

# **A Synopsis of the Theological Systems Behind Current UK Church Streams**

**How to see the wood for the trees  
in today's evangelical mess.**

**Paul Fahy**

# A Synopsis of the Theological Systems Behind Current UK Church Streams

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## Why is this important?

Many commentators agree that the Evangelical church in the UK is in meltdown. There are factions on every side, erroneous practices, false teachings and abusive leaders. Aberrant practices can eventually be seen for what they are, but false doctrine is often more insidious. Jesus warned us that the end time would be dangerous because of the deceit of the enemy; wolves will pretend to be sheep and false teaching will be dressed up with some truths. Unsuspecting and trusting saints end up being damaged by the lies of the enemy, which were hidden amongst some otherwise good things. A lot of marked poison in a bottle on the shelf is not as dangerous as a small amount hidden within a hot apple pie.

Every professing church faction seen today has its own theological axe to grind. Behind each camp there is at least one theological system powering the teaching. But heterodox teaching does not have to emanate from an obviously dangerous splinter group; many popular writers and preachers have absorbed the principles of theological systems that actually erode Christian truth. Some teachers supposedly represent a certain sound stream, but have an underlying theological bent that totally opposes that stream. This study seeks to identify the key theological systems behind current churches, to explain the sources of their teachings. These are not apparently obvious in histories; for instance – all accept that Quakerism and Wesleyan Methodism are precursors of Pentecostalism, but the background contributing theologies would be mysticism and perfectionism.

It is a great advantage, for the believer, to understand the different theological systems abounding in the church today, and to spot the telltale signs of these when they hear them or read them. This will give them a serious advantage in their Christian walk and help them avoid dangerous pitfalls in their Christian life.

If a nature lover has a good knowledge of animal tracks and signs, and then camps out in a forest, they will be forewarned if they can spot bear tracks on the ground. Every year in the US, people without such understanding venture willy-nilly into such places and end up being savaged or killed. Today, the professing Christian church is an equally dangerous place. People are being abused and damaged by the very leaders who should be protecting and nurturing them, because they ignored, or were not aware, of the dangerous signs being exhibited by these teachers.

Theological comparisons are not to be feared as unnecessary academic excursions; doctrinal understanding is foundational to sound spiritual growth. Jesus told us that it is the truth that makes us free; so we must identify the non-truth, half-truths and semi-truths to avoid being enslaved by false teachers and erroneous notions.

Knowing the truth has never been more vital to maintaining a sound walk with God than it is today. This paper is being written to help you do that in a confusing world. It seeks to be as concise as possible and avoid large discussions of the issues. [Bible quotes are from the New King James Version and source quotes have been kept to a minimum to aid brevity.]

## Amyraldism

### Origins

Amyraldism was developed by the French Protestant theologian, Moise Amyraut (or Moses Amyrald, 1596-1664), as an attempt to unify Calvinists and Lutherans. He did this by teaching an Arminian type of universalism (God loves everyone, Christ died for everyone and desires to save everyone if they believe) then joining it to the particularism<sup>1</sup> of Calvinism (God elects only some to eternal life in practice). These views had previously been taught by the Scottish preacher John Cameron who influenced Amyraut. Subsequent Amyraldian arguments have been the way that Arminianism and Calvinism have been welded together by 'Reformed' teachers, such as Richard Baxter, Philip Doddridge, The Marrow-Men and Andrew Fuller. It has been called 'Hypothetical Universalism' because it is a theological impossibility. It tries to unite two opposite and contradictory things.

### Teaching

The doctrine was developed to avoid the impression that God is unfair, hateful or unjust in the doctrine of election; but it completely ignores many clear scriptures, such as that God does hate the wicked,<sup>2</sup> or that the reprobate are chosen to condemnation from eternity.<sup>3</sup> The essence of Amyraldism is:

- *Universalism*: salvation is hypothetically offered to all and available for all on the condition that they believe. Thus, God wills all men to be saved. But people are not saved as a result of their sin and rejection of the Gospel. This universal decree does not result in the salvation of men and is thus merely hypothetical.
- *Particularism*: salvation is certain for the specific people chosen by God since men do not believe the offer.

Thus God loves everyone and decrees the salvation of everyone if they believe. However, since men don't believe, God gives faith to the elect. This is a confused and contradictory system - all men can be saved by their own faith, but only the elect are actually saved by the gift of God's faith. In expounding this Amyraut posited (as with many today) that God has two contradictory wills:

1. God desires the salvation of all men and sends Christ to die for all men, on condition that they believe. Salvation is potentially available to all, including the un-evangelised.
2. God, actually, only gives faith to the elect. Salvation is definite for these.

This teaches a contradiction within God, God wills all to be saved but only wills to give grace to the elect.

Amyraut also taught that it was possible for pagans to be saved without the Gospel, as well as falsely distinguishing between fallen man's natural ability and moral ability. The call of God goes beyond Gospel preaching; those who use right reason based on the general revelation of God in nature receive grace. But since man is depraved he does not have the moral ability to believe. [What a confusing mess!]

Many subsequent teachers have fallen by first blurring the edges of Calvinism into Amyraldism, then spiralling downwards through Arminianism, Socinianism and Deism. Where Amyraldism has taken root in history, the end result is disruption in the church, a weakening of evangelism and people falling away. This can be seen in the downfall of the French Reformed Church and the effects of Fullerism in English Baptist churches.

<sup>1</sup> This means the singling out of certain people for salvation, as opposed to universalism.

<sup>2</sup> Lev 26:27-30; Ps 5:5, 11:5, 53:5; Prov 16:16-19; Zech 11:8; Mal 1:3; Rm 9:13; Rev 2:6.

<sup>3</sup> Job 21:30; Prov 16:4; Isa 43:7; Rm 9:11, 22; 1 Pt 2:8; Jude 1:4.

### *Summary of Amyraldism*

1. God loves everyone. (Hypothetical universal election.)
2. The Son is sent to make salvation merely possible. (Note, atonement is not definite for God's chosen people but only potentially for all.)
3. Hypothetical universal decree of atonement- all can be saved if they believe.
4. All men can believe by natural power.
5. But this power is offset by moral inability. So God gives grace to the elect alone.

### **Scriptures affected**

See *Arminianism* and *Universalism*.

### **Dangers**

This is a confused, compromised and contradictory theology, and yet it is unwittingly espoused by very many modern Protestants. Amyrault has been called, 'the gravedigger of the French Reformed Church'<sup>4</sup> since it paved the way for many to return to Romanism and Arminianism. It is attractive to those who do not wish to present God as discriminatory or hating sinners. Yet the Bible clearly teaches that God differentiated between the elect and the reprobate in eternity out of his sovereign good pleasure.

Any theology that denies clear Biblical texts is dangerous. Amyraldism not only denies scripture but misrepresents God. It also posits a rift between the decree of God to elect only some, and the work of Christ on the cross which is stated to be universal in scope. Thus God decrees two contradictory things. What is the point of an atonement potentially effective for everyone, if most do not benefit from it? A universal redemption posits an unthinkable waste of precious blood of Christ.

### **Modern Proponents**

Four-Point Calvinists (see *Calvinism*), people who call themselves 'Calminians' (i.e. Amyraldians); people following Andrew Fuller (see *Fullerism*, Andrew Fuller closely followed these ideas).

## Arminianism

### **Origins**

The root ideas of Arminianism started early in Christian history and were known as semi-Pelagianism,<sup>5</sup> which teaches that man, though sinful, can assist God in salvation; man cooperates with God in conversion (synergism). Arminianism continued this idea. The term arises from Jacob Arminius, a Dutch preacher in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, who initiated a formal change from the traditional Calvinism of his church. His followers hardened his teachings into what we now call Arminianism. The theology was condemned by an international gathering of theologians at the Synod of Dort in 1618-19.

### **Teachings**

The modern Arminian believes that:

- Man is not totally depraved, he is needy or weak rather than dead in sin.
- God's calling is conditional upon man believing (God chooses those who will ultimately have faith). However, the Bible states that God's saving grace is sovereignly given to those he elects (chooses) leading to the gifts of faith and repentance. Faith is not a work of any man but a gift.

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<sup>4</sup> Prof. Georges Serr; see Roger Nicole, *Westminster Theological Journal*, Vol 54, no. 2 [Fall, 1992], p. 396.

<sup>5</sup> Pelagianism was similar to universalism (see later section) and taught that man was not as bad as the Bible states and that he could do good works unto salvation. It was originally taught by the British monk Pelagius.

- Christ died for everyone because God loves everyone. However, the Bible states that God hates the wicked [even naming certain individuals] and that Christ died only for his own sheep, not other flocks. If God loved everyone and Christ died for everyone, there could be no hell.
- As a result, Arminians are forced to teach that man can resist God by rejecting the Gospel, when the Bible shows that God changes men's hearts sovereignly, even of his enemies like Saul of Tarsus. Paul was resisting God when he was sovereignly converted.
- If man is so predominantly active in procuring his salvation, then his future must be uncertain. If he can resist God, he can fall away and be lost. Arminians actually teach this because their system leads directly to it, even though scripture reveals that no one can drag us away from the hands of God once he has saved us.

### Sample of scriptures affected

- *And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins.* [Eph 2:1]
- *No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him ... no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father.* [Jn 6:44,65]
- *By grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works.* [Eph 2:8-9]
- *Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated.* [Rm 9:13]
- *I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own ... and I lay down My life for the sheep.* [Jn 10:14-15]
- *The Lord opened her heart.* [Acts 16:14]
- *As many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.* [Acts 13:48]
- *I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of my Father's hand.* [John 10:28-29]

### Dangers

This system opposes all the salient features of the Gospel enshrined in the doctrines of grace. It makes man the pivot of actual salvation rather than God. Such a wrong focus on man in the origins of redemption inevitably leads to a concentration upon man throughout the Christian life. This results in a diminishing of God in real terms; all aspects of theology become man-centred. Recent extremes of dangerous theology have arisen from Arminians.

### Modern Proponents

Sadly, the vast majority of modern Christians endorse this system, many without realising it. Historically this was not the case, the vast majority of believers after the Reformation were Calvinistic and virtually all the major denominational confessions of faith were solidly Calvinistic when they began: Anglicans, Baptists, Congregationalists, Presbyterians and most independents were all originally Calvinistic (or Reformed). Even the majority of early Brethren were Reformed as far as the Gospel message was concerned. On the other side, only Methodism was constructed on a definite Arminian basis. Today, most Evangelical denominations are Arminian or a confused and self-contradictory Calvinist/Arminian mix, with the exception of historic Strict Baptists, Presbyterians and some independents. Virtually all of the modern parachurch evangelistic organisations are Arminian, as are their materials.

### Spin offs

- *Evangelical Arminianism*: this is the name given to the Arminianism taught by John Wesley, which differed slightly from Continental Arminianism. Wesleyan Evangelical Arminianism was not quite as unorthodox since it upheld a form of human depravity

and the imputation of Adam's sin (though removed by grace given at birth). Followers of Wesley ought to be aware that he taught many other very serious errors.

- *Decisionism*: Since man is the centre of this Gospel, it spawned many methods to get man to respond visibly: altar calls (invitation system), easy-believism, campaign evangelism, raised hands, coming to the front of meetings etc. This is called 'decisionism', Arminians feel that the crucial factor in salvation is the decision of man, so efforts are made to press men to respond immediately; often without the enquirer doing anything, not even praying for himself. The historical results are poor: Charles Finney (who largely started this) later accepted that most of his revival converts fell away; the Billy Graham organisation revealed that well over 85% of campaign 'converts' never continued in church attendance. This method is never seen in the Bible where people are commanded to seek God for mercy, then repent, believe in Christ and confess him for themselves.
- *Free-willism*: Again in emphasising a man-centred Gospel, this teaches that man is free to will spiritual good, to choose salvation, to determine his own spiritual future. This was a teaching of Pelagius and opposes many Bible texts (e.g: Gen 6:5; Jer 17:9-10; Rm 9:15-16; Eph 2:1, 8-9). The start of the Reformation was Luther's great work explaining that the human will is actually bound and locked in wickedness without God's grace.<sup>6</sup>

## Calvinism / Reformed Theology

### Origins

The word arises from the 16<sup>th</sup> century reformer John Calvin, but the teachings he is known for can be traced back to Augustine of Hippo and the apostle Paul. It is simply Biblical theology regarding the doctrines of grace. The Reformation, beginning with Martin Luther in 1517, was the great work of God to free the church from error claiming that salvation was by faith alone, in Christ alone, through grace alone, to the glory of God alone. Calvinism was the systematisation of Reformation truths, binding the gains of the Reformation into solid, sound theology. Calvin's greatest work, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, propelled the Reformation into a formidable historic force for truth and transformed Europe. Reformed churches sprang up everywhere, taking hold wherever they were not stamped out by relentless persecution (as in France or Spain). Eventually, the general religious character of England, Scotland, the Netherlands, West Germany, the US, Switzerland and other states became Reformed.

The other strand of Reformation theology was Lutheranism which retained Martin Luther's erroneous idiosyncrasies (like the Real Presence<sup>7</sup> and baptismal regeneration) but also drifted from some of Luther's key Biblical emphases (such as the bondage of the will) becoming almost universalistic. Lutheranism remained strong in Germany and Scandinavia. It is well represented in the USA, but many variants are virtually liberal; only the Missouri Synod holds to classic confessional Lutheranism.

### Teachings

Although Calvinism covers more than the doctrines of grace, it is best known for its systematic analysis of God's work in salvation, which is opposed to Universalism in any form. In a nutshell, Calvinism emphasises that God is God, God is sovereign in the work of salvation. For many the acronym TULIP identifies the key points of Calvinism over against Arminianism:

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<sup>6</sup> Martin Luther, *The Bondage of the Will*. Not that man has no free will at all; man can choose Cornflakes instead of porridge for breakfast, but cannot choose to do spiritual good works, cannot attain to godliness.

<sup>7</sup> The Lord is not in the bread and wine (as in Romanism), but is actually present above, on and under them.



- **Total Depravity:** man is riddled with sin and dead towards God, unable to contribute to his salvation in any way.
- **Unconditional Election:** God chooses the elect from his own good pleasure, not according to what man may do in the future. The Father gave these people to Christ in eternity to be his bride.
- **Limited Atonement:** Christ only dies for the elect. These are definitely redeemed.<sup>8</sup>
- **Irresistible Grace:** those who are chosen, for whom Christ died, are drawn by God and effectually called by the Spirit and regenerated.
- **Preservation of the saints:** those who are truly converted (and only those) are kept by the power of God to the end. The redeemed will perform good works by grace.

Salvation is *particular* not *universal*, it actually saves those it is intended for (the elect). The NT words used: redemption, reconciliation, propitiation, all describe the actual attainment of salvation; they do not imply the possibility or potential salvation of those who respond (as in Arminianism). When God saves, his power is not broken or wasted. Furthermore, the Biblical concept of penal substitution (Christ suffered my penalty) clearly teaches that those whom Christ died for are definitely saved, since all their sin is paid for.

Salvation is solely the work of God (monergism), not involving the co-operation of man (synergism).

Other teachings [which grew out of a reaction to Roman Catholicism] include: an emphasis upon God's covenant with men through Christ (Covenant Theology), the priesthood of all believers; the discipline of the local church by godly elders; the centrality of the Lord's Supper, the Bible as God's authoritative and fully inspired word, submission to civil leaders etc.

### Sample of scriptures affected

- *Salvation and glory and honour and power belong to the Lord our God! [Rev 19:1]*
- *You, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses. [Col 2:13]*
- *Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me. [Ps 51:5]*
- *God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. [2 Thess 2:13]*
- *You shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people [not everyone] from their sins. [Mt 1:21]*
- *as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. [Rm 8:14]*
- *who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. [Jn 1:13]*
- *Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; you are Mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. [Isa 43:1-2]*

### Dangers

- *Hyper Calvinism:* some have taken Calvinism to a fatalistic extreme and refuse to evangelise the world, believing that a work of grace has to begin before they preach the Gospel to a soul. They believe the Gospel is only for the regenerate. This disobeys clear scriptures commanding evangelisation of all within our sphere of influence and

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<sup>8</sup> All evangelical systems limit the atonement in some way since not everyone is saved. Calvinism limits those who it is applied to – the elect only. Arminianism limits God's power and ability to save those it is applied to, since Christ dies for many who reject him.

explaining that God commands repentance of all (Acts 17:30). The responsibility of man as a creature does not imply any ability to perform spiritual good. Only the elect will actually repent and believe, but all must be commanded.

- *Amyraldism* or *hypothetical universalism*: better known as Four-Point Calvinism. This is the attempt to merge Calvinism with Arminianism by teaching two divine decrees: a general (universal) decree to save all, and a decree to elect only some. So, there is a hypothetical universal purpose in God: God loves everyone, Christ died for everyone [i.e. they omit Limited Atonement from TULIP], God desires to save all on the condition of repentance and faith. But then God sovereignly chooses only some since men will not come to Christ by themselves. This system is inconsistent, unbiblical and self-contradictory: God loves everyone but then only chooses some. Some Reformed men teach varieties of this such as: James Ussher, Richard Baxter, Andrew Fuller, E Polhill, E Calamy, Ralph Wardlaw, Alan Clifford, James Morison, Augustus Strong, Norman Douty and Millard Erickson. Sadly, this is the view of several modern Reformed publishing houses.
- *The Free-Offer* (or *sincere offer*, *well-meant offer* or *universal offer*): this is virtually Amyraldism and Four-Point Calvinism, though usually unrecognised by its proponents. It teaches that God loves everyone and effectively denies Limited Atonement since preachers tell congregations that anyone can decide for Christ, that all can believe. To anyone hearing the gospel proclaimed, there is a sincere offer from God of salvation - even to the reprobate. This is unbiblical since the reprobate are never drawn by God and are not called or granted faith.

### **Modern Proponents**

While many claim to be Calvinists, relatively few today are in line with the historic teachings of Calvin himself. Many modern Calvinists (or Reformed theologians) are actually four-pointers, softening the edges of election and limited atonement due to the stigma this causes. Some Presbyterian denominations and a few Grace Baptist churches are still faithful to historic Reformed theology. True Calvinism is definitely out of fashion – but it best represents Biblical truth.

### **Some useful Calvinist authors**

All of these are helpful, some are excellent, but occasionally there are items that cannot be fully endorsed. Many of the best Calvinist writers are Presbyterians.

- THE REFORMERS AND THEIR PROGENY: John Calvin, John Knox, Martin Luther (Lutheran), Martin Bucer, Jerome Zanchius, Henry Bullinger, Francis Turretin.
- CONTINENTAL THEOLOGIANS: Herman Bavinck, Abraham Kuyper, Wilhelms à Brakel, Herman Ridderbos.
- US THEOLOGIANS: WGT Shedd, RL Dabney, BB Warfield, Loraine Boettner, Jonathan Edwards, Robert Reymond, AA Hodge, Charles Hodge, John Girardeau, William Plumer, Louis Berkhof, Herman Hoeksema, David Engelsma, Herman Hanko, William Hendricksen, Joel Beeke, JL Dagg (Baptist), JP Boyce (Baptist).
- UK PURITANS AND THEIR PROGENY: Samuel Rutherford, Thomas Watson, Thomas Brooks, Thomas Goodwin (note: not the Arminian John Goodwin), Stephen Charnock, Matthew Henry, Christopher Ness, John Owen, William Perkins, William Ames, John Flavel, John Brown (Haddington), John Brown (Edinburgh, grandson of the other), William Cunningham, JC Ryle.
- UK BAPTISTS & INDEPENDENTS: John Bunyan, John Gill, JC Philpot, William Gadsby, William Huntington, Charles Spurgeon.
- POPULAR MODERN WRITERS EJ Young, AW Pink, Martyn Lloyd-Jones, RC Sproul, Michael Horton, Don Fortner.

- POPULAR LEVEL EXPOSITIONS OF TULIP: *The Five Points of Calvinism*, William Parks; *The Five Points of Calvinism*, Steele & Thomas; *Saved by Grace*, Cammenga & Hanko; *The Five Points of Calvinism*, Dabney & Dickinson; *The Reformed Faith*, L. Boettner (booklet); *The Five Points of Calvinism*, WJ Seaton (booklet), *Chosen For Good*, Lewis, Clements & Haslam.

### A Comparison of Systems

God is sovereign in salvation	Compromised position	Man initiates conversion by free will
<b>True historic Calvinism</b> God loves the elect alone Christ died for the elect alone Mankind is dead in sins But God draws the elect God gives faith to the elect God gives repentance to the elect God regenerates the elect God preserves the elect	<b>Amyraldism &amp; the 'free offer'</b> God loves everyone Christ died for everyone Mankind is morally dead in sins Men fail to come to Christ Man has natural ability to believe but this is counteracted by moral inability So God gives grace to the elect	<b>Arminianism</b> God loves everyone Christ died for everyone Man is not totally depraved Man decides to come to Christ Man believes by free will Man repents by free will Regeneration follows faith Men can fall away
Monergism	Compromised and contradictory	Synergism
Particularism	Hypothetical universalism	Universalism

## Cessationism

### Introduction

Cessationism is the teaching (not a theology but an interpretation) that the supernatural sign gifts died out with the apostles, or when the Bible monographs were written, say the end of the first century. It is a position held by most conservative Calvinists.

### Origins

Though this interpretation has been around since the Reformation (though not held by all), perhaps the key modern work was BB Warfield's, *Counterfeit Miracles*. Cessationism is largely a defence against the extreme aberrations found in Pentecostal and Charismatic denominations and the doctrine became prominent at the time of the Pentecostal beginnings. The serious errors of charismatic churches must be condemned but the argument by Reformed writers used to defend cessationism is flawed. It is not possible to make an exegetical case for this idea; all attempts are strained and stretched beyond logic. It is also not possible to make a historical case.

### Teachings

- The supernatural sign gifts were the authentication of the apostles. They were not the possession of the early church generally.
- The only people that possessed them were the apostles and those disciples laid hands upon by the apostles.
- The gifts, therefore, belonged exclusively to the apostolic and immediately sub-apostolic age. The supernatural gifts have now passed away, ending in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Warfield, p6. There is not agreement on this. The Reformers took this view, but most Protestants felt that there was a gradual waning of the gifts which disappeared in the fourth century, say about the time of Constantine. Some even extending them much later. (See Warfield p6-8.)

The evidence for the cessationist argument is drawn mainly from history, by analysis of the writings of the Fathers.<sup>10</sup> From this is formed a rationalist argument deduced from a logical approach to history. This argument is extra-biblical. To it is added an argument based upon revelation. Miracles accredit genuine revelation and only occur in revelation periods performed by true messengers of God. The abundance in the apostolic age is a mark of the richness of the revelation given. When this revelation period closed, so did the miracles.

The key argument is that the sign gifts were only available until the time that the canon of scripture was complete and churches then had the use of Bibles, thus not requiring revelation - prophetic ministry, words of knowledge etc. The problems are:

- There is not a shred of evidenced for this idea in scripture. However this teaching contradicts several clear scriptures.
- The working of gifts were not confined solely to the apostles and their delegates:
  - \* *Ananias* (Acts 9:12). There is no indication that he was an apostolic delegate, rather the reverse. We never hear of him again, yet he was the chosen instrument in Paul's healing, baptism and early discipling.
  - \* *Philip had four daughters who prophesied* (Acts 21:9). There is no doubt that these were not leaders, yet they were famous in this gift (even in patristic literature).
- Attempts to force this notion into 1 Cor 13:8-10 are arbitrary and unsound. Apologists state that 'perfect' means 'scripture'; when the Bible is complete, the gifts cease. But 'Perfect' here clearly refers to the restoration of all things at the Second Coming.
- Usually the sign gifts are said to end around the time of the final NT book about 95AD. Yet accredited church historians and early church fathers affirm that genuine gifts continued well past that time. Even Warfield accepts that miracles continued into the 2<sup>nd</sup> century. Augustine mentions genuine sign gifts 200 years later than this.
- Others suggest a date when the canon was formally accepted at the Council of Carthage in 397AD. But by this time there were insufficient revelatory gifts in practice, (though it seems that healings continued according to Augustine) so it would mean that God left the church without revelation for at least 200 years.
- In any case, even after 397 there would have been very few people with a Bible. Hand-written scrolls of even a few books would have been prohibited except for rich people. This situation is far from perfect.

### Scriptures affected

- There is silence regarding a clear statement that the supernatural gifts ceased; indeed, this concept would have shocked the early church that relied upon them.
- *Do not quench the Spirit, do not despise prophecies.* (1 Thess 5:19-20)
- *I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied.* (1 Cor 14:5)
- *Earnestly desire the best gifts ... first apostles, second prophets ...* (1 Cor 12:31, 38)
- *Having gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith.* (Rm 12:6)
- *Desire spiritual gifts and especially that you may prophesy.* (1 Cor 14:1)

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<sup>10</sup> Supernatural gifts are mentioned by some of the church Fathers, but not often. Also, the heathen world abounded with similar miracles, including supposed raisings from the dead. In comparison, the Fathers are fairly quiet about the matter. The most notable references are Irenaeus (Cont. Haer., II, lvi, lvii; V,vi) Origen (Cont. Cels., I, ii; III, xxiv; VII, iv, lxxvii) and Justin (Dial., pp.254ff., 308B, 315B, 258A; chap. 8). Cyprian, Tertullian and Augustine also contain references to the gifts. Argument from the Fathers is inconclusive. They certainly contain references beyond early 2<sup>nd</sup> Century but later writers are more suspicious; Eusebius could look back upon the age of the Spirit as a bygone era. Schaff states that the ante-Nicene writers are more free of references to the gifts than the works of the Nicene and Middle Ages, (Vol II, p117).

## Dangers

1. Even when the Bible contents were finally agreed in about 397 AD, it was centuries before ordinary church members were able to read it in most countries. The first vernacular translations into German appeared with Luther's Bible in 1534 while the first English translations that were widely available did not appear until at least 1535 with the publication of Tyndale's complete Bible (the NT appeared in 1525).<sup>11</sup> Thus the whole Bible was not available to most English Christians for over 1500 years (even then few poor people could afford one if they could find one<sup>12</sup>). Why would God withdraw gifts that the apostle's felt were essential to edification, only to leave them without access to his word for 1500 years? [This is one reason why this period was called the 'Dark Ages'.]
2. The Bible itself demands that we do not deny spiritual gifts (1 Thess 5:20). Indeed, Paul said they were essential and for all (1 Cor 14:1, 5,) and that meetings would include them (1 Cor 14:26, 29). In fact, there is no clear line drawn in the NT between ordinary and supernatural spiritual gifts (1 Cor 12:29-30 contains helps and administration with healing and miracles; Rm 12:6-8 contains encouraging and giving with prophecy, Eph 4:11 contains teachers as well as apostles). Since all agree that 'ordinary' spiritual gifts are still essential, it is impossible to slash scripture and remove the sign gifts destroying the unity of scripture.

For these and many other reasons we cannot deny that the Bible teaches the use of all spiritual gifts. It does not teach anywhere that these gifts will be removed before the Lord returns. While we may deplore the manifestations of what is supposed to be sign gifts in Charismatic churches, we cannot maintain a Biblical argument that they ceased in 100 AD.

However – we can make a strong case that tongues did cease in the apostolic age. The Greek words in 1 Cor 13:8 affirm that tongues ceased before the other gifts and fail 'on their own'. They are only mentioned in early NT books (Mark, 1 Cor. and Acts) and never mentioned again. In later lists of gifts, Paul did not mention them. In any case, Biblical tongues are certainly unlearned human languages; this is without doubt. The modern practice of speaking unknown, unintelligible sounds is an unbiblical practice, though common in false religions and occult groups. We can also affirm that the extraordinary offices of apostle and prophet have also ceased. There is a big difference between the apostles of the lamb or Christ (Rev 21:14; 1 Thess 2:6; Jude 1:17) and the apostles of the churches (1 Cor 12:28; 2 Cor 8:23 Gk). All God's people are now prophets, but this is not like the foundational office of prophet.

While it may be uncomfortable to deny cessationism, if we have a high view of scripture, we will affirm what the Bible actually says and not rationalise it away by fleshly arguments. This does not mean that we endorse the Charismatic practice of supernatural gifts; it simply means that we do not deny what the Bible clearly teaches.

What appear to be genuine supernatural gifts have appeared in history during times when they were needed. For instance, in times of persecution or when the Bible was unavailable. A good example of this is the ministry of Alexander Peden (see *The Scot's Worthies*). Peden was a godly, Protestant, Covenanter preacher who was hounded and persecuted throughout Scotland and Ireland who had many genuine prophetic words given him that enabled him to frequently escape danger. The Puritans considered godly, powerful

<sup>11</sup> Wycliffe's Bible appeared in 1388 but very few people had access to it and printing had not yet been invented.

<sup>12</sup> Over 200 years later (around 1800) the poor Welsh girl Mary Jones had to walk barefoot to Bala, 26 miles from her home near Mt. Cader Idris in Wales, to get a Bible.

preaching to be ‘prophesying’, something more than just dry teaching. Pioneer missionaries in desperate straits, in isolated settings, have known healing and miracles.

### **Modern Proponents**

Most conservative Protestant churches. For example: Victor Budgen, *The Charismatics and the Word of God*, Evangelical Press, Welwyn, (1985); *The Charismatics*, John MacArthur, Zondervan (1978).

## **Charismatic Theology Neo Pentecostalism**

### **Introduction**

There is no doubt, despite Pentecostal statements otherwise, that the Charismatic Movement (CM) and the Pentecostal churches are fruit on the same vine. The extremes found in CM, deplored by Classical Pentecostals, were all found in the origins and early pioneers of Pentecostalism; thus lines of communication can be traced from Azusa Street right up to Restorationism. Pentecostals cannot get off the hook that their innate theology has the seeds of heresy and aberrant practices within it. (See later article, *Pentecostal Theology*). The main root of both is the belief in a second work of grace called the baptism of (or *in* or *with*) the Holy Spirit, which leads to the use of supernatural spiritual gifts in the church.

However, since Classical Pentecostals deny relational links to the extremes of CM (thus calling it Neo Pentecostalism), and since there are discernible differences as well as comparisons, it seems best to summarise CM theology in its own heading. However, we should not think that Charismatic theology is either unified or systematic. It is more like a web of diverse and dissipated teachings; or perhaps it’s like a bucket, containing just about anything anyone throws into it – so varied are its distinctive teachings and practices.

### **Origins**

The CM formally began when Californian Episcopal (US Anglican) minister Dennis Bennett experienced the baptism in the Holy Spirit in 1959 and announced it publicly in 1960. This initiated the Pentecostal experience of the baptism in the Spirit, plus the use of tongues and other gifts, within non-Pentecostal denominations. In actual fact, for a decade, the ministries of William Branham, Oral Roberts, TL Osborn and Gordon Lindsay had already introduced members of other denominations to Pentecostal experiences through their healing and evangelistic campaigns. However, these ‘converts’ were an unidentifiable category within Protestantism. The Full Gospel Business Men’s Fellowship had also touched many Protestants through their conventions and prayer breakfasts; again, David du Plessis had been very active in reaching the mainline Protestant denominations with the Pentecostal message with a view to renewing them. Furthermore, Agnes Sanford was influential amongst Episcopalians when she added the gift of tongues to her gift of healing in the fifties. The first regular Pentecostal type prayer meeting occurred in the Trinity Episcopal Church, Wheaton in 1956 after a healing mission by Sanford. It was only the publicity that Bennett received from *Time* and *Newsweek* magazines which catapulted him into the limelight more than many others. Various magazines helped popularise the growing movement, while two books were major factors: David Wilkerson’s *The Cross & the Switchblade* (1963) and John Sherrill’s *They Speak with Other Tongues* (1964).

From this point the renewal in mainline churches spread to Canada and overseas and also began to affect the Roman Catholic Church. In England some brethren and independents had an experience of the baptism in the Spirit in the 1950s, but had only secondary US contacts, (e.g. Arthur Wallis, Edgar Trout, David Lillie). In the 60s these began to link up with those who were Spirit baptised via the CM in the 60s, such as Michael Harper who established *The Fountain Trust*. Harper set up conferences with respected men like Cecil Cousen and Campbell McAlpine as speakers, and also started a magazine, *Renewal*. In the 60s through the 70s there was very little input from pure Pentecostal sources; indeed many within the CM were wary of the extremes of Pentecostalism [this was largely due to the discredited sensationalism of healing and evangelistic campaign ministries]. Where this caution was expressed, folk from traditional denominations felt safe and gradually embraced the CM. Calvinists like Terry Virgo and Henry Tyler (friend of Martyr Lloyd-Jones), plus respected Baptists like Harold Owen, David Pawson and Doug McBain could become popular leaders in the growing work.

In the 70s there was a growing move towards Restorationism which arose from the contacts of Arthur Wallis and David Lillie. Gradually the many independent house churches started to coalesce into streams under key leaders like Bryn Jones in the North (*Restoration* magazine), Terry Virgo in the South East, Gerald Coates in Surrey, David Mansell in London, John Noble in Essex, Peter Lyne in Bristol and others. The impact of institutional renewal was waning while independent churches in the Restoration streams were growing; in fact there was some friction between the two as sheep voluntarily left mainline churches to go to Restoration works. Around these groups teachers like Hugh Thompson and Arthur Wallis ministered while some set up semi-restorationist independent churches (Harold Owen, Barney Coombs, Mike Pusey). The large Bible Weeks proved very effective means of strengthening existing members and providing a shop window for new ones (Dales and Downs in the late 70s & early 80s, Stoneleigh in the late 80s-90s).

Various groups rose and fell while leadership changed here and there for a variety of reasons. The Restorationist circles gradually cemented into two main streams with a few independents outside (e.g. Colin Urquhart's *Bethany* group, Restorationist groups in Farnborough/Basingstoke, Reading, Bristol, Southampton, Roger Forster's *Ichthus* in London etc.). The two key streams are still: *New Frontiers International* (under Virgo) and *Pioneer People* (under Coates). Outside influences came to bear upon these from time to time: Dave & Dale Garratt's free worship style, occasional Pentecostal influences (Steve Rider from Australia or Benson Idahosa from Africa), American influences (Charles Simpson, Larry Tomzak, CJ Mahaney); but the main shot in the arm was the impact of the Wimber conferences in the late 80s. Wimber was the first charismatic to solidly unify all the streams of UK Charismaticism: institutional renewal (he was a close friend of David Watson), Restorationism of both streams (he was organisationally tied to Virgo's NFI but closely supported by Coates), and all the independent groups.

From this point the influences that drifted in of Latter Rain teaching (always quietly present e.g. from Cecil Cousen in the 60s or Ern Baxter in the 70s) heavily increased (See *Dominionism* article later). Wimber brought a mix of full on Pentecostal techniques, a rough theological blend of Roman, pagan, statistical, mystical, psychological and Arminian ideas that seemed fresh. UK charismatics were not used to quotes from Morton Kelsey, Agnes Sanford or Francis MacNutt and the power he and his team manifested seemed incontrovertible. The first Wimber conference in Brighton brought massive apparent demonstrations of the Spirit; the following week Kenneth Copeland had a Word Faith convention in the same conference centre, which was an ineffective damp squib in comparison. CM leaders bought into Wimber's theology because it seemed powerfully

effective (people fell over in large numbers, spoke in tongues, were released from rage by screaming or experienced some temporary palliative relief of pain).

From here the full gamut of Latter Rain ideas flooded into the CM while hard line Manifest Sons of God teaching (See *Dominionism* article later) emerged in the ministry of people like Paul Cain, with whom Wimber was later enamoured. Cain even teamed up with Westminster Chapel's RT Kendall. It was not long that The Kansas City Prophets were foisted upon the UK CM in various conferences with all their aberrant teaching. From here it was a small step to the full flowering in the Toronto Experience of 1994, thence a myriad of lesser items.

### **Teachings**

See *Pentecostalism* and *Dominionism 2*. The main claimed difference between the CM and Classical Pentecostals is the elevation of certain leaders into authoritarian figures called apostles and prophets, and the extreme doctrines associated with them. Often this is labelled as Latter Rain theology, but aspects of this have been associated with Pentecostal churches from the beginning. There have always been apostles and prophets in Pentecostalism, just as there has always been erroneous doctrines, extreme practices and bizarre behaviour.

### **Sub Movements and aberrant practices**

There are simply hundreds, even thousands of spin-offs from the Charismatic Movement, many of which are denied as valid by mainstream Classical Pentecostals. We cannot list all the aberrations, organisations, theories, ministries and heresies in this paper, a few will have to suffice:

- *The Alpha Course*: probably the most important sub movement with a world-wide impact. The theology behind this is Arminian, charismatic, supportive of Toronto type psychological effects, especially being slain in the Spirit. Evangelistic teaching is stripped of its Biblical emphases: the atonement of Christ, the depth of sin, responsibility to God, repentance, personal dealings with God etc. Instead is a blessing-based focus upon meeting the Spirit over a week-end of intense psychological manipulation and softening up, resulting in stressing the needs of recipients and a subjective experience which is called conversion, but which the many testimonies show, is often an emotional reaction with no real repentance.
- *Deliverance and deliverance ministries*: e.g. Cleansing Stream, Ellel Ministries.
- *Word Faith Theology*: (see *Dominionism 2*)
- *Dominionism*: (see later articles).
- *Worship as feelings-led entertainment*.
- *Subjective revelation overrides the Bible*: prophecies, visions, dreams etc.
- *Authoritarian leadership*: especially where there are apostles and prophets.
- *Dominance of spiritual gifts*, especially prophecy and the word of knowledge.
- *Inner Healing and counselling*: psychoheresy of various forms e.g. Sanford's inner healing methods, theophostic counselling, forms of hypnosis, forms of regression therapy, healing of the memories. [See *Psychoheresy*] These are all based upon unbiblical theories and quackery. At best they combine psychotherapy with false teaching, at worst they are occult techniques mixed with Biblical terminology.
- *Celtic Spirituality*: a move to emulate neo-pagan and mythic practices.
- *Shouted corporate prayer*.
- *Church Growth Movement*: (see *Seeker Sensitive Practices*).
- *Faith Seed Giving*: a method which promotes selfishness.
- *Imagining / Visualisation*: as in Word Faith theology.



