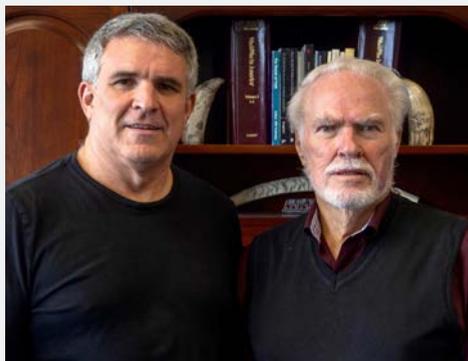


As we look at the growth of the Christian Church in today's world, there is reason for both optimism and pessimism. In the developing world there is both an enthusiasm and a real growth while in many parts of the Western world the church seems to be in decline. However there are some religious groups and movements that are experiencing growth. The Authors of this book attempt to study seven of today's movements to see why some are growing while others are either stagnant or declining. As we plan for the future it is important that we understand the dynamics of growth so as to be able to carry out the Great Commission of the Lord Jesus Christ and that is "To make disciples of all nations".



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Can Evangelicals Truly Change the World?

How Seven Philosophical and Religious Movements Are Growing



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Forward

By Dr. Raymond Tallman

Leadership is both an art and a science! Thus the mind of an engineer and the heart of a visionary provide a unique leadership model of qualifications which enhance movements of consequence in the marketplace of faith. Churches, mission organizations, and Christian institutions can all benefit by careful reflection on this book. Both of these leadership traits are found in my friend and colleague Dr. Wagner, whose decades of ministry provide rich experience to draw from. His most recent writing brings us a significant contribution for training a new generation of leaders who can process strategy possibilities for global ministry impact. Reviewing successful strategies among diverse faith-based communities provides a window for assessing our own methodologies that seem to have been de-energized. Strategy stagnates unless it is revisited and re-focused and revitalized. New times call for new leaders who can learn from others who have paved the way to success! Learn from the competition in the arena of ministry!

Dr. J. Ray Tallman

Preface

My many years of studying the Church Growth Movement were very helpful in learning why some churches grow and others decline. It became apparent to me that there was much more in the process than just one church being blessed by the Holy Spirit and another not. True, the spiritual aspect was important, but there were other dynamics that most Church leaders up to the middle of the twentieth century were not ready to study. Thus, along came the Church Growth Movement with its center at the Fuller Theological Seminary. I had the opportunity of studying there for several years under the tutelage of such spiritual giants as Donald McGavran, Ralph Winters, Art Glasser, and C. Peter Wagner.

Later in my pilgrimage, I was given the opportunity of being the Church Growth Consultant for the International Mission Board for the Southern Baptist Convention for Eastern Europe, Western Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa. This large part of the world covered an area that extended from the tip of western Spain to the eastern edge of Siberia and from the northern part of Norway to Yemen in the south and included many different cultures and languages. In that role, I was presented with a challenge to no longer look only at the growth of local church or even that of a denomination but at the spread of the Gospel in a major part of the world. I soon discovered that my “church growth eyes” were too limited to deal with my need for an expanded worldview.

My focus changed from needing to understand not only why churches grow but why larger movements and faiths grow, not only in the West but in the whole world. As I traveled in over 100 different countries, I saw Muslims flooding into Europe, Mormon missionaries visiting in European cities, and Jehovah’s Witnesses out on the streets in Northern Africa. Also, I became aware that many parts of my area were now much more accepting of homosexuality than previously. It was necessary to ask myself this question: “Why are some of these larger movements growing and why are some Christian denominations either declining or have crested? It was at this point that I felt a need to study some of the major movements that were growing in the world to find the answers to this question. I used some of the same tools that I had learned at Fuller, but now they needed to be expanded to see how the strategies of the Christian Church could be better structured to be more effective in the winning of the world for Jesus Christ.

This book is just the results of my studies of many of those groups that I encountered. I chose to consider only seven, each of which is either now growing or has a history of growth, but it would have been possible to have included other movements, including some truly secular ones such as communism or secularism. This may need to come later.

I am aware that the book is rather short. When I first set out to write this book on the seven movements, I began my study on Islam since I had worked so closely with Christian churches in the Middle East and Northern Africa. I was so interested in this study that I concentrated only on Islam and finally wrote a book, *How Islam Plans to Change the World*, on that one movement. This highly successful book made me want to write a series of books, one on each of the seven chosen movements. My second book, *How the Homosexuals Plan to Change the World*, was almost finished, but I was taken aback when I failed to find a publisher. Some said it was the result of intimation from the homosexual community while others said it was a topic that was overrun with new literature. I changed my mind and decided to go back to my original plan to write one book that dealt with all seven movements. It was apparent that such a book needed to be short, and this I was willing to do.

In starting, I realized that I had collected realms of material on all seven movements, so now I needed to reduce all this information into a rather small number of pages. As I began to write, it occurred to me that maybe I had not covered the topic in sufficient detail, but at this time, I felt the need for a shorter, more concise description.

In writing any literature, the author needs to determine who the audience will be. As I contemplated this rather simple question, I decided that I really have two audiences. The first is top church leaders, those who are in positions to make the necessary decisions to change our strategy to be more effective. The second audience is the typical Christian who sits in the church pew and wonders why we have not yet made disciples of all peoples. I would hope that they too could catch a vision as to what can still be done to reach the world.

My prayer is that many will see how rapidly our world is changing and begin to look at more effective means to reach the world with the Gospel. It is my hope that this book will challenge people to relook at our present strategies and to develop new ones. On the positive side, Jesus said, "This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come" (Matthew 24:14). Many feel that the end is near, but the church of Jesus Christ still has much work to do if we hope to make disciples of all nations.

Acknowledgments

I am always very grateful to my wonderful wife Sally and our two children, Candice and Mark. The whole family worked together as missionaries in Europe for 31 years, and even after this term of service, mission work is the top priority for all four of us. Sally has stood with me for over 60 years of our being in the ministry together.

Also, I am very thankful to my many professors who were patient with me but helped to form my theology. These include the professors from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Rueschlikon Baptist Seminary, Fuller Theological Seminary, and the University of South Africa. Each school added much to my understanding of global missions.

Especially helpful in my later years has been Dr. David Yang and the professors and staff of Olivet University. They have given me new insights on how a Mega ministry is planned, developed, and put into action.

My prayer is that now others can also be inspired to do more to reach the world for Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER I

An Introduction to Mega Thinking

Developing a Strategy to Win the World for Christ

*“Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations”
Matthew 28:19 (NIV)*

Introduction:

One of my mentors while I studied at Fuller Theological Seminary during the 1970s was Donald McGavran, the world-famous founder of the Church Growth Movement. This well-known theologian argued that the church and its missionaries were not always honest in their reporting of the growth of the Church. Often, they would exaggerate their numbers as well as their successes. McGavran argued there was a need to use accepted academic disciplines to study the real growth of the Church, and thus he founded a whole new movement of study in missiology.

In one of my conversations with him, he outlined his philosophy and stated that the Church and its leaders were not being honest with themselves and were claiming growth and success where there were none. Pressures to obtain good results were causing many to exaggerate their numbers. The present situation has shown us that the Church Growth Movement has seen its heyday, but the reasons for its existence have not changed, so the question remains.¹ Are some of McGavran’s doubts as to the positive reporting of results still a problem in the missionary world of today?

McGavran once wrote, “A strange combination of factors keeps us from perceiving church growth and has kept church growth leaders from measuring what has occurred and planning for more.” He believed these factors had created a “cloud of opaqueness.” He went on to say, “Many

¹ For a complete study of the rise and fall of an area church growth movement, one should look at the book by Fred McCrae, *The History of the German Church Growth Association 1985-2003: A Case Study in Contextualization*.

pastors and missionaries, surrounded by this opaqueness, carry on programs, preach sermons, do assigned work, raise budgets, administer departments, baptize converts, and teach school children and new workers. But only occasionally—when the cloud lifts—do they glimpse briefly into the state of church growth.” At other times he called this cloud “the universal fog.”² He stated that those in the fog do not always have the insights needed in order to understand what is really happening. Often, we believe everyone knows and understands strategic planning and is ready to attempt great things for God. Sadly, this is seldom the case.

As I have studied the growth of the Church, I have often wondered why some cults, sects, and movements are growing faster than Christianity. On several occasions I spent time studying other groups, such as the Mormons and the Jehovah Witnesses, and was impressed by their growth in our modern world. However, when I talked to evangelical leaders about this, I was told that either we should not be concerned with them because they are only cults, or they really are not growing, or they grow because of the dictatorial structure of their organization and we cannot duplicate what they are doing. In other words, these leaders were simply not interested in learning what others are doing to grow.

My studies continued, and I decided to write a book on the strategies of seven growing groups in the world of religion. One of those groups that I wanted to learn more about was those who practice Islam. Because I had been the consultant for Church Growth for the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention for the Middle East and North Africa, I had the necessary background to write a well-grounded book on their plans to change the world. I must admit I was very impressed by their plans and by the fact that they believe they can take over the whole world by the year 2080.

The Micro, Meta, Mega Concepts:

One of the more interesting facts that I learned while studying the Islamic faith was that several of their strategists recommended that they work on three levels. One of their people, Khevain Mural, gave names to these three levels. He described them as (1) the Micro Level, which is the level of individual persons and small organizations; (2) the Meta Level, which

² Donald A. McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 56.

is the level of very large groups, institutions, and structures; and (3) the Mega Level, the level of overall *Ummah* and Muslim Socialites and States.³

I continued my reading, and it occurred to me that I needed to discover if all seven groups that I was studying worked on all three levels. To my amazement, I discovered that only three of those groups had a Mega strategy in place while the other four were operating almost exclusively on the lower two levels. One of my great disappointments was that my own denomination, the Southern Baptists, were almost void of a constructive strategy at the Mega level.⁴ The next question seemed to be important. What would happen if evangelicals began to think on a Mega level instead of only at the Micro and Meta levels? If we are interested in transforming whole societies, we need to operate on all three levels.

In truly understanding how to change society at the Mega level, it is important to understand the makeup of the society we are trying to change. At an informal meeting many years ago, several creative Christian leaders began to discuss this problem and to try to understand the contemporary culture. They arrived at what is known as the "Seven Mountains of Culture." At that point, they determined that there are seven building blocks of a culture: (1) Art and Theater, (2) Business, (3) Education, (4) Family, (5) Government, (6) Media, and (7) Religion.⁵ They decided that the next step was to find ways to penetrate the culture at these seven levels. To do this, they would need to penetrate each of the layers. The leaders discovered a very important tool in strategy planning for the Christian Church. As I studied these seven mountains, I became impressed to bring the number to ten by adding three more: (8) the Military, (9) Sports, and (10) Technology. In applying the Micro, Meta, Mega concept on our planning, it behooves us to also focus on the totality of the culture in which we are working. We must look at the building blocks of culture if we are to find ways to change whole cultures.

³ Khurran Murad, *Dawah Among Non-Muslims in the West* (London: Islamic Foundation, 1986), 9.

⁴ As the Missions Professor at a Southern Baptist Seminary for ten years, I had the opportunity of studying most of the strategy plans of the different mission boards and concluded that few in the convention had a Mega strategy in place.

⁵ Many scholars have spoken about different parts of a culture. One story has it that several evangelical leaders, including some from Campus Crusade and Loren Cunningham from Youth with a Mission, met in a restaurant and wrote down their ideas of the seven building blocks of culture on a napkin. Others have both different numbers and different building blocks.

Five Important Principles for Growth at the Mega Level:

Principal One: Leaders need to be challenged and trained to work at the Mega level.

Several years ago, I had the opportunity of holding a discussion with Lt. Gen. Jerry Boykin, a retired three-star general who was very much involved in leadership in the Army. He was and is a devoted Christian. In our discussion, he stated that every military in the world had three levels of leadership for their officers and that they had the responsibility to train their leaders to operate at the level where they found themselves. In America they are listed as (1) the Strategic Level, (2) the Command Level, and (3) the Tactical Level.⁶

The Strategic Level:

In the military, leaders of this level are those of the highest rank. Generally, they live close to the Pentagon in Washington D.C. and have the responsibility to plan and guide the world-wide military in achieving the highest goals. Their rank is generally colonel or above, and they have experience at the lower two levels. One could say that they oversee the Mega strategy of the U.S. military.

The Command Level:

The officers operating at this level are the ones who coordinate the battles in various parts of the world and generally live in the physical area of their responsibilities. A good example of this level would be a colonel or a major who has responsibilities in a specific theater such as Iraq.

The Tactical Level:

These officers are those of a lower grade and are generally on the battlefield, leading the field troops against the enemy.

In making comparisons between these military levels and the Church and most denominations, I discovered that the tactical level would be considered the local churches, while the command level could be the national or state unions, and the strategic level could be the Universal Church and some of its cover organizations such as the World Council of

⁶ This information is from notes taken during a private discussion with General Jerry Boykin in Atlanta, Georgia, in April 2004.

Churches, the Lausanne Movement, and the World Evangelical Association. The leaders of each of these levels need to be trained and put into the most effective positions. General Boykin added that one of the mistakes made by leadership is having persons trying to operate at levels outside of their expertise and trying to operate at two or three levels at the same time. A very big mistake made in the Universal Church today is not having the right persons with the right talents operating at the Mega level of strategic planning.

It is not enough for us to just look at the three levels; the Church should develop plans to train persons for all levels. Donald McGavran has suggested that any church or movement needs to train five types of leaders:

- 1) Class I is the “unpaid leaders” heading in. They serve existing churches and work within the structure of the church. Examples are Sunday School teachers and deacons.
- 2) Class II refers to “unpaid leaders” heading out. These are persons who work in rescue missions and other organizations outside of the church.
- 3) Class III refers to paid or semi paid lay pastors who serve small congregations. A good example is a mission pastor.
- 4) Class IV is made up of full time pastors and church workers who work at a denominational level.
- 5) Class V represents the international leaders who speak several languages and have a large worldview. They call attention to the universal nature of the church and develop strategies to make the World Church more effective.⁷

It is necessary to train all five levels of leaders. The Class I to Class III leaders form the basis for those working at the micro level. Class IV form the basis for the Meta leaders, while the Mega leaders come from Class V leadership. In general, the Mega leaders have a post graduate degree such as a master’s or a doctorate; however, an academic degree is not the only qualification to become a Mega leader. Others, such as successful business people or those who have extensive experience in another field, can also be effective at that level.

⁷ Donald McGavran presented this material in a lecture at Fuller Theological Seminary. The course was “Advanced Church Growth.” The quote came from notes taken by the author.

Principal Two: To develop a lasting long-range strategy, it is important to develop strategies that will include plans to influence all of society by understanding and thinking about the Ten Mountains of Culture.

There is the adage that the best way to eat an elephant is one bite at a time. Mao Zedong put it another way when he taught that “a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” Targeting a whole culture is not easy, but if we divide a culture into ten bite size entities, it may be easier. Many persons have a real expertise in one area, such a business, and if that person were put to work in developing a strategy for the business world, he or she might have much more success than would a person trying to develop a Mega strategy for a whole culture. One person trying to find the best way to win a culture would be much less effective than a team of ten, each working on one of the Ten Mountains of Culture. In the long range of strategy planning, each mountain could also be broken down into small bites so that leaders at the command level could be called in to help.

Again, the ten mountains are as follows:

- 1) Art and Theater
- 2) Business
- 3) Education
- 4) Family
- 5) Government
- 6) Media
- 7) Religion
- 8) Military
- 9) Sport
- 10) Technology

To fully understand just one of the ten, a person must devote his or her life to the area with which he or she is best acquainted. When strategists try to develop a plan to reach leaders in all ten areas, the only real possibility is to have leading experts in each area work on the strategy planning. Therefore, a Mega strategy development should consist of a team of a minimum of ten who possess the necessary expertise.

Principal Three: Only larger organizations can develop and work with a Mega strategy.

As has been already stated, the development of an effective Mega strategy needs many helps, such as a valid training for class V leaders in a variety of areas. To train these persons for the contemporary world, out-

standing educational institutions need to be available to them. In the United States, Christian universities and seminaries are well placed to provide the necessary leadership. This is not true, however, in many countries of the world. Even Europe lacks the quality evangelical institutions that will be necessary to train Mega thinking leaders for the task ahead. One good illustration of this is that in 1990, it was two Harvard University professors who developed the highly successful strategy for the homosexual movement. They had the advantage of being well-trained thinkers.

A local church or a small body of churches does not have the necessary leaders and tools to do the bigger work of this type of strategy. The best possibility for such a strategy should come from larger denomination, such as the Southern Baptists or the Missouri Synod Lutherans. Another possibility is one of the cover organizations, such as the World Evangelical Alliance, the World Council of Churches, or the Lausanne Movement. True, smaller entities can make valuable contributions, but the complete strategy needs to have the support from a larger organization. The old saying that “it is easier to turn a small boat around than to do the same with an aircraft carrier” might apply here. It is often difficult to get larger organizations to see how they can change whole societies for Jesus Christ.

Principal Four: Those who want to develop a Mega strategy must be willing to have a long-range strategy.

Most organizations, small or large, have set goals that they want to reach. Inevitably, the goals will be divided into short term and long-term goals. Generally, the long-range goals will be for a period of five years and or longer while the short-term goals will be for a much shorter time. A Mega strategy should have a much longer time frame. True, the homosexuals have achieved much in under twenty-five years, but the Mormons began well over a hundred years ago, and they still are working their original plans but with changes that have generally improved what they are doing. Three different time frames should be used: short term goals (one to five years); intermediate goals (five to ten years); and long-range goals (ten years or longer). In looking at the Muslim’s Mega plans, one is aware that Mohammad had a plan to reach everyone in the world. This plan kept them going for many years, but in the 1500s, his plan went off the tracks. Only in the last fifty years have the Muslims returned to their original long-range plan of world domination.

Principal Five: Development of lasting growth strategies comes when there is a combination of the exuberance and excitement of the youth together with the wisdom and experience of the older generation.

