter when a team fails to achieve a result and will step in when necessary.

Finally, the group leaders learned that dysfunction results when team members care more about their personal goals than those of the team. The team must have goals, and team members must value and adopt them for the team. The lure of individual status must give way to a team psychology and collective ownership. This is more likely when

the results are clear and the team celebrates the results. It is important not to guarantee that goals will be achieved, but see them as achievable, and leaders must set the tone. Team leaders must be selfless and reward people for working on and achieving group goals.

Conclusion: Wisdom

Leonard Hjalmarson notes the progression and development of heroes in recent movies.⁶³ He describes how characterizations have moved from the rugged, self-confident style of the Clint Eastwood and Sylvester Stallone characters to the more human and troubled heroes of Frodo in *The Lord of the Rings* and Neo in *The Matrix*. The new heroes question their identity and abilities, and need others who reassure and enable them to complete their quests and journeys.

People in the postmodern context find it difficult to place authority in leadership based on knowledge and control of information. The new locus for authority is relationship, but not directionless relationship. The key is relationship that is transformative. Transformative relationships are based on enablement, participation, challenge, discussion, debate, and questions whose goal is not certainty about knowledge, but hope in wisdom and collective action.

Morse describes transformational leadership explored in this paper and believes it is congruent with the wisdom leadership model of Jesus.⁶⁴ Wisdom may be the ultimate

⁶³ Leonard Hjalmarson, "Kingdom Leadership in the Postmodern Era," *Christianity.ca*, 2005, <http://www.christianity.ca/church/leadership/2005/05.000.html> (accessed June 27, 2005).

⁶⁴ Morse, "The Relationship of Wisdom to Transformational Leadership," 323.

metaphor that expresses the nature, role, and function of leadership in the emerging context:

Wisdom and transformational leadership share these factors: Both deal with ambiguity and change; are most beneficial during chaos and conflict; demonstrate effective communication and relationship skills; consider individual needs, and; stimulate maturation in others. The wisdom leadership of Jesus suggests that wise transformational leaders: (1) have a paradoxical view of reality, (2) are the individual voice able to give guidance for change, (3) have a vision for renewal which is aware of moral impact and sourced in a spiritual identity and; (4) have a comprehensive and holistic field of reform.⁶⁵

Within this model, the biblical pattern Jesus Himself practiced can be rediscovered. An innovative postmodern leadership can emerge through a Hebraic, holistic, missional lifestyle:

Poised at the millennium, we confront two critical challenges: how to address deep problems for which hierarchical leadership alone is insufficient and how to harness the intelligence and spirit of people at all levels of an organization to continually build and share knowledge. Our responses may lead us, ironically, to a future based on more ancient—and more natural—ways of organizing: communities of diverse and effective leaders who empower their organizations to learn with head, heart, and hand.⁶⁶

Sir Ernest Shackleton is one such leader who received great attention for succeeding through failure. Shackleton saved the lives of all twenty-two men stranded with him in the Antarctic. A crewman described his leadership as an appropriate model for leaders in the emerging culture:

I have served with Scott, Shackleton and Mawson, and have met Nansen, Amundson, Peary, Cook and other explorers, and in my considered opinion, for all the best points of leadership, coolness in the face of

⁶⁵ Ibid., v.

⁶⁶ Senge, *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook*, 566.

danger, resourcefulness under difficulties, quickness in decisions, never-failing optimism, and the faculty of instilling the same into others, remarkable genius for organization, consideration for those under him, and obliteration of self, the Palm must be given to Shackleton, a hero and gentleman in very truth.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Frank Wild, as quoted in Margot Morrell and Stephanie Capparell, *Shackleton's Way: Leadership Lessons From the Great Antarctic Explorer* (New York: Viking, 2001), 205.

CONCLUSION

The thesis of this paper is that genuine renewal in the postmodern era is possible based on biblical principles and theological reflection, rather than simply repackaging church activities. Without the biblical basis and theological reflection, church responses may attract disaffected Christians, but will not provide genuine mission and connection to postmodern culture. This paper explored how this situation calls for a radical rethinking of church theology and its practices. Anything less will redress the church in trendy clothes, or reinforce its previous practices, neither of which will re-connect postmodern people to church.

Chapter 1 assessed the church's current responses to emerging culture through the interplay of message, mediums, and marketplace. The chapter demonstrated that without biblical and theological reflection churches re-package existing beliefs in new mediums, and continue to be unable to communicate with postmodern culture.

Chapter 2 described a theology influenced the doctrine of creation at the heart of the disconnect between the church and postmodern culture and people. The western church, with an overly platonic doctrine of creation, produced a theology that does not naturally lead to whole life discipleship within the emerging context. Chapter 2 proposed an alternative theology to enable existing and new Christians grow and be formed within the postmodern environment.

Chapter 3 applied the theology proposed in chapter 2 and combined it with an adaptation of James Fowler's sociological method for spiritual formation. The combined model facilitates spiritual formation and leads to authentic growth in the emerging context.

Chapter 4 explored preaching and teaching and their roles in spiritual formation, and how they might be renewed using this theology and model for spiritual formation. Chapter 4 addressed the insufficiency of two current responses to preaching, one that reasserts conservative preaching techniques and the other that calls for its abandonment. The two responses are predicated on insufficient theological reflection and are, therefore, incapable of fostering renewal. An effective alternative was described based on the theology described in Chapter 2 combined with the model for spiritual formation.

Chapter 5 explored the nature and necessity of leadership to enable to the theology and formation models outlined. The current call to abandon leadership because of its inherent abuse and control fails to produce renewal in the emerging, postmodern context. Postmodern leadership theory offers direction for effective leadership consistent with the theology and formation model proposed in this paper.

The theology and formation model suggested in this paper has led to the growth of the author's church plant and congregation. Although one example does not prove the validity or reliability of the model, it suggests the model bears testing in other settings to determine whether it accomplishes the goal and works consistently.

The modern evangelical church majored on the need for a personal relationship with Jesus, and used the propositional faith statements of modernity. Postmodernity

offers an opportunity for the church to explore relationship with Jesus free from the constraints of propositionalism and without the need to become liberal, which is equally propositional.

relationship created between two or more elements.”³¹ Transformational advocates believe a task focused philosophy is dehumanizing, but an exclusive emphasis on relationships is debilitating.³² Transformational leadership breaks down this dichotomy; to become is to do, and to do is to become.

Transformational leadership enables the intentional formation of communities, moves beyond the paralysis and pathology of leadership distain, but also avoids the imperialistic use of people to achieve a hierarchical leader’s goals. Transformational leadership has many exponents and different action models.³³ This paper does not endorse a single model or synthesize the group of models. In the next section, it identifies transformational leadership practices based on current transformational leadership theories useful in the postmodern search.

Emerging Leadership Methods and Practices

The preceding chapters of this paper described postmodern leadership methods and practices. This section provides additional examples of transformational leadership for the postmodern congregation.

A Multi-locational Priesthood

Leaders in the emerging church must be multi-locational and inhabit the public, social, private, and intimate spaces of community life. They must demonstrate ways to

³¹ Wheatley, *Leadership and the New Science*, 35-36.

³² Ibid., 37.

³³ Mary Kate P. Morse, "The Relationship of Wisdom to Transformational Leadership," (Ph.D. diss., Gonzaga University, 1995), 31-26.

inhabit multiple spaces, and how the dynamic creates growth. They show that multiple spaces can be valid and that entering into non-traditional spaces is transformational.

Ministry is usual used as a more functional label than priest. Ministry transforms more easily into ministers (a verb). Priest has no verb form. Priest has, therefore, been more exclusive than ministry, which is open to all. But ministry has become functional, and based upon the leadership models of modernity, as shown earlier in this chapter. The author this paper wishes to assert that we recover the nature of priest, and imbue it with verbal attributes to avoid connotations of the modern church leadership whilst using language to subvert metaphors and models of leadership.

Priest for this paper is therefore defined as an action rather than an individual with special qualifications or status. “To priest” is to inhabit and make spiritual locations of life. “To priest” is to live in those spaces and help others find connection to God, one another, and the world. Leaders who “priest” reject Sunday services as the only location of God’s kingdom, and they refuse to live out the opposite concept that everything is church. Leaders who “priest” understand the church as a missional community through which the kingdom of God is made manifest and experienced at home, in private, at work, and in public. As they “priest,” they invite others to do so by the nature of who they are and what they do in those spaces.

Liberator: Life Long Learners

Leaders in the emerging culture are liberators because they engage in life-long, holistic learning, and thereby remain connected and relational in their learning.³⁴ Their personal growth and actions model behaviors and foster growth in others.