- *The Prophetic Movement, Rhema doctrines: (see Dominionism 2, Neo Orthodoxy)*
- *Transformation Videos: (see Strategic Level Spiritual Warfare)*
- *Spiritual Warfare: (see Strategic Level Spiritual Warfare)*
- *Spiritual mapping: (see Strategic Level Spiritual Warfare)*
- *Praise Marches: (see Strategic Level Spiritual Warfare)*
- *Cultural dances.*

### **Scriptures affected**

See *Pentecostalism* and *Dominionism 2*.

### **Dangers**

The dangers within this movement are just too many to list properly here; in fact whole books have been written on this aspect alone. Unfortunately, there are huge numbers of people who have been damaged in one way or another by proponents of this movement or sub movements. Some of the damaged folk have been through horrendous treatment. There are testimonies of spiritual, physical, financial, psychological, emotional and sexual abuse from all over the world. Examples of abuse include psychological damage caused by fake exorcisms; physical abuse when folk have broken bones after being 'slain in the Spirit' or handled roughly after a supposed healing. There have even been deaths. There are many cases of sexual abuse where authoritarian leaders have abused their power and manipulated suggestible young women. The greater number is of damaged people who were simply treated abominably and ostracised after years of loyal service.<sup>13</sup>

One key problem is the authoritarianism of CM's leaders, especially those designated as prophets and apostles (which is almost any leader of a large church). Like some of the early independent Pentecostal leaders, they are treated as if they are infallible and must always be obeyed; questioning these folk is taboo. They hear from God for the rest, all must follow. These are classic signs of a cult, and this is what many CM churches have become. A real problem is the public mistakes made by many CM leaders, from gloriously failed prophecies to supporting people and movements later proved to be false. Hardly ever does one hear of repentance from men who are historically recorded as having failed. This means that such men, as well as being in sin, can never be trusted for sound counsel again. Yet they are still in place, many of them in an international capacity.

For instance, after the Kansas City Prophets were discredited only Wimber expressed remorse and withdrew from them. In the UK, the following leaders signed a document in 1990 endorsing them as men of God, thus leading large numbers of innocent people into deceit [this was one month after they had confessed to 15 areas of error]: Gerald Coates (Pioneer), Graham Cray (St Michael-le-Belfrey), Roger Forster (Ichthus), Lynn Green (YWAM), David McInnes (St. Aldates, Oxford), Sandy Millar, John Mumford (Vineyard, London), David Pytches, Brian Skinner, Teddy Saunders, Barry Kissel (St. Andrew's Chorleywood), Terry Virgo (NFI), Ann Watson (widow of David Watson) Rick Williams (Vineyard, Teddington). This event was a watershed in the deceiving of the UK church and paved the way for the Toronto Experience.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Many of these cases have been investigated on UK television documentaries.

<sup>14</sup> By way of illustration, a key member of the Kansas prophets was Bob Jones, whose paranormal experiences began in a mental asylum to which he had been incarcerated after extended alcoholism, violence, immorality and drug abuse. He readily admits that he is visited by demons and converses with them. His ministry involves an 'angelic' (demonic) messenger. In 1991 Wimber was forced to dismiss him for 'gross sexual sin' - using his 'prophetic' gift to manipulate women sexually and other offences. This is the man of whom Mike Bickle (leader of the Kansas City Fellowship) said, *'There is nobody ... that had a more integral role in establishing our foundations.'*

A final word must be brought in about money. The importance of sacrificial giving is a key emphasis in these ministries. Members are taught to tithe at least 10% of their gross earnings, plus more for special gift days, and give it only to the church leaders – not charities. Many folk give when they cannot afford it and are struggling to bring up a family on a low wage. Despite this, the leaders almost always live in comparative luxury. Even modest works provide new cars and plane travel for their leaders, many help them purchase a house or give them one. In the worst cases, leaders live in palatial mansions, Coates lives in the listed house once owned by Clive of India. This is entirely contrary to the spirit and specific texts of the NT.<sup>15</sup>

Regarding the dangers of heretical teachings, there are just too many to contemplate in a short summary like this. Examples can be seen under the *Pentecostalism*, *Sacramentalism*, *Strategic Level Spiritual Warfare*, *Seeker-Sensitive Practices* and *Dominionism 2* articles later. Virtually all CM's novel teachings and practices are unbiblical, whether it's shouted corporate prayer, screaming in meetings, exorcism of believers, personal directive prophecy etc. Again, all these novelties have been recorded in history amongst aberrant cultic groups (like the Jumpers, the Shakers, the Ranters, the Camisards) which were condemned by true Christians at the time.

### **Modern Proponents**

Too many to list; see *Dominionism 2*, *Pentecostal Theology* later. REGARDING INNER HEALING TECHNIQUES, some best known are: Agnes Sanford, John & Paula Sandford (*Elijah House*), Ruth Carter Stapleton, Chester & Betsy Kylstra, Olsen, Payne, Ed Smith (*Theophostic Counselling*), Neil Anderson, Kraft, Francis McNutt, Ellel Ministries, Robert McGee (*Rapha*), Leanne Payne, David Seamands, Dennis and Rita Bennet, Rosalind Rinker, William Vaswig (of Renovaré fame), John Wimber, David Yonggi Cho, Robert Schuller, and Norman Vincent Peale, H. Norman Wright, James G. Friesen, Fred & Florence Littauer, Robert Longman Jr.

## **Deeper Life / Higher Life / Victorious Life / Keswick Teachings**

### **Origins**

Again this is a diffused and varied system that is difficult to simplify. Some proponents are sound, differing only from Reformed theology in the semantics of sanctification doctrine. Others are dangerously mystical and even heretical. Some are Arminian or Wesleyan in orientation, but not all.

The movement essentially grew out of two stimuli, the American Holiness Movement and the impact of the 1904-6 Welsh Revival. Both were catalysts to shake well-meaning believers out of cold formalism into an earnest desire to be holy and consecrated to the Lord's use. The Holiness Movement, which was based upon Wesleyan perfectionism & Methodist camp meetings (early 19<sup>th</sup>c. US conventions), took this into the realms of enthusiasm (religious hysteria) and emotional exuberance with manifestations much like the Toronto Experience of 1994-6.

The Keswick convention originally arose from the Moody-Sankey revival of 1875, to concentrate upon prayer, reverent Bible study and enthusiasm for missions. However, its

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<sup>15</sup> Acts 20:34-35; 1 Cor 4:12; 2 Thess 3:7-12.

most well known feature was a desire for practical holiness. It hosted speakers from many denominations: F B Meyer was a Baptist; A T Pierson, J Elder Cumming, and George H C MacGregor were Presbyterians; Andrew Murray belonged to the Dutch Reformed Church; H C G Moule, H W Webb-Peploe, H W Griffith Thomas, John Stott and J Stuart Holden were Anglicans.

## Teachings

### *Keswick / Better Higher Life Teachers*

- Early Keswick supporters were often Reformed folk, especially Evangelical Anglicans, who maintained that sin cannot be extinguished but is counteracted by living in the Spirit.
- The believer has to 'reckon' on being dead to sin (Rm 6:11) and alive to God as the basis of his walk in the Spirit. Some emphasise the need to 'surrender' to God's will revealed in this doctrine.
- Faith in God's word that the believer is identified with Christ in death and resurrection (Rm 6) is crucial.
- Prayer is essential in overcoming.
- A focus upon union with Christ.
- A focus upon evangelism and mission.
- A high regard for God's word.
- The believer has an old nature which continues to deteriorate till death, and a new nature which is created in the likeness of Christ (Eph 4:22-24). Believers are thus new creatures (2 Cor 5:17).
- The believer does not use the law as the instrument of becoming holy. He, instead, trusts in the Holy Spirit, walks in the Spirit to obey the laws of Christ. As he believes in and practices Romans 6 doctrine, the Spirit enables the believer to walk in the light and mortify the flesh (Rm 8:4).<sup>16</sup>
- There is a struggle for holiness, but it is not the struggle for self-discipline by law, but for faith in God's word. The striving is to put off the old man and walk in the Spirit, not to strive to be good by human effort.
- Wesleyanism teaches that the soul itself is delivered from all sin after a second work of grace to achieve perfect love. Sound 'Keswick' expositors, on the other hand, teach that those sanctified are not made holy, but only that they are made victorious over the sin nature, which still remains in their hearts, as they walk by faith. There is an experience of seeing the truth of Rm 6 that frees the soul from legalism.
- Several writers make a strong point about the tripartite nature of man (i.e. spirit, soul, body; e.g. Jessie Penn-Lewis, Watchman Nee, T Austin Sparks).<sup>17</sup>
- Moule warned against a tendency of some Keswick speakers to emphasise a second blessing. To avoid error, he urged caution so as not to insist too much upon gaining an instantaneous and essential experience of liberty from sinning.

### *Less sound Higher Life Teachers*

- Arminian
- Pietism or even Quietism [see later] – putting experience above scripture.
- Tendencies to externalise sins and ignore the need to take thoughts captive.
- Wesleyan perfectionism is adopted, though often denied.

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<sup>16</sup> It is this point which causes conflict with Reformed teachers, but in reality the problem is mostly semantic. Sound higher life teachers are not antinomian (against law), they honour the law as representing the will of God to men in sin, however, they do not believe it to be the instrument of righteousness as scripture says (Gal 2:21, 3:21). Many Calvinistic Baptists teach something similar.

<sup>17</sup> This is another point of contention with Reformed theology, which is mainly bipartite (soul/body).

- Boardman was influenced by Finney's Oberlin perfectionism. The claims of God's law were 'graduated' according to the sinner's ability. [Finney taught that man's obligation is limited by his ability.]
- Sanctification by a crisis of faith, a second work of grace.
- Sanctification by an experience; a baptism of the Spirit (according to some).
- Sanctification can be lost.
- Tendency towards mysticism.
- 'Let go and let God'; i.e. passivity. This ignores the many commands to fight the fight of faith, to strive for holiness. [However, some Calvinists over emphasise opposition to this and ignore the importance of faith in sanctification, becoming legalistic.]

### **Sample of scriptures affected**

- *Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.* [Rm 6:11]
- *Put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.* [Eph 4:22-24]
- *If righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain ... if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law.* [Gal 2:21, 3:21]
- *That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.* [Rm 8:4]

### **Dangers**

It is easy to slip from trusting in Christ's finished work to becoming passive or even mystical, and thence full of spiritual pride. Some Higher Life teachers have been guilty of promoting such passivity, or even mysticism, and deny there is any struggle against sin. A bigger danger is from reading perfectionist teachers whose works are considered Higher Life, instead of the Wesleyan Perfectionism they are; an example is J Sidlow Baxter. The notion that sin can be finally overcome or eradicated through a single crisis experience is false. Some writers were full of heterodox ideas, such as mind over matter, which predated Word Faith. For instance, Hannah W Smith taught that you could grow old early if you kept saying you were old. Another problem was that few teachers gave adequate warning against apostate teachers and movements, as a result some were swept along by them. The arguments of Reformed writers against Higher Life perfectionism (such as B B Warfield) are really directed at this group. One cannot compare a Hannah Pearsall Smith with an H C G Moule, F B Meyer or Andrew Murray.

### **Proponents**

*Keswick / Better Higher Life Teachers* (not everything some of these teach is sound):

Griffith Thomas, Alan Redpath, Ruth Paxson, Watchman Nee, T Austin Sparks, Evan Hopkins, AW Tozer, FB Meyer, Andrew Murray, H C G Moule.

*Less sound Higher Life Teachers*

Hannah Pearsall Smith (Hannah Whitall Smith), Robert Pearsall Smith, Charles Trumbull, J Sidlow Baxter, WE Boardman. Holiness writers. Some Pietist writers, especially the radical Pietists.

## Deliverance Theology

### Introduction

Despite being referred to in other sections,<sup>18</sup> it has been decided to give this subject special mention due to the plethora of cases, ministries, programs and even movements which deliverance theology generates.

### Origins

Though forms of exorcism have been around from earliest times, particularly as a formal ministry within Roman Catholicism and in some aberrant revival movements, it was Pentecostalism that brought this practice to the fore in Christian experience. Most Pentecostal churches would accept that deliverance from demonisation is occasionally necessary, but many streams have hoisted it to an important norm of Christian experience and a key to spiritual wholeness.

When the Charismatic Movement began, demonisation and deliverance held a back seat; only in the more extreme and minor sections was deliverance considered necessary, still fewer practised it regularly (usually those with Pentecostal influences). By the late 70s deliverance was becoming more common and formal deliverance ministries were being established to concentrate solely upon this work. With the advent of Wimber, the practice of exorcism was given a boost, some of his 5-day conferences being devoted solely to spiritual warfare. As a result, deliverance entered into the warp and woof of the CM.

### Teachings and practices

- Christians can be demonised. Some would use the term ‘possessed’ by demons; however, many leaders [especially post-Wimber] are more cautious in language and use the term ‘demonised’ to avoid the idea of sovereignty. In practice both groups use similar methods.
- Many distinguish three levels of demonic affliction: oppression, obsession and possession or temptation, opposition and bondage.
- This demonisation can arise from traumas, rejection, abuse, and violence, but especially from habitual sin, in particular sins involving the occult. Extremists believe that certain sins or occult behaviour in one’s ancestors will cause demonic problems throughout generations until expelled.
- Demonisation requires deliverance, i.e. the expulsion of the demon by a spiritually mature believer.
- There are various methods: some converse with the demon and seek to get it to name itself, then using that name command it to go. Others simply take authority over it in the name of Jesus. Some folk will also use singing, praise, scripture reading and other methods. Usually, the sufferer is required to repent of known sin first or confess a known weakness, often of rejection of others or self-rejection.
- Some Pentecostals and charismatics attribute ‘*every accident, misfortune, quarrel, sickness, disease and unhappiness*’ to the direct work of demons.<sup>19</sup>
- Many will continue the exorcism of demon after demon until there is a sense of peace. In some cases dozens of supposed demons are expelled.
- In very aberrant groups, sacramental items are used to enhance the exorcism such as communion wine poured on bodily parts or anointing with oil (e.g. Ellel Ministries). Severely aberrant groups will add physical manipulation with these sacramental items, amounting to sexual abuse.

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<sup>18</sup> Pentecostalism, Dominionism 2, Strategic Level Spiritual Warfare, Charismatic Movement.

<sup>19</sup> HAM Whyte, *Dominion Over Demons*, (1974), p27

### **Specific modern example: *Cleansing Streams***

This is a growing ministry founded by Timothy Davis, endorsed and taught by the influential Jack Hayford of *Church on the Way* in California. Other people in this ministry are: Chris Hayward, Joy Dawson (YWAM), Dick Mills and Jean Darnell. A few thousand have completed its specific course on deliverance (which costs money) but it claims that many thousands of lives have been changed in ten years. The ministry uses teams of ‘warriors’ to minister deliverance to break the power of darkness in people’s lives. Rick Ranck, of Sunrise Fellowship, states that this ministry represents *the ‘crowning moments in the glory of God’s blessing and provision for his church’*. The testimonies sound like any other charismatic programme: marriages rescued, new freedom in one’s walk with God, a new joy and increased confidence or victory.

The key teaching is the same old second blessing theology (see *Perfectionism*). Salvation is not enough to set at liberty from demonic bondage, people need the Cleansing Stream. The method (like any deliverance ministry) is to focus one’s need or sin away from one’s personal responsibility and blame a specific demon. Spiritual warfare then removes that demon, and presto – problem solved. Like others, it teaches that most sins are caused by demons or ancestry not one’s old nature and rebellion. The also teach an extreme version of trichotomy<sup>20</sup> whereby they pray or sing to themselves commanding the soul to be subservient to the spirit and the body to the soul – this emphasis is called *alignment*. Furthermore, there is an unhealthy focus upon applying the blood of Jesus to various things as a means of protection, as well as Word Faith emphases like words of power. Presumably participation in the course is eventful as children under 16 are barred from attendance.

Unsurprisingly, affiliates of the Stream are other aberrant charismatic movements, such as the Brownsville Assembly of God in Pensacola and the Apostolic Roundtable of Deliverance. Each new wave of charismatic delusion feeds what went before and sparks new ones.

### **Scriptures affected**

- The cross is seen as insufficient for victory: *But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ*. [1 Cor 15:57]. *Thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ* [2 Cor 2:14].
- The Holy Spirit is seen as ineffective for leading us into all truth: *when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth* [Jn 16:13].
- It avers that we need more than truth to be free: *You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free* [John 8:32].
- It implies that we have not been successfully transferred from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light: *He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love* [Col 1:13].
- There is a complete failure to understand the sovereignty of God in all things [Ps 139: 5,8,10,13,16].
- There is no example of a NT believer being exorcised.
- We are never told to communicate with demons.
- There is a general failure to recognise that God uses sickness to train godly people [Paul 2 Cor 12:7; Trophimus 2 Tim 4:20; Timothy 1 Tim 5:23]. In fact there is no record of a believer being healed in the NT.

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<sup>20</sup> Man is composed of spirit, soul and body.

- *We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him. [1 Jn 5:18]*
- *Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it. [Col 2:15]*

### **Key modern proponents**

Neil Anderson, John Wimber and associates, Jack Hayford and associates, Bill Subritzky, C Peter Wagner, Michael Green, Michael Harper, Gordon Lindsay, Peter Horrobin (Ellel Ministries) and many others.

## *Dominionism 1*

### Reconstructionism / Theonomy

#### **Origins**

This view arises from the postmillennialism held by some throughout church history. It was not particularly common until it became popular amongst certain Puritans. Afterwards it remained a minority view, largely held only by certain Calvinists (most historic Calvinists are amillennial). Postmillennialism started to gain more popularity in the 20<sup>th</sup> century amongst Reformed folk with books by Loraine Boettner and Iain Murray.

Two movements developed in the later 20<sup>th</sup> century: the first (Dominionism 1) was Reconstructionism which began in the 1970s in mainstream Presbyterianism;<sup>21</sup> the second (Dominionism 2) was a triumphal, revivalist, postmillennial eschatology arising within the Charismatic Movement. The latter being boosted by the popularity of John Wimber and Vineyard churches connecting up with the Restoration (UK) or Shepherding Movement (USA). Surprisingly, on the basis of their shared Dominionism, some Reconstructionist Reformed churches have linked up with certain extreme Charismatic churches in the US.

#### **Teachings**

*The Foundation:* Postmillennialism is the eschatological view that Christ will return only after a 1,000 years golden age when the earth is virtually Christianised. The church will get stronger and stronger in its Gospel influence in the world.

*Reformed Dominionism:* Overlaid upon this is the idea that the church will dominate secular society in this time. Reconstructionists teach that this will be by utilising the law of Moses (Theonomy).

#### **Reformed Dominionism – ‘Theonomic Reconstructionism’**

- *Reconstructionism:* Essentially this teaches that every area dominated by sin must be 'reconstructed' in terms of the Bible. This word is often used as a global term for combinations of the Reformed dominion theologies. Followers seek to peacefully convert US laws to harmonise with the Mosaic Law. They have a '*mandate for the complete social transformation of the entire world ... if the Church is obedient, the people and nations of the world will be disciplined to Christianity.*' [David Chilton]
- *Dominion Theology:* derives from Gen 1:26 which most Calvinists interpret as a rule over the earth and animal kingdom. Dominionists see it as a command to bring all societies under the rule of God's word. This will be done as the nations gradually

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<sup>21</sup> Christian Reconstructionism has no connection to Reconstructionist Judaism, which is a liberal group within Judaism.

convert to Christianity. Eventually, all religions other than Christianity would be suppressed.

- *Theonomy*: (Greek for *God's law*) the moral laws of Moses are unchangeable and binding on all people, cultures and faiths forever, unless rescinded by the NT. Ceremonial laws have been fulfilled in Christ. In a future Reconstructed state, sinful people would be tried under Mosaic sanctions thus: blasphemy, idolatry, prostitution, adultery and homosexuality would be capital crimes and convicted people executed by stoning or burning.<sup>22</sup> Rushdoony even opposed mixed marriages, while some support the return of slavery. Theonomy (God centred) is opposed to autonomy (man centred).

As an example of the Dominionist attitude, note Pat Robertson: '*Get ready to take dominion! It is all going to be ours - I'm talking about all of it. Everything that you would say is a good part of the secular world. Every means of communication, the news, the television, the radio, the cinema, the arts, the government, the finance - it's going to be ours! God's going to give it to His people. We should prepare to reign and rule with Jesus Christ.*' [speech at Dallas '84]

### Sample of scriptures affected

- The world does not gradually improve, but turns away from God in a great apostasy, leading to persecution of true Christians in a great tribulation. *But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come.* [2 Tim 3:1]
- ... *that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition ... The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.* [2 Thess 2:3, 9-10]
- *Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. And you will hear of wars and rumours of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.* [Mt 24:4-12]
- *Jesus answered, 'My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now my kingdom is not from here.'* [Jn 18:36]

### Dangers

See *Dominionism 2*.

### Modern Proponents

*The Reconstructionist (Theonomy) Movement*

Rousas J Rushdoony, Gary North, Greg L Bahnsen, David Chilton, Gary DeMar, Kenneth L Gentry Jr. Larry Pratt, John Quade, Andrew Sandlin.

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<sup>22</sup> Two Christian pastors in Texas have already advocated the execution of all Wiccans (White Witches).



## *Dominionism 2*

### Charismatic Kingdom Theology

#### **Summary**

Charismatic Dominionism is more extreme, heretical, subjective and experience-led than the more intellectual Reconstructionism, and includes notions that Christians will become effective supermen (even able to fly) in a world which is ruled by apostles and prophets. Revival is seen by many as the way forward to promote this domination, hence the enthusiasm to generate powerful revivals by some charismatic leaders.

#### **Charismatic ‘Kingdom Now’ Dominionism Origins**

This is very difficult to summarise, as it comprises such a huge amount of information, spanning 60 years of Pentecostal/charismatic history, many aberrant movements, very many heretical proponents and several doctrinal streams. Also it is a loose system with wide variations amongst proponents. Some, while contributing to it, do not formally espouse it.

- *Latter Rain Movement*: Though the term was first coined by David Wesley Myland in 1907, this was a late 1940s stream within mainstream Pentecostalism that was eventually declared heretical by the Assemblies of God in 1949. Most of the doctrines and practices were later absorbed into the Charismatic Movement in the late 1960’s. The main original influence was Franklin Hall who had extreme heretical and occult doctrines. A rough summary of general Latter Rain ideas follows:
  - The use of the laying on of hands to impart the Spirit, healing and spiritual gifts.
  - A big emphasis upon fasting for spiritual results.
  - Belief in the possible demonisation of believers.
  - Restoration of the Tabernacle of David: powerful praise & worship, emotionalism, the felt presence of God, singing in the Spirit.
  - The use of personal directive prophecy.
  - The Church must be restored, perfected, unified and equipped to rule by the five-fold ministries, especially prophets and apostles.
  - There will be a purified elite group of overcomers who will manifest Christ and possess the Spirit without measure, who will purge earth of resistance.
  - The leaders of the perfect church will judge the apostate Church.
  - The church will experience a second Pentecost and will celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles when Christ will appear and be incarnated in the church and glorifying it before the Second Coming.
  - Some even teach that the overcomers will redeem all creation, and restore the earth and eventually overcome death.
  - The Church will thus inherit the earth and rule over it from the Throne of Christ.
- *Manifest Sons of God theology*: arose out of Latter Rain ideas. The main leader was William Branham who held many serious heretical notions.<sup>23</sup> He was the main proponent of healing and deliverance through laying on of hands and using the word of knowledge. He was widely supported e.g. by The Full Gospel Businessmen’s Fellowship (Demos Shakarian), Oral Roberts; Ern Baxter was once his associate. This branch of Latter Rain developed the idea that the glorified church of overcomers on earth becomes immortal and perfect before the Second Coming, and is the Manchild of Rev 12 which will rule the earth with a rod of iron. As an example of blasphemous arrogance and stupidity one promoter, Sam Fife, believed he had already stopped ageing and

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<sup>23</sup> E.g. held a modalistic view of the Trinity, equated the Bible with the Pyramids and astrology, was a severe misogynist, claimed that Satan had sex with Eve – Cain was ‘serpent’s seed’, and healed by clairvoyancy or channelling (via ‘his angel’).

when asked his age, would only say, 'I am', explaining that he would not die but was being changed already into an incorruptible life.

- *Sharon Fellowship* – North Battleford, Saskatchewan in 1947-8. George Hawtin, Percy Hunt, Herrick Holt applied the teachings of Hall and Branham and became the focal point of Latter Rain practices, experiencing a 'revival' with manifestations. It became sectarian and authoritarian. After being ousted by the AOG, Latter Rain went dormant.
- *The Word of Faith (Positive Confession) Movement*: Following a different line, this movement arose from the mystical shamanism of EW Kenyon, who received his ideas from Phineas P Quimby (the originator of New Thought Philosophy). Quimby sought to make witchcraft credible by using scientific and Christian language. Mary Baker Eddy's Christian Science came direct from Quimby's ideas and Eddy was healed by Quimby himself in 1862. The emphasis of Kenyon (thence Hagin, Copeland etc) is that man is intended to be a god. His power comes from bold statements of faith – positive confession or declaration ('name it and claim it'; *Rhema* doctrine – what is spoken in faith is inspired and spiritually empowered).<sup>24</sup> Visualisation (an eastern occult technique of concentrating on the desired object) is used to help this happen. From this follows prosperity teachings common in Word Faith preaching. All of this fits in with Dominionism theology – man is master of the earth (and even the spiritual realm).
- *The Signs & Wonders Movement – John Wimber*: in the US Wimber deliberately stole memberships from Calvary chapels and others through his healing conventions. His Vineyard churches grew rapidly as a result. Leaning heavily upon classic Pentecostal precedents, though not always their theology, Wimber initiated a new emphasis on power ministry and dominion. Teaming up with ex-Latter Rain Pentecostal Paul Cain in the late 80s, Wimber introduced these extreme Latter Rain ideas into mainstream renewal denominations and Restoration churches in the UK.
- *UK Restorationism, the New Churches*: the biggest branch of the UK Charismatic Movement which developed in the 70s and hardened in the 80s into new denominations like: Harvestime (Bryn & Keri Jones), New Frontiers International (Terry Virgo), Pioneer People (Gerald Coates, John Noble), Ichthus (Roger & Faith Forster, Graham Kendrick). These had always adopted Kingdom Now ideas (i.e. the full benefits, gifts and power of the heavenly kingdom are available today), but with little actual success. Criticised for adopting heavy shepherding techniques and certainly authoritarian, they adopted the power evangelism theology, church growth ideas and flowing worship methods of Wimber in the late 80s and 90s, since they appeared to give pragmatic results (people fell over at least). Then the Latter Rain ideas began to filter in through Wimber, Paul Cain & the Kansas City Prophets. By the early 1990s, Cain is preaching his Joel's Army doctrine openly in NFI churches. Gradually, they became enthused by expected revivals (which never occurred) and Kingdom Now theology leading to Dominionist ideas. The essential foundation for much of this charismatic theology is Latter Rain and Manifest Sons of God doctrines.

## Teachings

- Through the perfecting of the overcomers, by obedience to the latter day apostles and prophets, the Church will take dominion over the governments and social institutions of the world, in preparation for Christ's return. [Though some teach his return will be unnecessary, as the church is so perfect and powerful.] *'Today's praying church is rising up in militant force to possess the promised land of our nations.'*<sup>25</sup>
- Believers become overcomers through a special empowering experience called 'the anointing', a separate work of grace subsequent to the baptism in the Spirit.

<sup>24</sup> 'Power is released through our tongue and that every word that comes out of my mouth is either a blessing or a curse' [Cleansing Stream manual]

<sup>25</sup> Cindy Jacobs.

- The overcomers of Latter Rain are now variously called: Joel's Army, the New Breed, the Dread Breed etc. The most extreme (ridiculous) teachings on the overcomers can be seen in Paul Cain's ministry on Joel's Army which mangles the text of Joel 2.<sup>26</sup>
- It is the inheritance of the mature church to take control of all human governments.
- Christians bring in the fulness of the Kingdom of God, even politically.
- Jesus is the foundation of creation but not of the church; apostles and prophets are. This gives authority to the 'revelations' of modern, so called, 'apostles' and 'prophets'. Christians must submit to them as they would to Christ.
- The new revelation of leaders' truths will change people into becoming the substance of Christ [This is Gnosticism]! Man will thus become deified on earth, believers become little gods. Overcomers will become immortal, invulnerable, perfect, run up walls and even able to defy gravity (Joel's army).
- Those who oppose the apostles and prophets will be judged by God and plagued or struck dead. The church will also execute penalties on the opposition.
- Man is a little god.
- Prosperity and healing are the norm for the faithful believer, a divine right.
- Faith is to be visualised and declared.
- Establishment of spiritual techniques which work as a law for anyone. For example fasting: since this establishes prayer, it will work even if performed by pagans [Franklin Hall, *Atomic Power With God Through Fasting and Prayer*, p19].<sup>27</sup> Word Faith positive confession / faith teachings claim that even Buddhists use faith visualisation techniques successfully [Yonggi Cho].

### Practices

- Tendency to develop into a cult, often an authoritative or even a spiritually abusive cult.
- Tendency towards heavy shepherding pastoral methods and elitism.
- Tendency to require large financial contributions from supporters.
- Many leaders have become exceedingly rich and lead luxurious lifestyles.
- Tendency to demonise anyone who dares to criticise.
- Tendency to make wild prophetic claims, especially about impending revivals, which frequently fail spectacularly.

### Sample of scriptures affected

See Dominionism 1.

### Dangers

- These ideas overlook clear scriptures which declare that the end is a time of apostasy and rebellion, not growing world domination by the church. In fact, the church is persecuted.
- They apply OT scriptures applicable to Israel, literally to the church. They apply scriptures applicable to the new age to the current church.
- They apply symbolical texts in Revelation literally to their movement.
- It promotes feelings of elitism and even authoritarianism amongst the chosen leaders – i.e. those teaching these ideas. Rick Joyner has even identified antichrist as the orthodox church.<sup>28</sup>
- By elevating the words of leaders to scripture, the Word of God is dishonoured.

<sup>26</sup> This army refers to locusts (2:25) and is a judgment from God not a race of super-Christians at the end.

<sup>27</sup> It has been pointed out before that, by Hall's law, those who pray to demons will have their prayers answered if they fast, but Christians will not have their prayers answered if they don't fast.

<sup>28</sup> *Weighed and Found Wanting*, Bill Randles, p64.

- It usurps the power and decree of God into human hands (e.g. the manifestation of the kingdom).
- Many specific teachings are plainly occultic and belong to paganism [see especially the extreme Pentecostal ideas of Franklin Hall and William Branham, but also of many modern teachers in the Word Faith Movement].<sup>29</sup>
- New Agers have recognised that extreme Pentecostal teachings and Latter Rain, on the exaltation of mankind and establishment of a new world order, are identical with Theosophical teachings (such as Alice Bailey), but with different terminology.<sup>30</sup> Others have stated that '*Charismatic congregations in main-line churches are entry points into the Aquarian frontier.*'<sup>31</sup> Some ideas, like the Feast of Tabernacles celebration, feature almost identically in New Age books.
- Prosperity and 'little god' doctrines are totally unbiblical. Visualisation techniques are of occult derivation.
- It has made charismatic leaders gullible and anxious to promote any latest fad which seems to comply with the seeds of revival or a growing powerful ministry within the church (e.g. the Toronto Experience, Kansas City Prophets, power healing, signs & wonders, gold fillings, Pensacola).
- Both groups (Reformed & charismatic) mistakenly see the Gospel mandate as a command to 'take the nations', to change the world into a Christian Utopia, failing to see that Christ's kingdom is spiritual in this age. Hence foolish charismatic songs like 'World Changers' which declares '*We've been called to change the world*' – entirely wrong: God will change the world in the future (2 Pt 31-13) and we are currently called to make disciples within a fallen world system, incurring its wrath.
- Failed prophecies dishonour God and damage those who believed in them, even when they are covered up by embarrassed leaders. There have been very many of these e.g. Coate's prophecy of an earthquake at Lake Taupo NZ; Pat Robertson prophesied that his Christian Broadcasting network would cover the Second Coming live from the Mount of Olives; in 1993 John Hinkle prophesied that God would remove evil from the earth on 9 June. None of these leaders were disciplined according to Deut 13 or 18.

### Modern proponents

- Charismatics and Pentecostals who hold a triumphalist, postmillennial eschatology – this includes virtually all UK Restorationist / New Churches; Ken Gott, Gerald Coates, Terry Virgo, John Noble and their followers.
- Holy Trinity Church Brompton,
- Extreme Charismatic organisations like: Christian Outreach Centre and the New Jesus Army.
- All those teaching an imminent global revival.
- False prophets/teachers like: Bob Jones, Paul Cain, Rick Joyner, Mike Bickle, John Avanzini, Tommy Hicks, Rod Parsley, Benny Hinn, R.W. Shambach James Ryle, John Arnott, Sam Fife, Fred Price.
- Word Faith teachers such as: Kenneth Copeland, Kenneth Hagin, Morris Cerullo, Benny Hinn, David Yonggi Cho, Earl Paulk, Royal Cronquist, Benson Idahosa, Rick Godwin. Trinity Broadcasting Network (Paul Crouch). Rhema churches. Charismatic Bible Ministries, founded in 1986 by Oral Roberts (this organisation contains the top most visible charismatic leaders).

<sup>29</sup> E.g: Christians can become immortal through interaction with UFO's, levitation control. Believers can learn from the zodiac or the pyramids. Gold sheen on the skin is supposed to be a heavenly substance, overcomers become little gods.

<sup>30</sup> See Constance Cumbey's book, *A Planned Deception, The Staging of a New Age Messiah*.

<sup>31</sup> Theodore Rosak, *The Unfinished Animal: The Antiquarian Frontier & the Evolution of Consciousness*, quoted in *Strange Fire*, Travers van de Merwe, p32. Alice Bailey first proposed this strategy in 1957.

- Academic teachers supporting the apostolic and prophetic movement: Bill Hamon, C Peter Wagner, John Wimber etc.

## Dispensationalism

### [Dispensational Premillennialism]

#### Origins

Despite claims otherwise, there is no trace of this system in history before 1830. [There are versions of Premillennialism going back to the early Church Fathers, but no signs of the key features of Dispensationalism.<sup>32</sup> Wiser proponents now admit this.] It began in the heretical ‘Apostolic’ church of Edward Irving, which was a proto-charismatic sect that scandalised Victorian society and damaged many lives. It started as a merging of false prophetic, almost occultic, utterances by a deranged young girl called Margaret Macdonald, with an overlay of futuristic prophetic interpretations by writers in Irving’s church and distributed in Irving’s journal *The Morning Watch*. The conferences hosted by Lady Powerscourt (which were attended by JN Darby) helped to popularise these new interpretations of prophecy. The ideas were then taken up and systematised by John Darby, founder of the Brethren, and widely promulgated in the Scofield Bible. From there it came to dominate the US, and subsequently the UK church scenes.

#### Teachings

The system is properly known as Dispensational Premillennialism since it is a specific interpretation of the end times which differs significantly from Historic Premillennialism.<sup>33</sup> It is difficult to summarise since the movement has fragmented into a number of factions and is continually morphing as more features become untenable. However, we will clarify the tenets of moderate classic Dispensationalism as held by very many Evangelicals, especially Pentecostals and Arminians.

- Its main distinguishing feature is a proposed split between Israel and the church as the people of God. This separates God’s purposes as being mainly based upon a Jewish earthly kingdom, and only in a temporary and secondary manner is he concerned with a Gentile church currently on earth, which is a spiritual kingdom.
- God’s dealings with men varies during seven different dispensations (administrations) of salvation history. We are currently in the Gospel age, but the more important millennium is to come.
- Most believe that Christ’s coming will be split. There will be a secret rapture when Christ comes furtively to take the believing saints before the great tribulation to escape persecution. After a 7-year tribulation, Christ will return a second time (this time openly) with the saints to usher in the millennium. Some believe that saints will have to endure the tribulation.
- There are three resurrections, several judgments; for some even three churches.
- The kingdom of heaven (future, earthly, Jewish) and the kingdom of God (current, spiritual) are different.
- It is Arminian, sometimes extreme Arminianism (such as stating that a man can cease to be a believer yet still be saved – Ryrie, Hodges).
- It seeks to interpret the Bible literally, even to prophetic and figurative scriptures. Using a spiritual application to apply these to the church is denied.

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<sup>32</sup> There is no dichotomy of the church and Israel and no idea of Christians escaping the tribulation or antichrist by a rapture.

<sup>33</sup> Premillennialism is the belief that Christ will return before a 1,000 year reign upon earth where his kingdom will be ruling over all men, including sinners, before a final battle and victory after the 1,000 years, ushering in the final judgment and the new world.

### Sample of scriptures affected

Again there is just so much ground to cover here, a minute sample will have to do.