A church recently faced a deep conflict between the old pastor of the church and the new one. Their objectives and goals, not to mention their methods, were far apart. Some in the church suggested the church listen to both and find a way to move forward with help from both. This idea is a simple solution that works much better in smaller situations than in planning for a Mega strategy. Because of the rapid advances in technology, the coming together of two generations is even more important. The youth of the world today have the physical strength and enthusiasm to do much. They also possess an increasing ability to use modern technology. The older have the wisdom and “sticktoitiveness” that is needed for mature planning. It would be ideal to have both young and old working together on each of the ten mountains as a plan is developed.

One plan that is being promoted by the Olivet Institute for Global Strategic Studies is to use doctoral students who are already involved in quality research in the writing of a project or a dissertation. If these students could be challenged to study and write on a part of a Mega strategy, then two ends would be served. The student would finish his or her work while the dissertation, rather than just sitting on a book shelf, could be used in the making of a Mega plan to change the world.⁸

“Who gets the credit?” is still a problem of human nature. In studying the Mega strategies of the Mormons, the homosexuals, and the Muslims, the three groups who have been successful in developing a Mega strategy, you will notice that there is an absence of names of the leaders. Their strategists for the most part do not seek to lift themselves up but rather to promote their program. One of evangelical Christianity’s greater faults is that leaders are more concerned with their own reputation and legacy than with the good of the movement. A good planning team should consist of both old and young leaders who do not seek credits] for themselves.

Conclusion:

In moving forward towards the goal of the establishment of a mega strategy for evangelical Christianity, there are many roads that could be tak-

⁸ Olivet University has taken the lead in attempting to get all students who are working on a Doctor of Ministry project or a PhD. dissertation to work with the Institute to help promote more Mega thinking for world evangelization.

en. Strategy could be studied; each country or society could look at its own needs. Possibly a study of other groups that have been successful could help to show the way forward. The purpose of this book is to encourage leaders to accept the last one. Seven religious groups and three movements that have experienced a degree of success in the past have been chosen for further study. The following chart gives the seven groups to be studied and shows what is perceived to be their strengths and weaknesses when seen through the Mega strategy prism.

Organization	Micro	Meta	Mega
Southern Baptists	Very Strong	Very Strong	Weak
Assemblies of God	Very Strong	Very Strong	Weak
Jehovah's Witnesses	Very Strong	Very Strong	Weak
Mormons	Very Strong	Very Strong	Very Strong
Muslims	Very Strong	Strong	Very Strong
Homosexuals	Very Strong	Weak	Very Strong
Christian cover organizations - WCC, WEA, and the Lausanne movement	Medium	Medium	Weak

Why have they grown or why have they stopped growing? What is the future for these groups. For this study, the seven groups chosen are quite different. Some are denominations while others are sects or cults. One is a world religion while another is not a religious body but rather a movement. The cover organizations are not any of the above but do play a major role in what is happening in the world today.

The complexities of the world seem to be growing rapidly today. To plan a world-wide strategy to win the world to a saving relationship with the risen Christ seems to be impossible and out of reach for the modern Christian, but a worldwide revival for Jesus is a goal that is worth striving for.

CHAPTER 2

Reaching the Peak

A Look at the Strategy of the Southern Baptists

*“Day after Day . . . they never stopped preaching and
proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ”
Acts 4:42 (NIV)*

Introduction:

The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) is an American Protestant denomination that claims just under 15.5 million members, thus making them the largest Protestant church in the United States and the second largest church just behind the Roman Catholic Church. In the twentieth century, the SBC had the reputation for being a growing and dynamic church that specialized in evangelistic zeal, quality church planting, and topnotch Christian education in the churches. Much of this reputation is still true, but it should be noted that in the more recent period, they have experienced a steady decline in membership. The falling numbers lead to two questions: What is the reason for this loss of members and what is their strategy for future growth?

History of the SBC:

Their history begins during the early period of the country. In 1740, a great revival swept through the American colonies, which helped in the creation of new churches to meet the needs of the new converts. Leaders of this revival were two Baptist ministers by the names of Shubal Stearns and Daniel Marshall. In 1755, these two Baptist preachers from Connecticut and a few of their followers organized a church in Sandy Creek, North Carolina. They called themselves “Separate Baptists.” During the next era, this church was very active in evangelism and church planting, not only in the South but also on the Western frontier. The growth in that

area was phenomenal, and these churches continued to expand, as did the Baptist churches in the North.

By 1814, the Baptists in the North and the South sought to unify both in doctrine and organization. Their main reason for this unification was the churches' desire to be involved in missions on the new frontier as well as in other parts of the United States. Their efforts at unity led them to the formation of what was known as the Triennial Convention (so named because it met every three years). In 1832, the Baptists within the Triennial Convention formed the Home Mission Society, which proves that the early Baptists had missions as a foundation stone, but soon it became apparent that there were many social, economic, and political differences between the churches, especially between those in the North and those in the South.

Slavery in the mid-nineteenth century became the dividing line for the Baptists in the Triennial Convention. One major factor had to do with the sending out of missionaries. Those in the North felt that slave owners were not fit for missionary work while the Southerners supported the concept of slavery and felt slave owners should be allowed to serve as missionaries. As this debate intensified, the Baptists from the South met at the First Baptist Church of Augusta, Georgia, in May 1845 and founded what was to become the Southern Baptist Convention. Those in the North proclaimed their independence from those in the South and formed their own convention. The growth of the constituency of the Southern Baptist Convention between 1845 and 1891 was substantial. From 365,346 members and 4,395 churches in 1845, the membership increased to 1,282,220 members and 16,654 churches in 1891. Scores of new ministries were undertaken by the convention, and a developing denominationalizing gave the promise of effective cooperation through the years ahead.

By 1921 their growing missionary force was faced with many financial problems; thus it was determined that the churches would combine their offerings for both home and foreign missions and for the different works of the convention. They saw a need for one system for receiving and dispersing money; thus the "Cooperative Program" was formed. This move had a lasting effect on the convention and worked as the glue that has kept the convention together. It also put both their home missions and foreign missions programs on a much firmer financial basis and allowed for the founding of new SBC theological seminaries.

From the beginning, there were many minor controversies, but the convention remained together. One major controversy, however, took place between 1970 and 2000. This intense theological struggle also led to a fight to control the convention's various entities, including the semi-

naires. The results of the struggle were that there was a strong swing back to a much more conservative theological position. Some churches left the convention during this time, and one larger group of churches joined together, calling themselves the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and completely disassociating themselves from the SBC. The loss of these churches is considered by some as the reason for the decline of the SBC in the latter part of the twentieth century.

Reasons for Past Growth:

From its beginning, the SBC has had remarkable growth. The question must be asked, “Why did this occur?” The answer needs to look at structure, theology, and activities. Following are some of those reasons for growth between 1845 and 2000.

Church Structure:

First, the Baptists have always had a very democratic form of government. The Southern Baptist Convention is made up of State Conventions, which in turn are made up of Associations, which in turn are made up of churches. A person or a church can belong to one or more of these entities that define the SBC. Neither the SBC nor the State Conventions have control over the workings of the local church. In the past, this independence gave great autonomy to the average church member and attracted many to become Baptists. The average lay person was empowered to be more involved in the growth of the church. The pastors of the churches are called by God but ordained by the local church. It is recommended that they have a good solid theological education, but advanced schooling is not considered as important as a call from God. The pastors from Southern Baptist churches are much closer to the people than those in the more liturgical Christian churches.

Theology:

A second reason for growth has to do with their strong conversion theology. Various theories have been expressed as to where they got the name Baptist. One theory is that it came from the term “Ana-Baptists.” This group arose during the Reformation in Europe and were so named because they “baptized again,” practicing baptism on adults who proclaimed a personal belief in Jesus Christ as savior. Later the prefix of ‘Ana’ was dropped, and they became known as Baptists. Even the name has

given proof that the Baptists were very much in favor of adults and older children deciding to become Christians. This theology has been very important in their growth.

Personal Evangelism:

Along with their theological concept of conversion came their zeal for personal evangelism. They preached that it was the duty for every member of the church to be involved in witnessing to the lost and bringing them to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. It was the duty of the clergy to see the church grow, but sharing their faith was also a very important part of the life of every believer. In the early days, churches held period “revival meetings,” usually with a visiting evangelist. Many times, these were held in tents with sawdust floors; thus the expression the sawdust trail came into being. Later, when the churches were better off, the concept of a church-wide revival to be held twice a year was retained, often leading to more growth.

Church Planting:

Because the local church was important for the growth of the SBC, they desired to begin new churches where they saw a need. In fact, in the 1950s it was said that a part of the strategy of Southern Baptists was to have a local church within walking distance of every person living in the United States. In trying to fulfill this dream, Southern Baptists became very adept at starting (sometimes referred to as planting) new churches. These efforts were carried out in both urban and rural areas of the United States. Today, they claim to have more than 54,000 churches. One of the areas of growth in Southern Baptist life since the turn of the century has been the planting of new churches. The number of new churches in the convention continues to grow.

Missions:

Not only was evangelism a driving force in the minds and hearts of Southern Baptists, but also their emphasis on missions played a very important role in their success. From the very beginnings of the SBC, which was founded because slave owners wanted to be missionaries, missions have been on the central stage. Some have even argued that at the beginning, the SBC was more of a mission-sending agency than a convention of

churches. From its beginning, international missions were emphasized and supported, and home missions were soon deemed important enough that they established their own home mission board. It has been said that from its inception, the phrase “Every Baptist a Missionary” has defined what the leaders of the SBC felt was the most important task of the church. This missionary zeal was so ingrained into the life of every church that it could not help but lead to the growth of missions both overseas and at home. In considering the growth of the SBC, it should be remembered that Southern Baptists have restricted their membership to churches in the USA and Canada. When missionaries are sent to other countries, they are not involved in building SBC churches; instead, they help in the creation of a Union of Churches for their own country. At the present, all missionary work done by the SBC is confined to the supervision of two boards, the International Mission Board, which is located in Richmond, Virginia, and the Home Mission Board, with its headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia.

The Sunday School:

In the early years, Christian education was generally done in a rather sporadic way, with the preaching of the Word and the simple reading of the Bible being the most accepted methods. Since books were not always available, especially in the frontier churches, religious education was done by the pastor when he was around. In 1920, Southern Baptists, under the leadership of Arthur Flake, developed the age-graded Sunday school program, which allowed for a standardized system of training. The Sunday School Board was created to provide the necessary literature so that all in the church could receive a mature and solid education. Flake became well known for this five-step formula for how a Sunday school and a church can grow: (1) know the possibilities, (2) enlarge the organization, (3) provide the space, (4) enlist and train the workers, and (5) go after the people.

Many attribute the growth of the SBC in the twentieth century to an excellent Sunday school program. By the later part of the century, however, the Sunday school had become less and less attractive and was often replaced, especially for adults, by the house based small group movement.

Evening Services:

As the emphasis on the Sunday school was replaced in the later years, so was the evening service, another important part of Southern Baptist life in the earlier years. Most SBC churches would have four meetings on a Sunday. Sunday school generally started about 9:30 a.m. and was followed by the morning worship service at 11:00. The sermon would generally be a teaching sermon for the congregation. In the first half of the century, the afternoon was set aside for witnessing and visitation. Then in the evening, the church would hold what they called Training Union, followed by the more evangelistic evening service. Training Union was also age-graded, so all members in the church had an opportunity to attend. It was designed to help the members become more evangelistic and to teach them how to speak in public. When my wife Sally was in high school, she took a course in public speaking, and after her first presentation, the teacher asked her if she was a Southern Baptist. Her positive reply was followed by the teacher's remark that all Baptist students had learned how to speak in public because of Training Union. By the start of the twenty-first century, most SBC churches had done away with both Training Union and the evening services, thus in many ways cutting off a very important arm of the church's evangelism ministry.

Seminary Education:

Understandably, Southern Baptists in their early years needed to rely mostly on uneducated lay preachers who felt a divine call to preach but did not always have the necessary skills. Their Holy Spirit power and their enthusiasm carried them to new heights in leadership, but it became apparent as the level of education increased in most of America that it was necessary to give the pastors and church workers a better foundation. In 1878, the first Southern Baptist seminary was founded. The Southern Baptist Seminary, located in Louisville, Kentucky, began to give a quality education to all who desired to work in the church, including pastors, education directors, music directors, and missionaries. In the following years, five more seminaries were founded in different parts on the country, stretching from North Carolina to California. These six seminaries have consistently provided a very high standard of theological education, and the number of students who attend them remains high. Dr. Cal Guy of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary liked to describe the structure of Southern Baptists as being like a pyramid. The

foundation was the churches. On this base, other church organizations such as the boards and local organizations were established, but the seminaries formed the apex. This structure has served the SBC well over the years and has helped to add to its growth.

The Homogeneous Unit Principle:⁹

Donald A. McGavran of Fuller Theological Seminary defines the homogeneous unit: “The homogeneous unit is simply a section of society in which all the members have some Characteristic in common.”¹⁰ This commonality could be country of origin, race, or even occupation. Up until about 1950, in the South there was segregation. Because very little emphasis was placed on immigration at that time, it was accepted that all were invited to attend the church if they were white and could adapt to the church’s systems. This worked well except that segregation became a blot on the history of the SBC. This changed for two reasons: (1) the human rights movement in the mid-1950s urged all institutions, including the churches, to become integrated, and (2) the increasing numbers of immigrants from other countries who had come from different cultures. Americans liked to say that their country was one large melting pot, but this was not the case, and the church needed to find a solution to this new environment.

There were two major solutions to the problem. One that was generally followed by the churches of the World Council of Churches was the opinion that all races and peoples should come and be a part of the Church. There should not be any structural barriers. In some ways, this idea worked well. The second method was to follow the homogeneous unit concept, which meant recognizing the differences and the needs of people to worship in their own way and in their own language. The Southern Baptists pushed the second option. This choice did not mean that every church was not open to any who wanted to attend and be a member, but it did mean that an emphasis was placed on the establishment of homogenous unit churches so that all could worship in a place where they felt comfortable.

With the passing of time, both methods proved to be acceptable, but the Baptist method seemed to bring about much more growth. Language

⁹ Dr. Cal Guy was the long-time professor of missions at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. This information was taken from a private discussion with Dr. Guy.

¹⁰ McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*, 69.

churches were formed in many cities, and Black churches continued to meet and grow. In later years, many Black churches joined the SBC but retained their cultural identity. In fact, many missiologists feel that the decline of the SBC in the modern times would be much greater if it was not for the growth of the ethnic churches. In California alone, on a given Sunday the Gospel is being preached in Southern Baptist churches in 71 languages. For many years, the largest SBC Church in California was the First Chinese Baptist Church of Los Angeles.¹¹

The Growth and Decline of the SBC:

As already mentioned, the SBC experienced constant growth in its earlier years but in 2006 the Convention reported for the first time a decline in membership. This decline has been constant up to 2016.

A partial list of the total membership in the SBC is given below:¹²

Date	Members
1845	350,000
1875	1,260,000
1905	1,900,000
1920	3,150,000
1950	7,080,000
1980	15,700,000
2005	16,600,000
2006	16,306,246
2010	16,135,044
2013	15,735,640
2016	15,216,978

The decline may be even more pronounced than the numbers indicate due to several reasons. First, many churches do not clean their member-

¹¹ I gathered this information while working as a Professor of Missions at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in California.

¹² Wikipedia, Southern Baptist Convention, accessed 12 February, 2018, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Southern_Baptist_Convention&oldid=825297867, 8.

ship lists, so they retain names of persons who are no longer active or have moved to another church. Another is that in the last twenty years, some churches have left the convention and affiliated with other conventions, such as the Cooperative Baptists. A new movement calls for Baptist churches to be dually aligned, which means that people can be members of two conventions at the same time.

Similarly, the decline in the number of Southern Baptists can also be seen in the effects on one bedrock issue for them. In 2014 a new president of the International Mission Board was appointed. At that time, the number of international (foreign) missionaries had reached over 5,000. A short time later, a report in the Baptist press made the following statement: “Voluntary resignation and retirement incentives were offered beginning in 2015 and 1,132 missionaries and staff accepted, bringing the number of missionaries under 4,000 for the first time since 1993 according to SBC Annual Reports. As of Dec. 31, 2017, the IMB reported 3,562 overseas missionaries.”¹³ Other areas of Southern Baptist life have also begun to decline. As stated before, an important factor in the growth (or lack of decline) is the resurgence of ethnic churches all over the country. Without the growth of these churches, the decline would be much more noticeable.

Understanding Growth and Decline:

In studying the growth and decline of churches and movements over a long period of time, I have determined that a church (or a denomination) goes through seven stages: (1) vision, (2) formation, (3) gathering, (4) apex, (5) nostalgia, (6) polarization, and (7) death. It appears that the SBC is now going through the fifth stage in this process.¹⁴

In the past, Southern Baptists were leaders in personal evangelism, Christian discipleship, and church planting. In comparing these efforts to the Micro, Meta, and Mega scale, it is apparent that they have concentrated on methods that fall into the Micro and Meta areas. Their success at this level is practically without question. They have also been the prime developers of programs and methods in education that can help all to better prepare themselves for service in these areas. The existence of LifeWay Christian Resources (formerly the Baptist Sunday School Board)

¹³ www.pbnews.net/50350/david-plat-to-transition-out-of-ilmb-presidency, accessed February 28, 2018, 3.

¹⁴ Material taken from a lecture by Ralph Winters at Fuller Theological Seminary in the fall of 1978.

has guaranteed the continued flow of excellent programs and materials for discipleship and growth. Up until recently, this plan proved itself to have a positive effect that led to growth.

What has recently happened that led the SBC to a state of decline? The question must be asked to determine if the tried and proven methods of the past are still usable in today's world. It seems that a contemporary means of going forward would be to not only study past methods, but also to see what is being done by others who are successful in our complex world. A group of Southern Baptist leaders were recently called together to discuss the decline of the Convention; however, the paper they presented strongly advocated an even greater emphasis on evangelism, discipleship, and church planting, showing that they still believe that the old methods are the right ones for the future.

At one meeting of mission's professors from the six seminaries, representatives from the North American Mission Board made a presentation on their proposed plan for growth in the future. The plan was well laid out, and it was apparent that much thought had gone into the details. It was a five-year plan with a special emphasis for each year: prayer, preparation, evangelism, discipleship, and church planting. One of the professors stated that this plan was no different from the plan used by the Southern Baptists in 1954 that was named "A Million More in 54." That plan worked for that time, but to revive it will not really solve the problems now being faced by the denomination. After the meeting, the professors were informed that NAMB had dropped their proposed plan.