The postmodern climate does not allow an individual to be considered learned who spends life dispensing information:

For the oriental mind learning is ongoing...The roots of the English word for learning suggest that it once held a similar meaning. It originated with the indo-European *leis*, a noun meaning "track" or "furrow." To learn came to mean gaining experience by following a track—presumably for a lifetime.³⁵

In the postmodern context and emergent church environment, Christian growth is life-long learning and the ability of leaders to learn and stimulate learning is vital.³⁶ Kotter describes important elements of life-long learning by leaders as: risk taking, humble self reflection, solicitation of opinions, careful listening, and openness to new ideas.³⁷

Able Enablers

Leaders liberate and facilitate growth based on competence. The competence, however, is not the mechanistic competence of the professional clergy who are self sufficient, disconnected from the world, and have no need of others. In the postmodern

³⁴ Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee, *Primal Leadership*, 255-256.

³⁵ Peter M. Senge, *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook: Strategies and Tools for Building a Learning Organization* (New York: Doubleday, 1994), 49.

³⁶ For a theory and practical workbook based on implementing organizational learning see Peter M. Senge, *The Dance of Change: The Challenges of Sustaining Momentum in Learning Organizations* (New York: Doubleday, 1999).

³⁷ Kotter, *Leading Change*, 183.

environment, people are attracted and influenced by leaders who are learners. Once technical competence was admired, but continued learning is increasingly valued. Senge calls this “mastery” and writes: “It means the capacity not only to produce results, but also to ‘master’ the principles underlying the way you produce results.”³⁸

Those who embrace this postmodern approach value ability and strive for betterment, but also acknowledge individual fallibility and dependence upon others. Ability involves dependence upon others and the enablement of the leader and those who surround the leader. Rudolph Giuliani discovered the vitality and reality of this after September 11, 2001.³⁹ Max DePree describes leadership of this kind as “roving.” Because “no one person is the expert at everything [roving leadership is the] expression of the ability of leaders to permit others to share ownership of problems—in effect take ownership of a situation.”⁴⁰

While leaders possess skills, maturity, and abilities others do not, they do not use these to control people. Rather, they act with deference, bring others on board, and at all times recognize and understand their inabilities and weaknesses. De Vries has identified three clusters of competencies and abilities vital for leaders:⁴¹ (1) personal competencies such as self-motivation, self-awareness, and self directed effectiveness, (2) social competencies such as political awareness and empathy, and (3) cognitive competencies

³⁸ Senge, *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook*, 194.

³⁹ Rudolph R Giuliani and Ken Kurson, *Leadership* (New York: Hyperion, 2002), 98.

⁴⁰ Max DePree, *Leadership Is An Art* (New York: Doubleday, 1989), 49.

⁴¹ Kets de Vries, *The Leadership Mystique*, 221.

that include conceptual and systems thinking. Postmodern leaders have several commonalities; they are: ethical stewards, information alchemists, systems thinkers, and communicators.

Ethical Stewards

Companies such as Enron have collapsed under the weight of their greed and corruption, and the church has elevated people whose character and nature are beyond accountability.⁴² The goal of transformational, incarnational theology is the reformation of self and others to become Christ-like, and this necessitates leadership that lives out what it calls others to do. Transformational living is characterized by honesty, openness, vulnerability, accountability, and integrity combined with stewardship.

Modern leadership that pursued the individual's agenda is being replaced with the notion of stewardship. Ownership in the modern world was about possession and control; stewardship acknowledges that resources are held "in trust for a temporary period."⁴³ Power in stewardship leadership is located in everyone helping each other accomplish others' ends, not self-fulfillment. DePree describes this as "a way of thinking about institutional heirs, a way of thinking about stewardship as contrasted with ownership."⁴⁴

⁴² Chris Seay and Chris Bryan, *The Tao of Enron: Spiritual Lessons from a Fortune 500 Fallout* (Colorado Springs: Navpress, 2002).

⁴³ Fairholm, *Perspectives on Leadership*, 147.

⁴⁴ DePree, *Leadership Is An Art*, 12.

Information Alchemists

Does anyone expect the next 20 years to be any less tumultuous than the last twenty years? . . . If you are an organizational leader you are faced with a daunting task. In effect you are engaged in a great venture of exploration, risk, discovery and change, without any comprehensive maps for guidance.⁴⁵

Sweet talks about leaders being able navigate a fast-paced and accelerated world, able to sift and interpret multiple forms of information, and bring meaning from that process to people. In the information age, effective leaders bring meaning to a world overwhelmed with conflicting and competing information received through multiple channels and media. Sweet calls this leadership trait “information alchemy.”⁴⁶

Information alchemists sift data, question, articulate, re-articulate, give voice through multiple media, and bring meaning that enables them and others to grow and be transformed. This process is necessary in the postmodern world because people are not able to see the wood from the trees, but when they step back they “just see lots of trees.”⁴⁷ This characteristic reflects the prophetic tradition in the church, and the combination of the priest and prophet may be one of the most important roles for leaders in the emerging culture.

⁴⁵ Senge, *The Dance of Change*, 3.

⁴⁶ Synchronous discussion in LEC D.Min. 2 cohort, via webct.georgefox.edu, 2004.

⁴⁷ Senge, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* (New York: Doubleday, 1990), 126.

Systems Thinkers

The dominant metaphor for modern leadership was the mechanism and machine, but the new approach in the emerging context is systems thinking. Rather than focusing on the parts, systems thinking looks at the bigger picture and how things are interconnected. It deals with the changing interconnectedness of components, and does not seek the correct order imposed by hierarchical structure.⁴⁸

Systems thinking⁴⁹ is an appropriate approach to church leadership based on the biblical metaphor of the church as a body (1 Cor 12:12-31). Leadership in the modern world and church defended, maintained, and protected itself from external, worldly forces. Systems thinking is counter intuitive: “Openness to the environment over time spawns a stronger system, one that is less susceptible to externally induced change Because it partners with its environment, the system develops increasing autonomy from the environment and also develops new capacities that make it more resourceful.”⁵⁰

Tribal Story Tellers: Communicators

The ability to communicate is essential in this information alchemy. This is a complex skill because communication takes place constantly, and is planned and

⁴⁸ For a summary of systems thinking see Senge, *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook*, 87-190.

⁴⁹ “Systems theory is an interdisciplinary field which studies relationships of systems as a whole. Modern systems theory was founded by Ludwig von Bertalanffy, William Ross Ashby and others between the 1940s and the 1970s on principles from philosophy, physics, biology and engineering and later grew into numerous fields including philosophy, sociology, organizational theory, management, psychotherapy (within family systems therapy) and economics among others. Cybernetics is a closely related field. In recent times systems science, systemics and complex systems has been used as a synonym,” http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Systems_theory (accessed December 10, 2005).

⁵⁰ Senge, *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook*, 87.

intentional or involuntary and obscure. Postmodern leaders can use traditional and modern methods of communication to shape and give life to thoughts, notions, ideals, dreams, and visions, and provide space for questions and doubts. “There may be no single thing more important in our efforts to achieve meaningful work and fulfilling relationships than to learn and practice the art of communication.”⁵¹

Postmodern leaders will communicate through cyberspace, but must also communicate through personal, written, and spoken means. Technology is a vital part of the postmodern world, but the use of cyber communication alone is not the panacea for church communication issues. While on the forefront of technology, leadership must inhabit other vital spaces of peoples’ lives, and communication remains a key.⁵²

As they communicate, these leaders can weave meaning from story to story as “tribal storytellers.”⁵³ “The penalty for failing to listen is to lose one’s history, one’s historical context, one’s binding values.”⁵⁴ The tribal storytellers connect their listeners to meaning:

When leaders honour us with opportunities to know the truth of what is occurring and support us to explore the deeper meaning of events, we instinctively reach out the them. Those who help us centre our work in a deeper purpose are leaders we cherish, and to whom we return love, gift for gift.⁵⁵

⁵¹ DePree, *Leadership Is An Art*, 108.

⁵² This thesis is discussed in: Jim Collins, *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap—and Others Don't* (New York: HarperBusiness, 2001), 144-163.

⁵³ The origins of leaders as ‘tribal story tellers’ is explored at <http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/storyorigins.htm> (accessed December 10, 2005).

⁵⁴ DePree, *Leadership Is An Art*, 82.

⁵⁵ Wheatley, *Leadership and the New Science*, 133.