- The Bible declares that believers are one body not two: (Eph 2:11-22, 4:4), are one flock (Jn 10:16).
- Dispensationalists are wrong to suggest that God's promises to Abraham will only be fulfilled in the millennium a) there were literally fulfilled even in the OT (1 Kg 4:20-21; Josh 11:23; **21:41-45**; Neh 9:21-25); b) However, the real, complete and eternal fulfilment of the Abrahamic covenant is in Jesus alone. He is the promised seed of Abraham (Gal 3:16). Since believers are *in Christ* they also share in this fulfilment (Gal 3:29). As a result, the land now includes the whole earth (Rm 4:13).
- The formal designation of the kingdom was taken from national Israel and given to the true people of God (Matt 21:43; Lk 12:32; Rm 11).
- The church features as central in God's purposes, not as a stopgap, in scripture. Matt 16:18-19 alone shows how central the concept of the church was to Jesus.
- There is continuity between the people of God in the OT and NT. Both are called the church, both are God's son, both are called the people of God using the same equivalent words (1 Pt 2:9-10; Acts 7:38).
- The church, the 'body of Christ', is not temporary it is the fulness of God, Eph 1:22-23.
- It is Israel, not the church, which is the parenthesis. Many scriptures state that there is a time limit on Israel as the channel of God's purpose. That period ends when the Messiah comes (e.g. Gen 49:10; Jn 8:56; Matt 21:43).
- The secret rapture is not taught in the Bible. Different words for the Second Coming are used interchangeably. Texts regarding the tribulation do not state that believers will escape by being taken to heaven.
- Christ's return ends the age of grace; there can be no conversions after this event. Dispensationalists teach that many people are converted after Christ's first second coming: during the 7-year tribulation. There are also conversions during the millennium. However, Christ returns to earth only when the full number of the elect is complete (2 Pt 3:4; 1 Thess 3:12-13).
- There is no clear teaching anywhere in the Bible on a supposed millennium, today is the last days [*in these last days spoken to us by His Son*, Heb 1:2]. Rev 20:4-6 is clearly symbolic, as is most of Revelation, and the 1,000 years refers to the age of grace, the Gospel Age where Satan is bound and the Gospel prospers. There is no mention here of Jews, Israel, Jerusalem, or the temple.

### Dangers

There are so many problems with this system that a concise summary is difficult.

- It creates fear, paranoia and pessimism regarding the end-times instead of hope, especially when prophecies and Revelation are interpreted literally. There is no vision for God's future purposes.
- It creates a wrong focus upon Israel (see Jewish Roots) and fails to see the vital importance of the church in God's purposes (Eph 1:22-23, 3:8-11, 5:25-27).
- It demeans the glory of Jesus, for instance by stating that he can mix with sinners on earth in his majestic glory or by suggesting that OT offerings will be restored.
- The literal system of interpretation leads to many faulty conclusions and adoption of absurd ideas such as a city 1380 miles high or that God has physical hands and feet.
- It contradicts NT interpretation e.g. where Amos 9:11-12 is explained by Acts 15:16-17.
- It misunderstands the purpose of the law and the covenant.
- It has created a false Gospel by suggesting that converts do not need to recognise the lordship of Christ.

- It does not recognise that Christ's glorious reign has begun already (Eph 1:20-22; Col 3:1; 1 Pt 3:22; 1 Cor 15:25).
- The Bible describes the period after the cross as 'the last days' [Acts 2:17; Heb 1:2]. If so, there can be no more days after this period closes with the Second Coming, there is no millennium.

### **Proponents**

Main writers include: Charles Ryrie, EW Bullinger, John Walvoord, LS Chafer, A Gaebelein, J Dwight Pentecost, Hal Lindsey, SD Gordon, Zane Hodges. A new variant seeking to soften the hard edges and blend with Reformed theology is the 'Progressive Dispensationalism' of Robert Saucy, Craig Blaising, Darrell Bock, but this is only fashionable with academics, the classic system is still the most popular in the churches. John MacArthur is a popular Reformed writer who has written many helpful books, however, he is an ardent Dispensationalist who does not see the contradiction of this system with Calvinism. His *Study Bible* is full of Dispensational extreme interpretations.

## **Ecumenical Theology & Movements**

### **Origins**

Officially formed in 1948, large scale moves were made for inter-denominational unity by the liberal World Council of Churches (WCC) in the 1960s. Other groups included the International Council of Christian Churches and the American Council of Christian Churches, which opposed the broad stance of the WCC and also refused membership to Pentecostals. The National Association of Evangelicals, however, opened its doors to them, while Donald Gee and David du Plessis urged Pentecostals to get involved with the WCC. Although there were good evangelical men involved in this ecumenical move, the majority of evangelicals simply ignored it since it soon became clear that the bottom line was a reduction of theology to the lowest common denominator. Such unity was virtually meaningless.

Harbingers of a breakdown in old separatist ties probably began with the impact of the Billy Graham crusades in the 50s. His organisation needed many churches in local areas to work together and provide a spiritual home for 'converts'. All sorts of churches saw this as an opportunity for growth so the crusades had Roman as well as Liberal churches on the team. Before long Graham's platform contained leaders of many stripes standing with him in the Gospel presentation. However, this did not really make a real impact in actual unity of these churches.

A key factor for the involvement of Rome with the Charismatic Movement was the formulations of Vatican II in 1965, the most important Catholic Council since Trent in the time of the Reformation. Decisions included:

- The Church should be a full and active participant in the ecumenical movement.
- Acceptance of the importance of spiritual gifts in the life of the church (led by Cardinal Suenens). [Within a few years many Catholics were expressing tongues and prophecy.]
- The importance of lay members in promoting holiness in the church.

Although a few Catholic individuals had been touched by Pentecostalism, the formal beginning of the impact of the Charismatic Movement within Roman Catholicism was the events at Duquesne University in 1967. Some lay instructors were impressed by Wilkerson's and Sherrill's books and attended a local charismatic home prayer meeting. They were baptised in the Spirit and shared this with friends and started a charismatic

prayer group of their own. Soon other universities became involved then Ralph Martin and Stephen Clark were baptised in the Spirit, who started their own group and were very influential in the spread of the movement. As the media publicised these events, expansion accelerated and leaders like Derek Prince, Agnes Sanford, Tommy Tyson and Harold Bredeesen brought many Catholics into the experience of the baptism in the Spirit. Mention should also be made of the dialogue led by David du Plessis between Pentecostals and Catholics sponsored by the Vatican Secretariat for Christian Unity.

Other factors were international ecumenical conferences. In 1974 the Congress on World Evangelisation was convened at Lausanne by 142 evangelical leaders under the chairmanship of Billy Graham. There were about 3,000 participants from 150 countries who gathered to proclaim a common, unified, relevant Biblical basis to world mission and develop co-operative strategies.

However, despite attempts at formal accord, the greatest impetus towards actual unanimity between old enemies was the common experience of the Spirit. Since an agreed common theological base was never going to work, people began to draw up plans for uniting churches and individuals on the basis of a common experience. Charismatic celebrations and conventions began to draw together members of a diverse church background. Soon Roman Catholic leaders were sharing platforms with staunch charismatic Protestants. Interdenominational conferences on charismatic renewal were instituted, such as that at Kansas City in 1977. From the earliest times, Roman Catholics outnumbered other Protestant denominations represented at these events.

Recent publication of meeting minutes reveal that the US shepherding movement led by the Fort Lauderdale Five (which included Derek Prince, Charles Simpson and Bob Mumford) pursued active initiatives to involve charismatic Catholics in their plans. This included both support for and influence from various high ranking Roman leaders. This helped to develop a growing closeness in campaigns, conventions and direct ties between charismatics and Roman Catholics.

Once again the real catalyst for rapid change in this direction was John Wimber who had long drawn inspiration from Catholic sources (e.g. Francis MacNutt, Michael Scanlan). He accepted the validity of Roman miracles like Lourdes and was remarried in a Roman church. He wrote for Roman magazines, even penning one article called '*Why I love Mary*'.<sup>34</sup> Oddest of all, he had no problem with the use of relics to aid healing.<sup>35</sup> From this basis, it was a short step to sharing platforms with hard line Catholics. On one occasion Wimber even publicly apologised to the Roman Catholic Church on behalf of all Protestants.

One typical fruit of his influence was the Brighton 91 Conference, *That the World may Believe*, sponsored by the International Charismatic Consultation on World Evangelism and organised Virgo's New Frontiers International. It was attended mainly by Roman Catholics, but also by: Anglicans, Pentecostals, Charismatics and Non Denominational delegates. Leaders included senior Papal delegates, Archbishop George Carey, Graham Kendrick, Terry Virgo, Michael Green, Michael Harper, Larry Christenson, Vinson Synan, Jack Hayford and Kriengsak Chareonwongsak. Peripheral meetings included a celebration of mass by monks and other Catholic propaganda. A remarkable fact is that a Christian observer and reporter noted that at only one meeting he attended were the scriptures read. Interviews with key leaders present make it clear that they considered the Roman Catholic

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<sup>34</sup> *New Covenant Mag.* June 1988.

<sup>35</sup> Wimber, *Church Planting Seminar*, Tapes 1,2,3,4,5. March 1981.



Gospel to be identical with Evangelical teaching.

Unity with Catholics is clearly on the level of similar experiences, mainly Baptism in the Spirit, healing or miracles: *'the reason why I ... related to the Roman Catholics was because I saw that they had the same experience that I had, of the baptism of the Spirit ... the basis of fellowship is not primarily doctrine, it is those who God has drawn into his fellowship.'*<sup>36</sup> One charismatic Anglican could say, *'The Reformation was a mistake;'*<sup>37</sup> while others insisted that the Roman church was at the cutting edge of charismatic innovation. All this in spite of the fact that the Roman church has not rescinded its anti-Reformation statements or its claim that all who believe in justification by faith alone will go to hell, or repented for killing men women and children in their thousands for refusing to participate in the mass.

After the 90s, various movements rose and fell which promoted closer ties with Rome, *The March For Jesus* being one example, which included monks and nuns singing worship to Mary alongside evangelicals praising Jesus. One of international significance was *Promise Keepers* which was so ecumenical that it embraced Mormons. Top Promise Keeper executives Dale Schlafer and Glen Wagner once prostrated themselves on the ground before the sacrament in a Roman Catholic service at a Catholic men's conference in Steubenville, USA. They also took Roman theology books and liturgies which they have incorporated into their daily devotions.

The Charismatic Movement, and especially the Signs and Wonders Movement opened the door for many to walk straight into relationships with the Catholic Church. It was not many years before high-ranking evangelicals could make formal agreements on shared evangelism strategies with Roman authorities which included promises not to encroach on one another's turf [such as the 1994 document *Evangelicals & Catholics Together*<sup>38</sup>]. This formally ended 500 years belief that the formal stance of Roman doctrine is not Biblical and does not save. We now have a situation where once reformed writers, such as Clark Pinnock, even quote the Roman Catholic catechism in support of purgatory.<sup>39</sup>

### Teachings

- Ecumenicism teaches that all Christian religions are fundamentally the same but with differences in presentation or practices. They should be united in the common cause of the Gospel and present a cohesive front to the world.
- To take one example, Romanism is a different Gospel which teaches that: meritorious works are part of salvation; Mary is a co-redemptrix and is to be worshipped; purgatory is where we can continue to save ourselves after death; the elements of the Lord's Supper are transformed into Christ's very body plus the Pope is infallible and is a mediator under Christ. No Biblical believer can co-operate with such a church.

### Scriptures affected

- Paul made it clear that we cannot have fellowship with the works of darkness, we must not share in a different Gospel. *I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him*

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<sup>36</sup> Michael Harper, *The Brighton 91 Interviews*, WPU (Inc), Peacehaven (1991), p15.

<sup>37</sup> David Watson, *ibid* p15.

<sup>38</sup> The evangelical signatories include Bill Bright of Campus Crusade, Os Guinness of the Trinity Forum, Richard Mouw of Fuller Theological Seminary, Mark Noll of Wheaton College, James I Packer of Regent University, Charles Colson of Prison Fellowship, Larry Lewis of the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, Richard Land of the Christian Life Commission, Jesse Miranda of the Assemblies of God, and John White of Geneva College.

<sup>39</sup> Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, p 123f, 179,

*who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel.* [Gal 1:6, see also 2 Cor 11:3-4]

- *Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.* [Rev 18:4-5]
- *Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: 'I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people.' Therefore 'Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you.'* [2 Cor 6:14-17]
- *If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds.* [2 Jn 1:10-11]

### **Dangers**

While the premise seems attractive, the problem is that God has given us very clear commands not to unite with those who do not hold the doctrine of Christ. We are to be a separate and holy people; bad associations always produce a moral destruction (*Evil company corrupts good habits*, 1 Cor 15:33). It is not a Biblical goal for the church to be a world-wide, unified, tolerant, inclusive community of various beliefs; the church is a mystery to the world (1 Cor 4:1; Col 1:26), it is like salt, or yeast – hidden inside but deeply effective. True unity exists in the Spirit right now as a heavenly reality between true Christians. The objective manifestation of this unity will only be apparent when the Lord returns.

### **Modern proponents**

- ROMAN CATHOLICS: Ralph Martin, Kevin Ranaghan, Cardinal Suenens, Stephen Clark, Fr. Kilian McDonell.
- MODERN CHARISMATICS like: Vinson Synan, Jack Hayford (*'Sinners can come to Jesus through Mary'* – CBN interview), John Wimber, Mark Noll, David Watson, Michael Harper (now in the Eastern Orthodox Church).
- EVANGELICALS like: JI Packer, Charles Colson, Michael Green.
- AND MANY OTHERS such as: Pat Robertson, George Carey, Clark Pinnock. *Christianity Today* Magazine now has three Roman Catholic editors. Catholic evangelists now work with *Campus Crusade*, *Youth For Christ*, *Wycliffe Bible Translators* and *Inter Varsity Christian Fellowship*. In 1994 IVP produced the *Handbook of Christian Apologetics* produced by two Roman Catholics, one a Jesuit and one who believes Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists will be saved. In 1994 Moody Press published *Roman Catholicism: Evangelical Protestants Analyse What Divides and Unites Us*, edited by John Armstrong. It does not press for Biblical separation and Michael Horton (normally a Reformation champion) urges continued attempts at seeking visible unity. In the understatement of the century, Armstrong mentions the centuries of bloody Protestant persecution by the Papacy as *'a decidedly uncharitable response'* to the Reformation.

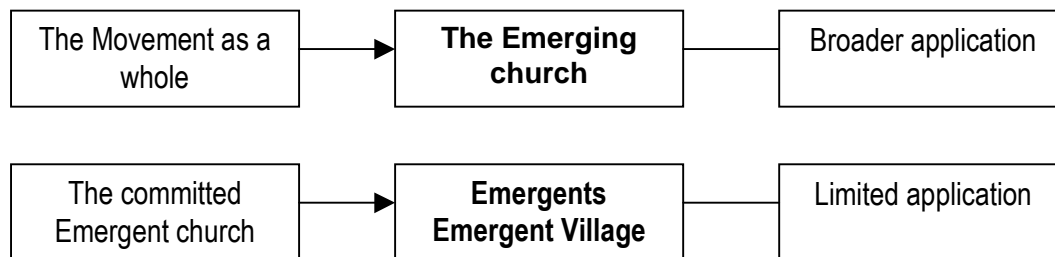
## **The Emerging Church**

## Origins

This is not a new theology, but a diverse church movement that began in the mid 90s, encompassing various streams, sharing basic principles but yet are quite distinct. In essence, they seek to deconstruct Christianity and reform basic Christian beliefs and church practices. There is no formal leadership, no strategic programme, no central office, and a multitude of expressions. Since it is still developing and quite amorphous, proponents call this process a ‘conversation’ – a process of change – thus it is a movement emerging out of the traditional church. What it is emerging into, appears to me, to be amorality, heresy, mysticism, hedonism and chaos.

As postmodern<sup>40</sup> society shifted in its thinking, the Emergent Church developed to fit in with what people wanted in a modern church – it is thus not based on rational certainty but consensus experience and mysticism. In some ways this movement is a reaction against the heavy shepherding and authoritarian structures of the Charismatic Movement, the slick flamboyance of Seeker Sensitive churches, and the dead orthodoxy of institutional churches. Many want to reconnect to the traditions and symbols of the past (‘vintage-church’) after abandoning the professionalism of Seeker-Sensitive innovations; they seek hymns, rituals, chants, crosses and candles instead of warehouses and modern entertainment.

Some adherents (usually the more radical) propose a difference between the ‘Emerging Church’ and the ‘Emergent Church’, i.e. between the broader work and churches actually committed to the Emergent vision. ‘Emergent’ is, by these, used to refer to the ‘Emergent Village’; this, is stated (by their website) to *‘a growing, generative friendship among missional Christians seeking to love our world in the Spirit of Jesus Christ.’*



## Teaching

This movement is essentially a fruit of postmodern thinking (anti-rational) in the church. Specific teaching is vague and inclusive.

### *Essential principles:*

- Decentralisation.
- Openness and tolerance; broad acceptance of diversity.
- Emphasis on subjectivity, feelings and experiences as opposed to logic and truth.
- Rejection of dogmatism – favouring narrative portions of the Bible, parables and personal experience that can be interpreted in any manner by anyone. In this they follow Narrative Theology.<sup>41</sup> The Bible is treated subjectively more like art or poetry, than analysed as a source of doctrine encompassing many forms of literature.

<sup>40</sup> Postmodernism is the reaction to the rationalism of modern Enlightenment thinking; thus a central feature is rejection of absolute truth and focus upon experience, often mystical.

<sup>41</sup> *Narrative theology* (or ‘postliberal theology’) – a development of theology in the 20<sup>th</sup> century which focused on a narrative presentation of scriptural truth, rather than systematic theology. It was a reaction against theological liberalism and prompted further movements in evangelicalism and Romanism. It focused more on community thinking than liberal individualism and in some ways asserted traditional methods. Theological enquiry was by means of a conversation, inter-personal dialogue and communal life leading to a

- Avoiding the clear meaning of the words of scripture by using various hermeneutics (systems of interpretation) to avoid the clear meaning; e.g. to avoid the doctrine of hell as eternal punishment by saying that Jesus meant something else.
- Relativism (i.e. no absolute truth; truth and morality emerges from the context of historical culture).
- Highlighting mystery – scripture is full of mystery and is not clear.
- Antinomianism (lawless).
- Tendency towards liberal theology. Some extremes are universalistic and syncretistic.
- Anti-legalistic; spiritual life is an individual, gradual process of formation. Conversation rather than prohibitions.
- Specific jargon (such as *generous, missional, authentic, narrative, conversation*) become terms which readily identify emergent people.
- Some aspects show similar thinking to neo-evangelicalism, Catholic Karl Rahner, and Open-Theism.
- Social Gospel rather than truth.

### *Essential practice*

- Heavy use of modern technology, such as computers and multimedia, in services.
- Open dialogue.
- Anti-hierarchy.
- Acceptance of diverse morals, beliefs and practices. Behaviour condemned by most churches may well be tolerated (such as swearing, drinking, and pornography.) Some of their works are just plain foul, using a multitude of bad language and irreverent expressions for God.
- Preference of communal practices (such as testimonies, sharing, prayer, group recitation, meals).
- Focus on social issues rather than eternal truth – this leads to social action, local community involvement & hospitality ('missional living').
- Open networks of communication between churches.
- Practice of worship is very varied, ranging from Charismatic and the use of modern music, to mystical reflective liturgy. It is generated by the local cultural influence.
- A growing interest in monasticism (called 'new-monasticism'), with the development of communities, such as Moot in the UK.

Influences include: Post Liberal theology e.g. George Lindbeck; Lesslie Newbigin & David Bosch (missiologists); Richard Foster and The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers); the 70s House Church Mvt; New Evangelicalism; NT Wright (New Perspective).

### **Scriptures affected**

- For the word of the LORD *is* right, and all His work *is done* in truth. (Ps 33:4)
- And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. (Matt 10:28)
- Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. (Eph 4:29)
- *Let* your speech always *be* with grace, seasoned with salt. (Col 4:6)

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living liturgy. It arose in Yale Divinity School and was influenced by Karl Barth, Thomas Aquinas and French Catholics such as Henri de Lubac. There were also philosophical influences: from Ludwig Wittgenstein's philosophy of language, the moral philosophy of Alasdair MacIntyre, and sociology of Clifford Geertz and Peter Berger on community.

See also the texts relative to articles on Open Theism, Liberal Theology, New Orthodoxy, Quietism, Mysticism and New Evangelicalism.

### **Dangers**

- Abandonment of the authority of scripture. They admit to a plurality of interpretations, which are based upon the reader's subjective and cultural understanding. Thus we cannot be sure what the Bible teaches about anything, even clear ethical issues such as homosexuality.
- Erosion of fundamental doctrines, such as man's depravity, the virgin birth, the incarnation, the inspiration of scripture, hell or God's sovereignty.
- Woolly thinking and pluralism (God loves everyone, everyone can experience God, everyone is right, mysticism etc.).
- Liberal ideas.
- Fleshly humanism.
- Ecumenism.

Critics (including former Emergent Church spokesmen such as Mark Driscoll) have accused leaders of serious heresies including:

- referring to God as a 'chick' (sic; i.e. female),
- denying God's sovereignty
- denying God's foreknowledge,
- denial of substitutionary atonement
- and denial of hell.

One leader's essential ingredients were under the acronym EPIC:

- Experiential not just listening.
- Participants not observers.
- Image-based – visual stimuli of art, film, video, multimedia etc.
- Communal – *being* church.

How these are worked out in practice is the problem.

### **Modern Proponents**

Brian McLaren; Rob Bell; Dan Kimball; Doug Pagitt; Frank Viola; David Sherwood; Bill Dahl; Leonard Sweet; Spencer Burke, Erwin McManus, Tommy Kyllonen (aka Urban D) and Donald Miller.

The writings of some leaders, such as Brian McLaren, reveal that their message is plain liberalism and cannot be considered as evangelical.

- I don't think we've got the gospel right yet. What does it mean to be saved?... None of us have arrived at orthodoxy. Brian McLaren [*Christianity Today*, November, 2004, p 40]
- Ask me if Christianity is orthodox, meaning true, and here's my honest answer: a little, but not yet. Brian McLaren. [*A Generous Orthodoxy*; Zondervan, (2004) p293]
- Either Christianity itself is flawed, failing, untrue, or our modern, Western, commercialised, industrial strength version is in need of a fresh look, a serious revision. Brian McLaren [*A New Kind of Christian*, Jossey-Bass, (2001), pXIV-XV] This is not talking about church reform but a fundamental understanding of Biblical doctrine.
- God can't ever really be an object to be studied. Brian McLaren [McLaren, *A New Kind of Christian*, p161]
- Regarding Christ's death on the cross - That just sounds like one more injustice in the cosmic equation. It sounds like divine child abuse. You know? Brian McLaren [*The Story We Find Ourselves In*, Jossey-Bass, (2003), p102]

- I don't like to use the word "objective." It's not a Biblical word. I also find the word "known" problematic. Brian McLaren [<http://www.brianmclaren.net/archives/000221.html>]
- Regarding the Calvinist TULIP, McLaren calls himself a Calvinist then defines it as - Triune love, unselfish election, limitless reconciliation, inspiring grace and passionate, persistent saints. [*A Generous Orthodoxy*, Zondervan, (2004), p195-197]
- Universalism is not as bankrupt of biblical support as some suggest. Brian McLaren [*The Last Word and the Word After That*, Jossey-Bass, (2003), p103 cf. pp. 182-183]
- People today are starved not for doctrines but for images and relationships and stories. Leonard Sweet [*The Church in Emerging Culture: Five Perspectives*, Leonard Sweet, ed., Zondervan, (2004), p35]
- We at Ikon are developing a theology which derives from the mystics, a theology without theology to complement our religion without religion. Peter Rollins, emergent leader with Ikon in Northern Ireland. [[www.emergingchurch.info/stories/cafe/peterollins](http://www.emergingchurch.info/stories/cafe/peterollins)]

For a variety of critical articles, see: *The Dangers of the Emerging Church*  
<http://www.takebackcanada.com/emergingchurch.html>

## Federal Vision

### Origins

Also known as 'Auburn Avenue Theology', Federal Vision is a development that has mainly affected American Presbyterian churches but is now spreading amongst other evangelicals. Most of the conservative US Presbyterian denominations now support this heresy. As it is still developing there are few works exposing the error but material is slowly being made available; such as works by Professor David Engelsma,<sup>42</sup> various Internet articles and a book by O Palmer Robertson [*The Current Justification Controversy*]. The positions for and against can be seen in the book: *A review of The Auburn Avenue Theology, Pros and Cons: Debating the Federal Vision*. The Knox Theological Seminary Colloquium on the Federal Vision. Edited by E. Calvin Beisner. Fort Lauderdale, Florida: Knox Theological Seminary, 2004.

### Teachings

Like Arminianism, Romanism, New Divinity, Fullerism and Finneyism it teaches a form of meritorious works righteousness: a right standing before God is achieved partly by Christ's work on the cross but mostly by the believer in obeying the law. A believer's good works, mixed with faith, become part of his justification (similar to Roman Catholic doctrine). Presbyterian Minister Mitch Lusk can dare to say that, '*Works of faith filled obedience in a secondary way cause our final justification*;<sup>43</sup> while Steve Schlissel affirms that the law is obeyable.<sup>44</sup> The apostle Paul's statements that it is not are explained away as referring to Jewish ceremonial laws only.

Some of the emphases of Federal Vision appear to have been built on the foundational statements of the *New Perspective* in affirming that justification is not a legal declaration of graciously imputed righteousness but is mingled with sanctification in some way.

<sup>42</sup> Such as: November 2005 issue of *The Protestant Reformed Theological Journal*.

<sup>43</sup> From the article, *The Tenses of Justification*; quoted in a speech by David Engelsma, *Federal Vision*.  
<http://www.prc.org/Audio/Engelsma1.wma>

<sup>44</sup> *The Federal Vision*, Steve Wilkins and Duane Garner; editors. Athanasius Press [2004], p260.

Like Arminianism and Fullerism the corollary teaching is forced upon them that election is merely a decision by God based upon someone believing in time and remaining faithful; a sort of rubber stamp founded upon man's performance. Thus election is conditional on man's faith; it can be resisted and lost. Consequently, like all semi-Pelagian systems, Christ's atonement is universal. In keeping with Arminianism the result is that salvation can be lost by disobedience; while like Romanism, salvation is covenantally linked with baptismal regeneration.

Amazingly, proponents can state that God can bring baptised, non-elect people into direct union with Christ, share in His covenant blessings, be sanctified by Christ's blood, receive new life, know the true love of God and still be lost eternally due to disobedience.<sup>45</sup>

The close connection with these doctrines to Roman Semi-Pelagianism has already led a number of Presbyterians to Rome. The key to damaging Presbyterians in particular is its version of a conditional covenant theology<sup>46</sup> - grace is universal to all baptised babies, but this grace can then be rejected. It is Arminianism mixed with covenant doctrine and as such is, *'the gravest threat to the Reformed faith since Dort.'*<sup>47</sup> Another reviewer claims that, *'Federal Vision is a deviant, unbiblical view of salvation.... the proponents of the Federal Vision hold to a deviant view of the covenant, the active obedience of Christ, the way one receives salvation-justification, the role of baptism in conversion, the relation of the reprobate to Christ and the means of assurance.'*<sup>48</sup> It also is a grievous rejection of sovereign grace and an elevation of man.

### Scriptures affected

- *Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. (Rm 3:20-22)*
- *Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law. (Rm 3:28)*
- *But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness. (Rm 4:5)*
- *Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified. (Gal 2:16)*
- *And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith. (Phil 3:9)*

### Dangers

Some Federal Vision teachers have openly claimed that the Bible is full of contradictions while Steve Schlissel has stated that Luther's understanding of justification by faith alone was a 'malady';<sup>49</sup> so Biblical justification by faith alone is a sickness. Federal Vision teaches heterodox ideas on a number of matters, such as: the covenant, faith, baptism, the Lord's Supper, election, regeneration, apostasy, and sacramental efficacy; but the main danger is to distort justification and its corollary doctrines.

<sup>45</sup> *The Federal Vision*, Steve Wilkins and Duane Garner; op. cit. p37, 62, 274, 288.

<sup>46</sup> Presbyterian Reformed theology is founded upon its doctrine of the covenant, hence in the US it is more frequently known as Covenant Theology.

<sup>47</sup> David Engelsma, speech - *Federal Vision* op. cit.

<sup>48</sup> Dr. Joseph Pipa, *A Review of The Auburn Avenue Theology*; p281.

<sup>49</sup> *The Federal Vision*, Steve Wilkins and Duane Garner, op. cit. p255.

## Modern Proponents

Key Federal Vision representatives include: Norman Shepherd, Douglas Wilson, Duane Garner, Mitch Lusk, John Kinnear, Steve Schlissel, John Barach, Peter J. Leithart, James Jordan and Steve Wilkins.

## Fullerism

### Origins

Fullerism is the name given to the teachings of English Baptist Andrew Fuller (1754-1815), best known for his close connection with the pioneer missionary William Carey. Baptist history books teach that the high Calvinism of the Particular Baptists preceding Fuller was becoming stagnant, Fuller called it arid and a dunghill. Fuller then bursts on the scene with a radical new way of interpreting Calvinism to give a major thrust to offering the Gospel to sinners, urging their duty to believe. In actual fact, all this is misjudged. The preaching of many high Calvinists such as John Gill (Baptist) Augustus Toplady (Anglican) or William Huntington (Independent) was extremely successful (far more so than Fuller) and they also urged the need for sinners to repent and believe. Also, a more Arminian emphasis on man being able to believe by natural duty had already been taught before Fuller. The preaching of some Hyper-Calvinists did deny giving the Gospel to the unregenerate, but these were a minority.

Nevertheless, Fuller despised all forms of consistent Calvinism and taught his re-interpretation; he achieved notoriety after his book, *The Gospel Worthy of all Acceptation* [1785] was widely read. This is essentially Amyraldian (or worse) in emphasis. As a result Fuller was attacked by Calvinists and Arminians who saw through his claims to be evangelical. Even Fuller himself admitted, *'I allow that the principles here defended may be inconsistent with the doctrines of grace.'*<sup>50</sup> Eventually, the furore caused fragmentation of the Baptist churches and the Strict Baptist group was created. However, today Fuller is being re-introduced to the evangelical world and hailed as a champion of evangelism. In fact the effect of his theology ruined Baptist churches in England and was unsuccessful.

### Teachings

Fuller was influenced by several movements before him. Much of his theology is Amyraldian. He was a follower of Grotius and his Governmental Theory of the cross, which denied the penal substitution of Christ; instead the Lord died as a perfect example to inspire man to do better. The cross is accepted by God to bend the rules and let man off the hook for sin. Sin is not judicially dealt with or removed. Grotius (and Fuller) also emphasised natural, moral law, the innate understanding for human actions (not the revelation of God's will for man). Fuller was also influenced by the errors of New Divinity<sup>51</sup> from America and the Latitudinarians of the 17<sup>th</sup> century English Anglicans (who elevated reason above scripture).

- *In a nutshell*, he taught that: IT IS THE DUTY [AND ABILITY] OF ALL WHO HEAR THE GOSPEL TO BELIEVE IN CHRIST WITH SUCH A FAITH AS ISSUES IN SALVATION. In other words, anyone

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<sup>50</sup> Fuller, *Works*, Vol 2, p367.

<sup>51</sup> This started as *New England Theology*, a school of thought following the works of Jonathan Edwards. It gradually degenerated into *New Divinity* - teaching Governmental Theory and elevating human reason and human ability. It further degenerated into *New Haven Theology* emphasising law, an extended Governmental Theory, free willism, and human ability. Total Depravity was thus completely denied.



[elect or reprobate] who hears the Gospel can believe. A key foundation of Fuller's theology is that man has a natural ability to respond to God. He emphasised that all men have a Gospel awareness deep down and know they should accept it. This means that men are not totally depraved, as they have power to do spiritual good and believe.

- *God*: Eradication of God's justice - there is no wrath against sin. There are two contradictory wills in God. There is also a contradiction between the decree of God to save the elect alone, and Fuller's interpretation of the cross, which is universal ('sufficient for all, efficient for some').
- *Election*: Election makes no difference to men, all must improve their own estate by virtue. Those who do are elect. Election is effectively God's foresight as to who believes.
- *Man*: Man has the natural ability to do spiritual good. The Fall did not render man depraved and unable. Adam's sin was not imputed to the human race. Sin is not a debt to God. Man just has a wrong inclination.
- *Law*: Natural (moral) law is universal and above revealed law. Obedience to the duties of the moral law leads to faith.
- *The Cross*: The cross of Christ is not different to the sacrificial offerings of the OT. Christ did not die as a vicarious substitute. Christ did not suffer under the law. Christ did not obey the law fully to give us righteousness. Christ was not made sin for us. The righteousness of Christ is not transferable. The cross is for all sin.
- *Justification*: Justification is by human righteousness. Repentance leads to justification. Justification is merely a declaration of pardon and does not involve imputation of Christ's righteousness.
- *Sanctification*: Sanctification is by human endeavour, not by the Spirit's work within us. Sanctification = good works. Sanctification is not an evidence of justification.
- *The Gospel*: Taught the free offer of the Gospel [i.e. Jesus died for all; anyone can be saved, election is irrelevant]. Anyone who hears the Gospel has the power to believe it. Man has the innate power to repent and believe.

### **Scriptures affected**

What doesn't it affect?

### **Dangers**

Fullerism corrupts the theology of Calvinism while pretending to be radical Calvinism. It steers people into Amyraldism at best, but scepticism, Pelagianism or even Socinianism at worst. The results of it in history are a deadening of faith and Gospel preaching.

### **Modern Proponents**

Fuller's teaching is now being supported and championed by many highly esteemed Reformed theologians and historians. These include: Michael Haykin, Peter Masters, John Piper, Peter Morden, Robert Oliver, Brian Talbot, Nigel Wheeler, Errol Hulse, Tom Nettles, Timothy George, Harry Boer, David S. Dockery, Crawford Gribben. Institutions such as Banner of Truth and Sword & Trowel Magazine have sponsored articles lauding Fuller. [For further information, see my Booklet: *The Problem of Fullerism*.]

## **Humanism**

### **Introduction**

While not a Christian theology, this can be viewed as a theology in reverse for (in its purest form) it believes that there is no God (*atheism*). It puts man in the place of God; so its

theology is that man is independent, in control, is God. However weaker forms, which are not atheistic, have infiltrated the thinking of many supposedly 'Christian' writers, so that their theology becomes man-centred in theory or practice. Arminianism is an example of this, but many other fads are essentially humanistic, especially those which focus upon the 'felt needs' of people (such as *Seeker Sensitive Practices* or *Psychoheresy*).

### Origins

The term was invented by FJ Niethammer in 1808 to describe Greek and Latin classics – 'humanistic literature'. The term was widened to encompass any theory that took man as its starting point. Christian scientists (who discovered many of the great laws of physics) sought to '*think God's thoughts after him*', to understand God's physical universe; but humanist scientists ignored God and elevated man. This thinking, spurred on by the developing evolutionary thinking, soon spread to philosophy, and theology.

Secular humanism was originally boosted by enlightenment writers, such as Voltaire (1694-1778) and Hume (1711-76), who directly attacked the claims of Biblical Christianity. This was encouraged by new scientific discoveries that seemed to oppose some church presuppositions (though not the Bible). In the 19<sup>th</sup> century science advanced at the expense of religion and Western society was gradually secularised.

The two world wars, the Cold War and growing societal problems in the 20<sup>th</sup> century shook the faith of many that scientific advances would cure man's ills. This led to the current *Postmodernism*, where science is no longer trusted and people believe anything at all. Truth is subjective and personal. While anti-scientific, it is still humanistic – man is the centre of his world and his felt needs come first.

### Teachings

- Are many and varied. The assumptions are: respect for the potential and values of human beings; latent human powers (arts, science, and language) must be awakened and liberated (e.g. by education) to improve human value; people must have freedom of choice to shape their lives. Doctrines which despair of man (Nihilism<sup>52</sup>) or charge that he is depraved and corrupt (Calvinism) are rejected, as are theories that seek to dominate man by fatalism, mind control, totalitarianism, or economics.
- HUMAN EXPERIENCE is the datum point for man's knowledge of himself and for understanding nature. This is the foundation of humanism.
- SCIENTIFIC HUMANISM: positivism, scientism; i.e. the scientific/logical/mathematical method is the only trustworthy means of discovering truth. Religious doctrines are myths. Metaphysics and theism is foolish.
- CHRISTIAN HUMANISM: this is where the principles of secular humanism are applied to believers; Biblical doctrines are overridden by the teachings of men. This is particularly noticeable in forms of Psychoheresy,<sup>53</sup> where concepts formulated by atheists (or even occultists) are given precedence over Biblical counselling. (See *Psychoheresy*)

### Scriptures affected

- *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.* [2 Tim 3:16]
- *For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.* [Rm 15:4]

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<sup>52</sup> The teaching that life has no meaning.

<sup>53</sup> Christian psychotherapies.

- *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes. [Rm 1:16]*
- *For it is written: 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.' Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. [1 Cor 1:19-21]*
- *Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. [Rm 12:2]*
- *Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.' [Mt 16:24-25]*

### **Dangers**

The dangers should be obvious to true believers. Man can only be understood in the light of his creator, God. The God who made man has given all the instructions needed to enable him to live right and prosper. If these instructions are ignored, man will not just lose his God-centredness, but also his true self-consciousness, being susceptible to lies. This was the essence of Adam's fall; he concentrated upon his felt needs, believed the satanic lie and fell from grace. We will never prosper by focusing upon ourselves; only as we worship God will we find happiness.

### **Proponents**

See *Psychoheresy* and *Seeker Sensitive Practices*.

## Hyper-Calvinism

### **Origins**

Hyper-Calvinism is an extreme form of Calvinism. The prefix 'hyper' means 'excessive', 'over and beyond', and this is what Hyper-Calvinists do; they over-develop the tenets of Calvinism to extreme lengths.