Many learned individuals have attempted to give reasons for the decline. Allow me to offer for discussion the fact that the decline can be traced to four reasons. The first is the declining birth rate among Southern Baptists. In 1960, the birth rate in the United States was 3.7 per couple, and by 2014 it had fallen to 1.9. A similar pattern is happening in Germany and other European countries. It has been stated that when the birth rate falls below 2.1 children per couple, the country or group is in danger of decline as a people. Falling beneath the birth rate of 2.1 means that with time, their identity will be slowly dissipated, as will their numbers in the population. A recent Pew study found that Southern Baptists are aging, with the median age rising from 49 in 2007 to 54 in 2014. Members of Southern Baptist churches have fewer babies coming and elderly persons are dying; furthermore, the churches are also losing their young people. One recent study in the USA reported by Thom Rainer determined that 70 percent of church-going young people drop out of evangelical churches between the ages of 18 and 22, which is the age when many are studying in the university. The study also stated that in the beginning

of college, the number of Southern Baptist students who attended church was 78 percent, and by the end their junior year in college, the number of students who attended church was down to 25.4 percent.¹⁵

A second fact needs to be considered. Many published programs are being produced, but there is a lack of both good delivery systems and continuity of use. As an evangelism professor, I know of thirty different programs for personal evangelism, each one being good and solid, but now few of them are being used in the Church. We throw away the old programs and create new ones that seldom get past a few leaders and actually get into the hands of Baptist laypeople who can effectively use them. A good example of this is MasterLife, an outstanding program on discipleship introduced in the early 1980s. In the beginning, no one could buy the materials unless they had attended a workshop or taken the course itself. MasterLife had great success, but later it was determined that the program could be put into another format and sold in bookstores to anyone who wanted to purchase it. Today, MasterLife is used by only a few while LifeWay has come out with new programs of discipleship.¹⁶ The old program could easily have been used by the many millions who never had the opportunity of using it, but now it lies upon the trash heap of tired, old programs. America seems to be plagued by the “Hula-Hoop” mentality that states that whatever new comes is better than the old. New thinking might include more emphasis on delivery systems and less on the creation of new programs. This has been one of the strengths of the Jehovah’s Witnesses.

Third, SBC leadership continues to rely on the old dependable big three methods: evangelism, discipleship, and church planting. There are new methods and new ways of doing better what we have done in the past, but now is the time for Southern Baptists to break out and study other groups that are growing and to be open to using more modern methods, such as the Internet. It should be noted that the SBC has delegated all domestic mission programs to the North American Mission Board, and all overseas programs must be approved by the International Mission Board. These two Boards have an amazing record of success, but in some cases, they have also become a bottleneck for new and creative

¹⁵ Thomas Rainer and Sam S. Rainer, *Essential Church? Reclaiming a Generation of Dropouts* (Nashville: B and H Publishing, 2008), 31.

¹⁶ From 1983 to 1995, the author was able to promote Masterlife Discipleship training in 22 countries and in 19 languages to over 28,000 persons, mostly in Europe and Middle East. Today this material is no longer available in most of the over fifty languages in which it was at one time translated and available.

ideas. Southern Baptist individuals and churches have developed several great new projects, but most have failed to gain support of the mission boards. The adage at work here says, “We will reject this idea because we did not originate it.” Good examples are some of the excellent new Christian movies being produced by churches and individuals. Southern Baptists embraced these new productions once they were a success, but they were not a part of a strategy that brought them to life. According to the present leadership, any new strategy envisioned by the SBC must have evangelism, discipleship, and church planting as the main content of their programs, but new and better delivery systems need to be considered and adopted.

A fourth aspect could be said to be the SBC’s lack of the development of Mega strategy. True, they are among the best at the Micro and Meta levels, but they have little that could be called a Mega Strategy. Other groups who are growing are using new tools, such as the Internet, very effectively. Others are also targeting university students for missions, and some are going to large businesses and influencing their board members to support their cause so that the businesses finance their projects. There are some advantages to looking at others who are attempting to win the world to their cause and learning not only what they are doing but also better ways to do them to be more effective.

Concerning the news that the SBC is in decline, Ed Setzer, a Southern Baptist researcher, wrote in a blog, “It is not too late to make changes that will reverse it—and to do so together.” It would be wrong for Southern Baptists to give up on evangelism, discipleship, and church planting, but at the same time, if they are to enter again into a growth cycle, they will need to do what the old proverb says and “think outside of the box.”

CHAPTER 3

Evangelism with Feeling

A Look at The Strategy of the Assemblies of God

*“And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit
and spoke the word of God boldly”
Acts 4:31 (NIV)*

Introduction:

Several years ago, I was having a conversation with a leader of the Assemblies of God (AG), and he asked me a question: “Why is it that the Southern Baptists have approximately 16 million members in the USA and only about 4 million overseas while the Assemblies have approximately 4 million in the USA and 16 million overseas.” It was not his intent to be controversial but to try to understand the reasons for growth for his church and that of the Southern Baptists. I questioned his statistics, but the proportions were somewhat accurate. The latest statistics show that his numbers for the USA were accurate while the number of members of the Baptist World Alliance is 35 million. The numbers of adherents to the World-Wide Assemblies of God is reported to be over 67 million. To answer his question is rather complex, but the Charismatic -Pentecostal branch of Christianity has been seeing phenomenal growth in the Southern Hemisphere. It is a rarity for a young denomination like the AGs to have their growth and population tilted so greatly towards the international scene. This growth has been concentrated south of the equator, specifically in Africa, Latin America, and parts of Asia. They have experienced limited success in the Middle East, parts of Asia, Europe, and the United States. Their highest concentrations of growth are occurring mostly in places that have not felt the direct effect of modernity and the enlightenment.

History:

The origin of the Assemblies of God is rooted in the Pentecostal movement, which began in the early years of the twentieth century. Because of strong emphasis on the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which led to some emotional excesses, this revival and the new charismatic churches that were founded were generally not accepted by the established churches of the day. Some say that the birthplace of the charismatic movement was in Los Angeles at the Azusa Street Mission and its revival in 1906. Whenever it started, it is certain that the Pentecostal movement is making great gains currently; close to one third of all Christians in the world claim to be charismatic.

In April of 1914, approximately 300 preachers and laymen gathered for a meeting in Hot Springs, Arkansas. Those who participated came from 20 states and several foreign countries. From this gathering, a new organization was incorporated; it was given the name “The General Council of the Assemblies of God in the United States of America.” Within the next forty years, other councils were founded in countries such as Canada, Great Britain, South Africa, and Australia. Today the Assemblies are one of the largest denominations of the Pentecostal movement. In 2014, they reported a membership of 3,192,112 members in the United States, but they relate to 67,992,330 worldwide adherents.¹⁷

Outreach to the Poor:

Some have accused the AGs of only reaching out to the lower classes while neglecting the higher social and economic classes. Though some may see this in a negative light, it must be remembered that the poor make up the masses in the southern parts of this world, thus their success. Another criticism of them lies in what some describe as their chaotic worship services. Many see their services as being emotion driven, but their success with the poor speaks for itself. It is doubtful that some strategists sat down and targeted the poor in many of these countries; rather, their missionaries just went to the masses and proclaimed a simple, evangelistic message that resonated with the needy who heard it.

One concept that originated at Fuller Seminary in the last century was the idea of “Redemption and Lift.” It states that the social stratum that is more open to the gospel is lower income people. Because the poor have

¹⁷ Assemblies of God World Missions Vital Stats, 12/31/2015, <http://agwm.com/assets/agwmvitalstats.pdf>.

few prospects of social and economic advancement, they are open to the message of love and power in the name of Jesus Christ. Thus, many churches have, in their first years, concentrated on where they had the best response—with the poor. This was true with the Methodists and the Baptists in their earlier years. In theory, after a person accepts Christ, his or her life is so changed that now he or she no longer spends money on wine, women, and fun. He or she now lives a changed life; this change leads to financial prosperity, which in turns puts the person in a higher social stratum. This means that denominations tend to first reach the poor but later their members become more affluent. When the Methodists rose in social status, in came the Baptists, and when they advanced upward, in came the Pentecostals. Now that they are lifting many of their members from poverty, the question is, who will come in to reach the down and out of our present society?

Understanding their Strategy:

In trying to understand the strategy of a large denomination, it must be seen that in a short study much must be excluded. This is true with the Assemblies. They have many parts to their outreach and mission work. The main reason for this is because they are very oriented towards reaching the lost of the world. It is impossible to name all the various suborganization that have originated within the church.

The strategy for AG missionary expansion is both internal and external. The main reason for their growth is their “reliance on the work of the Holy Spirit.” It is true that they emphasize the Holy Spirit more than most denominations, but there are still other reasons for their growth. A central document of importance is the Assemblies of God Vision 2000 proclamation. This document laid out the vision for future growth and expansion as a fellowship for their association of churches. One key phase in a section outlining the perspective of the AGs on evangelism states, “Every member and every ministry of their Fellowship must be compelled by the lostness of humanity.” This phase, as well as others later in the document that echo similar sentiment, communicates that the impetus for world evangelism is the “lostness” of people.¹⁸

The current expansion strategy of the AGs, as they describe it, includes four unique parts: reaching, planting, training, and touching. Their work on domestic and foreign soil includes all four of these pieces,

¹⁸ Assemblies of God Homepage, “Assembles of God Mission and Vision,” accessed 11 November 2006, <http://ag.org/top/about/mission.vision.clim>.

with each serving as a broad description for a wide array of activities. They have developed a very good education by distance course called the International Correspondence Course (ICI) that has been very successful in giving grassroots Christians the necessary biblical training they need to work in the church.¹⁹

They define the term reaching as finding ways to be creative and expressive with relation to telling the story of Christ Jesus. This term is somewhat limited to speaking about the process of conversion and evangelism.

Reaching is a synonym for taking the Gospel to the lost. For both Charismatics and Evangelicals, there is great concern for the lostness of the world. Jesus said to the disciples that they should take the message first to Jerusalem, then to Judea, then to Samaria, and last to the whole world, and now the church is attempting to be obedient to this work of the Savior. Reaching is the carrying out of the Great Commission.

Planting refers to the process of establishing and building churches all around the world and can be equated to the term of "Church Starting." The Assemblies have been able to start numerous new churches all over the world; thus this has been a plus in their work.

The term training is used to describe discipleship of the new converts to become a part of the churches planted in their area and to move them to tell others about their new life in Jesus Christ.

The last of the four parts is touching. This term communicates the value of "compassion ministries," which is mentioned in the early parts of the Vision 2000 plan.

In studying their literature, it is apparent that they put great value on the Micro and Meta levels of strategy while not addressing the Mega level in any realistic, practical manner, again returning to where they are having success. The Assemblies are very successful in what has been described as the developing countries of the world, where people place a high value on personal relationships and have a reputation for being more emotional. The Pentecostals, with their heartfelt approach, have been successful while others who take a more cerebral approach, such as the Baptists, have lagged in growth.

In the Northern Hemisphere there is little difference between the strategy of the Baptists and the Assemblies. Their success in the Southern Hemisphere is undeniable even if they use only Micro and Meta methods while their growth in the Western world remains low. It is here that the leaders of their churches must begin to look at the possibility of develop-

¹⁹ Ibid.

ing a Mega strategy that uses new forms of thinking as well as new technologies in proclamation.

Church Growth Implications:

In Church Growth Theory there are three ways that a local church grows:

- 1) Transfer growth – This growth happens when people transfer their membership from one church to another. They are already Christians but now desire to join another church because they have moved or because they want to change churches.
- 2) Biological growth – When a family grows by having children, these children are then added to the membership rolls of the church. This is natural, but it does form one of the main reasons that some churches grow.
- 3) Conversion growth—As a person decides to become a Christian, he or she is baptized or just joins a church as a new believer. Many believe this is the best way to measure if a church or a denomination is really growing. Pastors sometimes will brag about their rapid growth while almost all of the growth is either transfer or biological growth. Only conversion growth adds souls to the Kingdom.

It is possible that more than 80 percent of growth registered by Protestant churches is biological or transfer growth. If this is true, then the church is in bad shape as an evangelistic enterprise.

Evangelical churches generally emphasize the task of evangelism since it is part of their DNA. Charismatics are also very strong in the winning of persons to Christ. The AGs in the USA have put a strong emphasis on reaching the lost for Christ, but a problem had occurred in the last twenty years. The number of converts being brought into the churches is decreasing. Fewer persons are being won. At the same time, there has been an increase in the planting of new churches, but this apparent new tool for growth is being negated by an increase in church closings.

By the 1990s, the slowdown in the growth of the AGs became a point of concern; thus they created a new emphasis in growth called the Decade of Harvest. The leaders realized that they were a victim of what they called “routinization.” Comfort and prosperity began to take the place of going out to reach the lost. C. S. Lewis mentioned in one of his books that “the society had gone through the hard and difficult years of prosperity.” The AGs seem to have fallen into this rather deep well.

The Decade of Harvest saw 2,940 new churches planted, but when the number of churches that had been closed (2,077) was subtracted, the net positive change was just over half of what the denomination had experienced in the 1980s. One amazing factor in their growth is that in the last twenty years, they have a constant or slightly decreasing number of baptisms, but the number of adherents is remaining constant or even in some years decreasing. It appears that not even one half of the new converts are remaining in their churches.²⁰

Future Growth Possibilities:

The Decade of Harvest helped the Assemblies of God to once again see growth as a real need for its churches; however, the leaders seemed to make the same mistake as the Southern Baptists and other large evangelical denominations. They committed two mistakes: (1) attempting to live the past and (2) emphasizing only a few aspects of growth without realizing that the world has changed and that new methods and emphases need to be explored.²¹

In considering the “Living in the Past” syndrome, a look at the vocabulary they use can help us to better realize what they are really saying. In a report made to the leaders talking about possible growth, the terms used seemed to glorify yesterday. The terms were *Re-tool*, *Re-Focus*, and *Re-New*. The prefix “re” means to look at the past and to revisit it and make those things that were then successful, successful once again. When a dynamic growing movement slows down, the leaders tend to look backwards. In the parabolic curve of the life of an organization, the fifth point, which is on the downturn of the decline, is nostalgia. Organizations reach this point when they look back at the good times of the past and attempt to renew the organization by doing what they did then. In the case of the AGs, much of their growth came from two basic emphases: church planting and evangelism. Thus, now the churches are once again saying that these tools must be the future as well. There is no doubt but that these two aspects of reaching out are important, but what about newer methods that can incorporate both positives of church growth.

The new age that began with the turn of the century gives strategic thinkers new paths for new thoughts. The “net-generation” has now taken over. Young people are no longer interested in the churches of the

²⁰ Rich Tatum, *Examining Assemblies of God Statistics on Growth* (Self-published January 3, 2006), 2.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 3.

past. The church needs new leadership. This leadership needs to be a combination of the old and the young. Older persons are needed to give guidance to all plans made and to keep some aspects of the past, but the young are also essential since they have technical knowhow and are up on the changes being made in modern society.

A good example is the Mormon church. Their method of going from door to door was successful in the past with each young missionary averaging a total of 4 converts during his two years of service. They have, however, shifted to a “now generation” movement that has their missionaries sitting behind a computer; their new methods have a success rate of 30 converts in the same period.

Another example to look at is the printing ministry. We want to get the Bible into the hands of those folk whom we have targeted for evangelism. One of my co-workers came to me and wanted to look at my newly purchased I-phone. He asked me if I had the Bible on my phone. I said no. He asked if he could have it for a couple of hours. When he returned, he said, “The Bible is now on your phone.” I asked, “Which translation?” He answered that I now have twenty translations and the Bible in ten languages.

It is one thing to speak of the growth of the AGs in the USA, but we must also look at what is happening on the international scene. Much of the great explosion of the Christian Church in developing work has charismatic roots. The churches seem to be expanding at a remarkable rate, but the future could bring about a slowdown, as happened in the West. Today the West could become a place for experimentation. How are we able to win people in the secular world? If we can solve this issue, the answer may possibly become a blueprint for the developing world in the future. At this time, we should not slow the growth of the church in the third world, but we need to prepare the global church for the new world.

There is little doubt that the Assemblies of God have been truly blessed by the Holy Spirit. Their growth over the last 120 years is phenomenal, but now their people are faced with new challenges. Let us hope that they can combine this power of the Holy Spirit with the tools of the future.

Conclusion:

In this chapter, the growth strategies of the Assemblies of God ministries have been discussed, from the founding of the church to its present-day status. As evidenced by the information provided, the Assemblies of God is one of the leading among the growing Pentecostal denominations in

the USA and around the world. The discussion identifies different strategies of congregational growth, with evangelistic and biological growth being identified as the main reasons for their growth.

The charismatics did not have a Mega strategy back in the 1900s, but they were highly successful. In 1910 Christians made up 34.8 percent of the 1.8 billion people on earth. At the same time, the charismatics made up only 0.07 percent. By 2010, the world had a 6.9 billion population. Christians comprised 32.9 percent of that number while the charismatics had reached 8.5 percent. The percentage of Christians in the world is declining slowly, but the number of people in churches like the Assemblies of God and other Pentecostals continues to grow.²²

The Assemblies of God are to be congratulated for their far-reaching success. Their openness to innovations and adaption to contemporary changes helped them in their success in the past, but now they are facing even greater changes in the societies of the world. Their charismatic pursuit and the affinity to the congregation has allowed their mission work to further expand; however, their missionary efforts remain on the Micro and Meta levels of strategy planning with no Mega plans in place. Nevertheless, their contributions to the Christian mission are historical, and other churches should be able to take note of their mission strategies and use them as models as they develop their own.

²² Todd M. Johnson et al, "Christianity 2017: Five Hundred Years of Protestant Christianity," *International Bulletin of Mission Research* 41, no.1 (2016): 9.