This is not simply information exchange; it is openness to communication that shares thoughts and feelings, and is open to questions.⁵⁶

The leader's communication skills reveal the leader's personality and self. To do anything else is superficial and focused on leadership technique rather than the personal involvement that demonstrates the leader's self and beliefs. Taylor describes this as the process of "our beliefs becoming our truths,"⁵⁷ and Kouzes and Posner call this "credibility" and provide a leadership prescription: "DWYSYWD: Do what you say you will do . . . leaders must put what they say into practice."⁵⁸

DePree describes this involvement as intimacy, and modern writers that the practice of distance and lack of ownership is superficial. Leaders too often "never get seriously and accountably involved in their own work. Intimacy is betrayed by the inability of our leaders to focus provide continuity and momentum."⁵⁹ When a leader is involved deeply with other people they experience life together and develop strong relationships.

⁵⁶ David S. Taylor, *The Naked Leader* (London: Bantam, 2003), 197.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 179.

⁵⁸ James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002), 38.

⁵⁹ DePree, *Leadership Is An Art*, 57.

Leadership in the Emerging Church: Metaphors for Transformation

The author of this paper believes the following leadership metaphors⁶⁰ are useful in the emergent church context:

1. The spiritual sage who replaces the Bible analyst obsessed with the cognitive.
2. The listener who leads through listening and develops communal learning and growth.
3. The friend who leads through relationship and conversation rather than through organizational goals and technical means. People are heard rather than used as objects or means toward an end.
4. The dancer who invites others to hear the music and move with its rhythm, rather than march to an organizational drum.
5. The amateur who rejects clerical professionalism and embraces the fact that people can be life long learners.
6. The quest creator who seeks new challenges, asks questions, and invites people into adventure and discovery. Learning takes place in the quest, and individuals are transformed as they ask questions, rather than told answers. Much like Jesus, these leaders answer questions with questions and facilitate growth and learning.⁶¹
7. The apologizer, or alternatively the learner, is a leader who points out how inadequate the leader's ideas are, and is open to learning and direction from others.
8. The includer involves others on the leaders' journey and team.

⁶⁰ These new metaphors in title are taken from Brian D. McLaren, "Dorothy on Leadership."

⁶¹ Conrad Gempf explored this as a thesis in his book titled *Jesus Asked* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003).

9. The seeker who, instead of acting as a know-it-all, recognizes his/her limitations and needs others on life's journey.

10. The team builder who empowers, enables, and avoids pressure to rise to the top as a self-sufficient being. To lead is to need team, to be team, to live and participate as team. By avoiding the paternalistic dependency models of modernism and the independent tendencies of the emerging church, mutuality and interdependency are possible.

Application: Examples from an Emerging Church

In previous chapters, the author included examples from his emerging church plant and demonstrated the postmodern model in practice. There has been one key area in the community life where the church practiced a leadership model not yet discussed. The pastor and church sought to steward the church's resources as a team, and they worked to be accountable to each other as they developed a less hierarchical and more enabling church structure. Patrick Lencioni's book, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, was an important tool in this process.⁶²

Lencioni suggests genuine teamwork is elusive, the product of working together to achieve more, and vital in postmodern world. He identifies five issues that hinder teams in the emerging culture. The issues are interrelated and can infect each other, although he recognizes a progression and evolution among them. They are:

1. Absence of trust, which stems from a lack of openness about weaknesses and failings, vulnerability, and authenticity.

⁶² Patrick M. Lencioni, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002).

2. The lack of trust sets the stage for “fear of conflict,” where honest, open, and passionate debate about ideas does not take place. People interact with veiled, politicized comments.
3. The lack of healthy conflict leads to a “lack of commitment.” When people do not air their doubts, feelings, passions, and convictions they may feign commitment, and not support the team.
4. A lack of real commitment develops into a lack of “accountability,” and team members will not confront inappropriate peer behaviors and actions which are counterproductive for the team.
5. The lack of accountability produces an environment where people are inattentive to team results and put their needs and goals before the team.

If these issues are not resolved, the team collapses.

The author of this paper believes five mirror-image behaviors will produce a healthy, productive team:

1. Trust one another, be vulnerable and open, ask for help, and be transparent with thoughts and feelings.
2. Engage in unfiltered sharing of ideas and conflict.
3. Commit as a group and individually to decisions and action plans.
4. Hold each other accountable for completing the plans.
5. Focus on team results, not those of individuals.

As a result of commitment to these behaviors, the group experienced the following:

The group engaged in shared experiences over time by sharing personal histories, family stories, challenges, hobbies, and strengths and weaknesses. They saw each other as human beings, and asked each other to share perceptions of individual strengths and weaknesses. This began the process of vulnerability. The group used psychometric tools to learn about each other and the interplay of the team. They received feedback from peers based on team goals and team agreement. Individuals demonstrated vulnerability and created a safe environment where vulnerability was encouraged and respected.

In addition, the group discovered the differences between ideological disagreement and malicious, corrosive fighting. Loyalty is about honest dialogue and interaction; back channel conflict is corrosive and destructive. The group encouraged the identification of interpersonal conflict and brought it to the group so others became aware of it. They coached one another not to retreat from debate, and when people became uncomfortable, they were reminded conflict was positive and useful, and good for the team. Psychometric tests identified how people dealt with conflict, and how they responded to each other during conflicts. The leader learned not to be overly protective of people in conflict, and to allow others to facilitate the conflict process. The leader became more comfortable with non-resolution, which teaches participants important skills. The leader can model these behaviors for the good of all.

A third result of the group's commitment to these behaviors was the realization that team members can accept a decision based on trust and processing feelings, even if they disagree. A desire for consensus and certainty undermines decisions, whereas collaboration does not. Collaboration allows creativity and outcomes for the group guide

the decision-making process rather than individual agendas. Decisions can be made successfully without certainty, but many teams wait, are indecisive, and become paralyzed. The group learned the importance of reviewing decisions made and communicating those decisions to others outside the team. The review clarifies points, identifies confidential matters, and promotes communication and feedback within the church. The experience demonstrates a need for scheduling that avoids ambiguity, and contingency plans for worst-case scenarios. Individuals in the group began making decisions, saw the results, and this built confidence in decisions making without outcome certainty. The leader must also be comfortable with making decisions without outcome certainty even though the decisions may be wrong.

The team learned to hold each other accountable, point out behaviors that undermine the team, engage in difficult conversations, and be comfortable with each other. In order to practice these goals, participants must know the team's goals and who is responsible for them. It also requires regular review of goals, what people committed to do, and open discussion of what each is doing. Individual and team rewards are important, and leaders must encourage the team to be the primary place for accountability and engage in it directly with individuals. The leader serves as the ultimate arbiter when a team fails to achieve a result and will step in when necessary.

Finally, the group leaders learned that dysfunction results when team members care more about their personal goals than those of the team. The team must have goals, and team members must value and adopt them for the team. The lure of individual status must give way to a team psychology and collective ownership. This is more likely when

the results are clear and the team celebrates the results. It is important not to guarantee that goals will be achieved, but see them as achievable, and leaders must set the tone. Team leaders must be selfless and reward people for working on and achieving group goals.

Conclusion: Wisdom

Leonard Hjalmarson notes the progression and development of heroes in recent movies.⁶³ He describes how characterizations have moved from the rugged, self-confident style of the Clint Eastwood and Sylvester Stallone characters to the more human and troubled heroes of Frodo in *The Lord of the Rings* and Neo in *The Matrix*. The new heroes question their identity and abilities, and need others who reassure and enable them to complete their quests and journeys.

People in the postmodern context find it difficult to place authority in leadership based on knowledge and control of information. The new locus for authority is relationship, but not directionless relationship. The key is relationship that is transformative. Transformative relationships are based on enablement, participation, challenge, discussion, debate, and questions whose goal is not certainty about knowledge, but hope in wisdom and collective action.

Morse describes transformational leadership explored in this paper and believes it is congruent with the wisdom leadership model of Jesus.⁶⁴ Wisdom may be the ultimate

⁶³ Leonard Hjalmarson, "Kingdom Leadership in the Postmodern Era," *Christianity.ca*, 2005, <http://www.christianity.ca/church/leadership/2005/05.000.html> (accessed June 27, 2005).