Hyper-Calvinism arose amongst certain English Baptists and Congregationalists in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, being especially linked to Strict Baptists and some Particular Baptists.<sup>54</sup> Today Hyper-Calvinism is seen most commonly in Britain amongst the remaining Gospel Standard Baptists and a few others; numbers are very small though there are about 200 Gospel Standard chapels remaining; usually with very small congregations. In the US it is evidenced in some Southern Reformed Baptist churches – though both UK and US groups have considerable presence on the Internet (e.g. the *Pristine Grace* website). Though the underlying *raison-d'être* is to uphold the glory and honour of God in salvation, it goes to extremes to do this and becomes unbiblical.

### **Teachings**

- All Hyper-Calvinists are Supralapsarians. This is the doctrine which teaches that the decree of election is prior (*supra* 'above') to the decree to allow the Fall (*lapsus*). The prior purpose of God was his glory in having a saved, chosen people, a finished

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<sup>54</sup> Notably: Joseph Hussey (1660-1726), Lewis Wayman (d. 1764), John Brine (1703-1765) and John Gill (b.1697). Gill is not an extreme Hyper-Calvinist as some claim; indeed he could perhaps better be claimed to be a high-Calvinist. He taught justification in eternity but his sermons show many examples of preaching duty-faith.

salvation and the testimony of heaven (mercy, love) and hell (wrath and justice). Thus double predestination is emphasised; in God's purpose the sovereign separation of the elect and wicked comes first. This is within the confines of traditional Calvinism, though most Calvinist confessions are infralapsarian; that is that the decree of election is below (*infra*) the decree to permit the Fall. Infralapsarianism tries to soften the view of God, who primarily seeks fellowship with men and then deals with the resultant sin problem. Many infralapsarians deny reprobation (the sovereign choice of the wicked for condemnation) altogether. Infralapsarians emphasise mercy and rescue amongst men already seen as fallen; supralapsarians emphasises God sovereign choice of the elect first.

- Opposition to unlimited atonement, common grace, love of God to all men, and the sincere or free-offer. However it should be noted that all consistent Calvinists agree with this opposition; modern watered-down, moderate Calvinism supports these points.
- *Denial of duty-faith.* This is a root error of Hyper-Calvinism. This denies that men have a duty to obey the Gospel message, to repent and believe. Since man is dead in sins, Hyper-Calvinists believe that it would be wrong to command belief since this would imply 'creature-faith'. This position denies many clear scriptures (Isa 45:22; Matt 21:32; Mk 1:15; Jn 6:28-29; Acts 17:30, 20:21; Rm 16:26) and fails to understand that in the Gospel call comes power to the elect to believe, just as the command to Lazarus to come out of the tomb carried power to raise him up. Responsibility does not imply ability. The internal call of the Gospel comes with spiritual power to the elect, but to the reprobate it is a hardening in sin. Some Hyper-Calvinists (like George Ella) now accept that repentance is a duty but still claim that faith is not. This fails to understand that the two are inseparably linked in scripture. Conversion is faith and repentance. Historically, some have developed ridiculous ideas about 'legal-repentance' (required obedience to the law) and 'common-faith' (e.g. that Jesus existed historically) to try to get round the Biblical commands to repent and believe, as if God commands mere 'legal-obedience' in Acts 17:30!
- *Restriction in preaching the Gospel:* this is the second key error. Since duty-faith is denied, the Gospel is not preached to all but only to the regenerate, the awakened, the 'sensible' (i.e. convicted of sin). Sinners have the law preached to them but only the regenerate have the Gospel preached. This requires preachers to see into the hearts of men and make a choice – something impossible and ridiculous.
- *Justification in eternity:* though not the touchstone of Hyper-Calvinism, many see this as axiomatic. From it they posit that all the believer's spiritual blessings were achieved in eternity: adoption, sanctification, glorification etc. Thus progressive sanctification is completely denied. The believer is never seen as having been an enemy or alienated from God in his pre-conversion state, but always sanctified and justified.
- *Denial of rewards:* fearing any implication of merit in salvation, rewards are denied, despite very many clear verses and passages that explicitly state that God gives these out of his great grace; even though we do not deserve them, and even though the works are inspired and empowered by God.
- *Antinomianism:* again not all Hyper-Calvinists are antinomians, but in history very many were. In certain periods, these were seen as two sides of the same coin.
- *Further errors:* some moderns have gone to extremes in undermining Biblical imputation. They teach that justification is the impartation (not imputation or reckoning) of God's own infinite attribute of righteousness (not Christ's obedience to the law as a man) to the believer achieved by the faith of Christ (not his work). Others have said that Christ actually became sin in his person on the cross (thus positing that God knows sin personally) instead of sin being imputed to him – he bore our guilt.

## Scriptures affected

- Gospel preaching to all indiscriminately: And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.' Mk16:15 Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations. Lk 24:47 The everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth -- to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people. Rev 14:6
- Belief is a command:; Mk 1:15-16; Jn 3:36, 6:28-29; Acts 17:30, 20:21; Rm 6:17, 15:18, 16:26; Lk 17:9-10; Heb 5:9; 1 Pt 1:22-23. Refusal to believe is disobedience: Matt 21:32; Jn 8:24; Rm 10:16; 2. Thess 1:8; Heb 2:3, 3:18-19, 12:25; 1 Pt 2:7-8 4:17
- Justification (and thus adoption etc) is in time not eternity: Col 1:21, And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled. In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. (Col 1:14) And by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross. (Col 1:20) Notice in Col 2:9-14 the blessings following justification, righteous acceptance by God, is consequent to having died and been raised with Christ. This can only happen in time.
- Sanctification is not set in eternity but follows the cross (Heb 13:12); is legally definitive to secure our place in heaven at conversion (1 Cor 1:2; Heb 10:10) and also progressive in time throughout the believers life, finalised at the Last Day (Jn 17:17; 2 Cor 3:18; Heb 2:11; Eph 5:26-27; Jm 1:21; 1 Pt 1:9, 22). Believer's sins are dealt with as the errors of a son requiring chastisement (Heb 12:5ff).
- Rewards: e.g. Matt 5:11-12 – reward to Christians who are persecuted; Lk 6:23 – reward to Christians who are reviled for Jesus; 2 Jn 8 – reward for Christian work; 1 Cor 9:17 – reward for preaching the Gospel; Col 3:24 – reward of the inheritance for service. And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward, Matt 10:42. Rewards are due to our labour 1 Cor 3:8; for works predestined by God Eph 2:10; and achieved by God's power Phil 2:13.

## Dangers

This error arises from reading certain scriptures very simplistically (e.g. 2 Cor 5:21) and then developing an over-riding philosophy on them. In order to maintain it, huge numbers of Bible passages must be ignored or twisted. It is impossible, on a fair reading of scripture, to maintain the key tenets of Hyper-Calvinism. Severe forms come close to blasphemy and most forms dishonour the work of Christ on Earth as a man to secure our righteous standing before God. Placing everything in eternity nullifies various aspects of the Christian life as an experience known in time and tends towards introspection and mysticism; thus many Hyper-Calvinists fall into a severe lack of assurance. Some writers demonstrate intense subjectivity in their devotional writings (e.g. JC Philpot).

Some (such as George Ella) write in an extremely convoluted, complex and disorganised way, leading to irrationality and confused logic. Frequently this leads to terrible exegesis and erroneous statements. It is not uncommon for different camps of Hyper-Calvinists to oppose each other vigorously while some have confronted other Calvinists with much unkindness. The denial of progressive sanctification and the placing of all spiritual blessings into eternity past has led some to be aggressive and unloving, and yet fear nothing for their disobedience.

Having said all that, some Hyper-Calvinists are godly men with many good things to say, as long as they do not touch the key tenets of their sectarian position. For instance John Gill is usually an excellent exegete and his theological writings are often very beneficial, but is erroneous on eternal justification.

## Proponents

New Focus magazine. Pristine Grace website. Don Fortner, Bill Parker and Brendan Kraft (US Baptist preachers). George Ella, Peter Meney, Grace and Truth Online (Ian Potts). Gospel Standard churches. Many Strict Baptist works. Historically: JC Philpot, W Gadsby, J Irons, James Wells, John Gill (though he preached duty-faith often), John Brine, Lewis Wayman, Anne Hutchinson, Joseph Hussey.

## Jewish Roots

### Origins

Essentially, this theology asserts that the foundation of the church is the Jewish people since God's purposes were always focused upon Israel as a nation; the church is a temporary feature in the divine plan since the covenant is Jewish and its promises are for Israel. The early church was plagued with a form of this teaching called 'Ebionism', and the apostle Paul spoke against the works of Judaizers [Gal 2:4-5, 12-13, 5:12, 6:12-16; Phil 3:2; Acts 15:1]. Throughout later church history this type of heresy lay dormant until Dispensationalism became popular in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The emphasis which this gave, to an earthly Jewish millennium and the emphasis upon Jews by blood continuing as God's covenant people, led to the modern concept of Hebrew Christianity, also called: Hebrew Roots, Jewish Roots, Messianic Christianity and Christian Zionism.

These notions became more popular as the church grew unstable after charismatic extremes, such as the Toronto Blessing, which revealed the true colour of the movement. As people rejected charismatic apostasy and sought to revert to a more genuine basis to their faith, they turned to those who claimed that the foundation (root) of Christianity is Judaism and not the truths rescued by the Reformation.

### Teachings

- To a man the followers are Dispensational Premillennialists and thus usually Arminian. Therefore: God has two peoples, two covenants, the OT land promises are to national Israel, the kingdom is Jewish and earthly etc.
- They claim that Reformed theology spiritualises what are literal promises to Israel and applies them wrongly to the church. This is called 'Replacement Theology', which describes the church as the spiritual Israel. Such ideas are deemed to be false and all OT prophecies about Israel must be interpreted literally (as in Dispensationalism) and only belong to Jews; when scripture mentions Jews or Israelites – it means fleshly Jews only. [This is so clearly untrue it is hard to see how they can hold it.]
- *'Romans 11 tells us the invisible root of the church is Israel.'*<sup>55</sup> In fact careful exegesis of Rm 9-11 shows that the root is Abraham as a model of faith and election. Israel did not even exist as a nation at the time under view by Paul.
- Jeremiah's promise of a new covenant applies only to Jews [despite repeated NT texts which apply it to the church: 1 Cor 11:25; 2 Cor 3:6; Heb 8:8-9:17]
- It is fine for Christians to celebrate Jewish feasts, fasts, Sabbath's and customs.
- Churches should meet on the Sabbath day.
- Some teach that Christians should adopt Jewish names and customs, leaders are rabbis, churches are synagogues etc.
- Some teach that rabbinical methods of interpretation should be adopted such as midrash. Some, like Jacob Prasch teach that only by using this method can certain truths ever be revealed.

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<sup>55</sup> Jacob Prasch, *Moriel Newsletter*, Winter 1996-7, p1

- Some have gone so far as to utilise rabbinical writings, the Jewish occult cabbala, and to use Jewish symbols like the Star of David, which is also of occult derivation.
- Some, like Pransch, are vehemently anti-Calvinistic, anti-Reformation and are not beyond misrepresenting history.

### Sample of scriptures affected

- *For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation.* [Eph 2:11-22 (v14 quoted, read whole passage)]
- *Only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham.* [Gal 3:7,14]
- *Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ.* [Gal 3:16]
- *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.* [Gal 3:28-29]
- *You observe days and months and seasons and years. I am afraid for you, lest I have laboured for you in vain.* [Gal 4:10-11]
- *Those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed.* [Rm 9:8]
- *And for this reason he [Jesus] is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.* [Heb 9:15]
- *God, who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.* [2 Cor 3:6]

### Dangers

- Very many long cherished OT passages are removed from being applicable to any Gentile Christians.
- The seed of Abraham is Christ [Gal 3:16] and consequently those who are in Christ, Jews and Gentiles [Gal 3:7, 26-29; Rm 4:11-16, 9:7-8], not Jews by the flesh [Rm 9:8]. The Jewish Root error denigrates the person of Christ by appropriating his inheritance and giving it to a fleshly people.
- The heresy dishonours Christ by placing the focus for believers upon a fleshly nation instead of the Lord himself.
- This heresy contradicts very many passages of scripture which identify the church with Israel (only a few of hundreds can be given here):
  - Titles of Israel are applied to the church [e.g: *beloved of God* Rm 9:25, *children of God* Jn 1:12, *flock of God* Jn 10:14; *house of God* 1 Tim 3:15].
  - Ethnic Jews without faith are specifically said to be *not beloved* Hos 9:15, *not God's children* Deut 32:5, *not the kingdom of God* Mt 8:11-12, 21:43]
  - Refs. to Israel are applied to the church [Exod 16:18 with 2 Cor 8:15]; or to Christians [Lev 26:11-12 with 2 Cor 6:16].
  - Christians are the seed of Abraham [Gal 3:7, 26-29].
- It separates those whom God has joined together [Eph 2:11-22].
- Celebrating Jewish feasts and customs is bondage and vanity [Gal 4:10-11, 25-31, 5:1; Col 2:16-17; 1 Cor 7:18-19].
- Some falsely claim that the Gospels were written originally in Hebrew.
- Undue attention is placed by some upon the Jewish Talmud which is a collection of rabbinical writings that is ruthlessly anti-christian and blasphemous.
- There is a growing problem of encouraging support for a nation (Israel) that is contravening UN resolutions more than any other state and terrorising Palestinian civilians.

### Modern Proponents

James Jacob Prashch (*Moriel*), Tricia Tillin (*Banner Ministries*), Philip Foster (*St Matthew Publications*), Clifford Denton (*Tishrei Supplement*), Tony Pearce (*Light For the Last Days*), *Vanguard Magazine* (Siam Bhayro), Ray Borlase & Stewart Dool (*Intercessors For Britain*), *Contending Earnestly for the Faith Journal* (Philip Powell), *Prophetic Word Ministries* (Prophecy Today Magazine, Clifford Hill, David Noakes and supporters), David Bivin, Roy Blizzard, Peter Michas. Less extreme are the *Prayer For Israel* team who oppose Hebrew Roots but hold the traditional Dispensational focus upon Israel and the need to bless Israel to be blessed.

## Liberal Theology Modernism

### Origins

In a sense this unbelieving attitude to the Bible has been around from the beginning, but is recognised as a formal movement from the 19<sup>th</sup> century composed of a wide range of religious thought sparked by the rise of rationalism and evolutionary theories. Although genuine evangelicals do not espouse Liberal Theology (the very term 'evangelical' implies faith in the Bible as God's word), this movement has infiltrated many churches which claim to be Christian, particularly institutional bodies like Anglicanism and modern Methodism.

Starting with Schleiermacher, the liberal approach to Biblical studies focuses upon man rather than God; the idea of self-consciousness is more important than revealed truth. Truth is empirical not revealed (reason guided by experience brings truth). In other words, the Bible was the work of men not God. This emphasis was given a boost with the rise of evolutionary ideas in the Victorian period and led to efforts to completely undermine the authority and inspiration of the Bible with the Higher Critical views of J Wellhausen, SR Driver and others.

### Teachings

There are many variations within different schools of thought, but they all seek to diminish the absolutism of truth and God's word; the old orthodoxy was seen as incompatible with early 20<sup>th</sup> century idealistic scientific views about man and the world. Doctrines include:

- Jesus isn't God, but an exemplary man.
- Creation is good, human existence is social.
- Man is not sinful. Sin is not heinous but a wrongful desire for independence.
- Man is being gradually perfected, society is improving.
- Miracles did not really happen.
- The resurrection is a myth.
- Hell doesn't exist. Universalism.
- God is love; he has no wrath.
- The need for atonement is rejected.
- The Bible was written late in history and is not inspired.
- Moses did not write the Pentateuch; instead a series of individuals (termed J, E, P, H, D) wrote various documents, being edited together after the exile, before 300 BC.
  - J = a focus on Jehovah (Yahweh) as the name of God and Judah.
  - E = a focus on Elohim as the name of God and the Northern Kingdom.
  - The documents of J and E were combined early on.



- P = Priestly Code, post-exilic.
- D = Deuteronomic Code, the prophetic period. Connected to the north.
- H = Holiness, a focus on ceremonial purity. Connected to the south.

They even maintain that the book of Joshua demonstrates being written by J, E, D and P. Frequently a single verse is claimed to have been written by two authors.

- The Gospels are conflicting stories written late after the death of Christ.
- As man became more sophisticated in history, so the Bible gradually portrays a more sophisticated picture of God. Complex theology, therefore, cannot be ancient.
- Miracles are myths, there was no Garden of Eden, no virgin birth, no resurrection and no flood. The Bible is just the same as the Hindu Upanishads or Bhagavad Gita.

### Scriptures affected

- *Your word is truth.* [Jn 17:17]
- *He [Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.* [Col 1:15-17]
- *And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses.* [Col 2:13]
- *By one man's disobedience many were made sinners.* [Rm 5:19]
- Jesus referred to Noah and Jonah as historical figures. He also referred to Moses as the writer of the Pentateuch.

### Dangers

Clearly there are many for this is essentially an unbiblical and non-Christian movement. Its common doctrines are guaranteed to ruin faith in God and denigrate his word to the point of having no value. Churches that are based on such doctrines soon find it easy to accommodate anti-Biblical practices and justify them on the basis of humanism or tolerance. A good example of this is the UK Anglican church in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Being steeped in Liberal Theology, it has apostatised to the point of being anti-Christian, now upholding: the ordination of women priests, the ordination of homosexual priests, hosting the Interfaith Movement - which includes sharing pulpits with leaders of false religions and praying to demonic gods - the general denigration of the Bible, the tolerance of those in high office who even teach that God is dead and so on.

### Proponents

Friedrich DE Schleiermacher [1768-1834], Julius Wellhausen [1844-1918], Albrecht Ritschl [1822-1889], Paul Tillich [1886-1965], Rudolph Bultmann [1884-1976], Adolf von Harnack [1851-1930], Albert Schweitzer [1875-1965], JAT Robinson. Modern liberals would include: John Shelby Spong, Marcus Borg (*The Jesus Seminar*).

## Mysticism / New Age

### Origins

Mysticism is a part of natural man's make up and has been the basis of pagan religion from the beginning. All false religions and occult practices are based upon the tenets of mysticism. Strip away the various methods, teachings, practices and disciplines, and what's left is a struggle to discover mystical truth; whether the technique is yoga, drugs, magic, meditation, Hinduism, Buddhism etc., mystical revelation is the goal.

The very diverse New Age Movement is the modern flowering of pagan mysticism. Precursors of New Age include:

- THEOSOPHY (Mme Helena Blavatsky, Annie Besant, Alice Bailey, The Findhorn Centre, David Spangler, The Lorian Assoc.).
- BUDDHISM, HINDUISM.
- SPIRITISM: mesmerism, hypnotic trances, Christian Science, Unity.
- PLATONIC DUALISM: the material world is not the real world of spiritual ideals.
- EVOLUTIONARY THEORIES.
- THE HUMAN POTENTIAL Mvt. e.g. Peale's *The Power of Positive Thinking*. (Note the high New Age content in current business training seminars.). Scientology.
- THE MIND SCIENCES: hypnotism, faith healing etc.

### Teachings

Essentially, mysticism is the name for many disciplines that seek to develop the 'god' within one's nature. Based upon the foundational Satanic lie that 'you shall be like God',<sup>56</sup> mystics (and all false religions) believe that God lies deep within the heart of natural man. Mysticism is the means to raise God out, or fan the divine spark into a flame. Contemplation, meditation and trances are used to gain union with the divine in Hinduism, Buddhism, Neoplatonism and Sufi Islam. Some 'Christian' mystics taught something similar, such as Meister Eckhart. Quakers were early proponents of gaining divine mystical knowledge from within without use of the Bible, thus predating Pentecostals and charismatics.

New Agism is a modern renaissance of a wide variety of mystical ideas adopted for modern man. It is a new flowering of ancient paganism, dressed up for civilised people which developed out of the 60s search for truth and 'flower power'. It encompasses huge numbers of different ideas, teachings and practices, all based upon an individual finding God through finding themselves.

Some specific aspects include:

- *God within*: the divine spark.
- *Pantheism*: God is identified with nature and the universe, all is god.
- *Monism*: all is one, all reality reduced to a single unifying principle, all things co-exist together, man is a part of nature and the spirit world.
- *Universal brotherhood*: all men are brothers, a part of the universal self (god).
- *Unity of all religions*: different roads to the same god. Contradictions are ignored and evaded by saying that truth is non-cognitive and not properly expressed in words.
- *Experience outweighs revealed truth*: the goal is personal transformation from psychic experiences, a paradigm shift.
- *Reincarnation and karma* (cause & effect): these Hinduistic ideas are believed by most.
- *Occult knowledge is received from spirits*: different cults give them different names (ascended masters, elementals, aeons, angels). Various methods include: channelling, seances, Ouija boards, Transcendental Meditation.
- *Gnosticism*: This is a dangerous form of monism & mysticism since it often takes root in the church. It is a syncretistic religion (a mixture of two or more faiths) that is based upon dualism (a good god fighting a bad spirit; material world is evil, spirit world is good) with a special emphasis upon truth being a mystery, revealed only to the initiated ones. Truth isn't rational but revealed through initiation into a mystery by mystical

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<sup>56</sup> Gen 3:5; Rm 1:25. Man did become like God in one sense (Gen 3:22), but only in knowing about good and evil, since man had now become evil. Man could never be really like God (Ex 8:10) in character or power.

rites, creating an elitist group with higher knowledge (as in Word Faith and some charismatics). Emphasis upon angels; often ascetic and rejecting norms of morality.

### **Sample of scriptures affected**

- *And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience. [Eph 2:1-2]*
- *[Men] who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator. [Rm 1:25]*
- *The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie. [2 Thess 2:9-11]*
- *And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. [1 Jn 5:20]*
- *But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! [2 Tim 3:1-5]*
- *...avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge - by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith. [1 Tim 6:20-21]*
- *Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. [2 Cor 11:14]*
- *His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue. [2 Pt 1:3]*
- *Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honour and glory forever and ever. Amen. [1 Tim 1:17]*

### **Dangers**

The dangers have been highlighted already. Mysticism leads people away from God and towards Satan. In the church, mystical ideas stimulate the flesh and emotions. Key dangers in this are: the emphasis upon subjective experiences validating impressions and new revelation; the encouragement of passivity to get these feelings. Passivity is always dangerous and leads to receptivity to satanic temptation; this is why a believer must have a sound mind, a renewed mind and be full of self-control. Continued repetitive singing and the use of background music are key mystical / occult features to encourage passivity.

### **Historical 'Christian' Proponents**

Meister Eckhart, Julian of Norwich, Thomas à Kempis, Madame Guyon, François Fénelon, Bernard of Clairvaux. These, to a lesser or greater extent, combined mysticism with Christian truth, but some became submerged in heresy or complete passivity. Schleiermacher (founder of liberalism) was a pantheist.

### **Modern Proponents**

Churches and leaders who have adopted mystical or New Age practices include: Tony Higon, St James' Church Piccadilly, Christian Science, Unity cult, Robert Funk (*The Jesus Seminar*), Matthew Fox, Teilhard de Chardin. Many Word Faith teachings have similarities with Gnosticism, especially the concept of Satan ruling this earth with God being seen as a poor spectator unable to do anything unless we help him with our faith.

The Toronto Blessing fiasco was straight out of Gnostic mysticism. The theology of revelation propounded by Barth was essentially mystical (see: *Neo Orthodoxy*).

The beginning of mysticism is when the Bible is ignored or rejected as the source of God's truth. Leaders who diminish scripture are on a dangerous path to mysticism e.g.: Gerald Coates or John Wimber who did not believe in the sufficiency of scripture,<sup>57</sup> Wimber said, '*not all truth is in the Bible. We integrate all truth, both Biblical and other into our experience of living*';<sup>58</sup> or Paul Cain, '*the word will do you no good*'.<sup>59</sup> Similarly, any leader who advocates abandoning reason, intellectuality or self control in order to experience something in a meeting, e.g.: Rodney Howard Browne ('*do not think only drink*').

## New (or Neo) Evangelicalism

### Origins

Inspired by the impact of the social sciences, anthropology and philosophical speculations in the United States and riding on the back of Neo-Orthodoxy, the movement was mainly a reaction to the dogmatic separatism of Fundamentalism. Many of the key proponents have been associated with Fuller Theological Seminary, the largest interdenominational evangelical seminary in the world, with an enormous influence. The impact of New Evangelicalism has developed and increased alongside the history of Fuller from 1947 to the present. The term itself is usually attributed to a speech by Harold Ockenga given in the Pasadena Civic Auditorium in 1947 (the convocation address for Fuller Seminary). New Evangelicalism is insidious because it is so universally pervasive; almost all mainstream evangelical institutions, churches, publishing houses and journals are infected with it.

The key problem has been gradual rejection of the inerrancy and authority of the Bible to the point where most evangelical leaders do not hold the historic view. This in turn leads to the adoption of false doctrines and compromise with error and false religions. As an example of the downgrade, the widely esteemed magazine *Christianity Today* carried a series of articles on Biblical criticism in October 1985 written by scholars from several evangelical seminaries. None rejected Higher Criticism, but defended it. While claiming to believe the Bible is God's word, they adopt academic positions which deny it in practice. It is now being said that it is '*almost impossible to find an evangelical professor in the theological schools of our land and abroad who still holds uncompromisingly to the doctrine of the infallible inspiration of the scriptures*'.<sup>60</sup>

An example of where this ends is Fuller Seminary's Charles Scalise. In his book *From Scripture to Theology: A Canonical Journey into Hermeneutics* (IVP, 1996), Scalise follows Barth's subjective approach to the Bible, [see *Neo Orthodoxy*] and concludes that:

- Moses did not write the Pentateuch. It was written and edited hundreds of years later (the Higher Critical View).
- The Old Testament record of miracles is inaccurate and exaggerated.
- Historical narratives contain true history mixed up with mythological sagas. He believes that it is hazardous to view the Bible as genuinely historical.
- Paul did not write Ephesians.

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<sup>57</sup> John Wimber, *friend or foe?* St Matthias Press, pg9-10. See also Media Spotlight: *The Vineyard*, p4.

<sup>58</sup> Wimber, *Vineyard* '83, Leadership Conference, 'The 5 year plan', Tool 6; quoted in Media Spotlight, *The Vineyard*, p20.

<sup>59</sup> Cain, speaking at the *School of Prophecy*, Anaheim, Nov 1989 session 7.

<sup>60</sup> Herman Hanko, *The Battle for the Bible*, p2-3.

- The Reformation was not about vital Biblical doctrines but was a mere misunderstanding.

This is about as liberal as one can get, yet he claims to be an evangelical.

### Teachings

- GOD: Man cannot apprehend God through written language, but must experience him through events (shades of Barth). ‘Anthropomorphic figures’ do not refer to God’s person but to his activity.<sup>61</sup> In other words, the Trinity may not be a real statement about God’s essence, but a humanised description of his behaviour. God may not be Triune. [Nida developed his view of truth partly to accommodate Islamic objections to the Christian Bible.]
- CHRIST: For Charles Taber, even the Lord Jesus becomes a human concept.<sup>62</sup>
- TRUTH: ‘*Biblical revelation is not absolute. Language is of human origin. God does not describe his essence*’.<sup>63</sup> Thus revelation and language are barriers to knowing God. The OT is reduced to Hebrew culture, the NT to Greco-Roman culture, thus neither are effectively applicable to modern believers. Truth is relative; this enables Charles Kraft, and others, to dismiss very many Christian doctrines such as: original sin, man’s guilt, saving knowledge of Christ’s death.<sup>64</sup>
- BIBLE TRANSLATIONS: dynamic equivalence is the best way to translate the Bible so that its message is understood like its first hearers would have grasped it. This is to translate thought for thought instead of literally (word for word); in other words, almost a paraphrase.
- SYNCRETISM: Some (like Cragg) have made moves to unite Islam with Christianity by redefining key words and using the flexible (relativistic) theory of truth above. He even suggests that ‘converts’ from Islam may not need to repudiate their heritage (i.e. remain Muslim) and that baptism can be ignored. [These same arguments are used by Jewish Root promoters.]
- METHODOLOGY: Its foundational attitude in all departments (theological and moral) was the repudiation of Biblical separatism; i.e. openness and tolerance of virtually everything, even liberal and apostate theologians. There is an inordinate desire for acceptance. For this reason, some call the movement *The New Neutralism*.
- ACADEMIC APPROACH: an unhealthy enthusiasm for liberal developments stimulated by a desire for professional academic acceptance.

### A summary of the essence of New Evangelicalism

- It contests the inerrancy of scripture.
- The sufficiency of scripture for matters of life is effectively denied.
- New Bible translation methodology: use of ideas (paraphrases) to evoke response in hearer rather than literal translation.
- Pagan ideas are ‘Christianised’.
- Due to relativism (no absolute universal truth), Kraft could endorse polygamy in Nigeria and Nida could partially excuse patricide or wife exchange in some tribes.
- Emphasis upon subjectivity.
- It rethinks Christian doctrines. Toleration for a wide diversity of theological views.
- It elevates love and tolerance. Readiness to compromise, especially to science.

<sup>61</sup> Sic. Eugene Nida: quoted in Richard L Heldenbrand, *Target: Evangelicals*, Words of Life, (1991) p6.

<sup>62</sup> Charles R Taber, *Hermeneutics & Culture – An Anthropological Perspective*, in *Down To earth*, ed. John Stott & Robert Coote, Eerdmans, (1980), p93.

<sup>63</sup> Sic. Nida: quoted in Heldenbrand, *ibid.* p4-5.

<sup>64</sup> Kraft, *Towards a Christian Ethnotheology*, in *God, Man and Church Growth*, ed. Alan Tippett, Eerdmans, (1973), p112, plus quotes from sources in Heldenbrand, *op. cit.* p11-12.

- The use of questionable methods in mission. Acceptance of a wide platform e.g. with Roman Catholics or apostate denominations.
- It does not practice separation from known error, the disobedient and heretics.
- Emphasis upon ecumenism by avoiding disputed doctrines (hell, atonement etc.).
- Promotion of pluralism.
- Adoption of Psychoheresy (See *Psychoheresy*)
- Condone worldly ideas, such as music, drama, sensuous worship.
- Political activism.
- Encouragement to involvement in humanistic social programmes to make the Gospel acceptable, to make the church an instrument of social change.
- Concessions to evolutionary theories.
- Supports the Charismatic Movement.
- Promotes new charismatic theological fads (power healing, spiritual warfare etc.)

### Scriptures affected

- *Cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.* [Rm 13:12]
- *Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.* [Eph 5:11]
- *Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?* [1 Cor 5:6]
- *Contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.* [Jude 3]
- *... teach no other doctrine.* [1 Tim 1:3]
- *Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge - by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith.* [1 Tim 6:20-21]
- *He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds.* [2 Jn 9-11]
- *Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them.* [Rom 16:17]
- *But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us.* [2 Thess 3:6]
- *I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of my mouth.* [Rev 3:15-16]

### Dangers

- The Bible claims inspiration and inerrancy in the smallest detail, even grammatical details. [Note Paul's case in Gal 3:15-16, based upon one letter 's', a plural noun rather than a singular.]
- New Evangelicalism seeks to change the believer's entire world view and undermines all previous presuppositions about the Bible and doctrine.
- Even by the late 70s the change in evangelical morals could be documented. After surveys in Christian colleges it emerged that: young couples were engaging in sexual intercourse without guilt, profanity became acceptable, masturbation was called 'a gift from God', viewing pornography was tolerated, young girls had abortions and evangelical gay associations sprang up.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> See Richard Quebedeaux, *The Worldly Evangelicals*, (1978), p16-17; James Hunter, *Evangelicalism The Coming Generation* (1987) and Francis Schaeffer, *The Great Evangelical Disaster*.

- Quotes from two professors of Fuller Seminary who resigned and rejected New Evangelicalism:
  - *'Down the road, whether it takes five or fifty years, any institution that departs from belief in an inerrant Scripture will likewise depart from other fundamentals of the faith and at last cease to be evangelical in the historic meaning of that term.'*<sup>66</sup>
  - *'The New Evangelicalism is a theological and moral compromise of the deadliest sort. It is an insidious attack upon the Word of God. ... The New Evangelicalism advocates toleration of error. It is following the downward path of accommodation to error, co-operation with error, contamination by error, and ultimate capitulation to error!'*<sup>67</sup>
- One final quote: *'Bible-believing Christians would do well to beware of the New Evangelicalism for four valid reasons. First, it is a movement born of compromise. Second, it is a movement nurtured in pride of intellect. Third, it is a movement growing on appeasement of evil; and finally it is a movement doomed by the judgment of God's Holy Word.'*<sup>68</sup>

### Modern Proponents

Eugene Nida, Charles Taber, Charles Kraft, Kenneth Cragg, Jack Van Impe, Bill Bright, John Stott, Chuck Colson, Tony Campolo, Charles Scalise, Lius Palau, Leighton Ford, Charles Swindoll, David Hocking, Edward Carnell, Billy Graham, Carl Henry, Bernard Ramm, many of the faculty of Fuller Seminary, the National Assoc. of Evangelicals, the Lausanne Committee, Campus Crusade, Christianity Today Magazine, Moody Monthly, Inter Varsity Press, Tyndale House Publishers, Zondervan Publishers, Nelson Publishers, Youth For Christ, Operation Mobilisation.

## Neo Orthodoxy

### [Dialectical Theology or The New Hermeneutic]

### Origins

The neo-orthodox movement was a major influence in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century but continues to infiltrate certain types of thinking today. Liberal theology had forced men like Bultmann and Barth to consider new ways of doing theology that engaged with current issues. Rudolph Bultmann's reaction was to demythologise scripture and apply existentialist ideas to it.<sup>69</sup> The key player in this theology was Karl Barth, seen by many as a champion of Biblical theology against liberalism, but by others as introducing a heretical doctrine of scripture. Thus while affirming the Reformation's *sola scriptura*, it really destroyed its traditional meaning. The New Hermeneutic emerged in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and continued Barth's ideas de-emphasising the text's historical meaning.

### Teachings

- Barth emphasised divine transcendence, i.e. a great gulf is fixed between the transcendent God and fallen humanity.

<sup>66</sup> Dr. Harold Lindsell, *Battle for the Bible*, p20, 121.

<sup>67</sup> Dr. Charles Woodbridge, *The New Evangelicalism*, (1969) p. 9,15

<sup>68</sup> William Ashbrook, *Evangelicalism: The New Neutralism*, (1958), Introduction.

<sup>69</sup> His ideas relate to getting rid of the mythological language in scripture in order to get at the real message proclaimed (*kerygma*), the message that affects human experience. This eventually led to his scepticism about the historicity of the NT records and abandoning the thought that it contained any genuine historical information about Jesus. He is more concerned with the 'Christ of faith'.

- The importance of scripture was stressed but critical presuppositions were brought to bear upon it. The essential word of God is Christ (the *logos*) so the Bible is not God's revelation, it is a *witness* to his revelation. Revelation is God speaking. The Bible is only effective as God speaks through it, revelation happens to a person, it is not found in reliable written statements. Since the written word is not revelation, it is fallible at every point and contains errors. However, as a witness to revelation, God uses it when he speaks to a person, then the word becomes revelation. This principle is of huge significance and undergirds much charismatic theology: revelation is subjective, based upon internal feelings of the Spirit, rather than objective, based upon the Bible as truth.
- Only God can speak for God. Truth is not necessarily conveyed by reading the Bible, even though it is a witness to God's past word to prophets.
- Although he speaks of 'verbal inspiration', since God uses the language of scripture, this is not meant to suggest that the words are inspired or this would lock God's revelation in the words of scripture. Verbal inspiration does not mean Biblical infallibility for him.
- Revelation is opposed to reason, therefore God is beyond any kind of mental comprehension. Insights given by the Spirit formed theological statements without rational proofs or Biblical statements.

### Scriptures affected

- *The entirety of Your word is truth.* [Ps 119:160]
- *Your word is truth.* [Jn 17:17]
- *You received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.* [1 Thess 2:13]
- *The Scripture cannot be broken.* [Jn 10:35]
- *For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.* [Mt 5:18]
- **"It is written**, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.' ... **For it is written**: 'He shall give His angels charge over you,' and, 'In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.' " Jesus said to him, **"It is written again"**. ... **"For it is written"**. [Mt 4:4-7, 10]

### Dangers

- Barth undermines the essential character of the Bible, which is that it is itself authoritative as the word of God.
- If scripture is merely the fallible words of men, there can be no obligation to obey it.
- How does one truly discern that God is speaking through the word? Subjectivism rules. How can one's faith that God has spoken be verified without concrete scripture?
- The Spirit does indeed illuminate truth, but he works with the words of the Bible, not replacing them by internal, isolated revelations.
- The Bible affirms its intrinsic authority; it is not just a witness but is actually God's revelation: Deut 5:22, also note: the oft repeated '*the Lord said*'.
- The Bible itself is light from God [Ps 119:105, 130] and truth [Ps 119:160; Jn 17:17].
- The Lord Jesus affirmed and accepted the words of the OT as truth, as God's words.
- Word studies of 'revelation' and 'word' reveal that revelation is both personal and propositional, not merely personal and pragmatic; i.e. the Bible contains propositional truth.
- Barth's ideas led his followers to assert that God's revelation can arise from non-canonical sources. Neo-Orthodoxy has no answer to people who claim to have met with God by faith through other religions. This led to charismatic notions of truth being appropriated from false religions or even occult sources like astrology.



- His followers also taught that God is so transcendent that only myths can bridge the gulf with God and man; Biblical events are myths which teach truths. Thus they rejected important doctrines like the virgin birth and the resurrection.
- Barth's theology led to universalism (see *Universalism* ).
- Barth's faith approach to revelation is a direct (but unwitting) precursor to the *rhema* teaching of Word Faith and extreme charismatics.<sup>70</sup>

### Modern Proponents

Karl Barth, R Bultmann, Emil Brunner, P Tillich, CH Dodd, A Nygren, J & DM Baillie, Reinhold & H Richard Niebuhr, Hans-Georg Gadamer, E Fuchs, G Ebeling, Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

## The New Perspective on Paul / Justification / Judaism

### Origins

This is a recent development within Christian theology supported by a number of academic scholars ranging from liberals to evangelicals. While there are variations within the movement, the key factors are a new way of looking at Second Temple Judaism<sup>71</sup>, and thus reappraising Paul's teaching on justification as understood by Reformation theologians.