CHAPTER 4

Hidden in Plain Sight

A Look at the Strategy of the Mormons

*“He sent them out two by two and gave them authority over evil spirits”
Mark 6:7 (NIV)*

Introduction:

I first began my study of the Mormons in the late 1950s after I attended one of their churches. Even at that time I was impressed with their mission program and their success in growth. I viewed them as a sect and could not understand why and how they could grow. During my early research, I obtained the book *Hidden in Plain Sight*. The book began by saying that few people knew about the strategy for growth of the Mormon church, not because they did their work completely in silence but because few took the opportunity of studying what they were doing, thus the title of the book. This short book gave me insights into the well-planned and thought out strategy that had been developed by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, headquartered in Salt Lake City, Utah.

As I read the book, I was amazed as to how well their plan was developed. At that time, I read the statement that they wanted to eventually influence the government of the United States to such a degree that they could use it in their dream of world evangelization. Their plan was to influence the government for their own ends. One statement that I remember from the book was that by the year A.D 2000, there would be a Mormon president of the United States. They have failed in that goal; however, they came close in 2012 when Mitt Romney, a Mormon, ran for president. Although I had not discovered the concept of Mega missions at that time, I saw that they had a definite Mega strategy to greatly influence the government of the United States.

A recent article in the Baptist Press mentioned that the Mormon Church has an office in Washington that places people from their church in government offices. It reported that they now have 28,000 Mormons

working in government agencies in Washington D.C. alone and that many agents for both the FBI and CIA come from the LDS church. Some have estimated that over one-fourth of those in each agency is Mormon, but accurate figures as to the religious affiliation of their agents is difficult to obtain. They have a Mega strategy in place, one that is functioning well; thus they are experiencing rapid growth worldwide.

History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints:

The history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS Church) is typically divided into three broad time periods: the early history, which took place during the lifetime of Joseph Smith, the founder of the Church; a “pioneer era” under the leadership of Brigham Young and his nineteenth-century successors; and a modern era that began around the turn of the twentieth century as the practice of polygamy was discontinued.

The beginning of the church can be traced to western New York State, where Smith was raised and gained a small following in the late 1820s. During this time, he claimed to have found a set of “golden plates” that had been buried by one of the remaining members of the ten lost tribes of Israel who had migrated to that area. The author of what was written on the plates, who eventually appeared to Joseph as an angel, was Moroni, thus the name of the church. On April 6, 1830, Smith organized his religion’s first legal church entity, the Church of Christ. The church rapidly gained a following of people who viewed Smith as a prophet. Because of persecution, the main body of the church moved first to Kirtland, Ohio, and then to Missouri in 1838. At that time, there occurred what is now called the Mormon War; the conflict between Smith’s followers and other Missouri settlers resulted in their being forced to leave Missouri. Smith and his followers then moved to Illinois, where they built the city of Nauvoo. Violence followed them, however, and it was there that Smith was killed. A succession crisis then took place, and a split occurred. The larger group followed Brigham Young.

There were continued difficulties and persecution in Illinois, so Young and his followers fled from Nauvoo in 1846 and made their way to the Great Salt Lake Valley in Utah. It was the intention of the early pioneers to form a separate state that was to be called Deseret. During this period, the Mormons formed small colonies that spread from Canada to Mexico and even some to European countries such as Switzerland. One of the early teachings of the Church was the acceptance of polygamy. By 1857, tensions had again escalated between Mormons and others who had set-

tled in the Salt Lake area, largely because of church teachings on polygamy and their theocratic form of church government. Another set of Mormon Wars ensued from 1857 to 1858, and they led to the invasion of the U.S. Army into Utah. Peace was reached when Young agreed to step down from power and be replaced by a non-Mormon governor, Alfred Cummings. The church continued to practice polygamy until 1890 when the church stopped performing official polygamous marriages. During this time, Utah became a state of the United States, and today the church seeks to actively distance itself from those who still support polygamy.

During the twentieth century, the Mormon Church grew substantially and became international in its outreach. The church sought to become engaged with mainstream American culture and emphasized the needs for a strong family life. During this time, the church made some changes, always stating that such changes were due to direct revelation from God. One such change included the ordination of black men, something forbidden in the early days. The church also changed some of its temple procedures and began to build many temples in different cities, a departure from the idea of having only the one temple in Salt Lake City.

The Mormon Success:

Over the last 150 years, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints has grown from a small insignificant sect in the desert of the United States to one of the most influential religious movements in the world. When a study is made of their theology and their beginnings, it seems unimaginable that this could happen; thus, the question must be asked— “How did this happen?” I am convinced that it was not their theology or that the Spirit of God led them, but rather it was that they developed a better Mega strategy, and over the years they have kept to their basic plan. It is true that they have made some small modifications to this strategy over time, but they have seldom deviated far from their original plans. Their basic plan is very simple: they use young male university students as their main missionary force.

In 1995 the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints (LSD) reported 9,024,569 members with 47,311 missionaries working in over 300 missions worldwide.²³ By 2015, their membership had grown to 15,372,337, with over 80,000 full time missionaries serving in 405 church missions throughout the world. In my discussion with their leadership, they claimed that they will have over 100,000 missionaries by the year

²³ Thomas S. Monson, “Welcome to Conference,” *Deseret News*, 6 October 2013.

2018.²⁴ This growth is phenomenal, and those who refuse to even look at what they are doing are sitting in a “universal fog” with their eyes closed.

The Mormons have a rather large and complicated strategy operating at all three levels, but this paper will be limited to looking more closely at their main missionary effort and its use of young university students to do the bulk of their missionary work. Their strategy has been remarkably successful; one reason the strategy has worked so well is that their training and discipleship of future members is outstanding. Let us look in depth into their plans to see why they have been so successful. At this point, the best approach is to take a closer look at nine different aspects of their work using students. At the end of this survey, a summation will attempt to put all they do into perspective in order that we can understand the whole and possibly duplicate at least some parts of what they are doing.

University Students as Missionaries:

I. Selection of Missionaries:

For many years the Mormons used male university students almost exclusively as their main missionary force. Only in the last twenty years have they begun to use older adults as well as young women on short-term duties. As I spoke with Dr. McGavran about the possibility of using university students as the main thrust for missionary work, he strongly suggested that this would not end up in success. I mentioned the Mormon plan to him, but he never gave me an answer. He did say that he felt university students were too preoccupied to be good missionaries.²⁵ The Mormons have proved him wrong. I had the opportunity of making a rare visit to their missionary training facility in Provo, Utah.²⁶ I asked them why they used university students. Their answer was very logical. First, they feel that young men between the ages of 18 and 22 are the most likely to be ready to do a two-year missionary duty. They mentioned that the U.S. military also recruits young people between those ages. Their reasoning is that before the age of 18 they are too immature and after the

²⁴ In 2000, I was invited to make a visit to the Missionary Training Center in Provo, Utah. Some of the information was given to me orally. I was not permitted to take notes.

²⁵ Interview with Donald McGavran during my 1972 study year at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California.

²⁶ This information was also gained during my visit to the Training Center.

age of 22 they are having children and are planning for a more stable existence. Between the ages of 18 and 22, however, they are ready for excitement and adventure. It is interesting to note that these are the same ages when most young people are in college. They also stated that if they took them between high school and college, many would not go to college after their missionary term or if they waited until after college, many would have a very difficult time going back into their normal lives after their missionary term. Based on these facts, the Mormons wait until the students have completed two years in college, and then they send them out for two years of service. All of them are expected to return to college after their service to complete their final two years; this move back into their educational program helps them reintegrate into their own culture. They stated that this plan has worked very well for them.

It is no longer only young men who do Mormon missionary service; a growing number of young women as well as retired older couples are now involved. The males can begin their work at the age of 18, but the girls must wait until they are 19. A 2007 report showed that 80% of their missionary force was young men, while 13% were young women and 7% were older retired couples. Also, in 2007, 30% of all Mormon men had served in a mission, but the percent for young men coming from what they describe as active LDS families climbed to between 80% and 90%.²⁷

Most parents from the secular West are reluctant to let their young people take a break from college, but the leadership of the LDS church has convinced their members that it is in their best interest. Another advantage of this plan is that when recruiters come to offer graduating college students good positions with leading companies, they are impressed that the Mormon senior has had international experience and is often fluent in another language. This reaction has been especially true when government agencies are looking for help. As a result, many Mormons work for the FBI and the CIA in America.

2. *Financing of Missionaries:*

Southern Baptists began a program for college graduates to serve for two years as missionaries overseas, but it recruited only about 200 a year. The reason for the low number was that the IMB paid all their expenses and there was a limit as to how many they could afford. In the Mormon system, the full support of the young people who are working as missionaries is paid by the young persons themselves, their families, or their local

²⁷ Wikipedia, Missionary (LSD Church), accessed April 30, 2015, 1.

stake. One of their ways of raising funds is that when a boy is born into a Mormon family, they immediately open a savings account for his missionary work. Then when friends or family want to give gifts to the young boy, instead of giving gifts that are often useless, they put money into his missionary account. This process is continued as the boy grows older. By the time he reaches the age for going as a missionary, he often has the funding for the two years. The Mormon denomination or the mission-sending agency does not pay for the expenses of the missionaries.

I have tried to discover how much it costs for a missionary to live. Of course, it varies depending on where they live, but the amount that needs to be paid is the same for all. It is approximately \$1000 per month or \$25,000 for the two-year period.²⁸

The missionaries live a very simple life. They do not eat out unless it has to do with their work. They ride bicycles that are provided for them or they walk. In some cases, they can take public transportation. Their meals are very simple, and they do not have televisions, radios, or the fine things of life. For two years they must concentrate on their mission and be willing to do without.

3. *Preparation:*

Close to most high schools and in all Mormon Church buildings, they have what they call seminaries. Their young people must attend these schools, which are held at times when they are free from their main schools. During this time, they are taught what could be considered as beginning courses on their beliefs as well as preparation for their missionary work. They cannot go as a missionary unless they have faithfully attended these seminary classes. While in college, they also must attend classes intended for their missionary work. During their sophomore year they make an application to go as a missionary. On the form they must give their background, including the courses completed at the seminaries. They also need the full backing of their local Bishop. A big day in the life of most Mormon families is when the invitation letters are sent out from the church to the young men. The letter, which is known as their "Call to Serve," tells them if they have been accepted to do missionary work or not. It also tells them the country where they will serve if they have been accepted. They make the necessary preparation, including the purchase of the designated clothing and gear. Then on a given day, they report to Provo for the sending out ceremony. The auditorium is filled

²⁸ Ibid., 3.

with the students and their families and friends. When their name is called, they go forward and through a door at the front. From that time on, they are not allowed to see or visit with families or friends. They are allowed only two telephone calls a year to their family during their time on the field, but they are encouraged to write a letter to their family every week. Their main purpose for the next two years is their mission.

4. Orientation:

Before Mormon missionaries go on the field, they have a two-month orientation, part of which is the same for all those going, but some of which is designed for those going internationally. Included in this orientation is a two-month extensive language learning class. The Mormons brag that their language school is the second best in the world, with only the language school for the U.S. military in California being better. After two months the students are not expected to be fluent in the language, but they do have a beginning knowledge of the language of the people they are going to serve. Included in the two-month orientation are courses on discipleship and evangelism.

5. Field Structure:

I made a study of the Mormon missionary program in Bonn, Germany, and I have been told that other parts of the world have similar structures. They have divided the city of Bonn up into 12 well-defined areas. Twenty-four missionaries are assigned to the city, which has two Mormon stakes; thus, each area has 12 missionaries assigned to each major section, all working under the leadership of the Bishop of the stake.

Since each of the twelve areas has two missionaries in it, one of them has been in the area for one year while the second person is new. The reason for this pattern is because the longer serving person has spent the previous year learning from an older missionary, both in the language and how to witness. With these two missionaries, the older one does most of the speaking and takes the lead in evangelism and discipleship while the younger person quietly learns. Also, when the two study together during private devotions, the older one takes the lead. When the year is finished, the older one goes home, having served for two years, while the younger one now takes the lead. If there are problems between the two during their time of serving together, the local Bishop is called in to solve the problems.

One of the greatest advantages of this structure is that there is a continuity of witness in the system. Let's look at this more closely. The older missionary has contact with some people and works with them for a year. When the older one goes home, these contacts are immediately taken up by the younger person, who has been with the older one for all the visits during the past year. This goes on and on over the years. I have been told that the missionaries now have computers and that they have every house and apartment in their area on the computer. The missionaries can look at any house in their area and see what type of contact they have had at that location. In this way, they can process their contacts with all in their area. Evangelicals have very little that can compare with this process.

6. Use of Short Term Missionaries:

I have stated that most Mormon missionary work is done by young, college-aged male students. They are, however, using girls more and more for the two-year terms, but more often females are used for short-term positions, such as for a summer. An example as to how the short-term worker fits into the structure and how they still have continuity of witness happened in Bonn. One young Baptist mother received a call from the Bishop. He explained that two young American university students were going to be in Bonn for the summer. Even though they could not speak good German, they would be willing to take care of the woman's two young children on Monday mornings for four hours while the mother did some of her chores and shopping. The mother was very reluctant to accept the offer, but the Bishop sent the two young girls to the home anyway. The mother was impressed with the two girls, who wore dresses and were very clean and well kept. The mother decided to try it. When she returned from her first morning out, the children were happy, the house had been cleaned, and lunch had been prepared. The girls said they would come again the next week. They did this for four weeks, and then, through a translator, the mother asked why they were helping her. The mother was told it was because of their church. The mother asked for more information about this church, and she was told that the girls did not have the necessary information to tell her what she wanted to know. They did, however, have two male friends who could come and give her the information she wanted. The short-term workers immediately gave the contact off to the two area missionaries, who would keep contact with the mother for the next two years. Even the short-term missionaries were a part of this well-planned concept of continuity of witness.

7. Emphasis in Evangelism and Discipleship:

Lyle Schaller, well-known missiologist, visited my Seminary, and during our discussions I asked him if he could predict which denomination would be the largest in California in twenty years. He answered that he was not sure, but he did say that he knew that the church that demanded the most of their members would grow to be the largest. He added that in the early 1900s, one fourth of all Californians was Methodist but now that denomination was quite small and getting smaller. If Schaller was right, then the Mormons will probably soon be the largest.²⁹

In looking at the daily schedule for the average missionary, one is impressed with the dedication to their job. Every day they hold to the same daily plan. They wake up at 6:30 and exercise for one half hour and then eat breakfast. After two hours of personal devotional studies as well as 30 minutes of language study, they go out on the street to do what they call proselytism. They take a break for lunch and return to their proselytizing for a total of nine and one-half hours in the day. Before they go to bed, they spend one hour in planning for the next day and in prayer. What they call proselytizing is made up of two elements: personal evangelism and discipleship.

8. International Contacts:

The Mormon missionary activity is in many ways a very large network of various means of making contacts and then following up with the expressed purpose of making converts. A good example of this is seen in their efforts during the Winter Olympics of 2008. When Salt Lake was given the Winter Olympics, many reporters feared that the church would use this occasion to try to make converts, and after the games were over, many said how pleased they were that no high-pressure evangelism had been done by the LDS church. It should be noted, however, that the church organized a vast army of young college girls to act as guides for tours that were made available for free for those who wanted to tour the impressive Mormon facilities, including the Temple and their Tabernacle. These girls were very careful not to try to pressure those they were leading, but they were ready to say why they were giving up their time to do this work. At the end of the tour, they would ask the tourists, many of whom were from outside the U.S., if they would like a free Book of Mor-

²⁹ Personal interview with Lyle Schaller in 1992 at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, California.

mon. If they said yes, then the girls got their address and sent it to the two Mormon missionaries who were responsible for the area where the tourists lived. The next step was that the two young men would hand deliver the Book of Mormon to those who had requested a copy. Their whole plan was very low-key, but it was also successful.

If any Mormon meets a person from another country, he or she can send that person's name and information to the church and it will be passed on to the missionaries in that area. They also use business contacts for missionary work. It is interesting to note that in Austria, the evangelicals tried for years to receive State recognition to exist while in the 1970s the Mormons received this recognition through both Mormon politicians and business contacts from the U.S.

As the LDS church expands rapidly in many countries of the world, their missionary force is becoming much more multinational. It is not only American young people who are required to serve for two years; all young people, regardless of their nationality, are expected to do their missionary work. In many cases, those from other countries will work in their own country or in their own language group, but they are increasingly being sent to other countries to work. During my time at the Missionary Training Center, I was told that English is now the second most common language of Mormonism since there are more Spanish speaking Mormons than English speaking ones.

9. Use of Technology:

In the last twenty years, the world has radically changed due to the great advances of technology. Those mission agencies that fail to understand and use the new technologies are going to be left behind. Most mission agencies have no strategy in place that capitalizes on the use of the Internet or even computers. In many ways the Mormon Church has led the way.

For many years the Mormon Church had strict rules on the use of the computers by missionaries. Because of their strict discipline, their missionaries were admonished to "avoid all forms of worldly entertainment." Today, they are not permitted to watch television, listen to the radio, watch or go to movies, or use the Internet except for their work. The exception allows them access to computers and the Internet to use social media for proselyting. Also, they can use their computers to keep track of all persons in their area so as to build up their contact base.

In Provo they now have missionaries whose work is composed of only the use of social media to reach converts. Of course, their media contact

is always passed on to those on the ground for face-to-face follow up. One study in the church revealed that door-to-door missionaries convert an average of 6 people during their 18 to 24-month service while online missionaries see about 30 converts in the same amount of time.³⁰

Using the Mormon Methods – The New Antioch:

After finishing my study of the strategies of the Mormon Church in 2005, I put together a program called The New Antioch with the intent of providing the Southern Baptists with an alternate way to do missions. The plan drew heavily on the Mormon strategy while incorporating it into a Southern Baptist culture. At that time, both the North American Mission Board, who was responsible for domestic missions, and the International Mission Board, who was responsible for intentional missions, had relatively new Executive Secretaries. Dr. Jerry Rankin was leading the IMB, and Dr. Bob Record was the head of the NAMB. They both allowed me to make a major presentation of my plan to them and to some of their leading strategists. Both said that they were open to new ideas and open to working together for the future. After I presented the plan, they took some time to consider the New Antioch. Later they informed me that they had rejected the plans. Their reason was simple. The plan was too radical, and it would interfere too much with what they were doing at that time. Both told me later that they would like to reconsider the New Antioch, but Dr. Record lost his position and several staffers who had been given the job of reevaluating the plan retired. The plan just died a natural death.