⁶⁴ Morse, "The Relationship of Wisdom to Transformational Leadership," 323.

metaphor that expresses the nature, role, and function of leadership in the emerging context:

Wisdom and transformational leadership share these factors: Both deal with ambiguity and change; are most beneficial during chaos and conflict; demonstrate effective communication and relationship skills; consider individual needs, and; stimulate maturation in others. The wisdom leadership of Jesus suggests that wise transformational leaders: (1) have a paradoxical view of reality, (2) are the individual voice able to give guidance for change, (3) have a vision for renewal which is aware of moral impact and sourced in a spiritual identity and; (4) have a comprehensive and holistic field of reform.⁶⁵

Within this model, the biblical pattern Jesus Himself practiced can be rediscovered. An innovative postmodern leadership can emerge through a Hebraic, holistic, missional lifestyle:

Poised at the millennium, we confront two critical challenges: how to address deep problems for which hierarchical leadership alone is insufficient and how to harness the intelligence and spirit of people at all levels of an organization to continually build and share knowledge. Our responses may lead us, ironically, to a future based on more ancient—and more natural—ways of organizing: communities of diverse and effective leaders who empower their organizations to learn with head, heart, and hand.⁶⁶

Sir Ernest Shackleton is one such leader who received great attention for succeeding through failure. Shackleton saved the lives of all twenty-two men stranded with him in the Antarctic. A crewman described his leadership as an appropriate model for leaders in the emerging culture:

I have served with Scott, Shackleton and Mawson, and have met Nansen, Amundson, Peary, Cook and other explorers, and in my considered opinion, for all the best points of leadership, coolness in the face of

⁶⁵ Ibid., v.

⁶⁶ Senge, *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook*, 566.

danger, resourcefulness under difficulties, quickness in decisions, never-failing optimism, and the faculty of instilling the same into others, remarkable genius for organization, consideration for those under him, and obliteration of self, the Palm must be given to Shackleton, a hero and gentleman in very truth.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Frank Wild, as quoted in Margot Morrell and Stephanie Capparell, *Shackleton's Way: Leadership Lessons From the Great Antarctic Explorer* (New York: Viking, 2001), 205.

CONCLUSION

The thesis of this paper is that genuine renewal in the postmodern era is possible based on biblical principles and theological reflection, rather than simply repackaging church activities. Without the biblical basis and theological reflection, church responses may attract disaffected Christians, but will not provide genuine mission and connection to postmodern culture. This paper explored how this situation calls for a radical rethinking of church theology and its practices. Anything less will redress the church in trendy clothes, or reinforce its previous practices, neither of which will re-connect postmodern people to church.

Chapter 1 assessed the church's current responses to emerging culture through the interplay of message, mediums, and marketplace. The chapter demonstrated that without biblical and theological reflection churches re-package existing beliefs in new mediums, and continue to be unable to communicate with postmodern culture.

Chapter 2 described a theology influenced the doctrine of creation at the heart of the disconnect between the church and postmodern culture and people. The western church, with an overly platonic doctrine of creation, produced a theology that does not naturally lead to whole life discipleship within the emerging context. Chapter 2 proposed an alternative theology to enable existing and new Christians grow and be formed within the postmodern environment.

Chapter 3 applied the theology proposed in chapter 2 and combined it with an adaptation of James Fowler's sociological method for spiritual formation. The combined model facilitates spiritual formation and leads to authentic growth in the emerging context.

Chapter 4 explored preaching and teaching and their roles in spiritual formation, and how they might be renewed using this theology and model for spiritual formation. Chapter 4 addressed the insufficiency of two current responses to preaching, one that reasserts conservative preaching techniques and the other that calls for its abandonment. The two responses are predicated on insufficient theological reflection and are, therefore, incapable of fostering renewal. An effective alternative was described based on the theology described in Chapter 2 combined with the model for spiritual formation.

Chapter 5 explored the nature and necessity of leadership to enable to the theology and formation models outlined. The current call to abandon leadership because of its inherent abuse and control fails to produce renewal in the emerging, postmodern context. Postmodern leadership theory offers direction for effective leadership consistent with the theology and formation model proposed in this paper.

The theology and formation model suggested in this paper has led to the growth of the author's church plant and congregation. Although one example does not prove the validity or reliability of the model, it suggests the model bears testing in other settings to determine whether it accomplishes the goal and works consistently.

The modern evangelical church majored on the need for a personal relationship with Jesus, and used the propositional faith statements of modernity. Postmodernity

offers an opportunity for the church to explore relationship with Jesus free from the constraints of propositionalism and without the need to become liberal, which is equally propositional.

APPENDIX I

STAGES OF FAITH: AN INTERVIEW WITH JAMES FOWLER¹

by Harold Kent Straughn

Straughn: Dr. Fowler, I'd like to begin by asking you to unfold in summary form the six stages of faith as your research has developed them.

Fowler: All right. Inevitably this will be sketchy. If we start with infancy—the time from birth to two years—we have what we call undifferentiated faith. It's a time before language and conceptual thought are possible. The infant is forming a basic sense of trust, of being at home in the world. The infant is also forming what I call pre-images of God or the Holy, and of the kind of world we live in. On this foundation of basic trust or mistrust is built all that comes later in terms of faith. Future religious experience will either have to confirm or reground that basic trust.

Stage One: Intuitive/Projective Faith

The first stage we call intuitive/projective faith. It characterizes the child of two to six or seven. It's a changing and growing and dynamic faith. It's marked by the rise of imagination. The child doesn't have the kind of logic that makes possible or necessary the questioning of perceptions or fantasies. Therefore the child's mind is "religiously

¹ Harold Kent Straughn, "My Interview With James W. Fowler on the Stages of Faith," *Life Spiral Communications*. <http://www.lifespirls.com/TheMindSpiral/Fowler/fowler.html> (accessed November 12, 2004). This interview is quoted verbatim without correction or editing.

pregnant," one might say. It is striking how many times in our interviews we find that experiences and images that occur and take form before the child is six have powerful and long-lasting effects on the life of faith both positive and negative.

Stage Two: Mythic/Literal Faith

The second stage we call mythic/literal faith. Here the child develops a way of dealing with the world and making meaning that now criticizes and evaluates the previous stage of imagination and fantasy. The gift of this stage is narrative. The child now can really form and re-tell powerful stories that grasp his or her experiences of meaning. There is a quality of literalness about this. The child is not yet ready to step outside the stories and reflect upon their meanings. The child takes symbols and myths at pretty much face value, though they may touch or move him or her at a deeper level.

Stage Three: Synthetic/Conventional Faith

There is a third stage we call synthetic/conventional faith which typically has its rise beginning around age 12 or 13. It's marked by the beginning of what Piaget calls formal operational thinking. That simply means that we now can think about our own thinking. It's a time when a person is typically concerned about forming an identity, and is deeply concerned about the evaluations and feedback from significant other people in his or her life. We call this a synthetic/conventional stage; synthetic, not in the sense that it's artificial, but in the sense that it's a pulling together of one's valued images and values, the pulling together of a sense of self or identity.

One of the hallmarks of this stage is that it tends to compose its images of God as extensions of interpersonal relationships. God is often experienced as Friend,

Companion, and Personal Reality, in relationship to which I'm known deeply and valued.

I think the true religious hunger of adolescence is to have a God who knows me and values me deeply, and can be a kind of guarantor of my identity and worth in a world where I'm struggling to find who I can be.

At any of the stages from two on you can find adults who are best described by these stages. Stage Three, thus, can be an adult stage. We do find many persons, in churches and out, who are best described by faith that essentially took form when they were adolescents.

Stage Four: Individuative/Projective Faith

Stage Four, for those who develop it, is a time in which the person is pushed out of, or steps out of, the circle of interpersonal relationships that have sustained his life to that point. Now comes the burden of reflecting upon the self as separate from the groups and the shared world that defines one's life. I sometimes quote Santayana who said that we don't know who discovered water but we know it wasn't fish. The person in Stage Three is like the fish sustained by the water. To enter Stage Four means to spring out of the fish tank and to begin to reflect upon the water. Many people don't complete this transition, but get caught between three and four. The transition to Stage Four can begin as early as 17, but it's usually not completed until the mid-20s, and often doesn't even begin until around 20. It comes most naturally in young adulthood. Some people, however, don't make the transition until their late 30s. It becomes a more traumatic thing then, because they have already built an adult life. Their relationships have to be reworked in light of the stage change.

Stage Four is concerned about boundaries: where I stop and you begin; where the group that I can belong to with conviction and authenticity ends and other groups begin. It's very much concerned about authenticity and a fit between the self I feel myself to be in a group and the ideological commitments that I'm attached to.

Stage Five: Conjunctive Faith

Sometime around 35 or 40 or beyond some people undergo a change to what we call conjunctive faith, which is a kind of midlife way of being in faith. What Stage Four works so hard to get clear and clean in terms of boundaries and identity, Stage Five makes more permeable and more porous. As one moves into Stage Five one begins to recognize that the conscious self is not all there is of me. I have an unconscious. Much of my behavior and response to things is shaped by dimensions of self that I'm not fully aware of. There is a deepened readiness for a relationship to God that includes God's mystery and unavailability and strangeness as well as God's closeness and clarity.