The novelty began with writings by EP Sanders and then James DG Dunn (liberals), but was revised by the evangelical NT Wright, followed by John Armstrong and others. Since the movement is diverse, it is difficult to summarise the position with absolute fairness to all participants, but some attempt must be made to take account of this new direction in Biblical studies. Not all participants believe all that's claimed of the new view.

### Teachings

- The foundation stone is Sander's claim that Second Temple Judaism was not a religion based upon legalistic self-righteousness, but grace.<sup>72</sup> Keeping the law flowed from a grace initiative from God establishing the covenantal scheme. Works are not to get in (God's gift), but to stay in the covenant (this is called 'covenantal nomism').
- Paul was not concerned about grace versus works for salvation, but about the status of Gentiles in the church. Justification was more about Jewish Gentile relations than personal standing before God. Justification is not concerned with acquittal from sin, but with being established in the covenant community.
- Luther read his own presuppositions in his understanding of Paul in establishing the Reformation doctrine of justification. What is needed is to understand what Paul's hearers would have understood by it. According to Wright, [the Traditional Protestant way] '*of reading Romans has systematically done violence to the text for hundreds of years.*'<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> This idea posits a separation between the two Biblical terms for 'word'. *Logos* is supposed to be the rational, objective word of God (i.e. the Bible, Jesus as the 'word'), while *rhema* is a 'now word' spoken in faith and powerful application to a person, almost like a prophecy. In fact, the two words are used interchangeable in scripture, sometimes within the same sentence. An early, tentative, suggestion of this is found in Watchman Nee.

<sup>71</sup> That is from c. 515 BC when the original second temple was rebuilt, to 70 AD when Herod's temple was destroyed by the Roman army.

<sup>72</sup> This is supposedly supported by contemporary Jewish literature.

<sup>73</sup> NT Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said*, Eerdmans, (1997), p117.

- Justification is 'covenantal inclusion', a kind of badge of Christianity, something that shows believers are in relationship with God and each other; it is not about being saved nor a part of the Gospel. It is a recognition of God's faithful worshippers who will be justified at the end: it is thus corporate and eschatological. *'Justification... is the doctrine which insists that all who share faith in Christ belong at the same table, no matter what their racial differences.'*<sup>74</sup> It is currently a temporary anticipation of a future acquittal on the Day of Judgment.
- Righteousness is not something given to us by God, but is rather the declaration that we have believed in Christ and are recognised as being in covenant. *'It makes no sense that the judge imputes, imparts, bequeaths, conveys or otherwise transfers his righteousness to either the plaintiff or the defendant. Righteousness is not an object, a substance or gas that can be passed across the courtroom.'*<sup>75</sup>
- Dunn and Wright openly deny the imputed righteousness of Christ. Those New perspective theologians who still affirm it, do so with compromise and confusion.
- The works mentioned in the NT 'judgment' passages are more than evidences of conversion, however, they are not meritorious either. This is confused. Some avoid this confusion by suggesting that the believer faces a future judgment based on works – thus justification becomes based upon works. Thus we see the nonsense of the suggestion that the Pharisees were in a grace religion and Christians are in a works based religion – the tables are completely turned on the truth.

### Scriptures affected

- *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."* [Rm 1:16-17]
- *For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.* [2 Cor 5:21]
- *... the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works: "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, And whose sins are covered; Blessed is the man to whom the LORD shall not impute sin."* [Rm 4:6-8]
- *and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith.* [Phil 3:9]
- *For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous. Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound.* [Rm 5:19-20]

### Dangers

- Scripture alone must dominate theology.
- Is it possible that no one in history, until Sanders, understood Paul properly on such important matters as justification and righteousness?
- The new view started when a liberal scholar, who did not believe in Biblical inspiration, challenged the traditional Protestant view as a result of reading non-Biblical ancient Jewish documents. [Sanders does not even believe that Paul wrote Ephesians and Colossians.] Recent textual and historical studies by evangelical scholars have challenged Sanders' basic concept as being unfounded.
- Even if the surviving Second Temple Judaistic literature revealed a picture of the Jewish religion contrary to that criticised by Jesus and Paul, this does not mean it is

<sup>74</sup> Wright, *ibid.* 120-122 Note: Wright insists that faith is the badge and justification the recognition of faith.

<sup>75</sup> Wright, *ibid.* p98; *The Shape of Justification*, p5.

accurate. Could a historic view of the social life of the UK in the 1990s be accurately portrayed in the future merely by examining surviving tabloid newspapers?

- If first century Jews did not believe in salvation by works, but rather by grace, then the whole Reformed (and Lutheran) doctrine of justification must be recast.
- The Old Covenant could not be kept (as the new view insists) but instead its purpose was to convict sinners and expose sin (Rm 3:20, 5:13,20, 7:7-8). It was a ministry of death not life (2 Cor 3:6-7). It theoretically promised life, but only to those who attained absolute perfect obedience – which is impossible (Jm 2:10). As such it pointed both to sinners, as being wicked needing a saviour, and to Jesus as the only one who perfectly obeyed (Rm 5:19; Heb 5:8-9). The New Perspective threatens the cardinal doctrine of Total Depravity with its view of the law.
- The idea that being a fleshly Jew meant automatic inclusion in the covenant, which was then maintained by faith to stay in, contradicts many scriptures. Righteousness (or being in the covenant) is established by faith in God's mercy, not law. For example: Lk 16:15; Rm 9:31, 10:3; Gal 5:4; Phil 3:9. In Jn 8 the Pharisees claimed righteousness and covenantal descent from Abraham, but Jesus stated that they were wicked because they committed sin, and thus were sons of the devil, not Abraham; they were not in the covenant. Nicodemus was a law-keeping religious leader of the Jews, yet he could not be in the kingdom of God until he was born again and justified (Jn 3). Abraham was declared righteous, before he was formally in covenant with God, because he had faith (Rm 4:3). Lk 18:9-14 (which discusses justification) clearly shows that Jews believed in salvation by works. Also it declares that one Jew was justified, the other was not. Both claimed a covenant relationship but one sought mercy from God, the other trusted his own law-works. The final word is from Paul in Rm 1-3 which clearly shows that all men are condemned, both those under law and those without law, because they are sinners – unless they receive a work of grace.
- Biblical justification is a legal heavenly declaration that a man is pardoned from sin and now declared righteous before God due to the atonement of Christ whereby our sins were imputed to Christ and his righteousness was imputed to us in a great exchange. It is a once for all legal affair which leads to actual sanctification of the person in time. Justification results in adoption into God's family, which guarantees entrance to heaven and freedom from the final judgment against sin. The new perspective destroys this.
- There is no real conflict between texts which state that salvation is solely by grace and passages that teach judgment is by works. The latter are evidential, not meritorious and related to rewards.
- If the righteousness of Christ is not imputed to us, we have no hope. The new view treats key scriptures (like Rm 4-8) with abandon.
- Faith for salvation is not our meritorious faith but God's gift.

### **Modern proponents**

EP Sanders, James Dunn, NT Wright, Alan Sugate, John Armstrong, Don Garlinton, Thom Smith, Scott Hafeman, Robert Gundry.

## Oberlin Theology (Finneyism) New Haven Theology / New Divinity

We will take these systems together for our purposes here. In their historic form they are defunct to all intents and purposes as theology has moved on. However, many modern teachers, and some systems, lean very heavily on these teachings, being little removed from them. For instance, the revivalist methods and doctrines promoted by followers of CG Finney are soaked in these errors.

### **Origins and key teachings**

*New Divinity* began as a development of *New England Theology*, a tradition following the rational system of the Calvinist revival preacher Jonathan Edwards. His followers continued this method of theoretical reasoning, but gradually began to drift from his pure Calvinism.

*New Divinity* arose out of the ideas of Edward's friends Samuel Hopkins (1721-1803), and Joseph Bellamy (1719-1790) who introduced Grotius' governmental view of the atonement. Further deterioration continued under Timothy Dwight (1752-1817, Edward's grandson and President of Yale College). The power of reason and human will became prominent thus diminishing man's depravity, alongside a new emphasis on law-work.

Later, Nathaniel Taylor (1786-1858) took the rationalistic erosion yet further and initiated what became known as *New Haven Theology*. This taught that man has the power of free-will and self-determination. Total depravity and the imputation of Adam's sin was abandoned, thus sin became the accumulation of errors rather than the fruit of a sinful nature. Then a universalistic system of atonement and rejection of penal substitution was taught alongside a complete denial of God's predestination. Man was seen as an innocent, free, moral agent with the power to sin or to save himself.

Within a hundred years of Jonathan Edward's death in 1758, the strong Calvinism that had permeated New England had fallen into a theology of works-righteousness. Alongside the death of Taylor in 1858 was the death of Edward's Reformed influence and the promotion of human ability. In this atmosphere Oberlin Theology was born.

*Oberlin theology* is closely connected to the teachings of revivalist Charles Finney and the ideas arising from *New Divinity*. Finney was professor of theology at the newly opened Oberlin Collegiate Institute in Ohio (now Oberlin College) and later became president from 1851-1866. He taught too many serious errors, tantamount to Pelagianism, to elucidate here but they include:

- Moral Government (Grotianism). [See Fullerism]
- Man's ability to repent without grace.
- Denial of imputation of Adam's sin.
- Denial of election.
- Denial of the effectual call. The drawing of God was the human persuasion of Gospel preachers.
- Man's ability to create a new heart (self-regeneration, regeneration is only a change in the will).
- Denial of the imputation of Christ's righteousness to believers; thus a denial of Biblical justification.
- Perfectionism; sanctification was the continuation of holiness by human effort.
- Utopianism / Millennialism (working to create a perfect society; the human establishment of the Kingdom of God through conversions and social reform).

Both these systems deny Biblical justification by faith. Where the imputation of Adam's sin is denied there is erosion of total depravity and less cause to require a thorough atonement. These systems just teach a need for some kind of forgiveness of offences, or even just a change in will. Where the imputation of Christ's righteousness is denied, there can be no Biblical justification and no acceptance with God.

These two theological systems ally closely with the erroneous system of Andrew Fuller in

promoting works-righteousness. Fuller was originally influenced by the earlier form of New Divinity but since his death there has been much cross-fertilisation. New Divinity and Finneyism have been accepted in some English circles, while Fuller has had a slow but increasing influence in the US. When folk hear preachers praise Fuller and Finney and hear of their evangelistic success (much exaggerated), or refer to New Haven theology with esteem, they are prone to accept that these systems must be orthodox without looking into them closely. In fact they are pits of vipers, able to emit as much poison.

### **Scriptures affected**

Too many to list, basically all those that deny spiritual power in man.

### **Dangers**

Such an elevation of man's ability without prior grace and regeneration and the denial of divine sovereign grace lead towards a non-Christian understanding of salvation. New Haven Theology was an academic pursuit expressed in teaching, seminaries and writings; but Finney's aggressive, emotional revivalist 'success' led such ideas into popular church culture. In fact, over time much of Finney's evangelistic success proved to be a failure, as he admitted later in life. Much was the froth and bubble of emotional excitement that make good reading in his journals.

But Finney's notoriety persists and gives credence to his ideas that go beyond Arminianism towards Pelagianism. Having taken an academic chair at Oberlin, he gave yet more credibility to his ideas, even producing a systematic theology that is man centred. This work is now easily obtainable on the Internet of CD ROM and continues to popularise his serious errors.

Finney is largely responsible for the damage that now afflicts many churches with their easy-believism, decisionism and various methods to produce instant disciples. What is called 'the invitation system' was developed from Finney's 'anxious seat' ideas - pressurising a sinner to feel the need to repent and pray for forgiveness under emotional duress and manipulation.

### **Modern Proponents**

- Anyone who promotes the teachings of Charles Finney and his methods of revivalism, such as Melody Green's magazines and many Charismatic proponents.
- Anyone who promotes the ideas of New Haven Theology, which is more common in the US than the UK.

## **Occult Theology / Paganism**

### **Introduction**

Since this will appear to some as a controversial and complex subject, it requires an extended treatment and specific examples to prove the point, extensively sourced.

### **Origins**

The occult is as much a theology, a science of God, as any Christian heresy; though it turns genuine theology upside down and does not serve the true God. Pagan ideas and practices have infiltrated Christianity from the very beginning, starting with the Gnosticism that began in the late apostolic period. As these emerged one by one, the church rose to

confront and condemn them, usually resulting in marginalising the practitioners as cults and sects. Examples would include: Simon Magus, the Medieval mystics, the Camisards, the Quakers, the Convulsionnaires, the Shakers, Christian Science and so on. Many of these did not start out to deliberately subvert the work of God, but went astray when they gave authority to demonic ideas taught by a trusted leader.

With the gradual acceptance of sensual based manifestations in revival situations (e.g. the jerks, screaming, fainting, jumping etc. in American frontier camp meetings), marginal groups came to accept unusual expressions in church meetings. Holiness gatherings became home to all sorts of strange occurrences. Maria Woodworth Etter was even called a 'voodoo priestess' and would stand motionless in a trance for over an hour on stage while the meeting continued around her. This was around the same time (mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> c.) when spiritualism grabbed the popular imagination the US and the UK starting in New York with Andrew Jackson (1843), then Margaret and Katie Fox (1848).

From the Holiness extravagances, it was a short step to expecting strange and occult events in Pentecostal services, and this is what occurred right at the beginning. The wild scenes of Azusa Street made front-page news in Los Angeles but the meetings also included seances and trances by spiritualists, witches and mediums (see *Pentecostalism*).<sup>76</sup> Although rejected by some, such bizarre behaviour continued throughout some churches in the Pentecostal movement. As odd manifestations occurred, rogue theology developed to explain it (like Latter Rain). It is these explanations that have grown to encompass more and more ancient pagan ideas. With the onset of the Charismatic Movement, a whole range of occult-based doctrines has become completely unopposed within charismatic churches.

Examination of weird charismatic teachings and practices proves that the modern Charismatic Movement is syncretistic, it is absorbing ideas and techniques from other religions and blending them into approved church praxis. For instance, it has taken on board the essentials of hypnosis from the mind sciences of Quimby; spiritualism (spirit guides, channelling) and trance inducing song/dances from shamanism; visualisation from Buddhism, fetishist sacramentalism from Wicca; and necromancy from the Spiritualist Church.

A central reason for the step change of academic acceptance of this in the 1980's came from three related sources: John Wimber plus Fuller Seminary's C Peter Wagner and Charles Kraft. All taught the necessity of a 'paradigm shift' in Christian thinking: the western way of understanding reality is secular; a better way is the eastern method of believing in spiritual beings and spiritual power. '*We should give ourselves to learning as much as possible about spiritual beings and power, even from other peoples*'.<sup>77</sup> In doing so we must be shorn of the need to rationalise or understand, '*In ministering to people, I find it necessary for them to be released from bondage to the need to understand*.'<sup>78</sup>

This put the beliefs of animists on a par with scripture. To this was added the psychic power of the mind sciences, or Fourth Dimension Faith (as in Yonggi Cho, promoted by Wagner). The claim is that a spiritual dimension exists which the Third World regularly taps into but the west does not, restricted by its adherence to rationality and physical laws. Christians should also tap into this world of spiritual power in the same way as, animists, Hinduists, Buddhists, occultists, and so on. The distinctives of the Christian revelation are reduced to the same level as occult ideas, because they all work successfully in the spirit

<sup>76</sup> *Counterfeit Revival*, op. cit., pp. 127-128. See also the extended case made in Nader Mikhael, *Slaying in the Spirit, the Telling Wonder*.

<sup>77</sup> Charles Kraft, *Christianity With Power*, Servant Pub. (1989), p89.

<sup>78</sup> Kraft, *ibid.* p48.

world. Rationality and logic are repudiated while God's commands to avoid the occult are ignored.

**Teaching and practices** (see *Charismatic Theology, Pentecostalism, Dominionism 2*)

- Visualising, incubating and imagining. Changing material things by concentrating on things imagined, visualised. Acting like God did when he created the world.
- Continuing revelation.
- Rational understanding is a hindrance to faith.
- The word of faith, power released through a word. Taking authority, commanding instead of praying for God to act. [This often involves using key phrases which becomes just like an occult spell. The words supposedly force God to act to change material things.]
- Validation by subjective feelings, impressions.
- Divination.
- Sacramentalism, fetishes (see *Sacramentalism*).
- Necromancy and spiritualism (divination through consulting the dead).
- Dancing and trances.
- Trance inducing repetitive singing.
- Falling over, fainting, slaying in the Spirit.
- Shouting, screaming, animal noises.
- Demonic tongues.
- Demons, gods and spirits which cause sicknesses and accidents.
- The power of curses.
- The reality of holy places, like shrines.
- Fortune telling by personal prophecy.
- False healing methods.
- Impartation of power through the laying on of hands.
- Use of altered states of consciousness (ASC). *'One could argue that ASCs, in the context of faith in Christ and prayerful obedience, are the basis of dynamic, personal, relevant, living faith.'*<sup>79</sup> ASC are conditions of the body different to sleeping or waking i.e. trances. These are common in occult and oriental religious phenomena, indeed they are necessary for many actions – such as fire walking.
- Adoption of bizarre bodily positions: e.g. foetal ('birthing') position to give birth to something, such as 'lost souls'.
- Psychic phenomena: the defence of the use of the soul (psyche) as a source of spiritual manifestations instead of from the Holy Spirit in man's spirit. There is *'no problem in accepting the term psychic in this pure sense to describe one part of the process of divine revelation to human beings.'*<sup>80</sup>
- Leaders who can disrupt electrical power and break domestic appliances by their mere presence in the room.<sup>81</sup>
- A denial of the relevance of the Bible: *'Truth is where God's been. Revelation is where God is. ... A true God chaser is not happy with just past truth; he must have present truth. God chasers don't want to just study from the mouldy pages of what God has done; they're anxious to see what God is doing.'*<sup>82</sup>

**Specific examples:**

- *William Branham*, believed in the power of astrology, the pyramids, believed he was

<sup>79</sup> Dr. Patrick Dixon, *Signs Of Revival*, p. 260.

<sup>80</sup> David Pytches, *Some Said it Thundered*, p106-107.

<sup>81</sup> Pytches, *ibid*, p52.

<sup>82</sup> Tommy Tenney, *The God Chasers*, Introduction.

the angel of Rev 3:14 / 10:7 and baptised people into his own name!

- *Morton Kelsey* was an Episcopalian priest and Jungian psychologist who equated Jesus with a witchdoctor as having ‘extra-sensory perception’. He adopted shamanistic methods, received guidance from the dead, equated the Holy Spirit with ‘the self’ and commended false religions and divination. Wimber dedicated a seminar to this man.
- *Agnes Sanford* was a disciple of Kelsey and held that experience preceded theology. From this came her occult visualisation or ‘imagining’ techniques, even teaching that one could forgive another's sins through visualisation. This oriental technique of visualisation became the key to her inner healing teachings. One visualises a past problem, then imagines Jesus coming into that moment and resolving it. Sanford called God ‘*primal energy*,’ a ‘*life-force existing in a radiation of an energy ... from which all things evolved*,’ ‘*God ... made everything out of Himself and somehow He put a part of Himself into everything*’ – this is pure pantheism.<sup>83</sup> Sanford even taught that people’s minds are connected, and can travel back and forward through time touching other minds in history as well as angelic and demonic minds!<sup>84</sup>
- *Ruth Carter Stapleton* was a disciple of Agnes Sanford and promoter of inner healing. She has said that people can be ‘born again’ by listening to great music or staring at great works of art.
- *John Wimber* believed in: ghosts, ancestors, earthly gods and goddesses who live within trees and rivers, Maya<sup>85</sup>, evil eyes,<sup>86</sup> planetary influences, etc.<sup>87</sup> He believed that some people are ‘*natural healers*’.<sup>88</sup> This is unabashed shamanism, as is the use of the use of relics, or psychic auras in healing, or the unbiblical ‘spiritual’ experiences which form the foundation of many Vineyard practices: slaying in the ‘spirit’, healing, demonic manifestation, screaming, laughing, vibrant irreverent noisy worship, shaking, falling, jumping on the spot or quiet passive contemplation. He felt he could get accurate information from a demon as well as God’s word.<sup>89</sup> Wimber opposed the ‘western’, intellectual approach to the Bible, demanding a *paradigm shift*, a New World view on the pattern of Third World intuitive religion (i.e. mysticism). In fact, many of the manifestations seen in Vineyard meetings are common in occult and oriental religions. Wimber also emphasised psychic healing using visualisation and inner healing techniques as described by Agnes Sanford. Wimber’s friend and colleague, Peter Wagner, even describes the occult use of observing auras as a guide to discerning a person’s problem.<sup>90</sup> Wimber refers to the same thing as ‘*radiance on the face*’ or ‘*warmth flowing out of hands*’.<sup>91</sup> These methods (e.g. used in healing of memories) are identical to the practices of psychic healers. They arise, at best, from subjective mental impressions; at worst they are demonic pretensions. Other methods, like receiving a tingling feeling in a part of one’s body identifying that God will heal an organ in that area, are completely occultic in nature. Never in scripture did the apostles work this way. It is, however, a feature of eastern occultic religions and sects which Wimber has opened himself up to with his ‘paradigm shift’.
- *C Peter Wagner* writes approvingly of ‘*shamans, witches, witch doctors, and mediums [who] have the power to control the supernatural forces which cause disease, poverty,*

<sup>83</sup> The identification of God with the universe.

<sup>84</sup> Agnes Sanford, *The Healing Gifts of the Spirit*, Revell, (1983), p152.

<sup>85</sup> In Hinduism, refers to the world of illusion.

<sup>86</sup> The ability in witchcraft to cast a spell on someone by merely looking at them.

<sup>87</sup> Wimber: *Signs Wonders and Church Growth*, section 3, ‘Today’s tension with the miraculous: world view’.

<sup>88</sup> Healing Seminar Syllabus, Section 2, *Healing in the NT* (1983), also Ministry Training Seminar, Part 2, Vineyard Christian Fellowship (1982), p1.

<sup>89</sup> Media Spotlight, Special Report: *The Vineyard*, p23.

<sup>90</sup> C. Peter Wagner, *How To Have A Healing Ministry Without Making Your Church Sick!* Regal, Ventura Calif. (1989), p228.

<sup>91</sup> These sorts of manifestations are called ‘*Cosmic reality*’ by Wimber. See *Healing Seminar Syllabus: 2 Observations, A Spiritual Phenomena*, p74-75.



*oppression, crop failure, hurricanes, barrenness, drought, and mental illness*'.<sup>92</sup>

- *Benny Hinn* claims Katherine Kuhlman as his female spirit guide who showed him his future ministry from beyond the grave and told him to follow her.<sup>93</sup> On another occasion he claimed to have seen Elijah.<sup>94</sup> He has stated that both Kuhlman's and Aimee Semple McPherson's graves carry a supernatural 'anointing.'<sup>95</sup> This is pure Spiritism and was seen in hysterical movements like the Convulsionaires who developed hysterical physical powers upon touching the grave of their dead leader.<sup>96</sup>
- *Rick Joyner* is a modern Gnostic who is even condemned by Pentecostals. His book *The Final Quest* is more like a computer game than teaching and is full of occultic imagery to describe the ascent of faith to find new revelation: he has an angelic spirit guide; he meets talking eagles who symbolise modern prophets, he encounters urinating demons and vomiting vultures, he collects gemstones and finds rooms full of gold. Joyner is another necromancer with added arrogance, he meets the apostle Paul who states that he was anxious to meet Joyner. Worse he criticises Paul's ministry.<sup>97</sup> Those who oppose him are called '*the hordes of hell*'.
- *Kansas City Prophets* – some tasters of ludicrous, arrogant and occult statements: *The presence of the Lord smells like a woman wearing too much perfume. ... When Bob Jones is filled with the Spirit, he can see and taste spiritual states and sins in others with all his five senses. ... God's 'logos' is merely the 'dry word' compared with their 'rhema.'* ... *This new generation will 'put death under their feet and they'll bring forth the glorious church and reveal the malechild of Revelation 12'.... Bob Jones has seen God 'face to face.' He feels a tingling in his fingers to tell who is a prophet, an evangelist, or pastor and hands turn purple when he gets his best revelations .... The Manifested Sons of God will appear within 30 years to glorify the Church on earth, and raise the dead and heal people.*<sup>98</sup>
- *Matthew Fox* is a Gnostic teacher who believes that the mystical teachings of Christ, which parallel world religions and which support universalism, have been deliberately hidden. Fox invented a New-Age '*Planetary Mass*' and runs the *Institute for Creation Spirituality*, a New Age association. Fox also promotes homosexuality, drug-use, astrology and witchcraft as helpful spiritual aids. He does not believe that Jesus is the only way to God; indeed Christ is a divine presence that permeates creation (i.e. pantheism) and is in every creature. The '*Cosmic Christ*' is the image of God present in all things who connects all the atoms in the universe and who incarnates himself in Lao-Tzu and Buddha as well as Jesus.<sup>99</sup>

### Scriptures affected

- *I have stretched out My hands all day long to a rebellious people, Who walk in a way that is not good ... Who sit among the graves, And spend the night in the tombs.* [Isa 65:2-4]
- *And when they say to you, 'Seek those who are mediums and wizards, who whisper and mutter,' should not a people seek their God? Should they seek the dead on behalf of the living ... it is because there is no light in them.* [Isa 8:19-20]

<sup>92</sup> C Peter Wagner, *Your Worldview Makes a Difference*, p61.

<sup>93</sup> June 11, 1997 edition of his *This Is Your Day* program.

<sup>94</sup> Honolulu Crusade, February 28, 1997.

<sup>95</sup> Hank Hanegraaff, *Counterfeit Revival*. Dallas: Word Publishing, 1997, pp. 168-169.

<sup>96</sup> The Convulsionaires were an extremist charismatic sect within the Jansenist movement which sprang up after the death of their leader in 1727. For more details on these and other groups, see the author's *The Origins of Pentecostalism*.

<sup>97</sup> Rick Joyner, *The Final Quest*, Morning Star Publications, 1996, pp. 131-132

<sup>98</sup> R. K. McGregor Wright, *The Shield* newsletter (1992); <http://www.dtl.org/shield/latter-rain-1.htm>

<sup>99</sup> See Tal Brooke ed. *The Conspiracy to Silence the Son of God*, in passim; David L. Smith, *Handbook of Contemporary Theology*, p303-4.

- *Give no regard to mediums and familiar spirits; do not seek after them, to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God. [Lev 19:31]*
- *And the person [lit. 'soul'] who turns to mediums and familiar spirits, to prostitute himself with them, I will set My face against that person and cut him off from his people. [Lev 20:6]*
- *So Saul died for his unfaithfulness which he had committed against the LORD, because he did not keep the word of the LORD, and also because he consulted a medium for guidance. [1 Chron 10:13]*
- *Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons. [1 Tim 4:1]*
- *Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: 'I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people.' Therefore 'Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you.' [2 Cor 6:14-17]*
- *... through death He [Christ] might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. [Heb 2:14-15]*

### **Dangers**

The hazards should be obvious to all Christians. The ultimate source of all occult ideas is Satan; paganism is demonic religion. The fact that false religions can mimic godliness or teach a few nuggets of truth is irrelevant, the root of a faith is what counts. If the root is evil, the results will ultimately be evil. We cannot serve God by using demonic techniques, even if these seem to work. Evaluation of false religions shows that there are experiences of power: there are signs & wonders, healings, miracles, tongues, ecstatic worship, dancing, falling and so on; but this is not a good enough reason to utilise their techniques.

A basic false premise is that the unregenerate can tap into a spiritual world power which is the same as that which Christians commune in, just as real as a physical law. In fact, the wicked can never commune with God until they are converted and born again. The only spiritual power which the unregenerate use is demonic and satanic.

Many aspects of power healing or exorcism are farcical or self-contradictory in teaching, morals and practice. For instance, Kraft tells of a healer who was immoral, and of a 'spirit-filled' woman, ministering in spiritual power, but who had 19 demons in her.<sup>100</sup> All practitioners admit that many prayed for are not healed or healed only for a short period [the 'rush' of ministry, especially in a meeting, releases endorphins or adrenaline naturally in the body which alleviate pain and give a temporary strength].

We are never to abrogate our powers of rationality, knowing the truth, comprehension, discernment and self-control: *giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control. [2 Pt 1:5-6] Since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. [Col 1:9] Incline your ear to wisdom, and apply your heart to understanding; Yes, if you cry out for discernment ... Then you will understand the fear of the LORD, And find the knowledge of God. [Prov 2:1-5]*

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<sup>100</sup> Kraft, op. cit. p165, 130.

It is absolutely essential to emphasise here the dangers of pragmatism, that is the belief that if something works it is right and true. Pragmatism undergirds much of the Charismatic Movement. What people forget is that occultism does work. Oriental occult practitioners do walk on hot coals, do speak in tongues, do appear to heal people, do have words of knowledge about folk which is naturally hidden from them, but their religion is false. The Egyptian magicians could copy some of Moses' acts of power, but could not overcome him. Just because something works is not reason to accept it. By using his army of demons to provide local knowledge, Satan can appear to foretell the future or identify personal data from someone's 'hidden' past. Occult therapies must be refused by Christians because they are occult, they are ultimately empowered by Satan. No Christian should ever use: Reiki, shiatsu, reflexology, yoga, martial arts, healing auras, acupuncture, homeopathy, aromatherapy, transcendental mediation and a host of other similar things. God's word is *Do not touch what is unclean*.

### **Modern Proponents**

Very many within the modern charismatic, historic Latter Rain and Word Faith streams. Benny Hinn, John Wimber (dcd.), Agnes Sanford (dcd.), Morton Kelsey, Kenneth Hagin, EW Kenyon (dcd.), William Branham (dcd.), Franklin Hall, Kenneth Copeland, David Yonggi Cho, Pat Robertson, Paul Crouch, Tommy Tenney, Rick Joyner, Cindy Jacobs.

## Open Theism

### **Origins**

This began with the teachings of Dr. Clark Pinnock of McMaster Divinity College in Ontario, Canada, and was first expressed in the book he wrote in 1994 with four other scholars,<sup>101</sup> *The Openness of God: A Biblical Challenge to the Traditional Understanding of God*.

### **Teachings**

Open Theism arises out of the principles of Wesleyan-Arminianism (or 'Evangelical Arminianism'). God's gift of free will to humanity incurs the risk that God will be affected by humanity's independent actions, this affects God's decrees [or decisions]. Consequently, God cannot know the future because humans can't truly make free decisions if those actions are divinely known beforehand. That means that God has 'limited sovereignty,' by his own choosing, trapped by man's decisions.

In a nutshell: God is not totally sovereign, God cannot know the future, man can impact on God, therefore, God is not God.

In a later book, *Flame of Love*, Pinnock's errors are compounded. He affirms the Roman doctrine of purgatory – the possibility of progressive sanctification after death and supports the old heresy called *Patripassianism* which teaches that God the Father was born in the incarnation, suffered and died.<sup>102</sup>

### **Sample of scriptures affected**

Most of the Bible is affected in some way. However, key scriptures include:

- *The Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.*  
[Dan 4:25]

<sup>101</sup> Richard Rice, John Sanders, William Hasker and David Basinger.

<sup>102</sup> Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, p 123f, 179 and 27, 42, 91, 109.

- *All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand or say to Him, 'What have You done?' [Dan 4:35]*
- *For He says to Moses, 'I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion.' So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy. [Rm 9:15-16]*
- *For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. [Col 1:16-17]*
- *The LORD has made all for Himself, yes, even the wicked for the day of doom. [Prov 16:4]*
- *You understand my thought afar off. You comprehend my path and my lying down, And are acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue, But behold, O LORD, You know it altogether. ... Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them. [Ps 139:2-4, 16]*

### **Dangers**

This is taking Arminianism into dangerous heresy with overtones of Pelagianism and Socinianism.<sup>103</sup> If God can't know the future, how can we have hope? How can we trust Biblical prophecy or the Book of Revelation? If man can deflect God's decisions and make him change his mind, how can we trust what he says? God ceases to be God in this system. In fact Pinnock has even suggested that evil may triumph in the end. This is the logical conclusion of his theology – no victory since God is rendered changeable and powerless. Pinnock also believes that other religions can reveal God's truth and the schism with Rome should be healed.<sup>104</sup>

### **Modern Proponents and supporters**

Greg Boyd, John Sanders. Clark Pinnock, who identifies himself today as a Pentecostal Arminian, has been supported in the UK by Gerald Coates, Sandy Millar, Graham Kendrick, Roger Forster, John Noble and others in that stable.<sup>105</sup>

## **Pentecostalism**

### **Origins**

In strict terms, Pentecostalism is a church movement not a theology; however, it has spawned a number of doctrines which are so closely connected to it that it can be used as shorthand to imply these teachings. The movement is so varied and fractured that no one church could be accused of representing all Pentecostal doctrines, and some streams are more moderate than others. However, even classic Pentecostalism derives from the same heterodox origins as aberrant modern churches and contains many novel teachings.

<sup>103</sup> Socinianism was a late 16<sup>th</sup> century anti-Trinity heresy which also argued against original sin, the pre-existence of Christ and Biblical atonement. The Socinians denied God's sovereignty, making God subject to the free decisions of men, insisting that he neither foreordains nor foreknows anything.

<sup>104</sup> Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, p217, 237

<sup>105</sup> *The Openness of God* was on the recommended advance reading list for the conference *A Theology for Revival* hosted by Coates and others in London in November 1997. Pinnock was called the '*theologian for revival*' when he spoke at Coates' Westminster revival meetings supported by the others mentioned.

Pentecostalism arose from the Holiness Movement in the US and was sparked into world-wide growth by the Welsh Revival of 1904-6. The first 20<sup>th</sup> century tongues speaker was Agnes Ozman at the Bethel Bible school led by Charles Fox Parham in Topeka Kansas, on New Years Day 1901. A number of other students, including Parham, followed later. From the very first there was an emphasis on the power of apostolic leadership in an end time church leading to the millennium. The gift of tongues was the manifestation of this end time baptism with the Holy Spirit, leading to a global revival. This is the foundational notion behind all Latter Rain teachings, and the term was widely used by Pentecostals from the beginning. Latter Rain theology is not simply the wrong turn of a few leaders in the 40s.

Associated with Parham was a black preacher, William Joseph Seymour, who led the so-called 'revival' at Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles from 1906-1913. Though originally a Baptist, Seymour accepted holiness teachings of entire sanctification. Seymour enrolled in Parham's school when it moved to Houston, accepted his doctrines and then moved to preach in LA. However, even holiness leaders rejected his ideas. Notwithstanding, Seymour held meetings in the home of the Richard Asberry where tongues broke out. This sparked an intense 'revival' operating in the street until a run down meeting place became available in Azusa Street. The first service was held there on 14 April, 1906. Within days, newspaper headlines ran two stories; the first was the San Francisco earthquake, the second was the 'weird babble of tongues' and 'wild scenes' in Seymour's church. Some compared it to the Cane Ridge extreme manifestations a century earlier.

Services were long, unplanned and informal, consisting of testimonies, singing, prayer, altar calls, and unprepared preaching. Without discipline, there was shouting, 'howling', slaying in the Spirit, 'falling down under the power', singing in tongues and silences. When Parham was invited to speak, he was repelled by the confusion, aberrations and theological heresy. Even worse was the regular presence of witches and mediums who felt at home in the chaos of 'spiritual' manifestations. These people were allowed to participate in their own ways. The meetings were often so out of control that Seymour put his head in a box to pray. Parham split from the movement. However, membership grew, publications were started and the church joined the Apostolic Faith Movement. Visitors were arriving from all over the world to get tongues and took the Pentecostal message back home so that missions spread everywhere; wild scenes ['revivals'] broke out in England, India, China, South America and elsewhere. Women's' ministries were also encouraged [this all has shades of Pensacola and Airport Church Toronto.] By 1908 the mission was fragmenting, one split led to the formation of the Assemblies of God in 1914. With the outbreak of World War I, it had all subsided in Azusa Street.

Although the spread of Pentecostalism took place in various ways in the US and the Third World, all the seeds were sown by 1914. The extremes of Toronto, condemned by moderate Pentecostals, were all found in Azusa Street right at the start. Pentecostalism gradually formalised into denominations and para-church organisations until the 1960s and was largely shunned by mainstream Evangelicalism for its erroneous doctrines and aberrant practices. With the start of the Charismatic renewal in the 1960s, this all changed. Gradually mainstream Pentecostalism became acceptable, and ultimately even the extreme Pentecostalism of Latter Rain forged new expressions in the Charismatic Movement.

#### *Summary of direct influences*

- Reports in the press of the Welsh Revival.
- Prayer meetings for revival.
- The writings and preaching of FB Meyer emphasising the victorious life.
- Keswick Conventions.

- The methods of CG Finney in frontier revivals [altar calls, anxious benches, tarrying meetings etc.].
- Memory of the Cane Ridge revival and Methodist Camp Meetings.
- Exciting meetings in the Holiness connections.
- Expectation of healings.
- Personal holiness as a 'Pentecostal' experience of the 'Full Gospel' as expressed in Asa Mahan's *The Baptism of the Holy Ghost* (1870).
- Rise of millennium fervour, especially through the rise of Dispensationalism, Darby's preaching / writings and the Scofield Bible.
- The rise of new restorationist movements in 19<sup>th</sup> c. US. [Some even then expected a Latter Rain outpouring of the Spirit.]