I also presented the plan at a seminar attended by the presidents of Baptist universities, specialists in discipleship training, and missionaries. Again, the plan was not totally accepted. Some of the reasons against the program were as follows:

- No long-time history, thus no finances
- No readiness to change our present-day methods
- Our young people are not ready to sacrifice
- Parents fearful that students will not return to their studies
- Leaders of Christian universities are fearful of losing students
- No other larger Christian body is ready to make the big jump
- Fear of being branded as Mormons

³⁰ Wikipedia, Missionary (LSD Church), 10.

- No appropriate literature to use on the field
- Untrained Field Personnel
- The plan is too radical.

The basic reason why it has not been accepted by evangelicals is the old “we did not originate it” problem.

Conclusion:

Two very important premises are covered in this chapter. The first one is that evangelical churches are not growing because they are losing their university students to secularism. The dropout rate of 18 to 22-year olds should be a major concern to every Christian leader. The second is that the best source of qualified missionary workers could be our 18 to 22-year olds. The young people of this generation want to be used and to make a difference in our world.

It is true that several successful evangelical, missionary para-church organizations are using young people effectively. These include Operation Mobilization, Youth with a Mission, and Young Life. Each has benefitted greatly in their work, but few, if any, have a program that is as sophisticated as that used by the Mormons.

In looking at these two ideas, we must look at other groups to find out who is successfully using this age group in missions and how they are doing it. My argument is that the one organization that is successful in using university students in missions is the Mormons; thus, we need to study how we too can incorporate some of their strategies into our plans so that we will not continue losing these students to the world but rather will win them to the job of presenting the Gospel to all nations. It may not be simple to solve the problem before us, but we as church leaders must begin to find ways to correct our present failures.

CHAPTER 5

A Strict Taskmaster

A Look at the Strategy of the Jehovah's Witnesses

*“You are my witnesses declares the Lord,
and my servants whom I have chosen”
Isaiah 43:10 (NIV)*

Introduction:

Jehovah's Witnesses, considered by most Christian denominations to be a Christian sect, have become a controversial religious group. Despite much opposition, the group continues to grow and claims to have adherents in over 230 countries and territories. Their worldwide membership increased from a mere 44,080 in 1928 to an extraordinary 6,035,564 in 2000, making the total international new growth of more than 5 percent a year. The most conservative estimates indicate that by the year 2020, this group will have 12,475,115 members worldwide. This remarkable growth and success means that this group has experienced great success in only 145 years.³¹

In studying their structure of the organization as well as their methods, I have been amazed to discover that they operate almost exclusively on the Micro and Meta levels. Not only do they not seek to find ways to create a better image for themselves, but they also seem to enjoy being considered outsiders and radicals. For them, a persecution complex is very much present. They do, however, have a global perspective, but their methods remain much the same as they have practiced for many years.

Many times, I have spoken with leaders of my own denomination as well as respected leaders of the evangelical movement and suggested that we learn from them and even try to duplicate some of their more suc-

³¹ Andrew Holden, *Jehovah's Witnesses—A Portrait of a Contemporary Religious Movement* (Great Britain: Taylor and Francis, 2001), 1.

cessful methods. The response is almost always the same: They are a sect and we are not interested. I have also been told that they really are not growing. We seem to be operating in a fog when considering what they are doing.

History:

The Jehovah's Witnesses (JWs) trace their founding to Charles Taze Russell, a haberdasher who was born in 1852 and was raised in the Presbyterian Church. By 1872, he had founded the International Bible Association in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Seven years later, Russell began publishing two magazines: *Zion's Watch Tower* and *Herald of Christ's Presence*. The popularity of these magazines led to the creation of numerous congregations in many states. His next step was the establishment of the Zion's Watch Tower Tract Society. It was incorporated in 1884. In 1908, Russell moved his operation to Brooklyn, New York, where it is presently located.

In the early days, the movement was beset by some theological arguments, one being the date of the second coming of Christ. Eschatological predictions were made for the years 1918, 1920, and 1925. Even later dates have been predicted and announced. With each failure to see the second coming, there have been deflections from the movement. After the prediction of 1925 failed to come true, the organization began to undergo several theological changes. The year 1914, which had previously been a date on which they believed the end of the world would come about, came to be understood as the invisible coming of Jesus Christ, thus issuing in the beginning of the Last Days.

Russell was succeeded by "Judge" Joseph R. Rutherford, who was born in 1869 and was raised as a Baptist. In 1931, Rutherford changed the name of the sect to the Jehovah's Witnesses, which he based on Isaiah 43:10. That name was officially adopted in 1933. After the death of Rutherford in 1942, Nathan Knorr became president of the society and established the Watchtower Bible Society School in New York as a place to train missionaries. He also founded the Theological Ministry School to train and educate members to help them learn to preach and teach at a congregational level. During Knorr's leadership, membership rose from 115,000 to over two million. By 1977, three others had served in the leadership position, with each making some minor changes, but the basic methods continued to be used. By 2003, the JWs had over four million members worldwide.

In 1976, most of the power of the presidency of the organization was passed on to the ecclesiastical Governing Body of the Church. The num-

ber of those comprising the government body has ranged from 10 to 17. Within the congregations themselves, elders are elected to oversee the congregation's public ministry and to appoint and schedule various speakers for congregational teachings. The government body must approve the selection of the elders.

Methods:

In the beginning, Russell used many of the normal methods for evangelism adopted by most evangelical churches of that day, including going out two by two, visiting homes, distributing tracts, and preaching in the streets. With time, many Protestant churches stopped using these methods, but the Jehovah's Witnesses continued to use them and even perfected them. They felt that it was important to be very visual; thus, they would stand on street corners simply holding copies of their magazines. Over the years, this method has been continued.

House to House:

In a study of what has led to the growth of the Jehovah's Witnesses, it is apparent that they have perfected their methods that operate on a Micro and a Meta level. In the early part of the twentieth century, they did use radio and even movies to attempt to gain converts, but today they seem to be satisfied with the more basic method of using their members as missionaries. A strong push for a universal door-to-door method was made in 1922 even though they had been involved in this method earlier. Today, when Jehovah's Witnesses are mentioned, most people state that those are the people who go from door to door. Many evangelical leaders say that this method is no longer useful, but the Witnesses continue to have success, especially in the developing world.

Mass Meetings:

In some cases, the Jehovah's Witnesses have begun to reach larger audiences. For instance, they often bring all their members together for a large convention or rally. During these times, they sometimes have a mass baptism. In the past, they used high profile arenas, such as Yankee Stadium in New York, for these meetings. It is also of interest to note that when they have these large gatherings, their members in the city where the rally is to be held will go from house to house and ask residents if they would be willing to rent out a room for several days during the rally.

They pay a fair price, and then the owners of the house become a target of their evangelism during the time the rally is being held. This method has proven to be successful.

Membership Involvement:

One important aspect of their outreach is their expectation that every member be involved in their mission work. If a member does not comply, then that person is expelled from the church. Although they have many new converts come into the church, they also have a rather heavy loss of those who do not desire to conform with their strict measures. In the 1940s, the JW's began to intensively train its members to be missionaries, with the goal of making 100 percent of their churches' participants active in the mission.

It is said that the Witnesses are not just believers; they are also ministers. They are not just believing their doctrines but expressing their faith through religious participation. A person is automatically ordained as a minister when he or she takes the step to be baptized as a member. For them, ministering and believing must coexist. Each member has a personal responsibility to spread the good news and to monitor his or her performance by recording the total number of monthly hours allocated to the ministry, the specific amount of literature left with householders, the number of return visits made to a prospective convert's home, and the number of home Bible studies conducted. There are different levels of works in the JW's. A full-time evangelist is called a pioneer. Those who have organized their lives to serve, spending 70 hours each month in preaching, are called regular pioneers. Others are selected to serve as special pioneers in areas where the need for Kingdom proclaimers is greater; these missionaries devote 130 hours or more to the ministry each month. Those who cannot pioneer full-time may serve as auxiliary pioneers as they are able, increasing their preaching activity to 30 to 50 hours a month. This is an extremely resourceful movement in which every member is a missionary. Hundreds of thousands of devotees continue to evangelize every week despite the insults they incur.

In their outreach, they use several steps to win converts. First, they try to get a copy of one of their publications, such as *Awake* or *The Watch Tower*, into the hands of the prospect. They then make a "back-call," which is a home visit, to the person. These visits can be kept up indefinitely. As interest is shown, the prospect is invited to attend a Bible study, which is where the prospect is given more information about their beliefs. The next step is to invite the person to attend a Sunday service at

a Kingdom Hall, which is more of a lecture hall than a church. The final step before inclusion into the group is attendance at the Wednesday evening meeting where all members are given encouragement. By this time, the prospect is ready to be incorporated into the sect by immersion baptism. All new members are then expected to do their required mission work. Witnesses will typically spend between 60 and 100 hours a month in their mission work.

They are trained to avoid and, if necessary, downplay the more controversial aspects of their religion. Issues such as refusal to have a blood transfusion and failed prophecies are sidestepped with the understanding that the individual is not ready to be exposed to the more difficult aspects of Witness theology. They are also adept at taking individuals who have a limited knowledge of the Bible, such as those who were brought up in a Sunday school but are no longer active, and tell them that they will now explain the scripture that they have been taught is inspired. They effectively use clerical molestations and pastoral infidelities to show that most churches could not be correct in the sight of God. The services on Wednesday night that the JW's are required to attend include a time when those who have been out doing mission work give a testimony as to what the objections were to their message. The leader then goes over the accepted answers so that all will be ready when the same argument comes up again.

Many denominations say that they want to use biblical methods in their evangelism, but few use what appears to be a basic method in the New Testament—going out two by two. Jesus sent the disciples out two by two, and Paul went out first with Barnabas and then later with Silas. The JW's have retained this method and sometimes expanded it to three as a training tool. They continue to go from door to door with some limited success. Their presentation is simple, and they encourage those they are visiting to ask questions. In some areas they will put small marks on the doors to designate to other JW's that they have been there.

Theology and Literature:

Theological indoctrination of their members is achieved through a variety of means, and it is designed to produce members who are fanatically loyal, not just to the organization, but also to its eschatological beliefs. One of the most effective means that the JW's have devised as a way of maintaining complete control over peripheral congregations and branches is through the emphasis on Watchtower specific materials. Members are forbidden to read religious material that is not approved by

the Society or material that speaks against Watchtower theology, and anyone caught reading such material is subject to organizational discipline. Members are required to report other members who are found violating this rule.

In the evangelical world of missions, a very important part of strategy planning is the concept of contextualization or trying to put the message into a form that can be understood in the target culture. This leads to a variety of tools and literature that are used in missions. The Witnesses are against this line of reasoning and insist that all their literature, printed in over 300 different languages, is a straight translation of the English version. This way they can prevent a variation of beliefs in their worldwide ministry. A person reading the *Watchtower* in Africa or Russia is looking at the same photos, layouts, and diagrams as those in every other country. This consistency has caused a unity in the movement that is seldom duplicated by others.

Even the study of the Bible is discouraged unless it is the New World Translation, and even then, this reading must be studied with Watchtower literature used during the Bible study to help explain the nuances of Watchtower scripture. It is believed by the author that a typical Witness will read hundreds of words of literature for every word of Bible text. So even though they become well acquainted with the Bible, they become even more familiar with the interpretations of the Governing Body.

While most missiologists will emphasize contextualization in cross cultural settings, the JW's do not seem interested in making their message more acceptable by using these tools in working with people of a different culture. Their publications and website may now be read in 252 languages. In most cases, the contents of each piece of literature are translated to be as close to the original English as possible. They strongly believe that there is only one understanding of the truth and that is theirs; thus they do not need many programs or interpretations. This attitude does give them a certain amount of continuity that most Christians lack.

Publications:

Every year the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society produces religious literature primarily for use by Jehovah's Witnesses. They publish the latest issues of the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines, and other items are featured in both printed and online versions in many languages. As of

2013, more than 2,700 translators were working in over 190 locations to translate their literature into more than 670 tongues.³²

The Bible. The Jehovah's Witnesses claim that early Christians mixed Jesus's teachings with pagan religious ideas and a counterfeit form of Christianity developed. In 1950, they began to release portions of their own Bible, the New World Translation. This Bible had been translated in whole or in part into 124 languages by August 14, 2014, according to the 2015 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses (2015).³³ It is designed for easy reading, restoring the divine name, Jehovah, and sustaining their doctrines. The most recent edition of their Bible was put out in 2013 and has over 200 million copies in print.

Magazines. In 1879 the Bible Students (the name they used prior to calling themselves Jehovah's Witnesses) began producing the magazine that they still publish today, *The Watchtower, Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom*. Today they publish this magazine in 239 lands and in some 700 languages. Again, it should be stressed that there are very little variations in the different translations, so there is no cultural contextualism.

Books and Brochures. JW's publish many printed and online books and brochures for Bible studies, evangelism training, and preaching. Their books include a history of the JW's, Bible commentaries, children's books, and books for young people and families. They also publish books dealing with staff roles, legal guidance for members and medical practitioners, reference works, yearbooks, etc. Audio books and sign-language videos are also available in many languages.

Online Activities. Jehovah's Witnesses' official website is jw.org. As of July 2013, it was available in 16 languages. Google supports their website in 71 languages, while Wikipedia supports it in 287. The website is translated into over 300 languages, so the total number of pages on the website is over 200,000. Publications are available for downloads in over 700 languages. According to Alexa, a company that analyzes global internet traffic, it ranks second in total traffic for a religious organization. Alexa, which has a list of 87,000 websites, says that tjw.org received an average

³² Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, *God's Kingdom Rules* (New York: Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of New York, Incorporated, 2012), 80.

³³ *2015 Yearbook of the Jehovah's Witnesses* (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 2015)

of more than 890,000 unique visits each day as of October 2013.³⁴ Quantcast, a company that specializes in audience measurements, reports that they had 799,000 visits in October 2015.³⁵ The JW yearbook also claims that by August 2014, over four billion web pages had been viewed, over one billion publications files had been downloaded, and over 159 million videos had been viewed or downloaded. Also 100,000 plus online Bible study requests had been received.³⁶

Conclusion:

The teachings of the JWs are in many ways inviting to the masses. They are against war, they see other churches as the Whore of Babylon, and they live clean lives. Only after one becomes a part of the church does he or she begin to experience the fear that so dominates their very existence. They fear losing their place in the new earth if they do not do the required mission work. They fear being condemned if they dare read any literature from another Christian faith, and they fear ever leaving this faith and being shunned by all their new friends and even their family members who remain within the church. They are taught to look down on all others and to remain totally and completely committed to the teachings of the *Watchtower*. Only time will tell if this approach has lasting power over the minds and wills of the masses.

Jehovah's Witnesses have a unique approach to missions and growth that is best understood by considering their peculiar eschatological theology, the way they motivate their members to be mission minded, and their strong circulation of their slanted materials. They do not create numbers of new programs but stay very much with their own brand of theology that is the same in all parts of the world. They are the best at using the Micro and Meta variations of strategy, and some may even say that they have entered in the Mega area due to their global approaches, but I feel that they have concentrated on older forms of outreach.

³⁴ Alexa, accessed 2015, http://www.alexa.com/topsites/category;0/Top/Sociey/Religion_and_Spirituality.

³⁵ Quantcast, accessed 2015, http://siteanalytics.complete.com?jw.org?quLocale=en_US.

³⁶ Jehovah's Witnesses' Official website: jw.org, accessed 2015.

CHAPTER 6

Four Steps to Change the World

A Look at the Global Strategy of Islam

*“And Abraham said to God, if only Ishmael might live under your blessing”
Genesis 17:18 (NIV)*

Introduction:

The “Clash of Civilizations” was an expression popularized by Samuel P. Huntington in an article published in the summer of 1993 in *The Journal of Foreign Affairs*. In Huntington’s view, interaction between the Western oriented Christian world and the world of Islam could present mankind with continuing conflicts, including the present-day terrorism, suicide bombings, and even the possibility of nuclear war.³⁷

Islamic scholars proudly boast that Islam is the world’s fastest growing religion, but this claim is only partially true. If the growth of Evangelical or Charismatic Christianity is compared to the growth of Islam, both of these two Christian categories have a faster rate of growth, but when Islam is compared to the total of Christianity, then Islam is growing faster. Nevertheless, it is a truism that Islam is having great success in the world today.

From its very beginning, the followers of Islam have taught, through the Koran, that the goal of this religion is that everyone will become Muslim before the end of the world. Even one of its main publications, *The Muslim World League Journal*, has stated that the present-day goal is to see the whole world become Muslim by the year 2080. There was a time when Christian theologians felt that Islam was just a secondary religion that came out of the desert; only recently have Christian missiologists discov-

³⁷ Samuel P. Huntington first wrote his article on the “Clash of Civilizations,” and it was followed by a book of the same name. The popularity of the book gave rise to many who began to see the differences between the Western World and the World of Islam in a new light.

ered that Islam has numerous capable scholars and strategists who are articulating their faith's means of growth and working towards a desired end.

When Islam was started in the beginning of the seventh century, its followers were taught that they should use the sword to conquer other peoples; thus they experienced rapid growth from the very beginning. This growth continued for about 900 years, or until its followers met military defeats by the Moors in Tours, France, and the Austrians in Vienna. From the 1500s to the 1900s, it appeared that the growth of Islam was stopped, or at least slowed, in most parts of the world. One leading Muslim in Europe told me, "Islam's race to win the world was detoured for about four hundred years, but now it is back on track to achieve our goal—setting up of a worldwide *Ummah* (Nation of Islam)."

Ralph D. Winters, in his book *The Twenty-Five Unbelievable Years 1945–1969*, claims that no matter how we look at it, the twentieth century was amazing, but no period had more change and more influence on today's problems than did the 25 years described by Winters. These years cover a period that can best be described as the "official end of political imperialism" or better "the retreat of the West." In his book, Winters shows that before 1945, 99.3 percent of the non-western world was under Western domination. By 1969, 99.3 percent of the same area was independent.³⁸ Political colonialism was ended. This revolution gave the Muslim States a desire to renew their drive to make the world Muslim. It was at this time that the Muslim World League was created and given the task of developing a strategy to accomplish what their faith had failed to do for over 1500 years.