Stage Five is a time when a person is also ready to look deeply into the social unconscious—those myths and taboos and standards that we took in with our mother's milk and that powerfully shape our behavior and responses. We really do examine those, which means we're ready for a new kind of intimacy with persons and groups that are different from ourselves. We are ready for allegiances beyond our tribal gods and our tribal taboos. Stage Five is a period when one is alive to paradox. One understands that truth has many dimensions which have to be held together in paradoxical tension.

Stage Six: Universalizing Faith

Some few persons we find move into Stage Six, which we call universalizing faith. In a sense I think we can describe this stage as one in which persons begin radically to live as though what Christians and Jews call the "kingdom of God" were already a fact. I don't want to confine it to Christian and Jewish images of the kingdom. It's more than that. I'm saying these people experience a shift from the self as the center of experience. Now their center becomes a participation in God or ultimate reality. There's a reversal of figure and ground. They're at home with what I call a commonwealth of being. We experience these people on the one hand as being more lucid and simple than we are, and on the other hand as intensely liberating people, sometimes even subversive in their liberating qualities. I think of Martin Luther King, Jr. in the last years of his life. I think of Thomas Merton. I think of Mother Teresa of Calcutta. I think of Dag Hammerskjold and Dietrich Bonhoeffer in the last years of his imprisonment. These are persons who in a sense have negated the self for the sake of affirming God. And yet in affirming God they became vibrant and powerful selves in our experience. They have a quality of what I call relevant irrelevance. Their "subversiveness" makes our compromises show up as what they are.

STRAUGHN: You mentioned earlier that for the next several years you're going to focus more sharply on the implications for religious education and pastoral counseling. It sounds as though you already have some things to say.

Fowler: Jerome Berryman has made a strong case for the use of parables with children, for the gift of those powerful images for the child of five or six. We need to listen to what children are doing with those images. We need to provide occasions for them with media

such as drawing or painting or acting out in dramatizations or simply with talking to an adult and with each other. We need to have chances to tap into what they're doing with the images, not to correct them doctrinally, but to help them avoid the dangerous appropriations of those images. As I said earlier, the child of five or six is very available to suggestions. Later on in the period of ages seven to ten we need to work with the powerful stories from the Bible and from contemporary sources to give the child a clue as to who his or her people are.

In terms of working with adolescents, one important thing is to help young people develop new approaches to prayer. One of the places we fall down in the Protestant churches in particular is in leaving prayer to be a private matter. It is a private matter, of course, but we can help young people work out approaches to prayer that take seriously their new developmental capacities and needs. Now the Roman Catholics are taking 15- and 16-year-olds on retreats where they are taught methods of contemplative prayer using Scripture. They are being taught to meditate. I think for adolescents in our time that's a terribly important thing to do: to help them discover how they can create an inner space where they can get some respite and some distance from the terribly burdening world of overchoice and stimulation that they live in.

In young adulthood, in the Stage Four period, it's very important to begin to give shape to a dream. In traditional Christian terms it would be a vocational dream. It's not just a dream of the work I want to do. By vocation I mean how I'm going to put myself and my gifts at the disposal of the human community and at the disposal of God, to make a difference in the unique way I'm called, to make a difference through my work and

through other dimensions of my life. We need to develop opportunities for young adults to explore and give shape to dreams that would involve Christian vocation. It would also involve working out the theological and biblical foundations for a Christian vocation.

For adults there are some important things we need to do in terms of rites of passage. We need to acknowledge that at mid-life one's religious needs and depths change.

Again some new forms of spirituality need to be developed.

I have a nun friend who's written a long paper on ministry to people in their 40s called "Ministry to Messiness." Her point is that as we turn 40, give or take five years on either side, we've lived with ourselves as adults long enough to qualify the dream that took shape in our young adulthood—the heroic dream. We see that we fulfilled parts of that, but perhaps there are parts that we'll never fulfill. We're at a time where the dependence of others upon us is optimal. Our parents are dependent upon us and our teenage children are dependent upon us. We are carrying our heaviest responsibility in our work world. Life feels messy. We can't get on top of it.

What kind of spirituality can sustain people with realism and grace in that period? Then we begin to face retirement or old age and I think our need for spirituality changes again. We're just at the beginning of investigating that and we're trying to come up with proposals. That will be part of our work of the Center.

STRAUGHN: Are you already involved in making curriculum available?

Fowler: We have not gotten to the point of making curriculum available. Some people are using our work to undergird their curriculum development.

STRAUGHN: Where would ministers have access to some of that?

Fowler: In the new United Methodist curriculum you'll find introductory pieces on faith development. You'll find that their selection of materials and their ordering of curriculum are dependent upon developmental principles.

STRAUGHN: What work have you done with implications for pastoral counseling?

Fowler: Well I think we are just beginning to reap the implications for pastoral counseling. One of those who's doing most of this is Leroy Howe at SMU. He's working with pastoral counseling with adults. One of the things stage theory has to contribute to pastoral care and counseling is that it provides a language that's not derived from pathology for talking about human dis-ease. As we come to understand transitions, we see that not all apparent sickness is a sickness unto death. It may be a sickness unto a new kind of health. I find that giving people images of faith that are dynamic and changing, and that incorporate the dynamics of doubt and struggle, is in itself a powerful gift. They begin to say, "Well, I may not be going crazy. I may not be going to fall off the edge of the world if I fall into doubt and struggle. That may be an integral part of faith for me"

Another way stage theory helps the counselor is to give him or her a framework to determine what the person with whom they are working is struggling toward. It gives a sense of the shape of the next stage. It helps us see the unfinished business of a previous stage that has a person trapped or blocked.

In the counseling itself, faith development doesn't become a totally new way of counseling. It becomes an additional framework for understanding what's going on, for making diagnoses and for working constructively with a person. That's where spirituality comes in, I think, as part of the therapeutic process. In the book you may recall a chapter

on conversion and the form and content of faith. I talk about the need after a conversion experience to recapitulate previous stages of faith. To me that is one of the most exciting ideas that I've come upon in the last year or so.

STRAUGHN: Where have you been doing work on the stages in relation to new converts?

Fowler: I've been doing it in classes on what I call the dynamic identity of faith. I've invited people in guided reflections to recapitulate their childhood and later experiences of faith. To say that we've done that with new converts would be misleading. We haven't done that yet. But it is the need for that that I'm beginning to see very clearly.

STRAUGHN: You're saying that a new convert needs to go back to review earlier experiences?

Fowler: A new convert needs a period of time where he or she is separate from the past. That is, you need to burn some bridges. After that's been done, there needs to be provision, in the context of the community of worship and support, for persons to recapitulate the previous eras and stages of their life to, as the Catholics say, heal the memories—to re-establish foundations of basic trust—to provide new basic images and new stories for life as well as a new identity. We need to provide occasions for that to happen. Not much of that happens in cult religions or even neo-evangelical Christian faith. We promise people that they can immolate their past. We never really deal with the past, so it operates as a kind of inner saboteur of faith. We then block people as far as further development is concerned.

STRAUGHN: Near the end of your book you gave examples of some familiar names that represented types of the various stages, such as Hal Lindsay, Robert Schuller, C. S. Lewis, and James Cone. I wonder if you plan to do a study of American religion as a whole. It seems to me that you have the basis for helping people understand what their options are in American religion.

Fowler: I'd like to see it done. I think it would be an important test of the theory. It would give us a framework to make sense of the variety of religious movements that we see coming and going.

One concept I find helpful is what Kenneth Kenniston has called the "modal" developmental level. I translate that to mean the "average expectable level of development" for adults in a congregation or in a religious group. Take those characterizations that you just referred to in terms of Lindsay and Schuller and so forth. We could go to congregations or to groups who are most influenced and helped by the kind of preaching or teaching that they do. We could test whether or not the average expectable level of development for adults is what we predict. In small congregations in particular, people are attracted to and around the mode. But a modal level also operates as a coercive feature. People who haven't developed up to it will be experienced as deviant in some way. And people who have developed beyond it also will be viewed as deviant. So there is a lot of pressure to stay at the mode. If you want to ask what it is that locks people into a stage of faith or leads to arrest at one stage, the modal level of the groups in which they're living out their faith is sometimes a major factor.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abraham, Joshua Heschel. *Sabbath*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1983.
- Adams, A. K. M. *What is Postmodern Biblical Criticism?* Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995.
- Allen, Roland. *Missionary Methods. St. Paul's or Ours: A Study of the Church in the Four Provinces*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1962.
- _____. *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church and the Causes Which Hinder It*. 4th ed. London: World Dominion Press, 1960.
- Ammerman, Nancy T. "North American Protestant Fundamentalism." In *Fundamentalism Observed*, eds. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994.
- Anderson, Walter Truett. *The Truth About the Truth: De-Confusing and Re-Constructing the Postmodern World*. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1995.
- Arndt William F., and F. Wilbur Gingrich. *A Greek-English Lexicon of The New Testament*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957.
- Aroney-Sine, Christine. *Sacred Rhythms: Finding a Peaceful Pace in a Hectic World*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2003.
- Athansius. *On the Incarnation*. Translated and Edited by a Religious of C.S.M.V. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1996.
- Bailey, Jeff. "Association of Vineyard Churches USA Board Report: Perspectives on Church, Gospel and Culture in the 21st Century." 1999.
- Bailey, Jeff. "Theology for the New Millennium: A Conversation with Stan Grenz." *Cutting Edge*, Winter, 2000. http://www.vineyardusa.org/upload/Winter_2000.pdf (accessed January 14, 2004).
- Barth, Karl. *Church Dogmatics*. Edinburgh: T and T Clark, 1960.
- _____. *Homiletics*. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991.