### Teachings

- Tongues is the initial evidence of the Baptism in the Spirit. Some now reject this, while others (including some modern charismatics) even insist that tongues is the sign of regeneration. Seymour came to reject 'initial evidence' as providing '*an open door for witches and spiritualists and free-lovism*'.
- Originally tongues was hoped to be the means of evangelising nations without learning the language. Many went out in faith, only be disappointed.
- Sanctification is a second work of grace necessary for the gift of tongues. (Many denominations, not all, now reject this.)
- Slaying in the Spirit is a valid response to ministry.
- Baptism in the Spirit [and fire] is necessary for powerful ministry.
- All the NT gifts of the Spirit are available for Spirit baptised believers in the church.
- The church requires the fivefold ascension gifts (apostle, prophet, pastor, teacher, evangelist).
- Ministry and leaders can (and should) be 'anointed', in the sense of a special spiritual, imparting power causing subjective responses.
- Christians can be demonised requiring exorcism.
- The Baptism of the Spirit and spiritual gifts are imparted by the laying on of hands.
- Healing is in the atonement (i.e. is automatically included in salvation, believers need not be sick if they have faith).
- Pentecostal preaching claims to be uniquely effective, having the same power as that of the apostles on the Day of Pentecost. It convicts of sin, produces faith, confronts demons, produces godly reverence, and is confirmed by spiritual gifts.
- One large branch (Oneness Pentecostalism) denies the Trinity and insists on re-baptism in the name of Jesus only.
- Some extremists even went on to practice things like snake-handling, fire contact and strychnine drinking in meetings.

### Sample of scriptures affected

- Prophecies of healing in the atonement are referring to sin, not physical healing. Isa 53:5, *by His stripes we are healed*, is Hebrew parallelism; compare with 1 Pt 2:24: *who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness -- by whose stripes you were healed*.
- Baptism in the Spirit is never commanded as an experience to be sought but something Christ has done for the whole church. All believers are included in the Baptism which placed us all in Christ: *For by one Spirit we were all baptised into one body -- whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free -- and have all been made to drink into one*

*Spirit.* [1 Cor 12:13]<sup>106</sup> *For as many of you as were baptised into Christ have put on Christ. [Gal 3:27] do you not know that as many of us as were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.* [Rm 6:3-4]

- Behaviour in church must be conducted with reverence and according to local mores of propriety: *Let all things be done decently and in order.* [1 Cor 14:40]
- All believers are anointed: 2 Cor 1:21; 1 Jn 2:20, 27.
- There is no second work of grace:

### **Dangers**

- It confuses emotional excitement with spirituality.
- The Pentecostal doctrine of the baptism in the Spirit is unbiblical. Christians are baptised into Christ at regeneration (see above) and are subsequently commanded to keep on being filled with the Spirit: *be filled* [present indicative implying continuous action] *with the Spirit* [Eph 5:18 see also Acts 4:8, 31]. Many fail to be continually filled with the Spirit since they harp back to a past experience years before as being the be all and end all of Christian experience.
- Following the pattern of the Day of Pentecost (Acts 1-2), some still insist that believers should pray and wait for the Baptism of the Spirit until they speak in tongues. This idea originated in early Pentecostal ‘tarrying meetings’ which continued for hours until something broke out. People who fail to exhibit tongues after an all night prayer meeting often suffer utter rejection and a sense of failure.
- The doctrine of justification must not be separated from the doctrine of sanctification: *of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God - and righteousness and sanctification and redemption* [1 Cor 1:30].
- There is no second work of grace: *and you are complete in Him.* [Col 2:10] *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.* [Eph 1:3]
- Elitism and authoritarianism: unfortunately Pentecostal history is full of cases of spiritual abuse and leadership failure, far more than any other type of denomination. The most prominent leaders have fallen foul of: alcoholism, sodomy (CF Parham fell from favour after being charged with this), adultery, multiple marriages, fornication, fraud, tax-fraud, greed, violence, wife-beating and so on. Some characters have even been the subject of Hollywood movies (e.g. Aimee Semple McPherson), so colourful was their life, while the general character of the sawdust trail preachers is powerfully seen in films like *Elmer Gantry* (Burt Lancaster) and *The Apostle* (Robert Duvall).

### **Key early proponents**

CF Parham, W Seymour, F Bartleman, F Bosworth, John Lake, TL Osborne, Oral Roberts, Kathryn Kuhlman, Maria Woodworth Etter, Aimee Semple McPherson, Smith Wigglesworth (UK), David du Plessis, AA Allen, Gordon Lindsay, George & Stephen Jeffreys (UK).

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<sup>106</sup> Note Robertson’s Word Pictures: *Were we all baptised into one body.* First aorist passive indicative of baptizw and so a reference to a definite past event with each of them of different races, nations, classes, when each of them put on the outward badge of service to Christ, the symbol of the inward changes already wrought in them by the Holy Spirit (Ga 3:27; Ro 6:2ff.). *And were all made to drink of one Spirit.* First aorist passive indicative of potizw, old verb, to give to drink. The accusative e’ n pneuma is retained in the passive as often with verbs that in the active take two accusatives. The reference is to a definite act in the past, probably to the inward experience of the Holy Spirit symbolised by the act of baptism.

## Perfectionism

### Origins

Perfectionism arose in the early church from Gnostic and Platonist ideas; subsequently Origen developed perfectionism in the direction of asceticism and monastic renunciation of the world. In the Middle Ages, mystical ideas dominated perfectionism, which later surfaced again amongst some Anabaptists and Arminians (the Reformers were against perfectionist theology). In Anglicanism, William Law and Jeremy Taylor embraced perfectionist ideas and these influenced John Wesley (1703-1791), for whom it became a central concern in Methodism.

Wesley's teachings dominate this topic although Charles Finney and Asa Mahan also taught a form of perfectionism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century [Oberlin Theology]. From them and the Methodists arose the Holiness Movement in the US (a revivalist, experience led perfectionism) which later gave rise to Pentecostalism, the Nazarene Church and Modern American Wesleyanism, all of which embraced forms of perfectionism. The most extreme being Latter Rain Pentecostalism which taught that certain 'overcomers' in the Church could attain a state of perfection and become immortal even while in their present bodies.

### Teachings

Moral perfection, freedom from known sin, or entire sanctification, is not only a goal but is attainable in this life. According to John Wesley, this state is identified with perfect love and is the result of a second work of grace, an experience where perfection is received in an instant by faith.

The doctrine of Christian Perfection was a vital part of the early Pentecostal message which came straight out of the Holiness Movement. Most Pentecostal churches, which developed out of a US Wesleyan-Holiness foundation, hold to perfectionism as a subsequent work after regeneration and before the Baptism in the Spirit. But there are variations:

- *Regeneration-perfection-baptism in Spirit*: For original classic US Pentecostals, this perfecting second work was prior to the Baptism of the Holy Spirit (personal holiness was necessary for the baptism).
- *Regeneration-baptism in Spirit/perfection*: For more Wesleyan influenced Pentecostals it was identified with it (the baptism is sanctification – this was the original teaching of Wesley's successor John Fletcher whose writings were very popular in the US, more so than Wesley's).
- *Regeneration-perfection-baptism in Spirit-baptism in fire*: For a few others there was a fourth work (or third blessing) - the Baptism of Fire, resulting in power for ministry or (as Irwin, following Fletcher) a 'baptism of burning love'.
- *Regeneration-perfection-baptism in Spirit-baptism in fire-baptism in dynamite-baptism in lyddite-baptism in oxidite*: the Fire-Baptised teachings of Benjamin Irwin (b. 1854) recognised multiple infusions of power. [Irwin's meetings were characterised by shouting and ecstatic demonstrations. Later he tied up with the Azusa Street ministry.] Mainstream Pentecostals rejected third blessing heresy.

Pentecostal churches with no Wesleyan origins [Assemblies of God, Elim etc.] are more sound and view sanctification as both a part of salvation and progressive in the Christian life, there is no need for an sanctifying experience before the Baptism of the Spirit. Charismatic churches (especially in the UK) tend to follow this view.



### Sample of scriptures affected

- *For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man.* [Jm 3:2; this is an apostle and the brother of the Lord speaking.]
- *Who can say, 'I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin'.* [Prov 20:9]
- *For there is not a just man on earth who does good and does not sin.* [Eccles 7:20]
- *As it is written: 'There is none righteous, no, not one'.* [Rm 3:10]
- *I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good.* [Rm 7:21]
- *For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.* [Gal 5:17]
- *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.* [1 Jn 1:8]
- *Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on.* [Phil 3:12]

### Dangers

It is dangerous to believe a lie and contradict scripture. The Bible is clear that sanctification is never complete in this life, if it were, we would be like God. How can one continue to seek after holiness if one is already perfected? Also, holding these ideas often leads to elitism.

### Modern Proponents

Methodist churches, especially American Wesleyanism. Some aspects of Pentecostalism [Church of God, Church of God in Christ, Pentecostal Holiness Church], various charismatic groups, some proponents of Higher Life Teaching. J. Sidlow Baxter, RT Kendall, Noel Stanton (New Jesus Army).

## Psychoheresy

### Introduction

This is not a theology as such, nor even a move to combat a theology, it is a keyword used to describe a group of unbiblical practices in the modern church. The word 'Psychoheresy' was coined by Martin and Deirdre Bobgan to describe the psychological seduction of Christianity: the adoption of humanistic psychological ideas into Christian counselling methods. It is where Christian psychologists use secular ideas and practices, mixed with the Bible, in order to counsel believers. Although these are not theologies, they undergird the thinking of a great many modern Christians and are the reason why a number are struggling in their walk with God. They are heretical since they generate false ideas about God and the Bible. For this reason, they are grouped under this title and are evaluated briefly here.



### Origins

Due to a failure to be disciplined by scripture, accompanied by a plethora of false teachers, the modern church is swamped with church members who are struggling with personal problems and getting no answers. As a result, a whole industry of counselling techniques, methodology, retreats, seminars, books and leaders has arisen in the last twenty years. Counselling Christians is big business. [The same climate of Biblical ignorance has fuelled the urgent desire for inner healing and demonic deliverance.]

The vast majority of these counsellors (not all) are people with secular training or qualifications in some form of psychotherapy. These, in turn, arise from the root teachings of famous psychologists like, Freud, Jung, Rogers and Adler; but the root of all psychoanalysis was the occult mesmerism, trances and hypnosis of Franz Anton Mesmer. What many appear to be unaware of is that many of the conclusions of Freud have been discredited, (he lied about experiments and successes) and that his disciple Carl Jung was heavily steeped in the occult. Most psychologists were vehemently anti-Christian. Somehow deluded believers seem happy to submit to ministry which is based upon lies, deceit, ungodly and occult ideas. Even the secular world is now realising that the money spent on psychiatrists is completely wasted.

### Teachings

What has now developed is an industry of Christian counsellors who apply the notions of clinical psychologists as therapies for believers – Christian psychology. This often entails blaming problems upon difficulties in the past, especially in childhood. The result is that responsibility for sin is abrogated and a selfish desire for happiness, above all else, is fostered. The most popular theme in psychology is self-fulfilment, through high self-esteem and self-love. This is not a Biblical goal; indeed Jesus demanded self-denial. The issue of raising self-esteem is a major priority for James Dobson. This focus is becoming a danger according to behaviour expert Edward Stainbrook, *'self-preoccupation is jeopardising America's future.'*<sup>107</sup> This dual focus upon self-love and excusing sin is a major problem for believers if they want to obey scripture.

Different therapies blame different things for human problems: the stars, mothers, fathers, lack of sex, too much sex, bio-chemical make up, diet, low self-esteem, life-style or karma from past lives. One psychologist admits, *'the field of psychology today is literally a mess. There are as many techniques, methods and theories around as there are researchers and therapists.'*<sup>108</sup>

Christian psychologists claim that 'all truth is God's truth', despite the fact that over 250 therapies and 10,000 techniques often contradict one another. Two opposing statements cannot both be true, but both could be a lie. The integration of psychology with Biblical truth is supposed to present something better than both. The fallacy is to suppose that psychology is scientific truth, when it is nothing but pseudo-science; a religion. Eminent thinker Karl Popper said of psychological theories, *'though posing as sciences, [they] had in fact more in common with primitive myths than science.'*<sup>109</sup>

Martin Bobgan identifies four myths about psychotherapy:<sup>110</sup>

1. Myth - PSYCHOTHERAPY IS A SCIENCE. It is not, it is a religion; it deals with why people behave the way they do. [Jung admitted that a psychotherapist was effectively a priest.] The systems of psychotherapy are unproven, unsubstantiated, unscientific, unnecessary and often conflict with themselves.
2. Myth - CHRISTIAN COUNSELLING IS BETTER IF IT INVOLVES PSYCHOTHERAPY. In fact studies show that there is no *'convincing evidence that even years of analysis in the most expert hands, radically alter a person's fundamental "psychopathology"'*.<sup>111</sup> For hundreds of years good pastors have consistently achieved better successes than the thousands of modern psychologists.

<sup>107</sup> Parade Magazine, 25.11.79, p6.

<sup>108</sup> Bobgan, *Psychoheresy*, p31.

<sup>109</sup> Quoted in Bobgan, *ibid*, p37.

<sup>110</sup> See Bobgan, *Psychoheresy* throughout.

<sup>111</sup> Anthony Storr, *The Art of Psychotherapy*, p151.

3. Myth - PEOPLE WITH MENTAL OR EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS ARE MENTALLY ILL AND REQUIRE A MIND DOCTOR, A PSYCHOLOGIST. Mental illness is a nonsensical term. The mind is not the same as the brain, neither is it merely the by-product of the brain; nor are nerves and nervousness co-equal. Organic brain damage requires a neuro surgeon, but the mind can't be diseased. Disease is something you have, behaviour is something you do. A person with a damaged brain may express emotional/behavioural symptoms, but he is then medically ill, not mentally ill. Psychological counselling deals, not with the brain, but with aspects of thinking and behaviour. The psychotherapist does not heal disease but tries to change behaviour and thinking; it is a form of education; for instance, nymphomania, paedophilia and alcoholism are not sicknesses - they are sins. Problems of living are not brain problems requiring scientific cures, but problems of the mind requiring Biblical solutions: knowledge, wisdom, guidance and loving support. Depression is more complex and varied and is usually the result of chemical imbalance in the nervous system, often caused as a reaction to trauma or suffering.
4. Myth - PSYCHOTHERAPY HAS A HIGH LEVEL OF SUCCESS. According to researches that are usually kept quiet, the success level is very low: *'Volumes of research have been done to demonstrate the absolute unreliability of psychiatric diagnosis.'*<sup>112</sup> *'Psychiatrists are no better than other citizens in predicting a human being's conduct.'*<sup>113</sup> This explains the continual mistakes made in court cases based on psychologist's evidence that, typically, sets free a 'cured' psychopath who then murders again, or wrongly takes children away from good mothers. The best research on psychotherapy's success and failure is by Hans J Eysenck whose conclusions over decades remains firm, that a greater percentage of patients who did not have treatment improved over those who did.<sup>114</sup> Other studies concur. In addition studies show that for some psychotherapy will slow down normal improvement, while for others it will do lasting damage. Finally, research reveals that normal conversation, especially confessional, produce similarly beneficial results – and it doesn't cost money. The best treatment for emotional distress and depression is talking to trusted friends and time.

### Scriptures affected

- *Now this I say lest anyone should deceive you with persuasive words. Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. [Col 2:4,8]*
- *We should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting. [Eph 4:14]*
- *Let no one deceive you with empty words. [Eph 5:6]*
- *Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge - by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith. [1 Tim 6:20-21]*
- *For it is written: 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, And bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.' Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God*

<sup>112</sup> Hugh Drummond, quoted in Bobgan, *Psychoheresy*, p146.

<sup>113</sup> Forensic scientist Ronald Schlensky, quoted in Bobgan, *Psychoheresy*, p147.

<sup>114</sup> Eysenck, The Effects of Psychotherapy: An Evaluation, *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, Vol 16, (1952) p322. His conclusions then have been confirmed subsequently.

through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. [1 Cor 1:19-21]

- Then He said to them all, 'If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it'. [Lk 9:23-24]
- He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. [Jn 12:25]

### **Dangers**

- For thousands of years believers have managed successfully without psychology. Now, instead of looking to God and his word applied by the Spirit for comfort, psychologists encourage patients to look to themselves and to the methods of sinful men. Very often, folk who feel helped by this or that book/seminar/technique will talk more about it than Jesus. The psychological method has become their present salvation. For instance, speaking of the *Boundaries* method of Cloud and Townsend, Bill Hybels stated that he wished he'd read the book twenty years previously as it changed his life. This is a powerful claim, usually reserved for a special work of God or a revelation of the Spirit in our lives, which re-orientates our whole future. This is especially worrying when attributed to a book that undermines the attributes of God and encourages selfishness.
- The Christian's focus should always be upon Christ and not himself.
- Sin must always be dealt with Biblically – confessed and repented of.
- The basic approach is unbiblical in assuming the inherent goodness of man who is then corrupted by his environment (behaviouristic approach); or controlled by inner psychic forces (psychoanalytical approach); both neglect man's depravity and culpability.
- As well as originally being based upon occult techniques derived from Mesmer (See appendix 10 and 11), Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961) was steeped in occultism. Even the highly esteemed and influential Carl Rogers (1902-87) was mixed up in spiritualism, consulted Ouija Boards and was involved in necromancy. Many Christian psychologists model their ministry upon this man.

### **Best known modern proponents**

The *Boundaries* teaching of Henry Cloud and John Townsend. The *Theophostic Counselling* of Ed Smith (a combination of Freudianism and Agnes Sanford's inner healing methods, based upon unbiblical premises). William Backus, Marie Chapien, Martha Rogers, Gary Collins, Lawrence Crabb, Paul Meier, Frank Minirth, James Dobson, M Scott Peck, Paul Tournier, Richard Dobbins, Joseph Palotta, Cecil Osborne, Charles Solomon, H Norman Wright, Robert Schuller, Mary Vander Goot, Archibald Hart (Fuller Seminary).

## **Quietism**

### **Origins**

This was more a system of spirituality than theology, but one that has had enormous repercussions on other movements. The key writers remain popular to this day. It was, like Pietism, a mystical reaction to 17<sup>th</sup> century dogmatism and the oppressions of the Thirty Years War. The leaders were people of intense spirituality who suffered significant persecution, especially after the movement was condemned by Pope Innocent XI in 1687.

The movement is very diverse containing some helpful contributions on the inner life through to downright heretical assertions. The behaviour of some of the leaders was nothing like the movement's ideals. Fénelon was guilty of lying and manipulation while his doctrine of God led directly to the Deism of the next century.

### Teachings

- Essentially, an exaggeration of Christian meditation, fused with ideas taken from the Medieval mystics.
- The soul's highest goal is passive contemplation of God.
- The soul: intellect, will and emotions, must be renounced in the quest for spiritual union so that it is lost in the divine (shades of Hinduism).
- The soul surrenders to God in a specific act of crisis, following which the soul is kept in divine union and responds in perfect love.
- Less able Quietists added here that self-denial and death of self is experienced by ignoring all distractions and obstacles; including thoughts of heaven, spiritual exercises and the church.
- This results in 'mystic death', a dehumanisation of humanity which resembles Buddhism.
- Perfection is attained after the annihilation of the will and unity with God.

### Scriptures affected

- *Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.* [Phil 2:12-13]
- *The labour of the righteous leads to life.* [Prov 10:16]
- *... eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honour, and immortality.* [Rm 2:7]
- *But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection.* [1 Cor 9:27]
- *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.* [1 Cor 15:58]
- *... your work of faith, labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.* [1 Thess 1:3]
- *Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.* [Heb 4:11]
- *... giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.* [2 Pt 1:5-7]

### Dangers

- Passivity, Neoplatonism and mysticism.
- Ignorance of Biblical commands to maintain godliness with personal ethics and corporate practices (such as the Lord's Supper).
- Disobedience to the command to do good works or to maintain self-control.
- We are never told to renounce our will, intellect and emotions, but to subjugate them to God's will.

### Historic proponents

Madame Guyon, Miguel de Molinos (*The Spiritual Guide*), François Fénelon (Archbishop of Cambrai).

## Sacramentalism

## Origins

A sacrament is a religious rite that is somehow effused with God's grace, which Augustine defined as 'sacred sign', while Peter Lombard defined it as 'a visible form of an invisible grace'. Protestants uphold only two sacraments as having Biblical warrant: baptism and the Lord's Supper. In both of these acts, commanded by the Lord, grace is ministered to those with faith; it is not the sacrament which communicates grace automatically, but the rite seals and ratifies the promises of God. As the early church began to become formalised and drift from its original purity, churches began to increase the number of activities that supposedly infused grace. Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches came to celebrate seven: baptism, confirmation, marriage, holy orders (priesthood), penance, the Supper and extreme unction (last rites). At the opposite end of the scale, the Puritans removed altars and other distracting fleshly objects from churches.

## Teachings

Sacramentalism is the idea that certain objects or unbiblical practices convey grace; or the use of material objects to engender a spiritual experience or demonstrate a spiritual reality. Roman Catholics teach that grace is conferred through the sacramental act itself if received (called *ex opere operato* – Latin for 'by the action being performed'). For instance: a sinning priest passing the communion wafer to a sinful person passes on God's grace if the communicant accepts the rite.

## Examples

Modern charismatics have taken this idea to ridiculous lengths:

- The Modern Jesus Army members make wooden crosses and pray over them believing they convey grace. They also make much use of flags and banners to represent Christ and the Spirit in meetings. At one convention, members were given washed stones to pile up believing this was an aid to faith for forgiveness of sins. At another, everyone was urged to wear a nail to symbolise being a crucified disciple.
- Many charismatics have used gemstones or crystals believing that praying and meditating over them will aid physical healing. Some Anglican churches keep crystals in a glass case in the church for this purpose.
- One charismatic leader 'knighted' church members with a broadsword (after seeing the film *Braveheart*) teaching that this would make them more effective spiritual warriors. Another one had no sword but used an umbrella!
- Charismatics, following the erroneous Celtic spirituality fad, made 'prayer sticks' - poles decorated with paint and feathers like pagans use - to aid prayer life in corporate worship.
- Some Assemblies of God pastors smashed bricks and threw oil into an Australian river to encourage an outpouring of the Spirit.
- A pastor in Baltimore takes a loaf to share with the congregation to engender healings and mystical blessings.
- Benny Hinn is setting up a healing centre in Dallas which will have 'healing statues of Biblical saints' and 'a healing fountain and an eternal healing fire'.
- Pentecostal minister AA Allen spread 'miracle saw-dust' on the floor of his 'miracle valley' tent to aid healings.
- A Messianic church in Hove blew rams' horns on the Downs to produce an open heaven necessary for revival.
- The Assembly of God church, Brownsville, Pensacola set up a replica of the Jewish golden altar upon which they burned written prayer requests from hundreds of leaders, including famous UK charismatics.

We could go on. This is all sacramentalism.

### Sample of scriptures affected

- *Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.* [Heb 11:1]
- *Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.* [Heb 10:22]
- *We do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.* [2 Cor 4:18]
- *Whatever is not from faith is sin.* [Rm 14:23]

### Dangers

The key danger is that these practices take believer's eyes off the Lord and focus them somewhere else. They also ruin faith which is the evidence of things not seen. Using objects, even as a pictorial aid to faith (let alone a supposed actual channel of the Spirit) is negating real faith. But in the end, these practices are unbiblical and should be condemned as such.

### Modern Proponents

The Roman Catholic Church, The Eastern Orthodox Church, High Anglicanism, The Jesus Army, many streams within the Charismatic Movement which use objects to aid spirituality.

## Seeker-sensitive Practices Church Growth Movement

### Origins

Though we are looking primarily at practices here, the theological basis of 'seeker-sensitive' meetings underlies a great many other problems in the church today. These include: pragmatism superseding Biblical truth, the focus upon sinners' needs not God, concentration upon the congregation's felt needs; the place of media, drama, music, humour and entertainment in worship services. These are the 'theology' of humanism.

'Seeker sensitive' or 'user-friendly' practices arose out of the Church Growth Movement which was initiated by Donald McGavran at Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, California, practically developed by John Wimber in 1975, and made popular by the books of his colleague at Fuller, C Peter Wagner. Among its emphases, it held that people engaged in mission do not require a common theological basis, all you need is to believe in Christ (God's truth is dropped). Another was the widespread use of the social sciences like: psychology, anthropology and sociology (humanistic truth is accepted). These led to a focus upon adopting methods to suit the world.

Arising out of this was the development of worship services which were entirely aimed at visiting sinners in the congregation. The most famous church which succeeded in this was that of Bill Hybel's Willow Creek Church in Chicago. A UK Anglican example would be the Sheffield St Thomas Crookes adjunct church under Chris Brain; which was heavily influenced by Wimber and the Kansas City Prophets and later by Matthew Fox's *Planetary Mass*. His *The Nine O' Clock Service* used acid house dance music, light shows, strobes, lasers, half naked dancers, and so on. It ended in tears with Brain being accused of multiple sexual misconduct and abuse in 1995.

### Teachings

- Essentially it is the accommodation of the church to the superficial tastes of the world in order to attract visitors. This compromise of church principles uses fast-paced

services which have modern music and bands, drama, film clips, pyrotechnics, light shows, humour and virtually no Biblical teaching. Anything which mentions sin and man's responsibility is removed in order not to frighten people away. Meetings must react to sinner's 'felt need', and are thus sensitive to seekers. Style is championed over substance.

- Seek public opinion to find out what people want to hear. *'The audience, not the message, is sovereign'*.
- Tailor short sermons to local needs not the Bible, e.g. marriage, parenting, finances, work, relationships.
- *'Think of your church not as a religious meeting place, but as a service agency - an entity that exists to satisfy people's needs.'* *'The Bible is one of the world's great marketing texts'*.
- Some churches provide crèches, fitness centres and restaurants to enable folk to drop off children, work out, eat and then catch a fast Christian service, just like going to a movie theatre.

### **Sample of scriptures affected**

- *Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. [Jm 4:4]*
- *Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. [2 Tim 4:1-4]*
- *You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. They are of the world. Therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears them. We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. [1 Jn 4:4-6]*
- *If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. [Jn 15:18-20]*

### **Dangers**

- Methodology takes precedence over theology. The Church Growth Movement is clearly based upon anthropology, sociology and even management techniques, rather than Biblical strategies. The sociological dimension forms the missiological practices to engender large-scale successes in new homogenous areas.
- Church growth and seeker-sensitive approaches make much of the social sciences, statistical analysis and local research to form strategies, which then become focused upon numbers; success is measured numerically.
- These methods are unbiblical. The early church never adopted such practices yet was responsible for millions of conversions.
- Christianity addresses sin and alienation from God, not our 'felt needs'. Some saints suffer more after becoming Christians than they did before, e.g. Paul, Job, Jeremiah, William Carey, David Brainerd etc.
- The church's focus is the Lord Jesus Christ, yet these methods completely focus upon attracting modern worldly men and women; one church's slogan was *'we exist to serve you'*.



- The techniques are even called ‘marketing methods’, revealing the blatant consumerism in manipulating the unchurched, enticing them just like a supermarket product would.
- Biblical worship services are totally geared to praise God and celebrate the cross of Christ. This is why Biblical worship contains the Lord’s Supper, commanded by the Lord himself and practised by the apostles every Lord’s Day (Acts 20:7). Seeker services reverse this operation to concentrate upon man. The sacraments become irrelevant items to be discarded for something more important.
- People are converted when God applies his power through the Spirit and the word. Abandoning these will not result in true conversions. Men are not saved through attractive presentations.
- The use of drama, mime, dance and musical extravaganzas has no Biblical mandate. In fact, musical instruments are never mentioned in the NT. Paul ignores drama as a helpful issue even when staying for over a year in the centre of the drama world (Greece) at that time.
- Worship must be based upon God’s commands on how we approach him [the regulatory principle], not upon whatever we think is best for us. Any approach not found in the Bible is deplored and rejected by God. [Calvin: (God is) *grievously offended with the presumption which invents ... worship, and threatens it with severe punishment.*<sup>115</sup>]
- Truth is the greatest sufferer. Biblical and doctrinal preaching is negated and dismissed.
- The methods are based on pragmatism – if it works, it’s good.
- It has led to serious theological compromise.
- The church is commanded not to follow the world.
- Seeker sensitive methods have led to successful results in non-Christian sects e.g. the Unity cult in Chicago.
- In the long run the methods do not last. Churches which planted many new works based on this approach have found that most of them die within 10 years.
- *Any teaching...that starts with us and our needs, rather than the glory of God, is unscriptural, and seriously unscriptural. That subjective approach ... is what has led many astray for so many years.* Martyn Lloyd-Jones.

### **Modern Proponents**

Bill Hybels (Willow Creek Church), George Barna, Rick Warren (*The Purpose Driven Church*), Robert Schuller, Christianity Today Magazine, The World Council of Churches. [The methods are widely practised by many denominations world-wide.]

CHURCH GROWTH MVT. John Wimber, Donald McGavran, C Peter Wagner, Alan R Tippett, Ralph Winter, J Edwin Orr, Charles Kraft, Eddie Gibbs, Arthur Glasser.

## Strategic Level Spiritual Warfare Theology Territorial Spirits

### **Origins**

This arose out of the ‘Power Evangelism’ techniques of John Wimber and the tenets of Word Faith, both of which highlighted confrontation of demonic activity. The term ‘Spiritual Warfare’ probably first appeared in print in a 1970 book of that title by Michael

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<sup>115</sup> *Selected Works and Letters of John Calvin, Tracts and Letters*, p152f.

Harper, describing a characteristic of the Charismatic renewal. Pentecostalism had always practised exorcism of demons and this came to the fore in the Charismatic Movement with the development of specific ministries fixated on the demonic, which led to organisations and permanent retreats just for this purpose.<sup>116</sup>

Gradually, a theology developed of ‘Territorial Spirits’ which assume control over geographic areas unless resisted by Christians. This arose from city-wide Gospel campaigns in South America which claimed success after days spent wrestling in prayer against Satan. Then Frank Peretti’s novels gave an emphasis to the battle of Christians with territorial demons. SLSW systematises this so that C Peter Wagner can talk of demonic rankings:

- *ground-level spiritual warfare*, refers to the ministries of deliverance and exorcism;
- *occult-level spiritual warfare* confronts demons manifest in activities such as Satanism, Freemasonry, and shamanism;
- *strategic-level spiritual warfare* aims to locate, identify, and remove beings at the top of the demonic hierarchy – *territorial spirits*.

With some influences from the Salvation Army marches, Graham Kendrick started *Praise Marches* in the late 80s. The spiritual warfare theology behind this was fundamental to his *March For Jesus* Movement. The whole point was to release, by a corporate human activity, whole towns for Christ. Kendrick’s pastor, Roger Forster, stated: *The objective of the City march is a bold proclamation of Christ in areas that have significance as seats of power. Our togetherness, worship, praise and proclamation of Jesus’ name—the word of our witness—are instruments in the priestly warfare against Satan’s rule.*<sup>117</sup> This, along with other inflammatory quotes from Gerald Coates, an associate organiser, caused a furore in the religious press.

Some insisted on the need to research past history to determine the types of demons which were active, and why. This often necessitated, they said, corporate (identification) repentance for the past sins of the areas. For instance, Britain needed to repent for the hurt caused by the crusades or for past anti-Semitism. This then led to the discipline of ‘Spiritual Mapping’, identifying the geographic clusters of demons and their influences. The influential video, *Transformations: A Documentary* is an example of supposed social improvement following spiritual mapping and warfare.

### Teachings

- Subjective revelation is a valid source of doctrine. Wagner’s initiation into SLSW came from an inner voice speaking to him in Manila.
- Demons control towns and rural areas unless they are unseated from power by the charismatic ministry of Christians confronting these powers.
- There are three types of demons: those which possess people requiring exorcism; those which control occultists like witches and those which control territories which require a church response of strategic intercession to bind the spirit.
- The territorial spirit needs to be identified by name and territory. A ‘prayer walk’ is required for this. For a city, a praise march is necessary. For a region, a prayer expedition is required. For a nation, a prayer journey must be done
- Spiritual mapping is the exercise of discovering the exact location of demonic domains. It involves locating on geographical maps all historically significant pagan activities. SLSW claims that by studying the area’s religious history one can ascertain how spiritual bondage occurred, thus aiding prayer. When facts are scarce, discernment of

<sup>116</sup> Such as Ellel Grange.

<sup>117</sup> See W Pickering, “Secularization,” in *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Modern Christian Thought*, 1993.

spirits is utilised. For instance, buried occult objects are found and destroyed to enable the Gospel to progress unrestricted.

- ‘Identification repentance’ is the discovering local sin and guilt, which give a demon power, then repenting of it for removal.

### **Sample of scriptures affected**

- Daniel 10 is the main support for SLSW, but: there is no trace of the practices advocated by Wagner; the battle here is fought in heaven between angels not on earth with men; God directs the conflict, not men; no one was commanded to bind a demon or even pray.
- Eph 6:12 shows that Satan’s angels are organised, but there is no text which states that every geographic, social or political unit has its own controlling demon. There is no support for rebuking territorial spirits.
- Matthew 12:29, 16:19 and 18:18-19 and Mark 3:27 do not lay a foundation for binding territorial spirits. Jesus did not bind Satan during his temptations in order to overcome – did he fail? The apostles never practised this yet had success in areas full of demonic worship and idolatry. These texts are to do with the Gospel, which proceeds because Jesus has bound the strong man (Satan, Rev 20:2-3).
- Satan is a conquered foe [Col 2:15].
- Christians are specifically told not to rebuke spirits [Jude 8-10; 2 Pt 2:10-12].
- We stand against the enemy, not march; and pray to prevail, not sing [Eph 6:10-18].

### **Dangers**

- No doctrine or church practice can be supported merely by an inner voice. Only scripture is able to develop doctrine and praxis.
- While claiming that truth is a dynamic to cause spiritual breakthroughs in towns, Kendrick fails to realise that truth must be experienced in person not in global declaration. Truth brings liberty when the Gospel is believed and Jesus (the truth) is received by faith. Shouting or singing the truth in the streets will not change council policy or criminal activity. The subsequent social degeneration of towns where the marches were held tells all. Some (like Brighton) have degenerated even worse and speedier since several local marches took place.
- Any focus upon the demonic or deliverance ministry is unbiblical. There are no ‘deliverance ministries’ in the NT and no exorcism of believers.
- The devil and his demons lie. No information gained from conversation with demons (which is how their name is ascertained in SLSW) can be trusted. There is no value in any conversation with a supposed demon. Wagner ignores the fact that Satan is master of deception (2 Cor 11:14) and that deceit is widespread in the end (Rev 12:9, 13:14; Mt 24:24; Mk 13:5).
- Believers are told to contend for the truth, not fight against demons. Even the sword of Eph 6:17 represents the truth, the word of God. The truth confronts Satan’s lies to release captive minds [2 Cor 10:4-5]. We are to resist the devil [1 Pt 5:8], stand against his wiles [Eph 6:11,13], not seek headlong hand to hand fights.
- SLSW has many comparisons with Shamanism (Shaman = witch doctor); e.g. the confrontation of the spirit world by various techniques, like dances / marches or talking to helpful demons, to secure a beneficial result (e.g. cure sickness or gain fertility).
- The practical repercussions of deliverance ministries are often catastrophic. Very many documented cases abound of spiritual, psychological or even physical abuses resulting from ministry that centres on release from demons.

## Modern Proponents

C. Peter Wagner, John Wimber, Gerald Coates, Roger Forster, Steve Hawthorne, Graham Kendrick, John Dawson (YWAM), Frank Peretti, George Otis Jr and many others.

Supporters endorsing these ideas: Bill and Vonette Bright (Campus Crusade), World Prayer Assembly, Ralph Winter, Thomas Wang, Luis Bush, Lausanne II; Jack Hayford, Richard Foster.

## Universalism No hell as future punishment

### Origins

Universalism is a feature of many heresies and of mysticism generally. Traces of Universalism can be found in the church Fathers such as Clement (150-215) and Origen (185-254), who sought to defend the perfection of God's love over against his judicial wrath. The church later condemned Origen's universal doctrine. After the Reformation, some Anabaptists adopted a Universalist position. In the modern age, Schleiermacher argued that the love of God would eventually save all, since heaven would be spoiled if its inhabitants witnessed the sufferings of the damned.

### Teachings

Universalism is a non-Christian philosophy, which teaches that all men will gain entrance to heaven in the end; everyone will be saved. It is also called Universal Redemption and has a form as a 'Christian' heresy. This form has two expressions: restoration at death and restoration after future punishment, the latter is more common from Clement onwards. Extreme positions of this view (e.g. Origen) maintain that God will even restore Satan and his demons to a perfect state. Arminianism is sometimes called 'Evangelical Universalism'. All that prevents Arminianism from becoming pure Universalism is their idea that free will is exercised by men to reject the Gospel, otherwise everyone would be saved.

The modern Evangelical rejection of hell is really the resurgence of ancient ideas. There are two forms, both of which deny key scriptures:

- *Conditional Immortality*: God only gives everlasting life to the redeemed, the wicked are not given immortality and are annihilated at death.
- *Annihilationism*: human nature was immortal but sin has forfeited it and the wicked will be sentenced to annihilation by God.

A vital mistake is to consider the word 'death' to mean non-existence or obliteration. In fact, the Bible always uses the word to mean separation, especially separation from God: deprivation of what is essential to normal living and worthwhile existence.