The question must be asked, what is their strategy? Do they have a plan or is it just luck? It can be shown how certain leaders in Islam have created a very effective plan to convert the world by the year 2080. Their present-day strategy was developed in the years after 1972 with the founding of the Muslim World League in Mecca.

In analyzing the Muslim strategy, I have concluded that they have a four-pronged plan: (1) *Da'wah* or Missions; (2) *Jihad* or Holy War; (3) Presence, or the Building of Mosques; and (4) Immigration.³⁹

³⁸ In this book Ralph Winters gives a clear overview of the changing world, one that was missed by many scholars in the contemporary world.

³⁹ The thesis that there are four prongs of the strategy of Islam is explained in detail in the author's previous book, *How Islam Plans to Change the World*. In the first edition, he discussed only three prongs, but added "immigration" in the second edition.

During my studies of the Islamic strategy, I did not find any writers who listed the same four prongs, but I did find several scholars who divided up their strategy on the three horizontal levels that I previously discussed: Micro, Meta, and Mega. They have plans that operate on these three levels in most parts of the world. A better understanding of the four prongs of their plan helps us understand their Mega strategy.

Da'wah:

Their first prong is *Da'wah*, which is translated into English as Missions. Both Islam and Christianity can be considered as missionary religions, and Islam has a very active force of missionaries in most countries of the world. Just as Christianity is sending out young people to do mission, so is Islam.

Missionaries:

Many of the university students who come to study in the USA or in other countries are officially *daa'i* or missionaries. From my studies, I am convinced that there are more Muslim missionaries now working in the United States than there are Christian missionaries working in all the Muslim countries. These *daa'i* work in schools, prisons, and universities, and they reach out to minority groups such as African Americans and Native Americans. On one occasion, I was invited to teach an English class at the university in Fez, Morocco. Since I was an English speaker, I was their guest. During the lecture, I asked them why they wanted to learn English, and most said it was so that they could help convert the English-speaking world to Islam.

The Academic World:

In California, a letter was sent to many of the state's public schools informing them that the Muslim Speaker's Bureau was ready to help their students gain a better understanding of multi-culturalism. They were willing to give free presentations to students. One teacher that I knew described to me what they did in her class. They had many props, such as a mockup of the Kabab, which is in Mecca, and Middle Eastern clothes. They then proceeded to have the students go through the process of making a pilgrimage to Mecca, incorporating the prayers and all the aspects of their faith. In this same school, the teacher would be fired if she mentioned the name of Jesus Christ in the class.

To influence universities, they have offered on several occasions to provide a new building for the Department of Religion with no strings attached except that the Dean of the school must be a Muslim. In a developing country in Africa, a university needed professors, and Egypt sent them twenty professors free of charge for ten years; all of them were missionaries for Islam. They have had great success in the academic world.

Prisons:

In the prisons in the United States, there are over 800,000 Black men, and Islam has discovered that by putting Muslim chaplains in the prisons, they can have a great success in converting these prisoners to Islam. They also will help take care of their families while they are incarcerated.

The Seven Mountains:

Time and space do not allow me to go into details on how their Mega strategy is working in all the ten mountains described earlier. They are influencing Hollywood, the media, sports, government, Wall Street, etc. Their success in the countries of the developing world is outstanding although they are having more difficulties in the United States. It could be added that many missiologists are not very optimistic about the future of Christianity in Western Europe while Islam is making big gains in that area.

Jihad:

The second prong is *Jihad* or Holy War. Holy War is acceptable under specific circumstances, but terrorism is generally seen as being negative by those strategists who are seeking to win the world. Islam has well-defined rules as to how Muslims are to work in different countries, with the strategy depending on the size of the Muslim community. For instance, in America where the Muslim community is under 5 percent, they are told to never speak about *Jihad* or to seek to bring fear. They want to be seen as peace-loving citizens of the country. As the percentage grows, they begin to make more and more requests for privileges, such as their dress and the type of work they will do. It is only when the percentage goes over 50 percent that Jihad comes into question. It is easy to understand what is meant by Jihad when we look at South Sudan and see that millions of Christians have been killed by the Muslim rulers in the North.

Another good example is the number of Christians being killed in Syria, Iraq, and Southern Egypt today.

When most in the world thinks about the growth of Islam, they immediately think about *Jihad* and terrorism. Could it be that the numerous terrorist attacks around the world are a part of the overall strategy to change the world for Islam? I think not. There is no doubt that it is an ever-increasing factor in the conflict between Islam and the rest of the world, but whether it is a part of their overall plan comes into question.

Jihad, which many interpret to be Holy War, is an integral part of the Islamic faith; in fact, some even refer to it as the sixth pillar of Islam. There is within Islam itself a disagreement as to the importance of the sword in the spread of Islam. Ayatollah Khomeini, the Muslim cleric who was key in the overthrow of the Shah in Iran, has been quoted as saying, "Those who know nothing of Islam pretend that Islam counsels against

War. Those who say this are witless. Islam says, 'Kill all unbelievers just as they would kill you.' Islam says, 'Kill them, put them to the sword and scatter their armies.' Islam says, 'Kill in the service of Islam.'"⁴⁰

The West seems determined to fight with rigor the various terrorist organizations that now exist in the world, such as ISIS, El Qaida, Hamas, Hezbollah, etc., feeling that a victory in these arenas will stop the growth of the Islamic wave now spreading over many countries.

If all battles against these branches of terror were successful, there would still be a very able force working to convert the world to the crescent moon. Those who are involved with the strategy planning generally have not incorporated terrorism into their strategy. In fact, there are indications that they even view the various terrorist attacks as being counterproductive in that they create a negative image in front of those peoples they are trying to influence by non-violent means.

In the Western world of today, we see the threat of terrorism as our main enemy. When terrorism dies down, we tend to let down our guard without realizing that Islam continues to move towards its goal of world dominance by the year 2080. Terrorism is a fact that needs to be looked at, but it is only a small part of Islam's overall strategy.

⁴⁰ Cited in the editor's review of Ronald de Valderano, *Terror: The War Against the West*, accessed 13 August 2002, <http://www.libertyhaven.com/Politicsandcurrentevents//crimeandterrorism/terrorwar.shtml>.

Building of Mosques:

The third prong is “presence” or the building of mosques. In Christian missiology, the presence philosophy emphasizes the importance of first creating a beachhead in a new mission field with the next step being to build a chapel so that all can see that the faith has arrived. The Muslims have taken this strategy and have perfected it by the building of mosques in many different countries. It is difficult to discover the number of new mosques that have been built in recent years, but one source wrote that over 30,000 have been built in the last twenty years. It should be noted that the number of new Christian church buildings that have been constructed in Muslim majority countries during the same period is zero. A part of their strategy is also to destroy Christian churches when possible. A visit to Turkey reveals the ruins of many Christian churches. I was told that they must remain as ruins so that all will see that Christianity lays in ruins while Islam is on the march.

It is not sufficient just to build new mosques; they must also be larger or taller than the closest church. Once while I was crossing the straits of Gibraltar, I looked at the hill above the city of Tangiers and saw a large, beautiful Catholic cathedral. Next to it was a new mosque that was taller and larger than the church. I was told that a wealthy Muslim gave the money to build the mosque with the instructions that it had to be bigger and taller than the church. I saw this in many countries that I visited. In Rome, plans were submitted to the authorities to build a mosque that was bigger than St. Peters. The permit was denied, but they do have a very large mosque in that city.

The funding for this surge in construction is coming from both wealthy individuals and Islamic countries, mostly those in the Middle East. An article in the March 2002 issue of *Ain-all-Yaneen*, an official Saudi magazine, reported that the royal family had wholly or partly funded some 210 Islamic centers, 1,500 mosques, 202 colleges, and 2,000 schools in countries without Muslim majorities.

One of the tools used by Muslims is diplomatic pressure. In 1940, the first attempt to build a mosque in London was made by the Egyptian ambassador to England. By 1974, construction began on the Central Mosque of London. Built for \$4.5 million, the bulk of the financing was provided by the Mosque Trust, which receives funding from several Muslim governments. The site, provided by the British government, is in the city’s much beloved Regents Park. An Islamic culture center stands alongside the mosque. The prayer hall was designed to hold approximately 1000

people. This diplomatic pressure has been used in most of the western countries.

Immigration:

When the final history of the last 100 years is written, a very big chapter will deal with immigration and the mass movements of peoples, especially in the last 50 years. The direction of the flow of humanity has generally been from the more destitute countries of the south to the more prosperous north. Due to the wars in the Middle East and the poverty in Africa, many are leaving these areas, and they see Europe as offering the best possibility for a better life. Most of those coming to Western Europe are coming from Muslim countries.

The fourth prong of Islamic strategy is immigration. Those determining the Islamic strategy were somewhat taken back by the rapidity of this movement, but they now are taking advantage of what is happening for the furtherance of their faith. Prior to about 1970, Muslim immigrants coming to the West were encouraged to integrate into their new society. This attitude changed when their leaders began to encourage the new immigrants to retain both their religion and their culture for the benefit of Islam. In the last 30 years, Islamic scholars have seen the great potential of flooding the West with Muslims so that they can eventually become the majority. This strategy has been working very well in Western Europe, as is now seen by the political turmoil in many of these countries due to the large number of Muslims in their country and their rapid growth. Their immigration is well planned, and they now have seen success in taking over larger sections of the main cities. One interesting book written by Melanie Philips is called *Londonistan*. It describes the takeover of London and the attempt to make it a Muslim city. It should be noted that the present mayor of London is a Muslim.

Some estimate that one of the first cities to have a Muslim majority is Brussels, the so-called capital of Europe. I made a study of both Brussels and Cologne, Germany, to try to understand their plans. It appears that they first study the demography of a city and decide which area will be their target. They choose good Muslim families, strategically assign them to what they have determined is the right place, and help them to open a store, often a grocery store offering the foods of the Middle East. Soon a relative will move several blocks away and, also being subsidized, open another store. This process of establishing a strong Muslim presence will continue and grow. Rather than being surrounded by these so-called foreigners, the Belgians and Germans who live in that area will move to an-

other part of the city, selling their property at a lower price to more Muslims.

Today there are large areas of most Western cities that are overwhelmingly Muslim. In a recent discussion, it was said that many cities of Europe have no-go zones where the police and others are not allowed to enter. This has been strongly denied by most governments, but recently the prime minister of Germany had to agree that that is now the situation.

One can imagine politicians are trying to find solutions for this growing problem. Recently, some of the members of the European parliament from London commissioned Dr. Sam Solomon, a well-known expert of Islam, to help develop a “Charter of Muslim Understanding” to find a way that Muslims and Western Europeans could live and work together in harmony in the countries of the European Union. The proposed charter has ten articles; some of these articles suggest that all Islamic leaders translate the Koran in a way as to forbid the use of force against others and to interpret the Koran where it seems to promote physical violence in a way to show peace instead of violence. The proposal was quite fair, but it was soundly rejected by the Muslim clerics since they were not ready to change the emphasis of aggression. Their argument was that this charter would have precedence over their holy literature and would allow nonbelievers to interpret the Qur’an. This could not be allowed. It seems that a possible peaceful living together will be very difficult to obtain, but in the meantime, the percentage of Muslims in most Western European countries continues to grow at an alarming rate.

In addition to the problem of emigration is the problem of the Muslims having a much higher birth rate. The birth rate per couple for retaining the status quo in a society is 2.1 births per couple. Germany has a birth rate of 1.6 births per couple, and most of the other countries of that continent have similar numbers. In contrast, the birth rate of Muslims living in Europe is closer to 5.0; thus there will be a growing percentage of persons living in Europe who are Muslims.

Conclusion:

In the emerging world of multiculturalism, mass migration, and changing world views, we must attempt to predict what will be the logical consequences of the events of today. History has shown us that life on earth is, if nothing else, unpredictable, but allow me to suggest some possible scenarios for the “Clash of Civilization” in the future.

- 1) There will be a rise in influence of the moderate branches of both Islam and Christianity, leading to a better understanding, and both will seek ways of co-existing. This could be the best solution.
- 2) The Islamists are correct; Islam will continue to gain adherents through both *Da'wah* and *Jihad*. There will be minor wars of liberation, but the "Path of Muhammad" will increase in both size and power. Christianity will fail because of moral decay.
- 3) The apparent status quo between Christianity and Islam will continue with minor wars and conflicts. Both Christianity and Islam will have some limited growth.
- 4) As Islam and Christianity continue to have conflicts with each other, another of the world-civilizations, such as China, will gain such strength that it will become the dominant force in a "Brave New World" society. Because of the drained strength of the two great religions, they will have little or no stamina to defend themselves.
- 5) Islam will continue to grow and become more brutal in its attempts to conquer the world. *Jihad* will replace *Da'wah* as the main emphasis in their attempt to conquer the world. Islam will never completely overtake the world, but conflicts will grow bigger and even more brutal.

The strategy is well set for the attempted takeover of the world. The Muslims are well prepared and have done the necessary research to make plans for their ultimate victory. Now is the time for the Christian Church to wake up from its slumber and create a Mega strategy that will enable it to not only do battle against Islam but also to achieve the command of Jesus, "To make disciples of all nations."

CHAPTER 7

“After the Ball”

A Look at the Strategy Used by the Homosexual Movement

*“They called to Lot, where are the men who came to your house tonight?
Bring them out to us so that we can have sex with them”
Genesis 19:5 (NIV)*

Introduction:

What is the end goal of the homosexual agenda? I contend that they would like to project an image of a world in which the happily “married” homosexual couple and their two adopted children live side by side with the heterosexual family of four next door without discomfort or judgment. This rainbow world could be a Shangri La existence that has no maladjusted youth, no violence, and no abuse between people because all are free to live and exist according to themselves. I am afraid that the reality will be much different than what they are seeking. It can be argued that there was no solid homosexual strategy prior to the early 1990s. It was at that time that two Harvard professors, Marshall Kirk and Hunter Madsen, began writing and developing a strategy. First, they produced an article entitled *The Overhauling of Straight America* and then they published the very popular book *After the Ball, How America will conquer its fear and hatred of the Gays in the 90s*.

Kirk and Madsen outlined various goals, including the decriminalization of all “sex acts between consenting adults” and the opening of “all standard rights of marriage and parenting to homosexuals.” They stated that the first stages of reaching these goals was to seek the right of homosexual couples to be linked in civil solidarity pacts that would allow them to file joint tax returns, receive all the welfare and employment benefits of spouses, and enjoy the inheritance rights of spouses. In the early stages of the movement, they were somewhat successful in gaining

these rights through several means, including putting pressure on large businesses. They were surprised, however, as to how readily their agenda began to be accepted; thus, they changed their goal away from civil unions to same sex marriages.

In attempting to gain respect and acceptance, Kirk and Madsen published a six-point strategy in their initial two works:

- 1) Talk about gays and gayness as often and loudly as possible
- 2) Portray gays as victims, not aggressive challengers
- 3) Give homosexual protectors a just cause
- 4) Make gays look good
- 5) Make the victimizers look bad
- 6) Solicit funds (the strategy was to get corporate America and major foundations to financially support the homosexual cause).⁴¹

It is apparent that the basis for the six points is public relations. They want to change the image of the gay and lesbian community. The two main prongs of this strategy are to make the homosexuals look good and to make those opposing them look bad. This strategy has been successful. The homosexual agenda includes desensitizing the public. In their book, Kirk and Madsen state,

The first order of business is desensitization of the American public concerning gays and gay rights. . . . To desensitize the public is to view homosexuality with indifference instead of with keen emotion. Ideally, we would have straights register differences in sexual preferences the way they register different tastes for ice cream or sports games. At least in the outset we are seeking public de-sensitization and nothing more. We do not need and cannot expect a full ‘appreciation’ or ‘understanding’ of homosexuality from the average American. You can forget about trying to persuade the masses that homosexuality is a good thing. But if only you can get them to think that it is just another thing . . . then our battle for legal and social rights is virtually won.⁴²

Not only would they make gays look good and detractors (including Christians) look bad, they would also promote a desensitization of the American public concerning gays and gay rights.

⁴¹ In their book, *After the Ball*, Marshall Kirk and Hunter Madsen go to great lengths in not only listing the six points but also giving a long explanation on each.

⁴² Marshall Kirk and Hunter Madsen, *After the Ball—How American will conquer its fear and hatred of Gays in the 90s* (New York: Penguin Group, 1990), 177.

As they progressed, they created what I call a Mega strategy to change the thinking of society. It is at this level that they have been the most successful. It is true that they operate on both the Micro and Meta levels, but how they have sought to change society is textbook. Few today would question their success in changing the society, not only of the United States, but of the whole Western world.

As previously stated, a Mega strategy will need to concentrate on the ten major building blocks of culture. Let's look at several examples of the homosexuals' work to see what they have accomplished.

Art and Entertainment:

There have always been actors who were suspected of being homosexuals, such as Edward Evert Horton and others, but there was no attempt to push their activities. A shift in strategy began in the 1970s in the aftermath of the Civil Rights era. It involved a direct assault on the traditional family and its values. The growth of television programs began to breed new ground in social discussions. One of them was Norman Lear's *All in the Family*, a show that presented many subjects, such as feminism, race, pacifism, cohabitation, and homosexuality, which had previously been off limits during prime-time television. Some episodes centered on lesbian and transvestite characters. The show did not advocate for any lifestyle, but it did present some of the characters who represented alternative life styles in a positive manner. Later in the 1980s, other shows began to have sexual innuendos in the form of humor. Increasingly, the humor focused on homosexually orientated persons. With time, however, the humor began to have as its object the unenlightened heterosexual or the misguided Christian.

In the next thirty years there was a progressive presentation of gays in a positive light, with the crown jewel of their efforts being the homosexual characters in *Brokeback Mountain*. The main actor, Heath Ledger, received an academy award nomination for his work in the movie.