- Baudrillard, Jean. *The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures*. Theory, Culture and Society. London: Sage, 1998.
- Bolsinger, Tod E. *It Takes a Church to Raise a Christian: How the Community of God Transforms Lives*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos, 2004.
- Bosch David, J. *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*. American Society of Missiology Series No. 16. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993.
- Boylan, Bob. *What's Your Point? The 3-Step Method for Making Effective Presentations*. Holbrook, MA: Adams, 2001.
- Brownson, James V. *Stormfront: The Good News of God*. The Gospel and Our Culture Series. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2003.
- Brueggemann, Walter. *Finally Comes the Poet: Daring Speech for Proclamation*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989.
- Bruskowitz, Fabian W. "The New Catechism of the Catholic Church." *Catholic Faith Magazine*, March 4, 1996 <http://www.catholic.net/RCC/Periodicals/Faith/0304-96/catechism.html> (accessed March 24, 2005).
- Carnegie, Dale, and Dorothy Carnegie. *The Quick and Easy Way to Effective Speaking*. New York: Association Press, 1962.
- Carbonell, Mels. *Uniquely You: Understanding Personalities from a Biblical Perspective*. Fayetteville, GA: Personality Wise Ministries, 1993.
- Chang, Curtis. *Engaging Unbelief: A Captivating Strategy from Augustine and Aquinas*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000.
- Cissna, Tamara. "God Bent a Person, Not a Proposition: A Conversation with Len Sweet," *George Fox Journal* (Fall 2005): 14-17.
- Cladis, George. *Leading the Team-Based Church: How Pastors and Church Staffs Can Grow Together into a Powerful Fellowship of Leaders*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999.
- Clapp, Rodney. *A Peculiar People: The Church as Culture in a Post-Christian Society*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996.
- Chaves, Mark. *Congregations in America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004.

Cloud, Henry, and John Sims Townsend. *Boundaries: When to Say Yes, When to Say No to Take Control of Your Life*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992.

_____. *How People Grow: What the Bible Reveals About Personal Growth*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001.

Collins, Jim. *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap—and Others Don't*. New York: HarperBusiness, 2001.

Cooper, Morton. *Change Your Voice, Change Your Life: A Quick, Simple Plan for Finding and Using Your Natural, Dynamic Voice*. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1985.

Copenhaver, Martin B., Anthony B. Robinson, and William H. Willimon. *Good News in Exile: Three Pastors Offer a Hopeful Vision for the Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1999.

Covey, Stephen R. *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Families: Building a Beautiful Family Culture in a Turbulent World*. New York: Franklin Covey/Golden Books, 1997.

_____. *The 8th Habit: From Effectiveness to Greatness*. New York: Free Press, 2004.

Dean, Eric. *St. Benedict for the Laity*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1989.

Depree, Max. *Leadership Is an Art*. New York: Doubleday, 1989.

Derkse, Wil, and Martin Kessler. *The Rule of Benedict for Beginners: Spirituality for Daily Life*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2003.

Dodd, C. H. *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments, Three Lectures*. Chicago: Willett, Clark and Company, 1937.

Donovan, Vincent J. *Christianity Rediscovered*. 25th anniversary ed. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2003.

Dorrien, Gary J. *The Remaking of Evangelical Theology*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998.

Dykstra, Craig R., and Sharon Daloz Parks. *Faith Development and Fowler*. Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1986.

Fairholm, Gilbert W. *Perspectives on Leadership: From the Science of Management to Its Spiritual Heart*. Westport, CT: Quorum, 1998.

- Finger, Thomas N. *Self, Earth and Society: Alienation & Trinitarian Transformation*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1997.
- Finkleman, Harold. "Psychodynamics: An Introduction." <http://members.shaw.ca/finkleman/psychoDYN.htm> (accessed December 3, 2005).
- Fleming, Dave. *Leadership Wisdom from Unlikely Voices: People of Yesterday Speak to Leaders of Today*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004.
- Flory, Richard W., and Donald E. Miller. *GenX Religion*. New York: Routledge, 2000.
- Ford David, F. *Self and Salvation: Being Transformed*. Cambridge Studies in Christian Doctrine. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 12 98, 1998.
- Fowler, James W. *Becoming Adult, Becoming Christian: Adult Development and Christian Faith*. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1984.
- _____. *Faith Development and Pastoral Care*. Theology and Pastoral Care Series. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987.
- _____. *Faithful Change: The Personal and Public Challenges of Postmodern Life*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1996.
- _____. "James W. Fowler." In *Faith Development in the Adult Life Cycle*, ed. Kenneth Stokes. New York: W. H. Sadlier, 1982).
- _____. *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning*. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1981.
- _____. "Stages of Faith: Reflections on a Decade of Dialogue." *Christian Educational Journal* (Autumn 1992).
- _____. *Weaving the New Creation: Stages of Faith and the Public Church*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991.
- Fowler, James W., Sam Keen, and Jerome Berryman. *Life Maps: Conversations on the Journey of Faith*. Waco, TX: Word Books, 1978.
- Fowler, James W., Karl Ernst Nipkow, and Friedrich Schweitzer. *Stages of Faith and Religious Development: Implications for Church, Education, and Society*. New York: Crossroad, 1991.
- Frost, Michael, and Alan Hirsch. *The Shaping of Things to Come: Innovation and Mission for the 21st-Century Church*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003.

- Ganssle, Gregory, E. *God and Time: Four Views*. Nottingham, UK: InterVarsity Press, 2001.
- Gay, Peter. *The Enlightenment: An Interpretation*, Vol. 2, *The Science of Freedom*. New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1969.
- Gempf, Conrad. *Jesus Asked*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003.
- Gibbs, Eddie, and Ian Coffey. *Church Next: Quantum Changes in Christian Ministry*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000.
- Giuliani, Rudolph W., and Ken Kurson. *Leadership*. New York: Hyperion, 2002.
- Gladwell, Malcolm. *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking*. New York: Little, Brown, 2005.
- Goleman, Daniel. *Emotional Intelligence*. New York: Bantam Books, 1995.
- Goleman, Daniel, Richard Boyatzis, and Annie McKee. *Primal Leadership: Realizing the Power of Emotional Intelligence*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2002.
- Green, Joel B., and Michael Pasquarello. *Narrative Reading, Narrative Preaching: Reuniting New Testament Interpretation and Proclamation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003.
- Greidanus, Sidney. *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text: Interpreting and Preaching Biblical Literature*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1988.
- Grenz, Stanley J. *A Primer on Postmodernism*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1996.
- _____. *Renewing the Center: Evangelical Theology in a Post-Theological Era*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000.
- _____. *Theology for the Community of God*. Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 1994.
- _____. *What Christians Really Believe—and Why*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998.
- Grenz, Stanley J., and John R. Franke. *Beyond Foundationalism: Shaping Theology in a Postmodern Context*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001.

- Griffin, Emery A. *The Mind Changers: The Art of Christian Persuasion*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1976.
- Guder Darrell, L., and Lois Barrett. *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1998.
- Gunton Colin, E. *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Doctrine*. Cambridge Companions to Religion. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- _____. *Christ and Creation*. The Didsbury Lectures. Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 1992.
- _____. ed. *The Doctrine of Creation: Essays in Dogmatics, History and Philosophy*. Edinburgh: T and T Clark, 1997.
- _____. *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*. Edinburgh Studies in Constructive Theology. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998.
- _____. *Trinity, Time, and Church: A Response to the Theology of Robert W. Jenson*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans 2000
- Hammond, N. G. L. *A History of Greece*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967.
- Hatch, Edwin. *The Influence of Greek Ideas and Usage upon the Christian Church*. Edinburgh: Williams and Norgate, 1891.
- Harvey, Barry. *Another City: An Ecclesiological Primer for a Post-Christian World*. Christian Mission and Modern Culture. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1999.
- Haught John, F. *God after Darwin: A Theology of Evolution*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999.
- Heifetz, Ronald A. *Leadership Without Easy Answers*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1994.
- Hendricks, Howard G. *Teaching to Change Lives*. Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1987.
- Heschel Abraham, Joshua. *Sabbath*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1983.
- Heyduck, Richard. *The Recovery of Doctrine in the Contemporary Church: An Essay in Philosophical Ecclesiology*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2002.