### Sample of scriptures affected

- *God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment. [2 Pt 2:4]*
- *... for whom [ungodly men] is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.[Jude 13]*
- *The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. [Mt 13:41-42]*
- *Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? [Mt 23:33]*
- *cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. [Mt 25:30]*

- *The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. [Rev 20:13-15]*
- *The heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. [2 Pt 3:7]*
- *the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment. [2 Pt 2:9]*
- *For if we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. [Heb 10:26-27]*

### **Dangers**

Universalism reduces the importance of sin and man's responsibility to God. It denies many clear scriptures and the importance of hell as a place of future punishment, declared most effectively by the Lord himself. It denies God's attributes of holiness, wrath against sin and justice. It completely fails to understand the Biblical significance of sin.

### **Modern Proponents**

The Unitarian church. Karl Barth's views imply universalism, both he and Emil Brunner certainly held it to be a possibility. Barth taught that man does not have an individual actual existence after death but was remembered by God. Others include: CH Dodd, J Hick, K Rahner, Matthew Fox, Marcus Borg.

Some modern evangelical scholars come dangerously close to Universalism when they teach conditional immortality i.e. there is no everlasting punishment in hell, only annihilation for the wicked [Eric Lewis, O Cullmann, LE Froom, Paul Tillich, John Stott, PE Hughes, Michael Green, John W Wenham, Edward Fudge, Clark Pinnock, George Carey, Stephen Travis].

## Conclusion

There is a sense in which this book could have been continually extended, so many and various are the errors facing Christians today, but a halt has to be called somewhere.

Surveying such a wide variety of errors held by evangelicals today is daunting, and some folk could be tempted to react negatively, either by being depressed by it or by rejecting what has been said and ignoring it. Both reactions would be wrong.

The job of the pastor is to feed the sheep but also to protect them from wolves; this means pointing out dangers and safeguarding them. Error must be exposed –THIS IS VITAL! If error is not exposed, it will grow and it will certainly damage more people. One reason why the church is a mess today is that leaders are failing to protect their sheep by warning of false teaching and naming names. If error is revealed, then the responsibility of avoiding it is down to the individual. If errors are ignored, many sincere believers end up being damaged because they did not understand the dangers. Leaders who fail to protect those in their charge will face the judgment of the Lord:

*But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to stumble, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea. [Mk 9:42]*

People do not have to understand the theological nuances of all that we have covered in this book, many of them can be boiled down to a few key points; certainly focusing upon good theology instead of listening to all and sundry new ideas will help. At the end of the day, compare what you hear with scripture all the time. Does your pastor tell you there are two people of God? See in the Bible that it says there is one. Are you told to let go of your mind to receive blessing? See the scriptural command to maintain self-control and test all things, being renewed in the spirit of your mind. If you hold God's word close, and prove everything by it, you will avoid the pitfalls of heretical theology.

*Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, 'If you abide in my word, you are my disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free'. [Jn 8:31-32]*

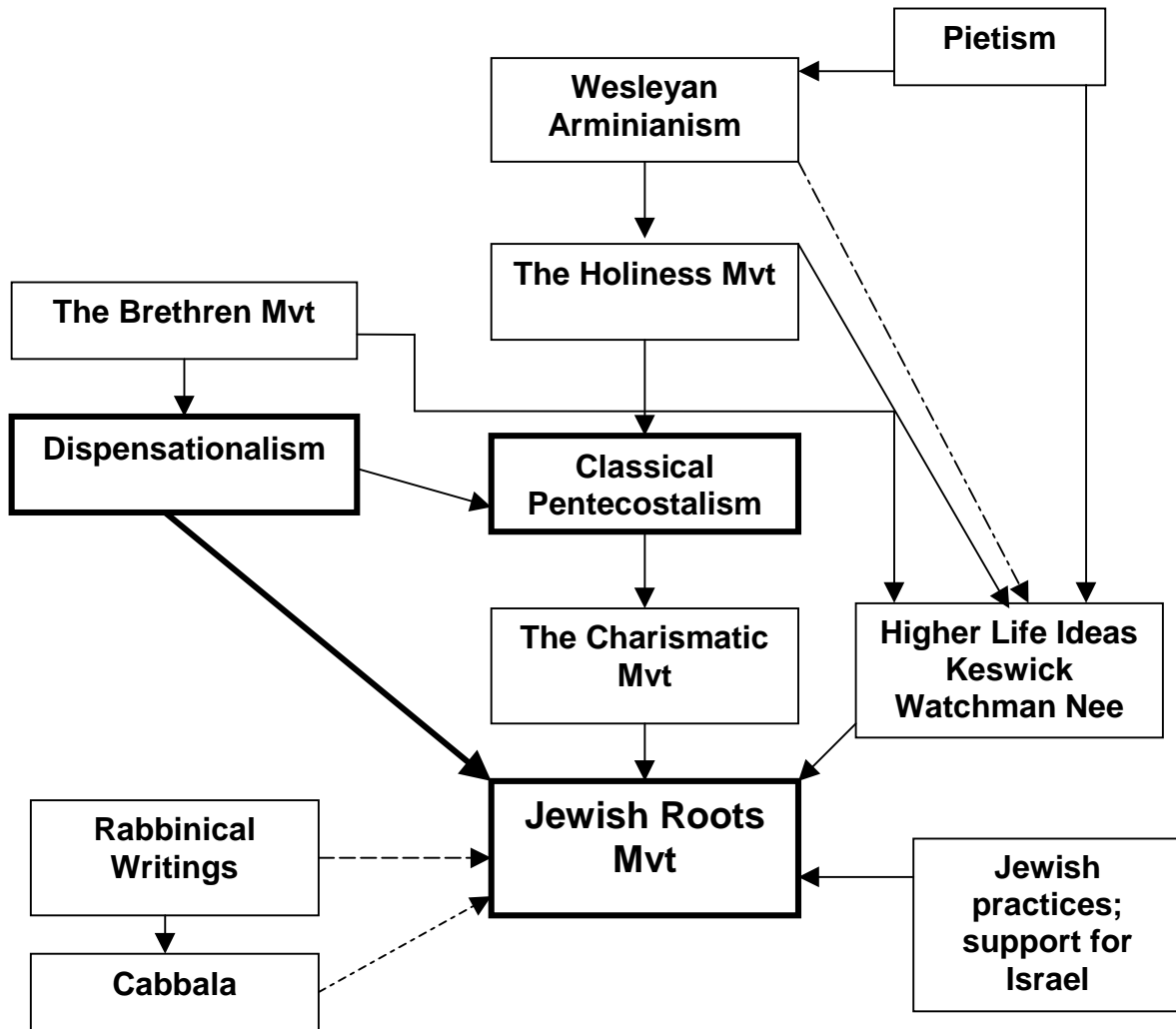
*Give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine ... Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you. [1 Tim 4:13-16]*

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## Appendix Two

### The Jewish Roots Reaction to Extreme Charismaticism

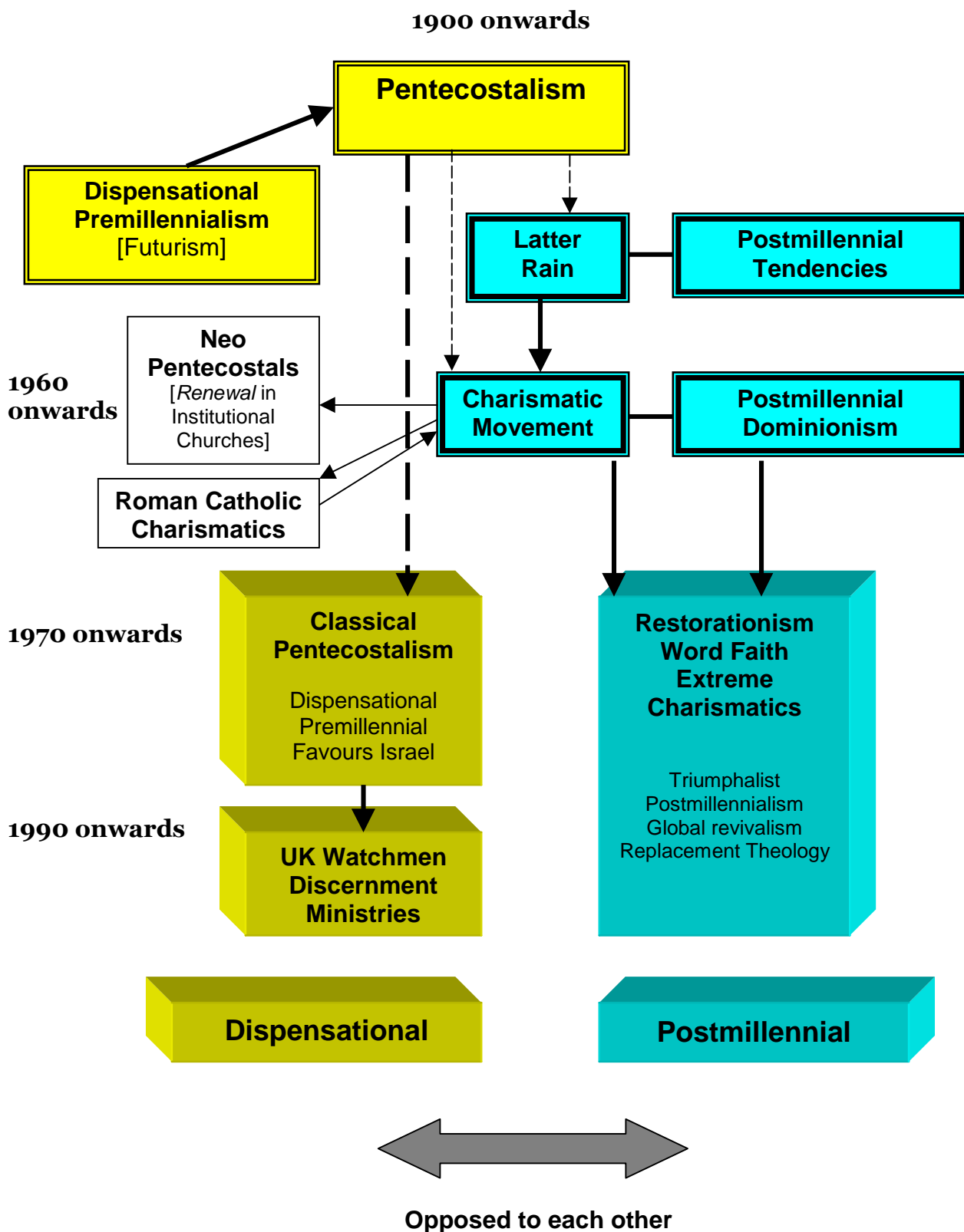


**Note:** Although Jewish Root teachers are vehemently opposed to charismatic extremism (such as Toronto), they arise from the same systems, but claim to be more moderate in them (they are usually moderate Dispensational, Arminian Pentecostalists). They reject Latter Rain and Word Faith ideas (many would reject Finney's revivalism); but believe equally in prophecy, baptism in the Spirit, laying on of hands, fasting, supernatural gifts to all, demonisation of believers etc.



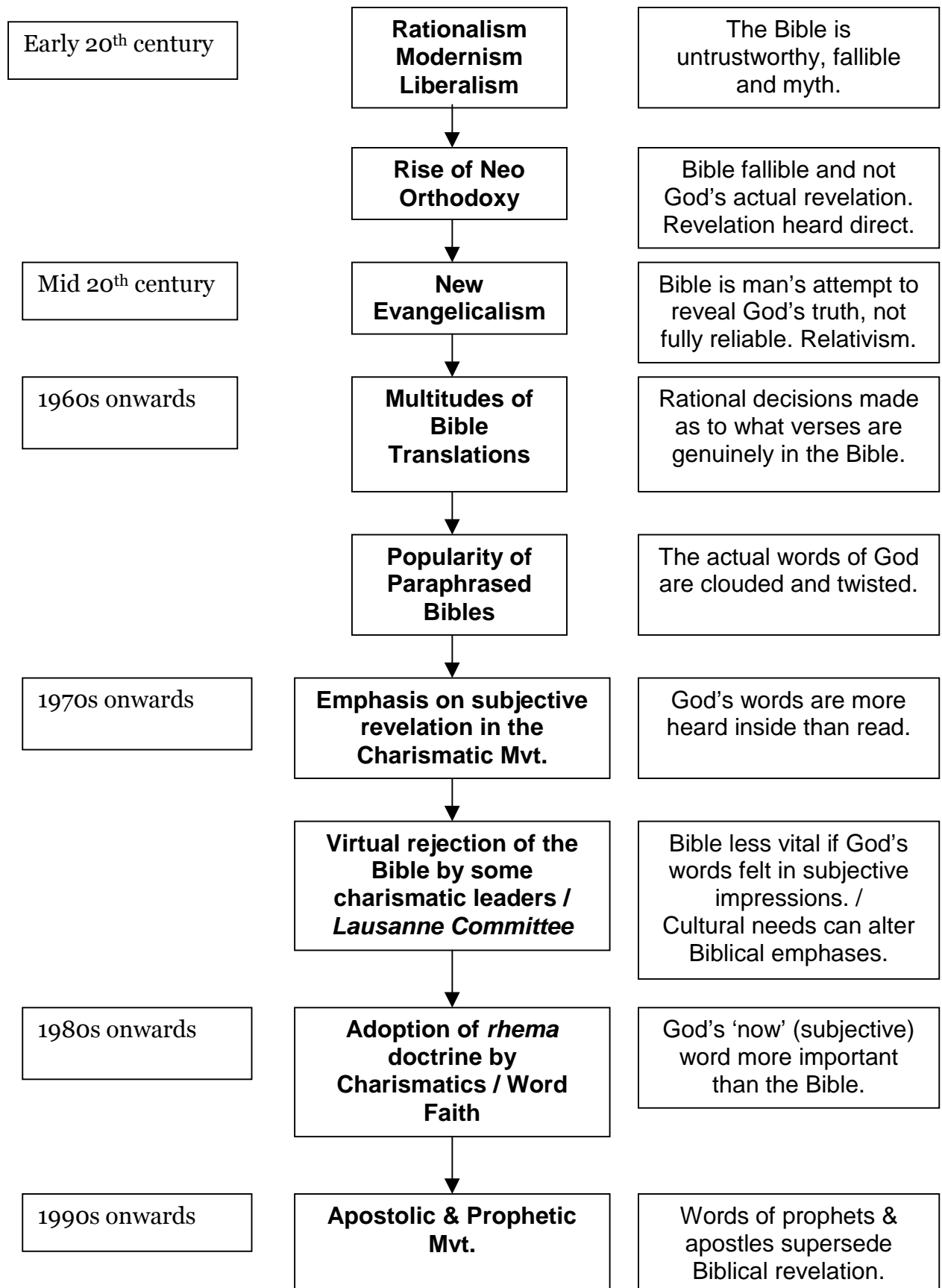
Appendix Three

The Eschatological Key  
To Current Charismatic Factions



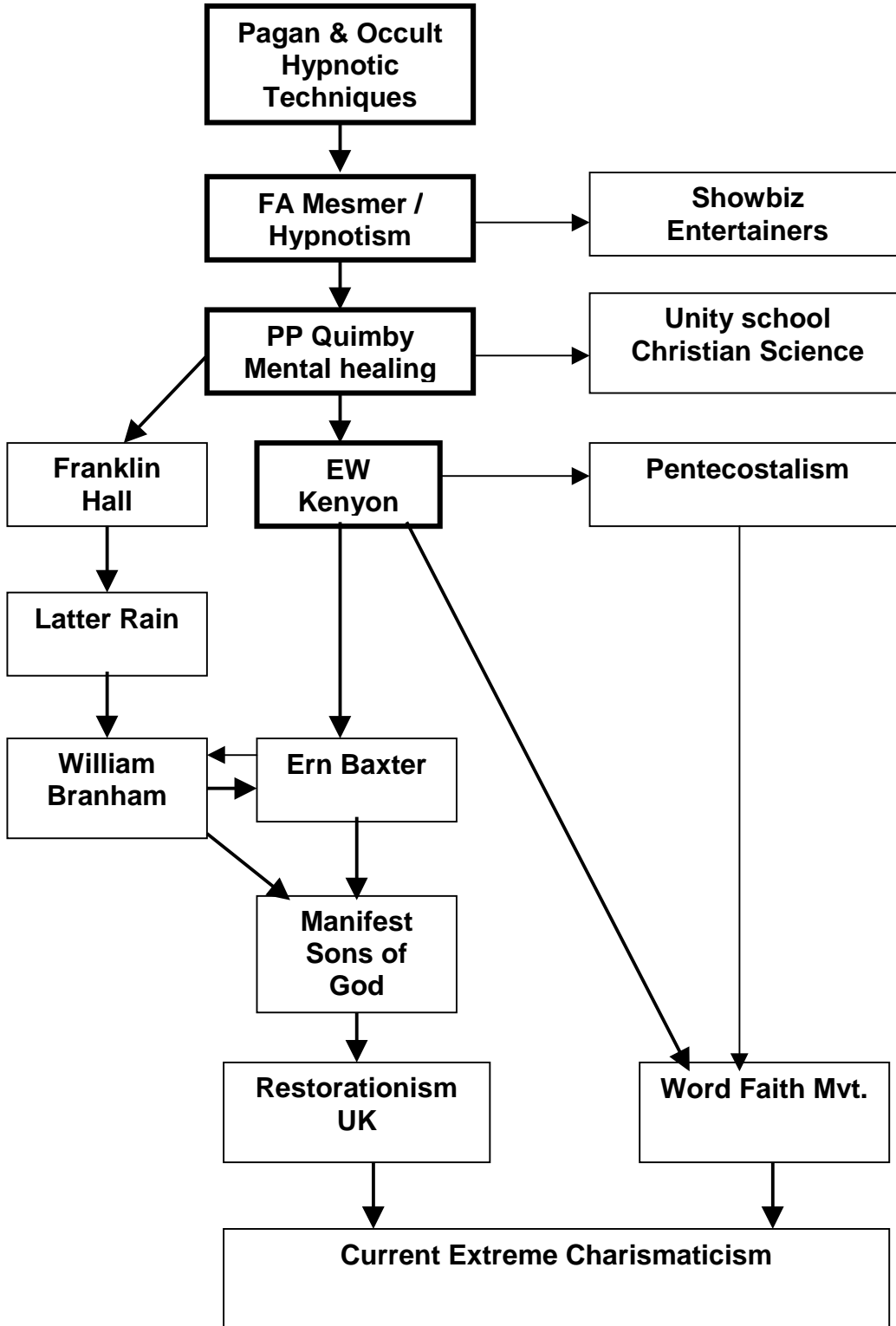
**Appendix Four**

**The Diminishing of the authority of God's Word**



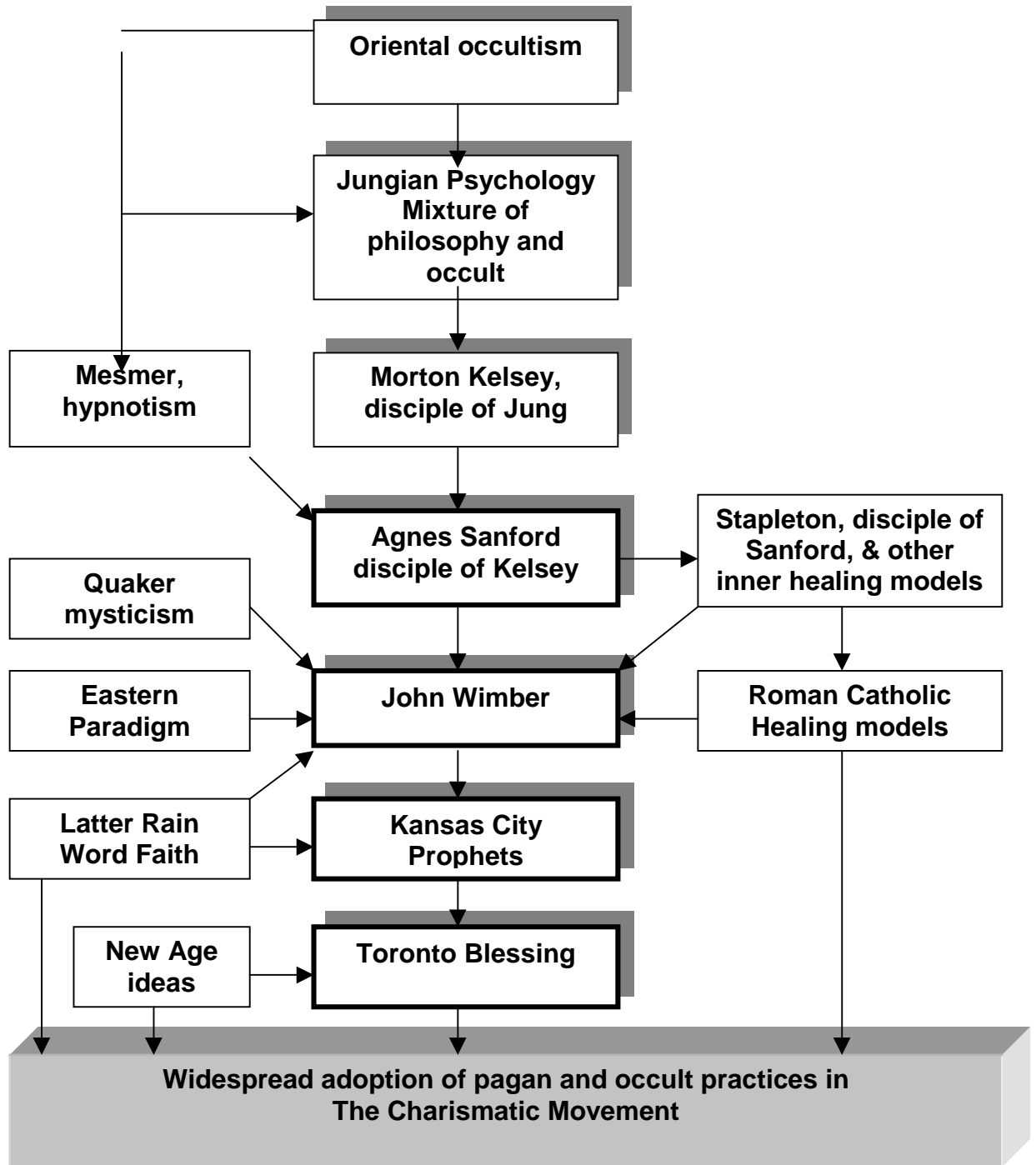
Appendix Five

The Impact of the Mind Sciences



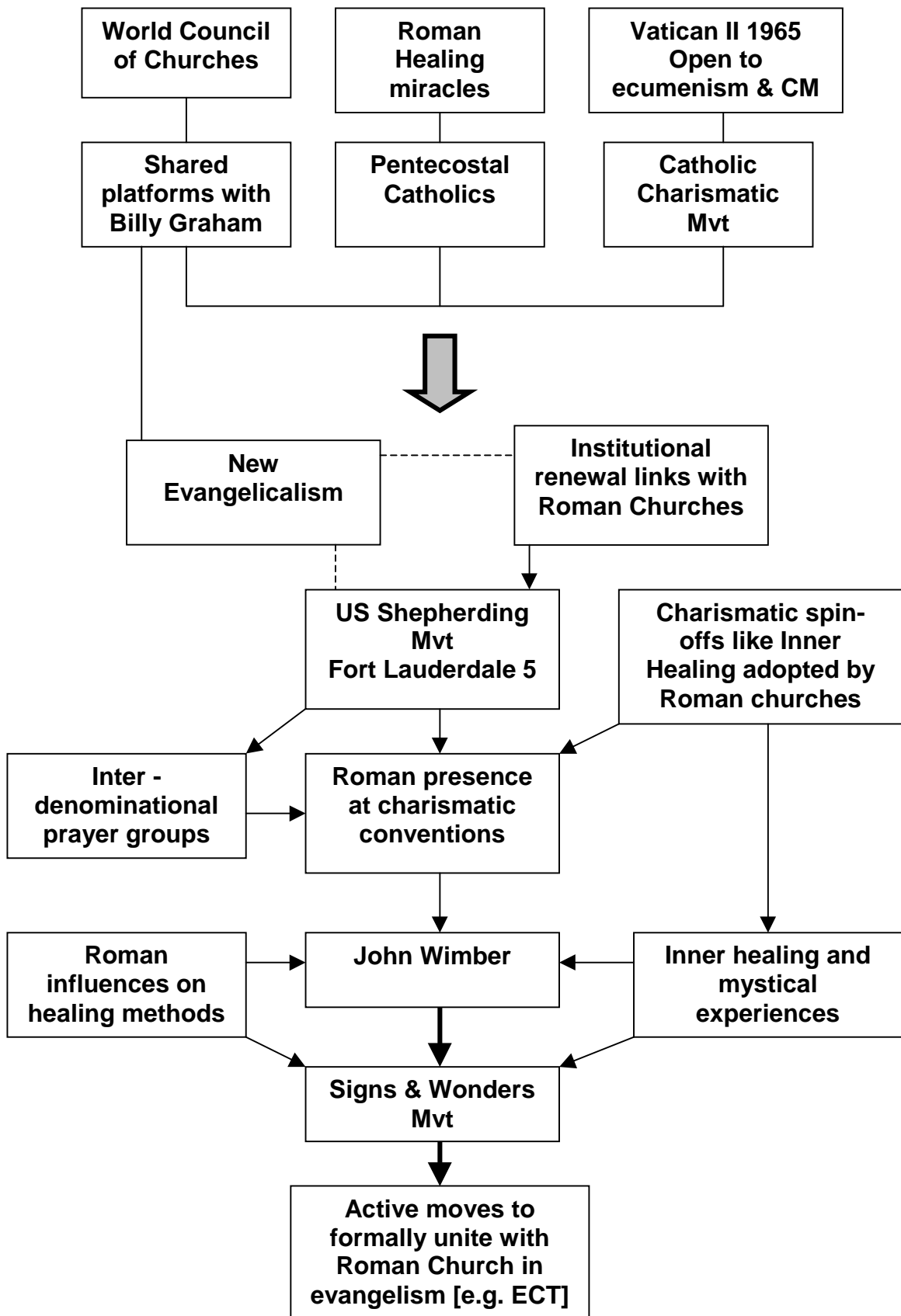
### Appendix Six

## The Rise of Paganism in the Church



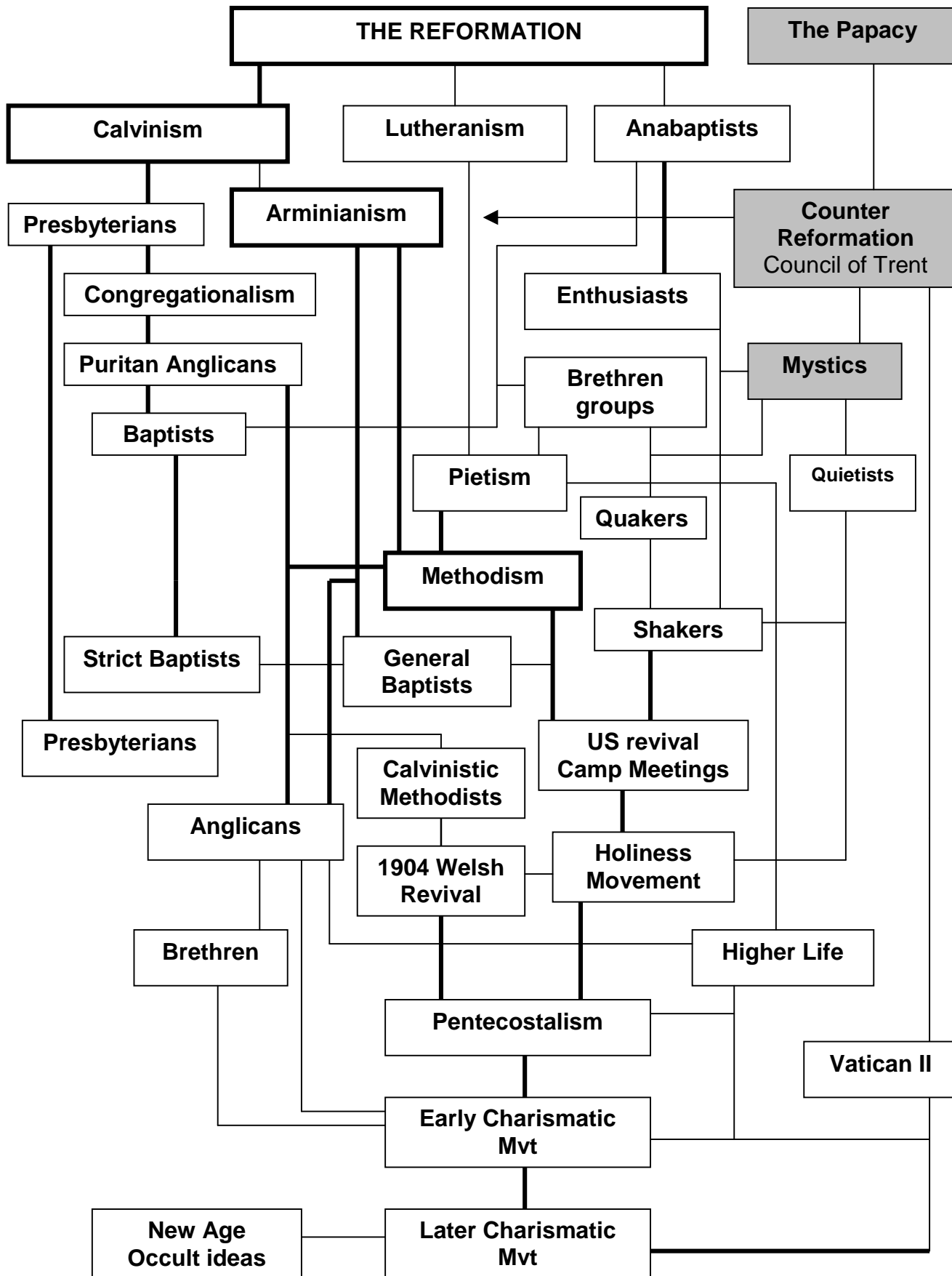
Appendix Seven

The Rise of Closeness To Rome



### Appendix Eight

#### Post Reformation Family Tree (simplified)



## Appendix Nine

### Historical Timeline

This is an essentially simplified summary of events. Each movement is so complex and labyrinthine that it would take many books to cover all the important people and features. I believe, however, that the following demonstrates significant streams of influence through time.

Date	Event	Characters
16 <sup>th</sup> c. onwards	Roman Catholic mysticism	John Tauler
17 <sup>th</sup> c. onwards	Initial Pietism: concern with a reformation of life and church as well as doctrine. Initially Lutheran.	Johann Arndt 1555-1621 Philip Spener 1635-1705 August Francke 1663-1727
17 <sup>th</sup> c. onwards	Radical pietism, the subjective, mystical branch. Neoplatonist.	Jacob Boehme 1575-1624 Gottfried Arnold 1666-1714
1610	Arminianism formally begins	Jacob Arminius 1560-1609
1624-90	Radical Quakers, a branch of George Fox's Quakerism: emphasis upon passivity, inner light. Visions and other Pentecostal experiences. Women leaders.	Jane and James Wardley
Mid 1600s	Development of Pietism.	Philipp Jakob Spener 1635-1705, August Francke, Count Zinzendorf
1688	French Camisard prophets: prophecies, visions, tongues, women leaders.	
Late 17 <sup>th</sup> c.	Quietism	Fénelon, Guyon, Molinos
1739	Methodism: 1 <sup>st</sup> society formed in London	John Wesley 1703-1791
1771	John Fletcher (Wesley's successor) first coins the term 'baptism of the Holy Spirit' to describe sanctification.	Fletcher 1729-85
1787	Shakers heretical restorationist mvt. Spiritual gifts, dancing, visions etc. Messianic woman leader.	Ann Lee 1736-81
Late 18 <sup>th</sup> c.	Mesmerism, healing by trances	Anton Mesmer 1734-1815
1790	Jesuit Manuel De Lacunza (under the pen name 'Ben-Ezra') wrote <i>The Coming of the Messiah In Glory and Majesty</i> , later trans. by Irving. A foundation of Dispensationalism.	
Early 19 <sup>th</sup> c.	Methodist camp meetings in US. Cane Ridge – 1801. Emotionalism: the 'jerks', prostration & dancing.	James McGready Peter Cartwright Francis Asbury
1822	Edward Irving preaching in London. Fervent desire for charismatic gifts and interpretation of end times	1792-1834

	prophecy.	
1824	Charles Finney revivals begin	
1830	People receive tongues & prophecy after Irving's preaching tour in Scotland. Margaret MacDonald has vision of secret pre-trib. rapture. Dispensational teachings appear in his journal <i>The Morning Watch</i> .	
1831	Plymouth Brethren start.	J N Darby 1800-82
1832	Irving's <i>cultic Catholic Apostolic Church</i> founded. Based upon apostles & prophets, tongues & visions. Later, gifts abused and Irving ousted, the mvt. vilified.	
1830s	Holiness Mvt starts, many women leaders.	
1830s onwards	Dispensationalism popularised through Darby's writings and others.	William Kelly 1821-1906 Charles Scofield 1843-1921
1835-1866	Finney's Oberlin Theology (Perfectionism and near Pelagianism)	Finney & Asa Mahan
c1860s	Churches of God start	A J Tomlinson 1865-1943
1862	New Thought develops in US.	Phineas Quimby 1802-66
	New Thought directly resulted in Christian Science and heavily influenced W Branham, John Lake and Kenyon. Kenyon's ideas led directly to Word Faith.	Mary Baker Eddy EW Kenyon 1867-1948
1873	Moody & Sankey's two year tour of Britain. Attendance in London meetings totalled 2.5 million.	DL Moody 1837-1899 Ira Sankey 1840-1908 (singer)
1875	Keswick, thence Higher Life ideas influence US churches.	Murray, Boardman, Moule, Whitall Smith etc.
1887	Christian Missionary Alliance	A B Simpson 1843-1919
Late 19thc.	Holiness writers begin to speak of entire sanctification as a 'baptism of the Spirit'. For others the baptism is a means of spiritual power.	Phoebe Palmer 1807-74 BH Irwin
Late 19thc.	Pentecostalist ideas arising along with faith healing and prophecy.	Maria Woodworth Etter 1844-1924
1890s	Both Wesleyan and Keswick Holiness Mvts. begin to identify a second crisis experience (sanctification) with Pentecost.	
1901	Topeka, Kansas: 1 <sup>st</sup> US tongues, birth of Pentecostalism	Charles Parham 1873-1929
1904	Welsh Revival starts	Evan Roberts 1878-1951
1906-1913	Azusa Street 'revival' begins. Many similar manifestations to Toronto.	William Seymour 1870-1922
1908	Nazarene Church UK & US	
1910	1 <sup>st</sup> volume of <i>The Fundamentals</i>	
Early to mid 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	Development of Neo Orthodoxy.	Karl Barth 1886-1968

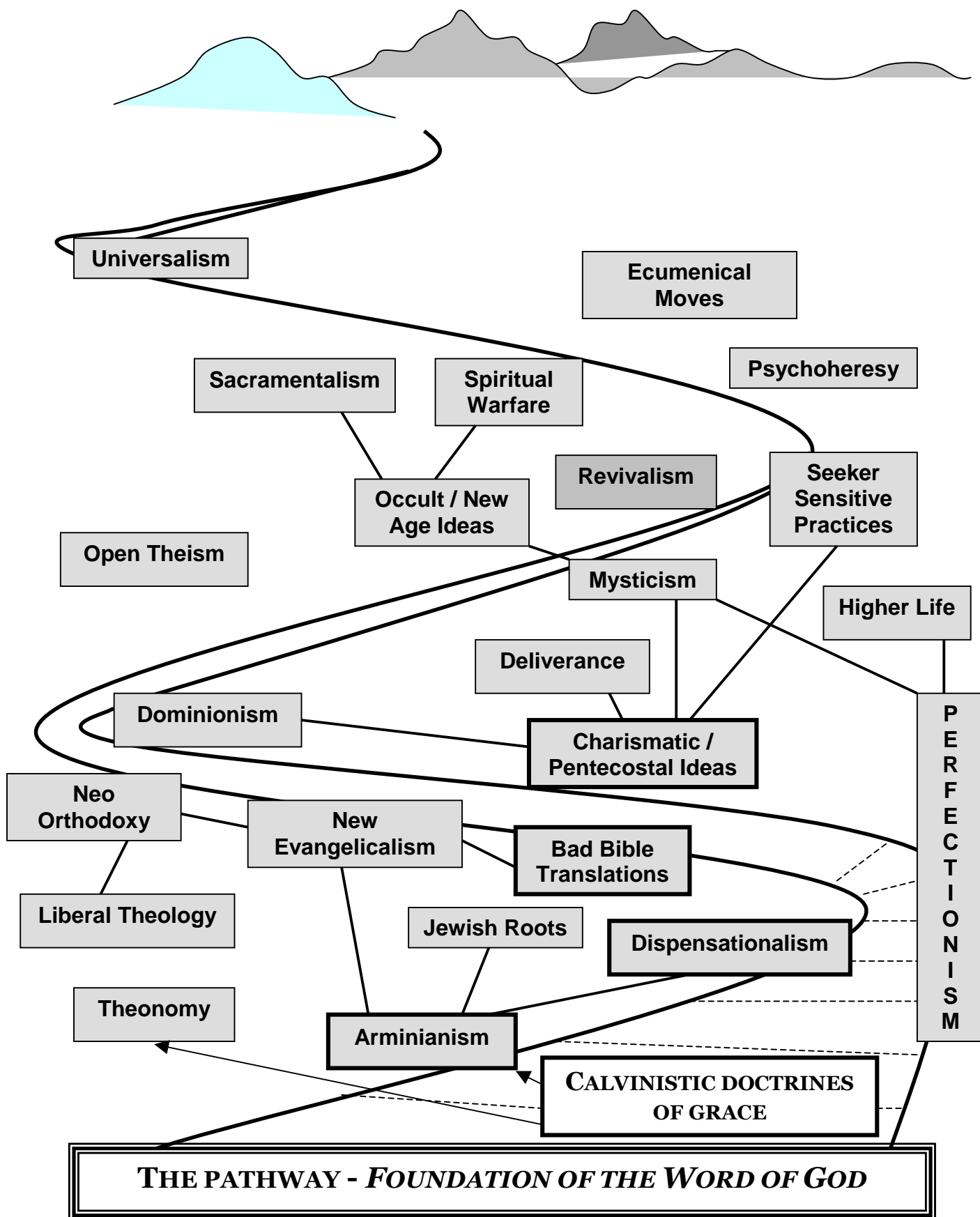


Mid 20 <sup>th</sup> c. onwards	Higher Life (Deeper Life) ideas develop and become popular with Evangelicals through books.	Andrew Murray, Evan Hopkins, Alan Redpath, Ruth Paxson Watchman Nee
Mid 20 <sup>th</sup> c. onwards	Some Higher Life writers take on perfectionist and heterodox ideas.	Hannah Pearsall Smith
1940s	Latter Rain arises in principle	Franklin Hall 1907- William Branham 1909-65
1947	Sharon Fellowship: Latter Rain arises in practice.	George Hawtin, Percy Hunt, Herrick Holt
1947	Start of Fuller Seminary	Harold Ockenga
1947 onwards	Rise of New Evangelicalism. Impact of social sciences on the church.	Nida, Kraft, Taber etc.
1954	1 <sup>st</sup> Billy Graham crusade in London.	Billy Graham 1918-
1954	<i>Customs &amp; Cultures</i> published. Relativistic view of scripture.	Eugene Nida
1960	Charismatic Mvt begins, <i>The Second Wave</i>	Dennis Bennett David Wilkerson
1960+	Bible translators denying that language can convey truth about God.	Nida, Kraft,
Mid to late 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	Development of the New Hermeneutic, a re-packaging of Neo Orthodoxy.	
1963	Renewal in UK institutional churches	Michael Harper
1970-80	House Church Mvt originally Brethren (Chard) and Holiness (GW North) plus many independents.	David Lillie, Sid Purse, Gerald Coates, Dave Mansell, John Noble
1974	<i>Lausanne Congress / Committee on World Evangelisation</i> – acknowledges cultural Biblical elements can be altered to suit other nations/faiths. Adapt the Gospel by borrowing items from other faiths.	John Stott Charles Taber Kenneth Cragg Don McCurry
1975	UK Restorationism arises gradually out of House Church Mvt	Arthur Wallis, Bryn Jones, Terry Virgo
1974	UK Restorationism links with US Shepherding Mvt. [Later broken.]	Bob Mumford, Derek Prince, Ern Baxter (US leaders)
1975	Wagner teams up with Wimber to form a Church Growth dept. in Fuller Evangelistic Assoc. to practically work out McGavran's theories.	John Wimber C Peter Wagner Donald McGavran
1978	US Lausanne members propose focusing on 'felt needs' and 'power encounters' for mission strategy.	Charles Kraft Kenneth Cragg
1980	UK Restorationism in two main streams: NFI and Pioneer People, plus independents (like Barney Coombs, David Pawson)	Gerald Coates Terry Virgo
1981	1 <sup>st</sup> <i>Signs &amp; Wonders</i> class at Fuller. Sign & Wonders Mvt begins, <i>The Third Wave</i> . Ideas borrowed from Kraft & AR Tippett.	John Wimber C Peter Wagner

1980s	Word of Faith (Positive Confession)	Ken Copeland, Ken Hagin, Yonggi-Cho
1987	On May 10, Ichthus Fellowship in London joined with Youth With A Mission and Pioneer Ministries for a Praise March through London.	Graham Kendrick Roger Forster Gerald Coates Lyn Green
1989	Kansas City Prophets; Prophetic Mvt.	Mike Bickle, Paul Cain, Bob Jones
Late 80s-90s	Development of Church Growth Mvt. teachings followed by Strategic Level Spiritual Warfare. First Praise Marches. Development of 'Seeker Sensitive' ideas.	
1992	May 23, The first nation-wide March for Jesus in 142 U.S. cities and in 25 European countries.	
1994-7	Toronto 'Blessing'	Rodney Howard-Browne
1994	Beginning of Open Theism theology.	Clark Pinnock
Late 1980s – 1990s	Discernment (Watchman) ministries develop in US & UK; usually Dispensational, a minority Reformed.	UK: Tricia Tillin, David Noakes, etc.
1990s	Jewish Root Mvt.	UK: Jacob Prasch, Tony Pearce, Clifford Hill.
1990s	Protestant reaction to Dispensational Watchmen: UK: Christian Research Network, US: Christian Research Institute, Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals	Michael Horton (US) Hank Hanegraaf (US) Peter Glover (UK) Alan Howe (UK) Alan Morrison (UK/France)
1996-7	Pensacola 'revival'	John Kilpatrick, Steve Hill
2002 onwards	Dispensational & Jewish Root UK home groups/small churches start calling themselves: <i>The Remnant</i> .	