One of the most successful incursions into the field of Art and Entertainment was the founding of the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus, riding on the results of the Stonewall Riots in New York and the candidacy of Harvey Milk for Supervisor in San Francisco. The San Francisco Gay Freedom Day Marching Band and Twirling Corps were founded as the world's first openly gay and lesbian performing arts groups in 1978. Later that year the SGMC was founded and held its first rehearsal on October 30, 1978. Because it was an openly gay organization, it presented some challenges in gaining membership beyond the reluctance of some gay men to

join because of the name. In 1981, the SFGMC lost a controversial court battle when Superior Court Judge Ira Brown ruled that the Jesuits of the University of San Francisco could refuse to allow the chorus to sing at St. Ignatius Church. A civil suit several months later awarded damages to SFGMC.⁴³

Musically, the chorus was an instant success. Part of their high profile was because they were asked to sing at the impromptu memorial service at San Francisco City Hall for Harvey Milk and Mayor George Moscone, both of whom had been assassinated earlier. Their success allowed the chorus to reach a wider audience, and they took a tour of America in 1981. During that tour, the chorus performed in nine cities: Dallas, Minneapolis (Orchestra Hall), Lincoln, Detroit, New York City, Boston, Washington D.C. (Kennedy Center), Seattle (Seattle Opera), and then they returned to San Francisco for a triumphant performance at Davies Symphony Hall, where San Francisco Mayor Dianne Feinstein awarded SFGMC the key to the city—the first time that honor had been bestowed on a gay organization. Their success spawned other gay men’s choruses to be formed, and by 1982, a global LGBTBT chorus movement had begun to take shape. Today, more than 250 such choirs are operating.⁴⁴

Education:

By 2001 the homosexual movement had already made inroads at the top levels of the National Education Association. At their annual convention that year in Los Angeles, a resolution was introduced for consideration. It called for implementing a full-scale indoctrination of children to accept and affirm homosexual behavior. The resolution read as follows: “The National Education Association recognizes the complex and diverse needs of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and questioning students; and gay lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered families and the children requires the development of programs to promote a safe and inclusive environment.” Eight steps were recommended to achieve their object:

- A) Development of curriculum and instructional materials and programs designed to meet the needs of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender students.
- B) Involvement of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender characters in developing educational materials used in classroom instruction.

⁴³ GLAAD, “Accomplishments,” accessed 15 November 2006, www.glaad.org.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

- C) Dissemination of programs that support gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and questioning students and address their high dropout rate, suicide rate, and health risk behavior.
- D) Recognition of the importance of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender education employees as role models.
- E) Accurate portrayal of the roles and contributions of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender education employees as role models.
- F) Dissemination of programs and information that includes the contributions, heritage, culture, and history of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people.
- G) Coordination with gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender organizations and concerned agencies that promote the contributions, heritage, history, health, and care of gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender people.⁴⁵

When the news of this resolution spread, organizations such as Focus on the Family and others blew the whistle, and the public backlash caused the NEA to table the resolution. A committee was appointed to study the resolution, and the NEA decided to slowly implement this program without the members' approval. Later, the NEA, along with the American Academy of Pediatrics, published a booklet entitled “Just the Facts about Sexual Orientation and Youth.” This booklet calls for the whole-hearted encouragement for school children to experiment with homosexuality and calls for the censorship of the “religious right” and the censoring of religious speech on the issue.

By 2014, the LGBT community was promoting a nationwide plan for all schools to plan and organize a LGBT History Month. In this plan, 31 “icons” from the gay community would be honored and studied. They wanted one for each day of the month. Most concerning to parents that year was the inclusion of C. C. McDonald, who had been released from prison earlier that year after serving time for the killing of a man who had insulted her. It was also reported, “Works by several of the other individuals included on the year’s list would not otherwise be allowed in schools, or most homes. For example, a music video of ‘icon’ John Cameron Mitchell has been too explicit to be shown on MTV Europe. Comedienne ‘icon’ Margaret Cho’s routines are replete with vulgarity and not permitted in schools.”

⁴⁵ NEA, 1999-2000 Resolutions, “Racism, Sexism, and Sexual Orientation Discrimination,” 89, www.nea.org/ressolutions/99/99b-9.html.

Business:

One of the early problems the homosexual movement faced was the lack of funds to do what they wanted to do. Many rather wealthy persons were closet homosexuals, and they provided some funds for the movement. Later, when the AIDS epidemic hit, even though the LGBT community strongly denied that this was a homosexual problem, they did capitalize on the publicity and created many organizations that sought contributions for the cure of this terrible blight, providing many jobs and other means whereby the movement benefited financially.

Early in their strategy, the LGBT program targeted businesses. One of their tools was to identify company board members who were either homosexuals themselves or were at least sympathetic with their movement. They then slowly used those contacts as a beachhead to try to influence leading members of the Board. This strategy has been successful, and today strong supporters include well-known businesses such as Target, Ford, and Disney. They proved that when the homosexual movement went to the top leadership of the business world, they would most likely be successful, thus gaining them inroads into the business world as well as finances for their work. Today some of the movement's strongest supports are major corporations in the nation.

Government:

In 1962, I attended the weekly meeting of the Albuquerque, New Mexico Rotary Club. I was told that our main speaker represented a liberal organization. During his talk, he stated that his organization was out to change the social fabric of the United States. He said that government would be their main target to achieve their goals. He mentioned that at first, they thought they could have success by trying to influence the administrative branch of government, but that plan had failed since the president must face an election every four years and their form of liberalism was not yet acceptable to a majority of the country. They decided to spend most of their time on the legislative branch, but again that strategy failed for the same reason. They then looked at the judiciary branch and found that here they could be the most successful. Many judges do not need to face reelection, and many have higher degrees and tend to be more liberal. The speaker then stated that they had determined that they could change America through the judiciary. At the end of the talk, I learned that the speaker was one of the top leaders at the ACLU.

An article in the New York Times dated Sept. 14, 2014, reported, "Democrats have reversed the partisan imbalance on the federal appeals courts that long favored conservatives, a little noticed shift with far-reaching consequences, for the law is President Obama's legacy." The article when on to say, "The imprint of the Obama judges is already being felt. In July, when the 4th U.S. Circuit court of Appeals issued an opinion declaring Virginia's same-sex marriage ban was unconstitutional, the author of the opinion was an Obama appointee, Henry F. Floyd."

Most court cases now end with a favorable tilt towards same sex marriage. It is apparent that the gay movement has been successful in influencing the American court system.

Baptist Press reported concerning a Tennessee county judge who had ruled that the state has the authority to limit marriage to a man and a woman, setting forth an exception to more than three dozen rulings in a period of 14 months in favor of same sex marriages. Russell D. Moore, president of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, applauded the judge's decision, stating, "Courts around the country seem determined to try to impose a redefinition of marriage, and I'm happy to see one court decision that refuses to try and will into existence constitutional planks by force of its own will."

It appears as if the homosexual movement has followed the same route as that discussed by the man from the ACLU. In their efforts to legalize same sex marriages, they have attempted to get the support of important political leaders such the president or state governors, but they failed. Then they went to the judiciary and were able to get a series of positive decisions in the courts that, together with the media, slowly began to change people's attitude towards same sex marriage. Only after great success in the courts did they return to the administrative branch of government. It is possible to see the movement's increasing influence in the fact that Barack Obama, during his first run for president, came out against same sex marriage, but four year later, he saw the swing of the pendulum and supported it. It is worth noticing that the strategy of the LGBT movement began with the judiciary branch.

I read the main San Francisco weekly homosexual newspaper, and in almost every edition there is an article on who is running for judgeship in California and how the readers need to contact their friends to be sure that those who are favorable to gays get elected. In many cases, the average American citizen knows very little about the positions of those running for judgeships, but the gays put great emphasis on this.

As the gay agenda is gaining strength, homosexuals are beginning to put pressure on other branches of the government to go along with their

agenda. Saying that judges are not always cooperative, they have chosen to go elsewhere. Many activists have turned, therefore, to the tactic of urgent whispering into the ears of liberal and moderate public servants at all levels of government. Given the generally conservative climate of recent years, their lobbyists have worked extra hard to present themselves as terribly polite, dignified, and respectful ladies and gentlemen; they have had to cut their suit to fit the available political cloth—a suit that is tailored with the utmost discretion. The goal here has been to forge a little entente conspiracy with the power elite, to jump ahead of public sentiment or ignore it altogether.

Another example of the LGBT success in government is a recent action in Houston, Texas, where the city government under the leadership of Mayor Annise Parker, an open lesbian, passed by a vote of 11-6 an ordinance that adds sexual orientation and gender identity to a list of protected classifications, such as race, religion, sex, and disability. The new ordinance was called by its shorter name HERO. In September, subpoenas were issued to many leading pastors in the city; the LGBT was attempting to make public the communications of pastors, both from the pulpit and privately in their churches. The subpoena stated that the following needed to be turned over to the government: “All speeches, presentations, or sermons related to HERO, the Petition (for a referendum to overturn the ordinance) Mayor Annise Parker, homosexuality, or gender identity prepared by, delivered by, revised by, or approved by you or in your possession.” Once again, it is clear that the gay movement will use the courts to further its agenda. Only time will tell if they can have enough influence to turn the Senate and the House of Representatives into supporters of the total gay agenda.

Religion:

By now, we have all heard the statement that U.S. churches need to liberalize their teachings on sexuality and homosexuality or rapidly decline. The homosexuals are using this ploy to bring about a change in attitude by all churches. However, exactly the opposite is true. Let us look at several examples.

First, we have the Episcopal denomination. In 2003, Gene Robinson became the first openly gay, non-celibate man to be consecrated as a bishop of the Episcopal Church. In 2006, they lifted a moratorium on gay bishops, and in 2009 they created a “blessing ceremony” for gay couples. Due to this liberalism, their numbers should reflect growth, but the opposite is true. In 2002, the number of baptized U.S. members of the Epis-

copal Church stood at 2.32 million. By 2012 that number had fallen to 1.89 million, a decline of 18.4 percent.

The Southern Baptists hit a peak in 2007, but they have had practically no real decline during the period of gay advances. As those churches who reject the call for liberalization continue to hold to Biblical principles, they will grow. As a result, the gay movement will continue its attacks on such churches.

In 1990, few politicians would publicly support homosexuals or their movement for fear of losing the next election, but as their strategy began to work and they were experiencing success, then many politicians, including President Obama, changed their course and gave them their full support.

Family:

In the traditional Christian culture, the family had two definitions. One was the nuclear family that consisted of a husband and wife together with their children, either biological or adopted. The extended family consisted of the nuclear family plus grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins. At the earliest dates of the homosexual evolution, there was literature that attacked this notion. Their argument was that any two loving adults who desired to live together should be allowed to form their own nuclear family. Thus, the expression of "same-sex marriages" came into being. In the early stages, they admitted that they could not have biological children, but they claimed that if they could adopt, then they would also have families. They were far more successful in getting laws changed at the state level so that they could adopt. By the time same sex-marriage became commonplace, many gay couples had plans for adoptions. It appears now as if their argument has won the day.

One of their arguments was that many laws favored married adults. Inheritance and tax laws were weighted against the loving same sex couple. Also cited were benefits given to spouses by both the military and corporations. It was here that the gay lobby really played the victims. They felt that those who wanted same sex-marriages were not allowed to live the same quiet, community-supported existence that other couples were allowed.

When this topic came on the national scene, it became apparent how well the initial strategy had been promoted. Sympathetic judges were in place, many government leaders had been won over, and the gay movement had the necessary finances, mostly coming from gifts from corporations and from the battle against AIDS. Yet in the early stages, it was ap-

parent that most Americans did not want to recognize same sex marriages as legal and accepted marriages. Same sex civil unions could be accepted for tax purposes, but the sanctity of marriage still needed to remain as a union between a man and a woman.

The battleground became California and what was known as Proposition 8. This proposition stated that marriage is between a man and a woman and that the state would recognize this definition. It was put to the voters and it passed 54 percent to 46 percent. The next step was to take it to the courts, and liberal judges began to say that the proposition was illegal and against the constitution. The results were not clear as one court after the other gave its ruling. The issue finally reached the Supreme Court of the United States. When the ruling was given, it remained unclear since the court simply said that individual states should make their own decision. Since that time, the gay movement has proclaimed that it is unconstitutional to not recognize same sex marriages. In their interpretation of the judgment by the U.S. Supreme Court, many state supreme courts agreed that same sex marriages should be allowed and that those who disagree are going against the constitution. At this point in the battle, some states recognize same-sex marriages while others do not, causing tremendous problems in the lives of many persons. It needs to be noted that the gay rights people are spending great resources in the battle for same sex marriages in the various states that still do not permit it.

The attack on the family now seems to have been won by the gay movement as more and more people accept the premise that marriage is between two loving adults. It remains to be seen what repercussions this acceptance will have on society, but there is no doubt that in the United States, the term “family” now needs to be redefined.

Sports:

Many would think that sports would be neutral territory in discussions on politics, religion, and social issues, but the homosexual lobby has made it a prime area of concern. The view of many in the world is that most sports require a macho type of person to excel; thus, the normal homosexual would not qualify. The main channel for the LGBT lobby to gain influence in sports has been the sports media.

Beginning in the first part of 2013, many sports magazines and writers brought up the issue as to when the first openly homosexual man would play in one of the major professional leagues such as the NFL, the NBA, or MLB. Several ex-players from these leagues had come out and stated that

they were gay, but none who were active players had openly admitted their homosexual identity. This silence was broken when the former college Division I player Michael Sam publicly came out as homosexual in February 2014 after he completed his college career. Later that year, he was selected by the St. Louis Rams in the 2014 NFL draft and thus became the first publicly gay player in the league. When he was drafted, Sam received celebrity coverage in the press. Even President Obama openly congratulated him on his decision. It was clear that no one dared speak against him. This was proven when Tony Dungy, one of the most respected coaches in the NFL, was asked if he would have drafted Sam. He replied that he would not have because he did not feel a team he was coaching needed the hype that was being given to this player. Many consider Dungy as the most ethical representative of the league, but after his statement, many in the press attacked him. In an interview with Bob Costas, he was asked about the drafting of Sam, and Dungy paused before giving an acceptable but vague answer. He was criticized for the pause while others felt he took the middle way out. In showing the ridicule that Dungy has had poured out on him, one writer stated, "When he decided to declare Michael Sam a 'distraction' it was a code to distract from his own homophobia and same sex marriage stance."⁴⁶

Several players have come out against gays in professional sports. One of them, San Francisco 49er's player Chris Culliver, was soundly reprimanded and was told by his team that he needed to apologize. Others who have been opposed to gays have been told that they would lose their position on the team for holding to biblical beliefs on the subject, and they were told that they would have to go to "sensitivity training" if they wanted to continue playing on their team.

Jason Collins, who had already played for a professional team in the NBA, also came out about the same time. He earned the title of the first male professional athlete to be gay. Once again, the media made a hero out of the first gay player to come out. Being gay is now considered to be a highly sought after means for becoming famous.

In the winter Olympics in Sochi, seven athletes, all women, admitted to being lesbians. The world sports scene has not come as far as the USA, but it will move forward in its acceptance, as the homosexual lobby is putting pressure on many sports figures to side with them. It should be added that it was well known for many years that some outstanding women athletes, such as tennis player Billy Jean King, were homosexuals.

⁴⁶ Bob Raissman, "Tony Dungy's comments about Ram rookie Michael Sam could bring NBC viewers," *New York Daily News*, July 24, 2014.

Media:

Recognizing their need of good public relations, leaders of the movement created the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD). This became one of the most important tools of the homosexual movement within the media industry. One of their tactics was the threat of lawsuits against any media outlet or any person who spoke negatively about homosexuals. In many cases, their zeal even turned into a form of intimidation. A good example of this was the recently released list of “shame” colleges that were described as “the absolute worst colleges for LGBT youth.” If a college supports any activity that the Campus Pride organization feels is negative towards them, the whole university is put on the shame list. Of the 102 institutions listed, the clear majority affirmed historic orthodox Christianity.

Other Mountains of Culture:

Other mountains of culture include the military and technology. In each of these areas, it is possible to track how the homosexual movement has been able to influence this important part of the culture. In the case of this movement, it is impossible to have numerical count to determine their success, but everyone can see the rapid change in many attitudes of the average citizen, not only in the U.S.A. but also in many other countries around the world. Because they chose to have a Mega strategy, they have been able to have an undue influence in many parts of the American society.

There is no doubt but that the homosexual movement has been successful in both the development and the carrying out of their strategy. They have chosen to look at the whole of society and to find ways to influence it for their cause. Christians could learn from them, not by adopting their agenda but by looking at some of the tools they use. There are ways that the Church of Jesus Christ can be even more efficient in carrying out its task of winning the world.

CHAPTER 8

Without a Vision, the People Perish

A Look at the Three Christian Cover Organizations

**The World Council of Churches (WCC)
The World Evangelical Alliance (WEA)
The Lausanne Movement**

*“A cord of thee stands is not quickly broken”
Ecclesiastes 4:12 (NIV)*

Introduction:

In the second chapter, I stated that many Christians are living in a fog concerning the growth of the worldwide Church. The meaning of the fog is that people cannot really see clearly the whole of Church growth. All Christians rejoice when they are told that the number of believers in our faith is growing, especially in the third world countries, but few have taken the time to study the growth of the larger Church and particularly its decline in the Western world. Many major denominations in the West are not happy that they have stopped growing, but they have offered up no real solutions to change the situation. One of the reasons that no one is looking at the total world scene is that they are too busy looking at their own private world that usually includes structures working at the Micro and Meta levels. What is needed today is for someone or some agency, specialized in the development of strategy, to come forward with solid, well-researched plans for the growth of the world Church.

At one time I felt that we had three organizations that could fill this void. I call them “cover” organizations since all three consider themselves to be worldwide movements consisting either of many churches, many Christian organizations, or many individuals. As I began to look at the cover organizations, I was interested to discover that all three voiced a commitment to developing a practical global strategy that would help

to reach the whole world for Christ, but many questions remain about how successful they have been in their quest.

Some may see that my choosing of only three cover organizations could be limiting. I am aware that on the Global Christian scene, there are many large organizations that represent many Christians and churches around the world. One is the Roman Catholic Church. I have declined including them in this book due to the complexity of both their historical and contemporary settings. It would be necessary to write a separate book to study the strategy of the Roman Catholic Church down through the ages. Some of what they did and are doing is good, but much lacks a true Global outlook. It is of interest that four Global cover organizations met in April 2018 at the World Summit of Global Christian Forum in Bogota, Columbia. The sponsors of this meeting were the World Council of Churches, World Evangelical Alliance, The Pentecostal World Fellowship, and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (Vatican). This meeting was designed to find more effective ways to deal with such topics as persecution of Christians, human rights, world hunger, immigration, church unity, etc.