- Hjalmarson, Leonard. "Kingdom Leadership in the Postmodern Era." *Christianity.ca*, 2005, <http://www.christianity.ca/church/leadership/2005/05.000.html> (accessed June 27, 2005).
- Hollis, James. *The Eden Project: In Search of the Magical Other*. Studies in Jungian Psychology by Jungian Analysts. Toronto: Inner City Books, 1998.
- _____. *The Middle Passage: From Misery to Meaning in Midlife*. Studies in Jungian Psychology by Jungian Analysts. Toronto: Inner City Books, 1993.
- Hopewell, James, F. *Congregation: Stories and Structures*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987.
- Hunter, Geoffrey, Gethin Thomas, and Stephen Wright. *A Preacher's Companion: Essays from the College of Preachers*. Oxford: The Bible Reading Fellowship, 1989.
- Jamieson, Alan. *A Churchless Faith: Faith Journeys beyond the Churches*. London: SPCK, 2002.
- _____. "A Churchless Faith: Faith Outside The Evangelical Pentecostal/ Charismatic Church Of New Zealand." Ph.D. diss., University of Canterbury, 1998.
- _____. *Journeying in Faith: In and Beyond the Tough Places*. London: SPCK, 2004.
- Jeffcoat, John L. "English Bible History." *Greatsite.com* 2002. <http://www.greatsite.com/timeline-english-bible-history/> (accessed April 5, 2005).
- Jenkins, Philip. *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Johnson, Steven. *Emergence: The Connected Lives of Ants, Brains, Cities, and Software*. New York: Scribner, 2001.
- Johnston, Graham. *Preaching to a Postmodern World: A Guide to Reaching Twenty-First-Century Listeners*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2001.
- Kets de Vries, Manfred F. R. *The Leadership Mystique: An User's Manual for the Human Experience*. London: Financial Times Prentice Hall, 2001.
- Kimball, Dan. *The Emerging Church: Vintage Christianity for New Generations*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003.
- Kohlberg, Lawrence. "The Development of Modes of Moral Thinking and Choice in the Years 10 to 16." Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1959.

- Kotter, John P. *Leading Change*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 1996.
- Kouzes, James M., and Barry Z. Posner. *The Leadership Challenge*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002.
- Lakoff, George, and Mark Turner. *More Than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989.
- Latourette, Kenneth Scott. *A History of Christianity*. New York: Harper and Row, 1953.
- Lencioni, Patrick M. *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002.
- Locke, John L. *The De-Voicing of Society: Why We Don't Talk to Each Other Anymore*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1998.
- Loscalzo, Craig A. *Apologetic Preaching: Proclaiming Christ to a Postmodern World*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000.
- Lowry, Eugene L. *The Sermon: Dancing the Edge of Mystery*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1997.
- Macaulay, Ranald, and Jerram Barrs. *Being Human: The Nature of Spiritual Experience*. Carlisle, UK: Solway, 1996.
- Maxwell, John C. *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership: Follow Them and People Will Follow You*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1998.
- McFague, Sallie. *Models of God: Theology for an Ecological, Nuclear Age*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987.
- McFarlane, Graham W. P. *Christ and the Spirit: The Doctrine of the Incarnation According To Edward Irving*. Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 1996.
- McGrath, Alister E. *Christian Theology: An Introduction*. 3d ed. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2001.
- _____. *Evangelicalism and the Future of Christianity*. 2d ed. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1996.
- _____. *The Future of Christianity*. Blackwell Manifestos. Oxford: Blackwell, 2002.
- McKinney, Richard W. A., ed. *Creation, Christ and Culture: Studies in Honour of T. F. Torrance*. Edinburgh: Clark, 1976.

- McLaren, Brian D. *The Church on the Other Side: Doing Ministry in the Postmodern Matrix*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000.
- _____. "Dorothy on Leadership." *Rev Magazine*, November/December, 2000, <http://www.emergentvillage.com/downloads/resources/mclaren/DorothyonLeadership.pdf> (accessed July 8, 2005).
- _____. *A New Kind of Christian: A Tale of Two Friends on a Spiritual Journey*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2001.
- _____. *The Story We Find Ourselves In: Further Adventures of a New Kind of Christian*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003.
- McLaren, Brian D., and Anthony Campolo. *Adventures in Missing the Point: How the Culture-Controlled Church Neutered the Gospel*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003.
- McLuhan, Eric, and Frank Zingrone, eds. *Essential McLuhan*. London: Routledge, 1997.
- Miller, M. Rex. *The Millennium Matrix: Reclaiming the Past, Reframing the Future of the Church*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004.
- Miller, Mark. *Experiential Storytelling: (Re)Discovering Narrative to Communicate God's Message*. El Cajon, CA: Youth Specialties, 2004.
- Morrell, Margot, and Stephanie Capparell. *Shackleton's Way: Leadership Lessons from the Great Antarctic Explorer*. New York: Viking, 2001.
- Morrissey, George L., Thomas L. Sechrest, Wendy B. Warman, and George L. Morrissey. *Loud and Clear: How to Prepare and Deliver Effective Business and Technical Presentations*. 4th ed. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1997.
- Morse, Mary Kate P. "The Relationship of Wisdom to Transformational Leadership." Ph.D. diss., Gonzaga University, 1995.
- Murphy, Nancey. *Beyond Liberalism and Fundamentalism: How Modern and Postmodern Philosophy Set the Theological Agenda*. Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996.
- Murray, Stuart. *Church after Christendom*. Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 2004.
- _____. *Church Planting: Laying Foundations*. Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 2001.

- _____. "The End of Christendom." <http://www.anabaptistnetwork.com/endofchristendom> (accessed January 14, 2004).
- _____. *Post-Christendom after Christendom*. Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 2004.
- Myers, Joseph R. *Organic Community: Creating a Place Where People Naturally Connect*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, forthcoming.
- _____. *The Search to Belong: Rethinking Intimacy, Community, and Small Groups*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003.
- Nathan, Rich, and Ken Wilson. *Empowered Evangelicals: Bringing Together the Best of the Evangelical and Charismatic Worlds*. Ann Arbor, MI: Vine Books, 1995.
- Newbigin, Lesslie. *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1989.
- _____. *Proper Confidence: Faith, Doubt, and Certainty in Christian Discipleship*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1995.
- Norrington, David. *To Preach or Not to Preach?* Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 1996.
- Norton, Robert, and Richard Southern. *Cracking Your Congregation's Code: Mapping Your Spiritual DNA to Create Your Future*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2001.
- Novak, David. "Theology and Philosophy: An Exchange with Robert Jensen." In *Trinity, Time, and Church: A Response to the Theology of Robert W. Jenson*, ed. Colin E. Gunton. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2000.
- Pagitt, Doug. *Reimagining Spiritual Formation: A Week in the Life of an Experimental Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004.
- Peacocke, Arthur. "The Cost of New Life," In *The Work of Love: Creation as Kenosis*, ed. J. C. Polkinghorne. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2001.
- Pearse, Meic, and Matthews, Chris. *We Must Stop Meeting Like This*. Eastbourne, UK: Kingsway, 1999.
- Peters, Thomas, and Robert H. Waterman. *In Search of Excellence*. New York: Harper and Row, 1982.
- Peterson Eugene, H. *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction*. London: Marshall Pickering, 1989.