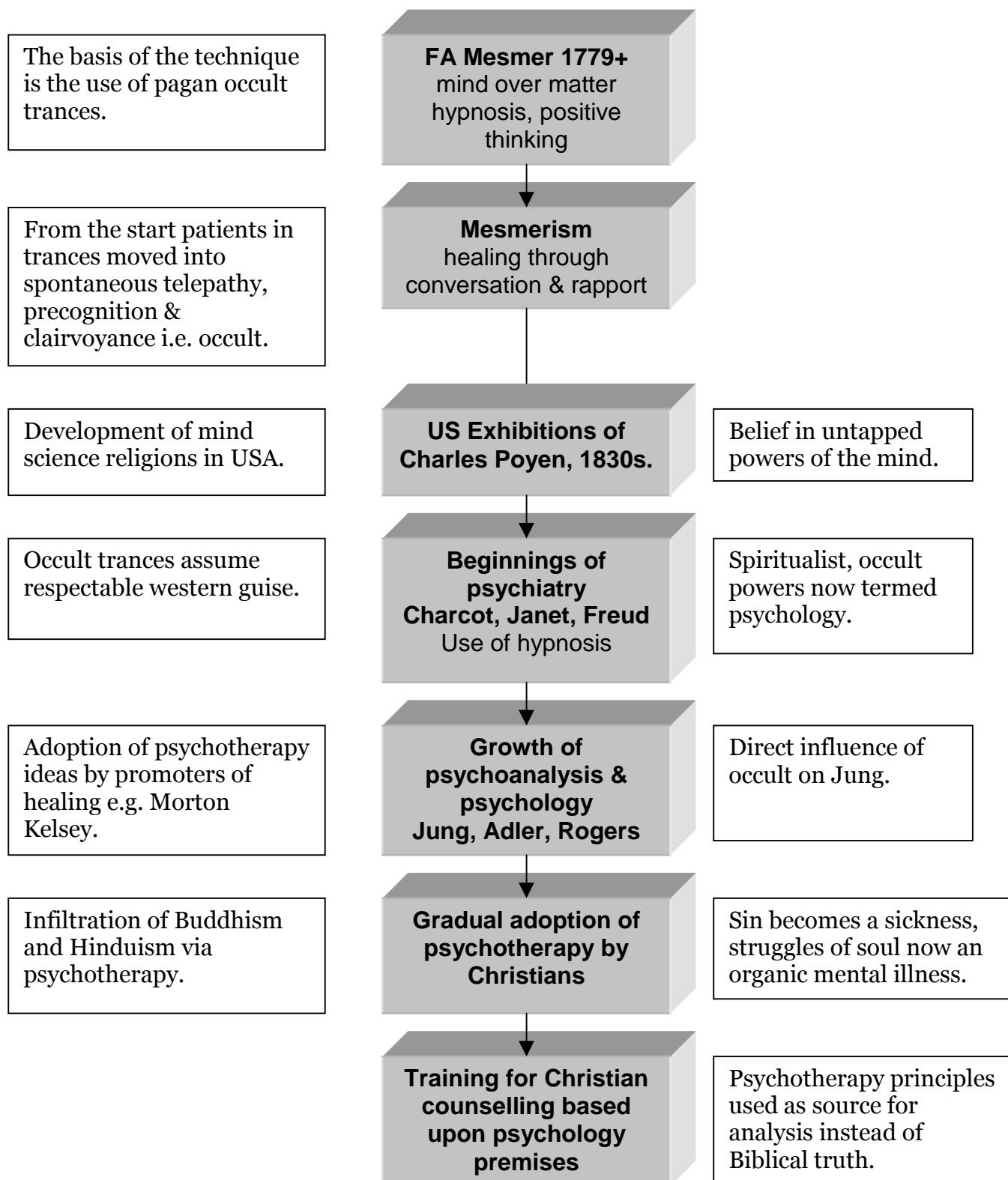
### Appendix Ten

## The Minefield Facing Christians Today



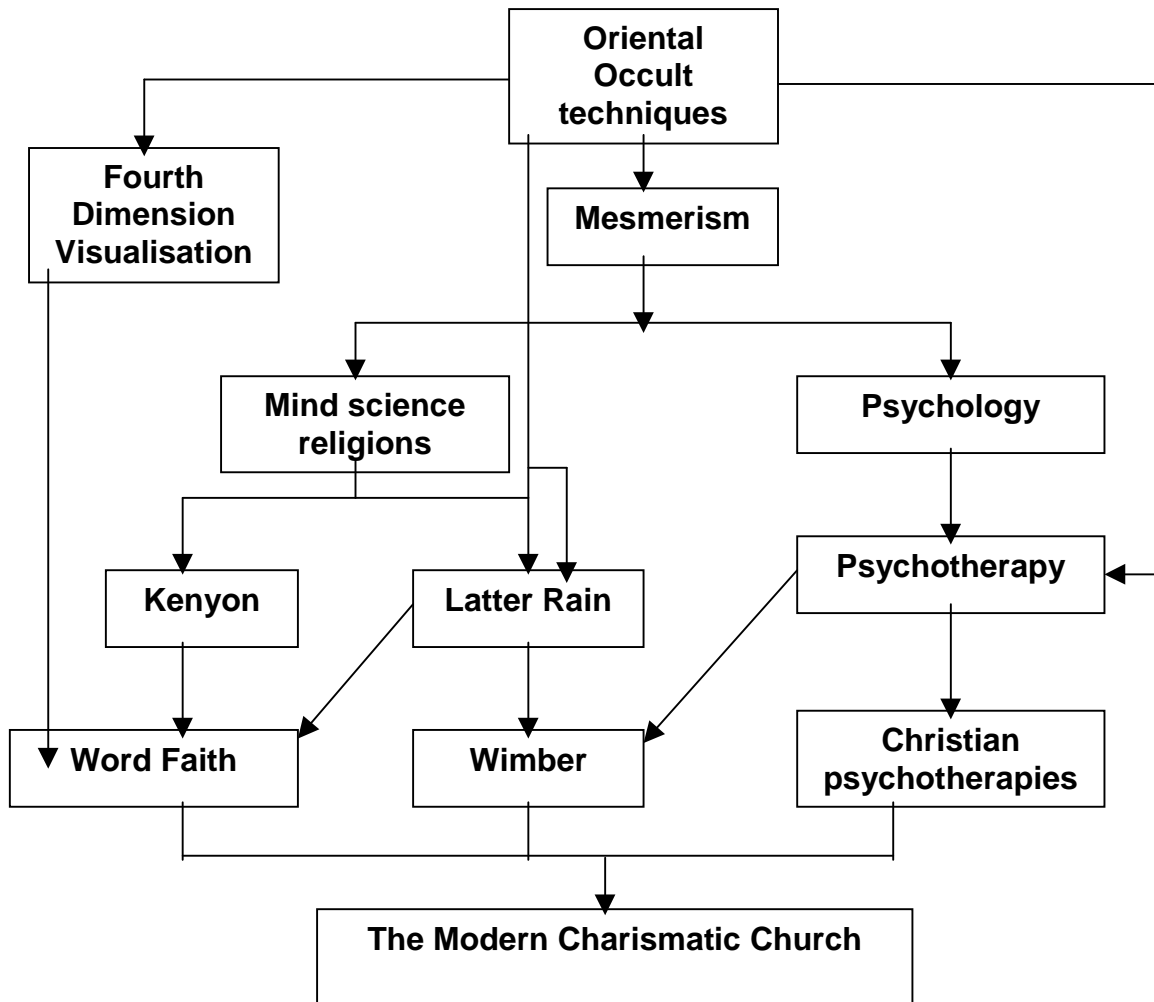
## Appendix Eleven

### The Rise of Psychoheresy



Appendix Twelve

The Common Factor of the Occult



## Appendix Thirteen

### The Centrality of Fuller Seminary

**Fuller  
Theological  
Seminary**

*Flagship of  
New  
Evangelical-  
ism*



**Seminary  
Divisions:  
Theology  
Psychology  
Mission**

**Archibald Hart: *Dean of the Graduate School of Psychology.*** Ardent promoter of psychoheresy.

**Charles Kraft, *Prof. Of anthropology,*** undermined Biblical presuppositions and perverted doctrine.

**John Wimber:** Taught the MC510 *Signs, Wonders and Church Growth* course with Wagner from 1982.

**C. Peter Wagner: *Professor of Church Growth for 28 years from 1971.*** Initiator of Strategic Level Spiritual warfare. Populariser of the Church Growth Movement. Now called an 'apostle', is President of the *Global Harvest Ministries* and Chancellor of the *Wagner Leadership Institute*, established in 1998.

**Donald McGavran. *In 1965 headed the School of World Mission and Institute for Church Growth.***

**Daniel Fuller, *son of the founder,*** led the battle against inerrancy of scripture. Fuller adopted Neo Orthodox view. Others denied inerrancy including Charles Scalise and Paul K Jewett.

***David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality:*** two million-dollar facility opened on the Fuller Campus in 1986 under the leadership of Dr. Russell Spittler, Associate Dean of the School of Theology and an Assemblies of God minister.

***Fuller professors C. Peter Wagner and George Kraft*** were key figures at the Catholic/Charismatic Indianapolis '90 Conference in Indiana.

**Dr. Lewis B. Smedes, *Professor of Ethics at Fuller Seminary,*** wrote an article in the August, 1978, *Reformed Journal*, on the subject of ordaining homosexuals.

**Richard Foster, *Fuller psychologist,*** promotes 'encounter group methodology', and 'contemplative' meditation.

## Appendix Fourteen

### The Academic Precursors of the Signs & Wonders Movement

#### Ethnotheology

Eugene Nida  
1950s and 60s

Actual words of scripture depreciated. Start of dynamic equivalence. The response of the receptor validates the message. Questions the Trinity since hard for Muslims to grasp.

#### Ethnotheology

Charles Kraft  
(Prof. Of anthropology  
at Fuller)

Opposed faith as doctrinal. In *Christianity & Culture*, 1969, argues for Christians to work miracles since demanded by ethnic tribes; hindrance of Western world-view. Influences Wimber.

Donald McGavran  
(Fuller) lectures on  
healing in his church  
growth seminars (1969)

Was a colleague of Wagner at Fuller. Wagner is influenced by McGavran and Wimber.

Alan R Tippett  
(Prof, of Missionary  
anthropology at Fuller)  
1971

Coins phrase *power encounter*. Miracles are the key to ethnic evangelism. There must be a demonstration of power, originally to break people's reliance on the occult.

Wimber & Wagner team  
up for church growth  
lectures at Fuller.  
(1975)

Strong emphasis on altering one's worldview to accommodate the supernatural just like pagans. A focus upon the occult

Wimber & Wagner start  
MC510 'Signs &  
Wonders' course at  
Fuller. (1981)

Powerful Pentecostal type manifestations in the classroom. Course later dropped after criticism of methods.

Third Wave begins in  
the churches

Wimber takes course to churches via conferences. Phrase coined by Wagner.  
1<sup>st</sup> wave = Pentecostalism;  
2<sup>nd</sup> wave = Charismatic Mvt.

## Appendix Fifteen

**A few things which first century believers did not need in order  
to live  
a successful Christian life  
and evangelise the known world**

Psychotherapy

Inner Healing

Deliverance Ministry

Strategic level  
spiritual Warfare

Seeker sensitive  
meetings

Multiple Bible  
translations

Spiritual mapping

Visualisation

Praise Marches

Pagan worldview

Jewish Root ideas

Prayer Walking

Sacramentalism

Ecumenism

Mysticism

The Alpha Course

Rhema words

Celtic spirituality

Music

Healing of believers

Women priests

Gay priests

Identification  
repentance

Encounter groups

The invitation system

Dispensationalism

Feelings led worship

Church buildings

Large churches

Dancing

Dominionism

Joel's army


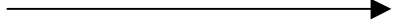



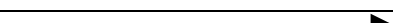
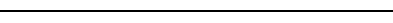
Prosperity theology



## Appendix Sixteen

## Reaction and Counter Reaction in History

[The Pendulum Effect]<sup>118</sup>

Intellectual or Academic Emphasis	Balanced Biblical Position	Emotional or Subjective Emphasis
	NT writings, apostolic example, early church life	
<b>Theology of the Church Fathers</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 4 <sup>th</sup> c. <b>Classic theological debates</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 4 <sup>th</sup> c. <b>Church formalism</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> –4 <sup>th</sup> c.		<b>Gnosticism</b> late 1 <sup>st</sup> - 3 <sup>rd</sup> c. [Subjective knowledge] <b>Montanism</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> c. [Emotionalism & spiritual gifts]
<b>Growing power of Roman Church in cities</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 7 <sup>th</sup> c.		<b>Monasticism</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> - 10 <sup>th</sup> c.
<b>Medieval Scholasticism</b> 11 <sup>th</sup> – 14 <sup>th</sup> c.		<b>Mysticism</b> 14 <sup>th</sup> – 15 <sup>th</sup> c.
<b>Reformation Scholasticism</b> 16 <sup>th</sup> – 17 <sup>th</sup> c.		<b>Pietism</b> 17 <sup>th</sup> – 18 <sup>th</sup> c. <b>Quietism</b> 17 <sup>th</sup> c.
<b>Enlightenment &amp; Liberalism</b> 19 <sup>th</sup> – 20 <sup>th</sup> c.		<b>The Holiness Movement</b> 19 <sup>th</sup> – early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.
<b>Fundamentalism</b> 20 <sup>th</sup> c.		<b>Pentecostalism</b> 20 <sup>th</sup> c.
<b>Evangelical rationalism</b> 20 <sup>th</sup> c.		<b>Charismatic Mvt. Signs &amp; Wonders Mvt</b> late 20 <sup>th</sup> c.

<sup>118</sup> I acknowledge a chart by Robert C Walton as a suggestion for this table.

## Appendix Seventeen

# Corruption of the Presentation of the Gospel after the Reformation

### Key conceptual and social movements

#### **Arminianism Early 17<sup>th</sup> c.**

Concept of human co-operation with God, universal atonement; man has natural ability to repent and believe. Man initiates conversion. Foundational error - God loves everyone; the cross for all.

#### **Amyraldism Mid 17<sup>th</sup> c.**

Hypothetical universalism. Unsustainable synthesis of Arminianism and Calvinism. Universal atonement but divine election also.

#### **Fullerism Late 17<sup>th</sup> c - early 19<sup>th</sup> c.**

Concept of Duty-Faith teaching that man has natural ability to repent and believe. No sovereign election, universal atonement in principle.

#### **Finneyism [Oberlin Theol.] Early - Mid 19<sup>th</sup> c.**

Radical Arminianism and near Pelagianism. Total emphasis upon man who regenerates himself by an act of will. Introduction of decisionism techniques. Emotionalism and subjective manipulation to gain converts.

#### **Camp Meetings & Holiness Mvt. USA Early - late 19<sup>th</sup> c.**

Arminian (Methodist) theology; decisionism, emotionalism, radical subjectivism. Introduction of occult / mystical practices, loss of self-control. These features continue in the Pentecostal Mvt.

#### **Crusade Evangelism Late 19<sup>th</sup> - mid 20<sup>th</sup> c.**

Mostly Arminian theology; decisionism, emotionalism. New emphasis upon God's love for everyone with DL Moody; universal atonement. Use of advertising methods & music.

#### **Charismatic Mvt. Mid 20<sup>th</sup> c. onwards.**

Mostly Arminian theology; decisionism, emotionalism, occult & mystical subjectivity, esp. hypnotic practices. Emphasis upon God's love for all. Music, advertising and market research.

#### **The Free Offer Mid 20<sup>th</sup> c. onwards.**

Distorted Calvinism based on God's love for all and universal atonement in practice.

#### **Seeker Sensitive Services Late 20<sup>th</sup> c. onwards.**

Arminian theology; decisionism, emotionalism. Emphasis upon God's love for everyone coupled with avoidance of doctrinal substance - especially on sin. Use of multi-media manipulation.

Note: the apostles never based evangelism on God's love for man. The word 'love' does not even appear in the book of Acts.

## Appendix Eighteen

### Definitions of Key Words

[Not fully covered within the main text.]

**Animism, animists** the fear of demons or evil spirits resulting in seeking knowledge or power from certain spirits to prevent harm from other spirits or to guarantee fertility. Witch doctors, shamans and magicians head up tribal actions in this, using spells, charms, potions, trances, dancing, prayers, drugs and such like. Animism is basic occultism.

**Bipartite** the word used by Reformed theologians to describe man as composed of two parts only: an outer nature (the body) and an inner nature. The inner nature is usually called the soul, but often writers are forced to call it the spirit.

**Camisards, or the French Prophets** were a persecuted, southern French Protestant movement in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, forced to worship in woods and mountains. With leaders martyred, prophets began to appear, mostly young illiterate women, who spoke in an ecstatic state. There were tongues, trances, visions, crying and trembling. By 1700 there were some thousands. The prophetic messages began to inspire violence, which erupted in 1702 when an abbot was killed. Two years later, they were defeated. The Protestants resolved the crisis in 1713 when a young preacher called for repentance, reformation, established a focus upon Biblical preaching, condemned the prophets and forbade women preachers. French prophets had a significant influence in England, especially upon the Quakers and Shakers. In 1707 there were 400 of them in London; but the movement dissipated there when prophecies failed to materialise.

**Convulsionnaires** a French ecstatic sect within the Jansenist movement which sprang up after the death of their leader in 1727. [The Jansenists were a Christian group opposed to the Catholic revival known as Ultramontism.] On the death of Francois de Paris, miracles were claimed through prayer meetings at his grave. Invalids from all over France began to be brought seeking cures while women went into ecstasies. Later, people who touched his tomb went into paroxysms and were supposedly cured of many ailments. Some went into extreme spasms whereby they appeared invulnerable. They groaned, shrieked, barked like dogs, whistled spoke in tongues and prophesied; whole streets were full of convulsing men and women. To shake them out of it people inflicted them with blows from rods, iron bars and even hatchets, to which their rigid bodies showed no effect. Eventually the movement fell into gross immorality and they were condemned by the Jansenists and the Roman hierarchy. It finally died out with the sealing of the tomb by the king, and the events of the French Revolution.

**Camp Meetings** appeared on the US frontier in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, usually as a result of the ministry of Methodist itinerant preachers. The first ones were held by James McGready in Kentucky during the summer of 1800. They were similar to charismatic Bible Weeks in the 70s-90s in the UK but conducted in the open air. Gradually, many became steeped in flagrant hysteria and wild scenes, the most famous being at Cane Ridge in Kentucky in 1801 where the crowd was estimated as up to 25,000 strong. They dwindled in importance as the extreme behaviour gave rise to sinful excesses.

**Decisionism** the practice of encouraging people to indicate their desire to be saved by raising a hand, standing up or going to the front at a meeting, whereupon someone prays

for/with them and then informs them that they are converted. This is never seen in scripture.

### **Deism**

A rational and anti-dogmatic belief in a God who created the universe, established its laws and natural religion and then left it to fend for itself. It is usually applied to the English rationalistic movement of the mid 17<sup>th</sup> to mid 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

**Divination** fortune telling by one method or another, seeking to know the future. Occult methods include: Tarot Cards, crystal balls, tea leaves, numerology, astrology etc. Christians have entered this sphere when they engage in personal directive prophecies and suchlike behaviour.

**Eschatology** is the Biblical teaching regarding the end times. There are four variants:

1. *Historic Premillennialism*: Jesus will return after an apostasy and a great tribulation which the church will suffer, and initiate a 1,000 reign over the earth before the establishment of a new heaven/earth. [Return before millennium.]
2. *Dispensational Premillennialism (Dispensationalism)*: grew out of the above but teaches that there is a dichotomy between the church and Israel and that God's purposes are mainly towards Israel. The believing church will escape the final apostasy and tribulation by being secretly raptured away during a hidden return of Christ. After the tribulation, Christ will again return to usher in a 1,000 year reign before the final battle. [There are many variations within this movement. Return before millennium, usually pre-tribulation.]
3. *Postmillennialism*: Jesus returns after a 1,000 year golden age on the earth where the church has cumulatively prospered with the Gospel. [Return after millennium.]
4. *Amillennialism*: there is no millennium. The single reference to it in the Bible (in Rev 20:1-4) is speaking symbolically of the church age, the time between Christ's first and second comings. [No millennium.]

**Evangelicalism** is derived from the Greek word *euangelion* meaning 'the Gospel' and used to describe genuine Christians who believed in the Biblical Gospel, i.e. Biblical believers, born again Christians. It is often attributed to the time of the revivals under Whitefield and Wesley in 18<sup>th</sup> century England and Wales. In the last thirty years, however, the term has been stripped of real meaning since such a wide variety of thinkers and institutions claim to be evangelical, covering even apostate and completely liberal positions.

**Free-willism** – see synergism.

**Fundamentalism** a term inspired by a series of books called *The Fundamentals*, which were published around the turn of the century in America to combat the rise of modernism. They contained articles from a number of evangelical authors, of differing denominations, who united in this attempt to defend the authority of the Bible and the importance of key Bible doctrines. The term was originally used to define genuine evangelical Christians; but in later years was hijacked as a term of derision for hard-nosed, radical, unthinking zealots of any faction.

**Gnosticism** was a cultic heresy which plagued the early church and was particularly combated by the apostle John. It taught a blend of mysticism and ritual by which leaders imparted a special, revealed knowledge ('gnosis') to disciples whereby one escaped this evil world of the flesh to ascend gradually to the spiritual world of God. The adepts thus had their divine spark fanned into a 'god-consciousness' by which they transcended material

things (equated with evil) and lived in a spiritual world, which was the only true reality. Rituals included: hymns, repetitive chanting, drugs, meditation, ecstatic experiences and so on. Many aspects were similar to practices now found in the CM and New Age variations. Full enlightenment was by a continual ascent up a never-ending path, requiring constant new experiences of revelation.

**Higher Criticism** a movement around the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to subject the Bible to the secular principles of literary criticism as distinct from textual criticism. The focus was upon literary form, the author and date. As a science (now ‘literary criticism’) there is nothing to fear, but Victorian Higher Critics were responsible for declaring that much of the Bible is not trustworthy and that the claimed authorship of many books was incorrect. [This was based upon the evolutionary failed premise that ancient man was unsophisticated and could not write.] Disputed authorship included: the Five books of Moses (Pentateuch), the Gospels, 2 Peter, Revelation, and several of Paul’s letters. The Pentateuch was divided up into several authors at different periods.

**Karma** the Hindu law of cause and effect. A person’s sins result in an equal retribution either in this life or another reincarnated one. Good behaviour helps to build up credit in evolutionary progress.

**Keswick** a town in the Lake District which became the centre of an annual Bible convention. The first one was organised by Canon Harford-Battersby in 1875. The convention grew to be the vehicle for UK holiness teaching, though separate from the American variety; its influences being Reformed and Anglican rather than Methodist. Keswick is now used as a formal name for a variant of Higher Life sanctification teaching.

**Methodism** is the term used to describe the church movement initiated by John Wesley, although he personally remained within the Anglican fold to his death. It began as a description of the search for an effective method to develop holiness in believers and was first used to describe members of Wesley’s Holy Club at Oxford in 1729. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century revival, the term was applied to a wider circle than the Wesleys, and included the followers of George Whitefield and the Countess of Huntingdon. The term became a formal designation in 1784 naming 100 preachers associated with Wesley. Methodist Chapels were registered as dissenting meeting houses in 1787, but the movement began to fragment within six years of Wesley’s death (1791). The doctrine of the official Methodist church began to deteriorate soon after this and the Methodist Church in the UK is in virtual terminal decline, having adopted many liberal doctrines in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the US today, many people prefer to call themselves ‘Wesleyan Methodists’ to distance themselves from modern compromise and identify with the tenets of John Wesley’s theology.

**Mind sciences** a term used to cover religious groups that use hypnotism and similar metaphysical techniques for healing. In all, the mind is elevated above truth and most are based upon the mystical idea of divinity residing within every man. *New Thought* and the *Unity School* are mind science religions.

**Monergism** [from the Greek *monos* – ‘one’ or ‘single and *ergon* – ‘work, hence ‘single work or action’] the Biblical belief that God alone is the efficient cause of salvation, the human will cannot contribute.

**Neoplatonism** arose after the third century in Alexandria and was developed by Plotinus and Porphyry. It was a system of thought which spurred on mystical ideas in various religions, however, as a model of intellectual methodology, it was utilised by many great Christian theologians such as: Basil the Great and Augustine. Essentially, it was a

combination of Platonic dualism with oriental mysticism. God is above being, but revelatory light streams from divine perfection. Existence is a desire for the light hindered by irrational behaviour. The mind can overcome the hindrances of life by meditation or focusing to get a mystical illumination of the divine. This overcomes Platonic duality by direct union of the soul with God. However, there is always a separation of the material world and God; so Christ (as God) could not have a real body of flesh, but only appeared as a phantasm (in Gnosticism this common idea was called *Docetism*).

**New Thought** a religious break away movement, arising out of Christian Science, developed by Methodist minister Warren Evans and Julius Dresser. It is based upon the Platonic, occult and mystical healing ideas of PP Quimby [e.g. sin and disease only exist in the mind] plus some influences from Emmanuel Swedenborg. New Thought ideas permeate some radical Pentecostal/charismatic and Word Faith teachings. [See *Unity School*]

**Oberlin Theology** refers to the evangelistic school of Charles Finney and Asa Mahan which taught a form of Perfectionism. The name derives from the Congregationalist college at Oberlin, Ohio where Finney developed a liberalised form of Calvinism which closely approached Methodism.

**Occult** a word meaning 'hidden' referring to hidden, secret, supernatural or esoteric (mysterious) knowledge. There are three branches of the occult:

1. *Fortune telling* or *divination*.
2. *Magic* or *magick* - manipulation of nature to serve one's purpose, usually by casting spells and harnessing spiritual powers; witchcraft, sorcery. [*Magic* without the *k* is sometimes used to refer to conjuring tricks].
3. *Spiritualism* - communing with demons; in the US the word *Spiritism* is more common.

**Pelagianism** was initially developed by a trained lawyer, and Celtic British monk called Pelagius. In essence he taught that man's nature was not totally depraved but innocent and man could use his free will to choose holiness. If man is responsible, he must be able; he can choose the good and perform it. Sin only arises when we deliberately choose evil; a person can live free of sin even without knowing Jesus Christ. There is a limited gracious influence given to those who deserve it by good use of free will. Pelagianism contradicts many vital Christian doctrines, especially that man is born in sin, is dead in sin and cannot be saved without a prior working of God to graciously give faith and repentance. It was strenuously countered by Augustine of Hippo and condemned by the church.

**Pietism** was a reaction, amongst Protestants, to a cold and sterile scholastic dogmatism in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. They stressed the necessity for good works and personal holiness. It fostered a desire for godliness, Biblical study and missionary activity; some feel occasioned by contact with British Puritanism. The movement spawned charitable works towards the poor, orphanages, hospitals, Bible colleges, widow's homes and self-sacrificing missionaries. Pietist Count von Zinzendorf created the Moravian Church. Some representatives strayed towards mysticism and a wrong subjectivity; extremists of this wing are known as **Radical Pietists**.

**Platonism** the belief in an ideal world of perfect, absolute forms (ideas) which exists above and beyond our changing material world (dualism). Morality must be derived from the perfect eternal principles of the ideal world, not from experience. Thus the body is inferior to the immortal soul, and subject to reincarnation. Everything in the material world corresponds to a key form, or blueprint / matrix, in the ideal world. [This is a

simplified breakdown of a complex system of teaching developed by Plato (428-348 BC).]

**Psychiatry** the branch of medicine concerned with the study and treatment of mental illness, behavioural and physical.

**Psychoanalysis** the psychology and psychotherapy associated with Freud. The word is popularly used just to refer to the therapy. The main psychoanalytical schools stem from Freud, but also Jung and Adler who separated from Freud's theories, especially about sexual libido (everything revolves around sexual frustration). Adler emphasised the family as the source of neuroses; Jung focused upon the unconscious.

**Psychotherapy** psychological counselling methods using various theories and practices.

**Psychology** the study of the mind or of human behaviour. The discipline did not emerge as an independent science until the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**Quakers** a movement of austere religious folk founded by George Fox (1624-91) in 1652 during a vision. He emphasised that God speaks directly to individuals. The term Quaker was applied to him and his followers due to the trembling that came upon them when in the Spirit. Their church practice was to wait in silence for the Spirit to move upon a person, who often 'quaked' before speaking under the power. Fox was also said to have exercised a significant healing ministry. By 1700 there were Quaker assemblies all over the US. The Shaking Quakers were influenced by the Camisards, and this led to the later development of the Shakers sect. For Quakers the final authority is not the Bible but the subjective experience of the individual (the inner light); they were also universalistic. Today the sect is completely liberal.

**Reformation *solas*** these are Latin slogans of the five key principles to emerge out of the Reformation of the church, the great movement when Protestantism separated from Roman Catholicism in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. They are all based upon *sola scriptura*: the Bible (scripture) alone rather than papal fallibility. Salvation is in Christ alone (*solos Christos*), by grace alone (*sola gratia*), through faith alone (*sola fides*) to the glory of God alone (*solī deo gratia*). Another principle, less well known, was *semper reformandum* i.e. the church should always be reforming itself.

**Reformed** a term describing Calvinist theology or Protestant church polity; teaching which stems from the Reformation as systematised by John Calvin, rather than by Lutheranism.

**Shaman, shamanism** one of the names used to describe practitioners of sorcery – the ability to manipulate or control the spirit world through Black Magic. Other names include: magician, wizard, witch, witch-doctor, warlock (male witch), sorcerer.

**Shakers** a movement which grew out of Radical Quakerism, the followers of Ann Lee (1736-1781). Resenting her marriage and overcome by a 'revelation', Lee developed a new 'gospel' based on hatred of sex. Eventually she saw herself as the 'new messiah' and was known as 'Ann the Word' or 'Mother Ann'. Her emphasis upon the restoration of end time spiritual gifts, including tongues and healing and the rejection of the inspiration of the Bible helped gain converts. She also insisted on celibacy, perfectionism, good works for salvation, dietary controls and communism. In 1774 she immigrated to New York State and set up a religious society, gaining many supporters from Baptist churches. The wild worship included the shaking off of sin (hence the name), visions, tongues, prophecies and vigorous dancing, often encompassing the whole congregation dancing around the room.

Some say they danced naked to mortify the flesh. Many of these attributes of worship were found in later Pentecostalism. Some extremes dissipated after Lee's death and dancing became ritualistic, but numbers dwindled. There was resurgence, however, when frontier camp meetings adopted some of their extravagances, provoking Shaker missionaries to the West. The new leader, 'Mother Lucy', re-introduced the excesses and added praise marches. By 1837 the movement was steeped in occult spiritualism.

### **Socinianism**

The heretical teachings of Faustus Socinus (1539-1604). He denied the doctrine of the trinity and taught that Christ was just a man, but who became God's viceroy after his sinless life and resurrection. He denied the atonement as penal substitution, teaching a form of governmental theory - Christ's death was merely an example of faith and obedience. There is no punishment for sin; men repent from their own power. He also denied the person of the Holy Spirit, predestination, original sin, total depravity and hell. He also denied God's sovereignty, making God subject to the free decisions of men, insisting that he neither foreordains nor foreknows anything. In a way, he was the first liberal theologian.

**Sola scriptura** see Reformation *solas*.

**Synergism** [from the Greek *syn* – 'together' and *ergon* – 'work', hence 'combined work or action'] is the idea that the human will co-operates with God in salvation.

**Theosophy** an occult movement founded in 1875 by Madame Helena Blavatsky (1831-91) and continued by Annie Besant (1847-1933) and others. It's teachings are: the essential unity of all religions, the brotherhood of man, Hindu pantheism, a Gnostic view of knowledge and deity, Platonism and oriental mysticism.

**Trichotomy** the doctrine of the tripartite nature of man, composed of body, soul and spirit. (See *bipartite*.)

**Unity school of Christianity** began in 1887 when a certain Mrs Fillmore was healed. The Fillmores studied Christian Science and New Thought and developed Unity out of this mix. It is mainly a teaching establishment to serve enquirers but is far from being Biblical, being a blend of mysticism, Gnosticism and Hinduism.

**Visualisation** the technique of imagining or envisioning a desired object and concentrating upon it until it is received. This is claimed to be the expression of Biblical faith when, in fact, it is an ancient occult method. Nowhere in the Bible are we told to do this, in fact faith is the conviction of things not seen (Heb 11:1). Visualisation is the desire of things seen in the mind. An early proponent of this technique was Paul (now David) Yonggi Cho in his books on the 'Fourth Dimension'. He admits to seeing this method operate with Buddhists and states that non-Christians can perform it. His famous example is of a bicycle he needed. He imagined exactly what he wanted until he actually received it. The Biblical teaching is to present our needs to God and be patient (2 Cor 9:8-11; Phil 4:19). Paul expressed his pleasure when afflictions and needs were not met (2 Cor 12:10), since that forced him to rely on God's grace more.