- _____. *Working the Angles: The Shape of Pastoral Integrity*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1987.
- Phillips, Christopher. *Six Questions of Socrates: A Modern-Day Journey of Discovery through World Philosophy*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2004.
- _____. *Socrates Caf  : A Fresh Taste of Philosophy*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2001.
- Polkinghorne, J. C. *The Work of Love: Creation as Kenosis*. Grand Rapids, MI: Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans, 2001.
- Price, Reynolds, *Three Gospels*. New York: Scribner, 1996.
- Priddy, Mark. "Toward a Missional Community: A Short Reflection". Allelon Companions in The Gospel Article Index, March 30, 2004, <http://www.allelon.org/articles/article.cfm?id,69&page=2> (accessed June 27, 2005).
- Quenk, Naomi L. *Essentials of Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Assessment*. Essentials of Psychological Assessment Series. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 2000.
- Quicke, Michael J. *360-Degree Preaching: Hearing, Speaking, and Living the Word*. Carlisle, UK: Paternoster Press, 2003.
- Ricur, Paul, Robert Czerny, Kathleen McLaughlin, and John Costello. *The Rule of Metaphor: Multi-Disciplinary Studies of the Creation of Meaning in Language*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978.
- Riddell, Michael. *Threshold of the Future: Reforming the Church in the Post-Christian West*. London: SPCK, 1998.
- Ridderstrale, Jonas, and Kjell A. Nordstrom. *Karaoke Capitalism: Management for Mankind*. Harlow, UK: Financial Times Prentice Hall, 2004.
- Riso, Don Richard, and Russ Hudson. *The Wisdom of the Enneagram: The Complete Guide to Psychological and Spiritual Growth for the Nine Personality Types*. New York: Bantam Books, 1999.
- Robbins, Duff. "Postmodern Youth Ministry in Adolescence: A Look at the Culture of Youth Ministry." *Youth Worker*, November/December 2003. <http://www.youthspecialties.com/articles/topics/postmodernism/adolescence.php> (accessed January 14, 2004).

- Roberts, Andrew. *Hitler and Churchill: Secrets of Leadership*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2003.
- Roberts, Wes, and Glenn Marshall. *Reclaiming God's Original Intent for the Church*. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2004.
- Roques, Mark. *Curriculum Unmasked: Towards a Christian Understanding of Education*. Eastbourne, UK: Monarch, 1989.
- Roques, Mark, and Jim Tickner. *The Good, the Bad and the Misled: True Stories Reflecting Different*. Crowborough, UK: Monarch, 1994.
- Rose, Lucy Atkinson. *Sharing the Word: Preaching in the Roundtable Church*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997.
- Roxburgh Alan, J. *The Missionary Congregation, Leadership, and Liminality*. Christian Mission and Modern Culture. Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997.
- _____. *Reaching a New Generation: Strategies for Tomorrow's Church*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993.
- Schlossberg, Edwin. *Interactive Excellence: Defining and Developing New Standards for the Twenty-First Century*. Library of Contemporary Thought. New York: Ballantine, 1998.
- Shults, F. LeRon. *The Postfoundationalist Task of Theology: Wolfhart Pannenberg and the New Theological Reality*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans 1999.
- Schultz, Thom, and Joani Schultz. *The Dirt on Learning*. Loveland, CO: Group, 1999.
- _____. *Why Nobody Learns Much of Anything at Church: And How to Fix It*. Rev. ed. Loveland, CO: Group, 2004.
- Seay, Chris, and Chris Bryan. *The Tao of Enron: Spiritual Lessons from a Fortune 500 Fallout*. Colorado Springs: Navpress, 2002.
- Senge, Peter M. *The Dance of Change: The Challenges of Sustaining Momentum in Learning Organizations*. New York: Doubleday, 1999.
- _____. *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*. New York: Doubleday, 1990.
- _____. *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook: Strategies and Tools for Building a Learning Organization*. New York: Doubleday, 1994.

- Senge, Peter M., C. Otto Scharmer, Joseph Jaworski, and Betty Sue Flowers. *Presence: Human Purpose and the Field of the Future*. Cambridge, MA, SoL, 2004.
- Sheehy, Gail. *New Passages: Mapping Lives across Time*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1996.
- Smith, Chuck. *The End of the World—as We Know It: Clear Direction for Bold and Innovative Ministry in a Postmodern World*. Colorado Springs: WaterBrook Press, 2001.
- Snyder, Howard A., and Daniel V. Runyon. *Decoding the Church: Mapping the DNA of Christ's Body*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2002.
- Stackhouse, Ian. "Negative Preaching and the Modern Mind: A Crisis in Evangelical Preaching." *The Evangelical Quarterly* 73, no. 3 (2001): 247-56.
- _____. *The Gospel Driven Church: Retrieving Classical Ministries for Contemporary Revivalism*. Carlisle, UK: Paternoster Press, 2004.
- Staub, Dick. "The Dick Staub Interview: Trusting in a Culturally Relevant Gospel." *Christianity Today*, August 26, 2003. <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2003/134/22.0.html> (accessed January 14, 2004).
- Stetzer, Ed. *Planting Churches in a Postmodern Age*. Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 2003.
- Stibbe, Mark W. G. *Revival*. Thinking Clearly Series. Crowborough: Monarch, 1998.
- Stokes, Kenneth. ed., *Faith Development in the Adult Life Cycle*. New York: W.H. Sadlier, 1982.
- Stott, John. *I Believe in Preaching*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1982.
- Straughn, Harold Kent. "My Interview With James W. Fowler on the Stages of Faith," *Life Spiral Communications*. <http://www.lifespirls.com/TheMindSpiral/Fowler/fowler.html> (accessed November 12, 2004).
- Sudworth, Tim. "Preaching: A Critique of the Practice and Theology of Preaching within British Evangelicalism and Emerging Culture." Masters thesis, King's College, University of London, 2004.
- Sweet, Leonard I. *Aquachurch*. Loveland, CO: Group, 1999.

- _____. *Eleven Genetic Gateways to Spiritual Awakening*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1998.
- _____. *Post-Modern Pilgrims: First Century Passion for the 21st Century World*. Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 2000.
- Sweet, Leonard I., and Andy Crouch. *The Church in Emerging Culture: Five Perspectives*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003.
- Sweet, Leonard I., Brian D. McLaren, and Jerry Haselmayer. *"A" Is for Abductive: The Language of the Emerging Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003.
- Taylor, David. *The Naked Leader*. London: Bantam, 2003.
- Thomas, Gethin, Geoffrey Hunter, and Stephen Wright. *A Preacher's Companion: Essays from the College of Preachers*. Oxford: The Bible Reading Fellowship, 1989.
- Thomsom, Jeremy. *Preaching As Dialogue*. Grove Pastoral Series. Cambridge: Hassall and Lucking, 2003.
- Thwaites, James. *The Church Beyond the Congregation: The Strategic Role of the Church in the Postmodern Era*. rev. ed. Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 2000.
- Tomlinson, Dave. *The Post-Evangelical*. London: Triangle, 1995.
- Volf, Miroslav. *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity*. Sacra Doctrina. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1998.
- Walker, Andrew. *Telling the Story: Gospel, Mission and Culture Gospel and Culture*. London: SPCK, 1996.
- Ward, Graham. *The Blackwell Companion to Postmodern Theology*. Blackwell Companions to Religion. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2001.
- Ward, Pete. *Liquid Church*. Carlisle, UK: Paternoster Press, 2002.
- _____. *Mass Culture: Eucharist and Mission in a Post-Modern World*. Oxford: Bible Reading Fellowship, 1999.
- Warren, Rick. *The Purpose Driven Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995.
- _____. *The Purpose-Driven Life: What on Earth Am I Here For?* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002.

- Weaver, J. Denny. *The Nonviolent Atonement*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2001.
- Webb-Mitchell, Brett. *Christly Gestures: Learning to Be Members of the Body of Christ*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2003.
- Webber, Robert. *Ancient-Future Evangelism: Making Your Church a Faith-Forming Community*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2003.
- _____. *Ancient-Future Faith: Rethinking Evangelicalism for a Postmodern World*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999.
- _____. *The Younger Evangelicals: Facing the Challenges of the New World*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2002.
- Wheatley, Margaret J. "Goodby Command and Control." In *Leader to Leader*, ed. Frances Hesselbein and Paul M. Cohen, 151-152. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999.
- _____. *Leadership and the New Science: Discovering Order in a Chaotic World*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 1999.
- Wildman Wesley, J. *Fidelity with Plausibility: Modest Christologies in the Twentieth Century*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998.
- Willimon, William H. *The Intrusive Word: Preaching to the Unbaptized*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1994.
- Wilson, Jonathan R. *Living Faithfully in a Fragmented World: Lessons for the Church from Macintyre's after Virtue*. Christian Mission and Modern Culture. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997.
- Wilson, Paul Scott. *A Concise History of Preaching*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1992.
- Wright, N. T. *The Challenge of Jesus*. London: SPCK, 2000.
- Wright, Nigel. *The Radical Evangelical: Seeking a Place to Stand*. London: SPCK, 1996.
- Yaconelli, Mike. *Stories of Emergence: Moving from Absolute to Authentic*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003.
- Young, Jeremy. *The Cost of Certainty: How Religious Conviction Betrays the Human Psyche*. London: Darton, Longman, and Todd, 2004.

Zink-Sawyer, B. "The Word Purely Preached and Heard: The Listener and the Homiletical Endeavour." *Interpretation* 51, no. 4 (1997): 342-57.