In making my choice for only three, I felt that those chosen were the best examples of larger organizations that represent the World Christian movement and still have a sense of evangelism and missions. Thus, I chose the World Council of Churches, the World Evangelical Alliance, and the Lausanne Movement.

My starting point was to try to understand the purposes of the three organizations. One advantage that I had was that I was not a novice in this area. In talking with some leaders of the Lausanne movement, I discovered that I was one of the very few who had attended all its major meetings, including the first one in Berlin in 1966. I actively served on some of the committees that were interested in building better relations with the World Council of Churches. I remember well one of the committee members stating, "This is ridiculous. We in the Lausanne Movement are writing letters to an equal committee at the WCC, and most of both committees are made up of the same people." There has always been a desire for a closer working together, but one of the main stumbling blocks has been the understanding of "evangelism" by the three different groups. Over the last fifty years, there has been some give and take in relationships between the three cover organizations regarding working together. The reason why none of the three cover organizations has developed a Mega strategy to change the world has to do with the purposes of the organizations. Let us look at the expressed purpose of each group.

The World Evangelical Alliance:

Introduction:

First, let us look at the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA). Their stated purpose is “to establish and strengthen regional and national Evangelical Alliances, who in turn enable the national churches so advance the Good News of Jesus Christ and effect personal and community transformation for the Glory of God.”

The WEA is made up of local churches that have formed national evangelical unions. The WEA has as its base churches as well as regional and national unions. The leaders of this organization claim to represent over 600 million Christians. This figure is probably correct. Because of the size of the organization as well as the fact that they have representatives from many countries, the leadership is very concerned with bringing the different national unions together, something that is no simple matter. Their main emphasis is on fellowship, but it has been recently announced that they have three new areas of concern: (1) the persecution of Christians, (2) religiously motivated violence, and (3) the resulting refugee crisis. There is little time left for strategy development, and strategy planning is not a high priority.⁴⁷

Historical Background:

WEA’s roots began in 1846 with the establishment in England of the Evangelical Alliance (EA), incorporated in 1912 as the World’s Evangelical Alliance (a British organization). Prior to its founding, the Second Great Awakening (1791-1842) had already created a desire for Christian fellowship and unity across the boundaries of denominations and countries. There were many attempts on the local level for working together. The actual founding took place in 1848 at a watershed gathering in London that lasted from August 19 to September 2. In this meeting, there were representatives from England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Sweden, Germany, France, Holland, Switzerland, the USA and Canada. Some 800 to 1000 Christians met together for worship, preaching, and planning.

During the next 100 years, branches were formed in many countries, mainly in North America and Europe. They emphasized the proclamation

⁴⁷ Taken from a report given by the General Secretary at the WEA 2016 Meeting of the International Leadership Forum of the WEA, which took place in Honduras, February 9-13, 2015.

and expansion of the Gospel. Up to 1951, the Alliance was primarily a British venture with only limited participation from the rest of Europe and the USA. In 1951, 91 men and women from 21 countries met in Holland as the International Convention of Evangelicals to re-envision the old EA into a genuine global fellowship. Thus, the World Evangelical Fellowship was formed upon the foundations of the older Evangelical Alliance. The name was later changed to the World Evangelical Alliance. Due to its organizational structure, the Alliance has generally always had financial problems which has affected the organization even up to the present. The reputation of the organization has been up and down, with it gaining new strength at the start of the twenty-first century. The future of the organization remains to be seen. It continues to be recognized as a valid representative of the churches of the evangelical world.

Goals for the Future:

As I grew up in America, I was aware of the existence of the WEA, but for most Americans, little was known of their activities. In recent years, there seems to have been a revival of interest and effectiveness of the WEA. Much of this is because the leaders of the previous General Director Geoff Tunnicliffe and the present General Director Bishop Elfrain Tendo have helped the organization to reach a higher level of influence. I have seen new excitement coming from their leadership as they take their God-given responsibilities seriously. In many ways, they have taken the lead in getting some of the other cover organizations to see the need of finding ways for world evangelization as well as meeting the physical needs of the masses. To accomplish these tasks, they must also address contemporary issues such as world hunger, human rights, persecution against Christians, and other topics. They are now doing this in a very effective way without losing their historical conservative theological position, which places a strong emphasis on evangelism and missions. On July 5, 2015, leaders of the WEA met with leaders of the WCC and declared their common interest in their fight against poverty, and they promised to have a closer work on worship and witness.

Credit for the higher profile in the Christian world is partially due to the excellent work by Dr. Thomas Schirrmacher, the Associate General Secretary for Theological concern. He and others working with him have built new bridges to many of the other Christian cover groups including the Roman Catholic Church. As the WEA leadership continues to set their eyes on the proclamation of the Gospel to a lost and dying world, they

could become the preeminent force for the evangelization of the whole world to Christ.

The World Council of Churches:

Introduction:

The World Council of Churches (WCC) is one of the best-known Christian groups in modern history. It was founded in 1948 and is now the broadest and most inclusive among the many organizational expressions of the modern ecumenical movements whose main goal is Christian unity. The WCC is a fellowship of 348-member churches who together represent more than a half billion Christians around the world. Its basic makeup is also church and denomination based. It defines itself as “a community of churches on the way to visible unity and in one faith and one Eucharistic fellowship, expressed in worship and in common life in Christ. It seeks to advance towards this unity, as Jesus prayed for his followers, ‘so that the world may believe.’”⁴⁸ Again, their reason for not looking at the development of a global strategy is that it is not a high priority for them. Unity of the Church seems to be their main purpose. Historically, they have defined evangelism as social action and feel that their main goal is to help those in need. They see growth as the result of helping others. They should be commended for their excellent work in giving aid to the needy in the world. The membership of the WCC has remained somewhat static over the past half century. The growth of WCC generally does not come from conversion growth through evangelistic efforts of their member churches but rather by biological growth (baptizing of church members’ children) or by transfer growth.

History of the WCC:

The historical roots of the WCC are found in the student and lay movements of the nineteenth century and the 1910 Edinburgh International Missionary Conference. Major Protestant denominations and missionary societies, predominantly from North America and Northern Europe, sent 1200 representatives to Edinburgh, Scotland. The theme of the conference was global missions, and the leaders issued a call for Protestant missionary organizations to work in unity. Because this conference was so

⁴⁸ World Council of Churches, *What is the World Council of Churches?*, accessed 21 May 2018, <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/about-us>.

successful, a string of other conferences seeking more unity and less missions followed until the founding of the WCC.

Although the major driving force for the WCC's establishment was evangelical, the direction of the organization blurred as time passed. Today the WCC brings together churches, denominations, and church fellowships in more than 110 countries and territories throughout the world, representing over 500 million Christians and including most of the world's Orthodox churches and scores of Anglicans, Baptists, Lutherans, Methodist, and Reformed churches as well as many Independent churches.

Diverse Theology and Church Growth:

During most of the twentieth century and certainly in the second half of it, many theological seminaries and denominations tended towards a more liberal theology than a belief system with which most Evangelicals were comfortable. This liberalism began to cause a break within Protestant churches. As the WCC's main goal was unity of the Church, they needed to support a very broad theological position that could encompass the more liberal expressions of the day. Because of this trend, the leaders of WCC began to see evangelism and missions as equal to social action; thus, the major emphasis became aiding the poor. It was apparent that the Great Commission of the evangelical world was Mathew 28:18-20 while the Great Commission for the more liberal churches of the WCC was Luke 4:18-19.

In the middle of the last century there arose Liberation Theology, which was supported and even sometimes financed by the WCC. When Evangelicals and those supporting the ecumenical movement spoke together, they would use the same biblical terminology but with entirely different definitions. Because conversion growth was not a high priority, the churches of the WCC did not experience much growth.

When the WCC was first founded, the main emphasis was missions, but over the years the emphasis became unity. This is a very positive goal and one that is certainly needed today, but for the WCC, unity is not only the goal but also the result. There does not seem to be a great interest in converting others from different religions to Christ; the WCC is seeking one mankind with all religions working together to create a unified humanity. It is unlikely that the WCC is interested in the development of a Mega strategy to bring the peoples of the world to the Cross of Jesus Christ.

The Lausanne Movement:

Brief History of the movement:

The Lausanne Movement had its start in the development of the evangelical movement from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Some might say that the real beginnings were with the highly successful Edinburgh Conference of 1910. Of interest is that the World Council of Churches also traces its beginning to the same conference.

Over the next 50 years, the two movements seemed to grow up side by side as the WCC held several conferences showing that they had a direct line to Edinburgh. The evangelical movement was not as well organized, but it stood in opposition to the theology of the WCC. The key breaking point for the two important streams was their definition of “missions” and “evangelism.” Concerning the two concepts, the WCC tended to see that both terms were synonymous with social action, while the evangelicals saw evangelism as only a part of missions and that it should be defined as bringing persons to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ; thus, the divide continued to grow. By 1965, under the sponsorship of Billy Graham, the evangelicals held the World Conference on Evangelism in Berlin with the main intent to make clear that evangelism was the harnessing of the saving power of Jesus Christ to give man new life.

Both groups seemed to define missions as an extension of their definitions of evangelism, but their definitions of evangelism were different, so their understanding of missions was not the same. This theological difference continued for many years. John Stott tried to find a solution by simply giving this definition: Missions = Evangelism + Social Action. Even this simple solution was met with problems in that each group felt that its emphasis should be first, followed by that of the other group. The WCC wanted it to be social action first and then evangelism while the evangelicals wanted evangelism first and then social action.

Because it seemed that both movements were on different tracks, the Lausanne movement was founded as a real force in July 1974 when over 2400 participants from 150 nations gathered in Lausanne, Switzerland, for the first International Congress of World Evangelism. *Time* magazine, in a lengthy article, described this conference as a formidable forum, possibly the widest-ranging meeting of Christians ever held. This successful conference was followed by two other major meetings, Lausanne II, which was held in July 1989 in Manila, the Philippines, and Lausanne III, held in 2010 in Cape Town, South Africa. The last one in Cape Town at-

tracted over 4,200 participants from 198 nations on site and over 200,000 believers from 97 countries online.

General Analysis of Growth Strategies:

The Lausanne Movement has had a very clear global vision from its beginning until now: (1) the gospel for every person on earth, (2) an evangelical church for every people, (3) Christ-like leaders for every church, and (4) Kingdom impact in every sphere of society.

The first International Congress in Switzerland set the tone for the following two main events. When reviewing the significant role of Lausanne, I believe the leaders developed three major ways they could accomplish their mission: (1) study the theological foundations for global mission, (2) study the unreached people groups, and (3) study the holistic mission.

There is no question that they were extremely successful in the development and promotion of a strong theology for missions. Many organizations could easily accept the theology presented in *The Whole Gospel for the Whole Earth*, a book published after the second conference.

When looking at strategy, the leaders also recommended a program known as S.M.A.R.T.: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely.⁴⁹ This plan set goals for outreach by the global church and helped fulfill the vision of bringing the gospel to every person. It was felt that in this way the task of world evangelism could be fulfilled.

Appraisal of the Strategy of the Lausanne Movement:

At present, if one of the three cover organizations is involved in winning the world for Christ, it is the Lausanne Movement. They are the ones who see evangelism as bringing people to faith in Christ and bringing them into the fellowship of the Church. The reason this organization has failed to form a global outreach has to do with its base. The Lausanne movement is different from the other two in that its base is made up of parachurch organizations and interested individuals rather than larger groupings of churches. One statement from their movement notes, "Lausanne has benefited from significant involvement from agencies and individual Christians." It is true that many churches look to the Lausanne Movement for help, but it is difficult to get the large number of Christian

⁴⁹ Timothy C. Tennent, *Lausanne And Global Evangelicalism: Theological Distinctives and Missiological Impact*, 43.

mission organizations to agree practically on a common strategy. In my many meetings with them, I have heard the right statements, but in talking with the individuals who attend their conferences, I have ascertained that while they all see the need for global evangelism, each supporting organization wants its own smaller mission society to lead the way. It is difficult to get them to agree on a global strategy that really works.

Conclusion:

All three of the cover organizations have made great contributions to both the unity of the church and to the carrying out of its mission. I still feel, however, that many of their leaders have become so busy that they have failed to see the need for the creation of a Mega strategy to reach many more for Christ. Of the three cover organizations, the WEA possibly has the best opportunity to look at strategy development on a global basis because it is the only one of the three that has a good, strong concept of evangelism, and this understanding, coupled together with its strong church emphasis, places it in a favorable position.

Presently there is an increasing amount of close cooperation between these three and some other organizations, including the Roman Catholics. It appears as if much of the leadership of this drive towards more cooperation comes from the WEA. Some have feared that what is now taking place will lead more in an ecumenical direction, but strange as it may seem, just the opposite is taking place. More and more the cover organizations see the need for a more vibrant strategy of witnessing to the lost of the world. In this the WEA has been a leader, finding ways to work with others but without compromising their theology of evangelization and missions.

CHAPTER 9

Conclusion

Planning for the Future

*“But the noble man makes noble plans,
and by noble deeds he stands”
Isaiah 32:8 (NIV)*

Introduction:

The story has been told of a conversation between Mark Twain and some friends during the period between World War I and World War II. It seemed that the German U-boats had been very successful in torpedoing many of the freight ships of the Allies. The question was asked, “How we can respond to this problem?” Twain offered a solution. He stated that all we needed to do is to heat up the ocean to a high temperature and the U-boats would come up to the surface as bubbles. When they were above the surface of the water, our military boats could shoot at them and sink them. One of those in attendance asked with some bewilderment, “How are we going to heat up the ocean?” For an answer, Twain said, “Listen, I have given you the answer to the problem; now you have to work out the details.”

After writing a book such as this one, I am reminded that it is always easy to evaluate others, but it becomes much more difficult when it is necessary to apply what has been learned into a successful strategy. After I wrote my book *How Islam Plans to Change the World*, many said that I had successfully presented the problem facing the world through Islam, but then they asked, “What can we do about it?” In the second edition of that book, I wrote a chapter giving the solution on how to counteract the gains of Islam and how to win Muslims to Christ. This section was very much appreciated. What follows will be both a comparison of the seven groups and a few practical suggestions for the Evangelical world.

Comparison of Success:

In looking at the seven groups studied, it is hard to find one term that will describe all seven of the groups. Two of them, the Southern Baptists and the Assemblies of God, can be considered as solid Evangelicals while two of them, the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Mormons, are sects of Christianity. One, Islam, is a world religion, while another one, the homosexuals, is really the face of what could be called secular humanism. The last group, consisting of the three cover organizations, pretty much takes in the full spectrum of Christianity. These differences make it difficult to make any type of realistic comparisons, but much can still be learned by looking at the growth of these vastly different bodies.

The Evangelicals:

Growth of the Assemblies is not what it was twenty years earlier. Both the Baptists and the Pentecostals are growing at a rapid rate in the countries of the developing world while there is only slow or limited growth in the western world, which includes Western Europe. Any strategy that is developed will need to consider the differences in the various parts of the world. Perhaps the developing world needs to concentrate on the Micro and Meta levels while the West needs to take a new look at their present situation and be ready to enter a new area of development.

One of the problems with the present structure is that the more traditional churches are not ready to take on new plans or ideas. It is necessary, therefore, that any planning for a Mega strategy must include both older and wiser Christian leaders as well as the younger, inspired leaders. They can work together if given the opportunity. When Dr. Edwin Land developed his Polaroid camera, he took his idea to the large film company Kodak. They looked at what he proposed and rejected it, the reason being that they did not develop it. Leaders are often non-cooperative when someone from outside of their organization comes in with suggestions on how to do the job better. They too follow the same statement: "It was not developed here."

The Sects:

This is a term that has different meaning to different persons. For instance, in Germany the Baptists are a sect while in some parts of Alabama (USA), the Roman Catholics are a sect. The term I have used to describe the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Mormons is "sects." The term "sect"

comes from the English word “section” or a part of. Thus, a sect is a part of the whole, however different it may be from the whole. Another way of looking at this is to see that a sect originally comes from Christian history but has added some teachings. They are generally looked at by most denominations with some disdain. Others feel that a better term to describe them would be “cult.” However, a cult is a totally new religion, something like Scientology in the USA, while both the Mormons and the Jews retain a basic Christian foundation. I prefer to stay with the term sect in describing the two groups that we studied. There is a rule of thumb that says when the larger Church or denomination is weak, then the sects will grow, but when the larger Church is strong, the cults will grow. In America, there is some growth by both sects and cults because some parts of Christianity are experiencing a time of renewal and revival while most of the more traditional denominations, such as the Methodists and the Congregationalists, are losing members.

America has advocated for a multi-cultural society. Previous descriptions of our society were that it was like a melting pot, where people from different races, cultures, and ethnic groups would come to America and become one. This has not really happened. Others say that our society is more like a mosaic in that each individual piece retains its own form but adds to the beauty of the whole picture. Again, this is incomplete because there is always some give and take when two cultures live together in close proximity.

Others, probably more correctly, have described the American picture as being more like a stew, where each piece, whether it is the meat, the peas, or the potatoes, retains its own form but adds to the total mixture. Today in our society, we have churches, sects, cults, and religions living side by side, generally with only limited difficulties. We must wait and see if this will continue.

The World Religion:

One friend from Europe, who was a practicing Muslim, spoke with me after making the *haji* into Mecca. He told me that a large sign on the road just outside of the Holy City stated, “Islam now has over one billion adherents.” Islam is without question the largest non-Christian religion in the world. The exact numbers are difficult to come by, but one highly respected demographer, Patrick Johnstone, gave the following figures for the Muslims and Christians at the turn of this century.

Religion	Population Percentage	Adherents	Annual Growth
Christian	32.54%	1.973 billion	1.63%
Muslim	21.09%	1.279 billion	2.17% ⁵⁰

He goes on to add that only the religions that have a growth rate of over 1.39 percent are increasing faster than the world's population. Many will question these numbers, but they appear to be the most accurate ones available. Muslims often say that they are the fastest growing religion in the world, and Johnson seems to support this claim although if evangelical Christianity is separated from the larger Christian church body, then their growth rate would be larger than that of Islam. Johnson claims that the growth rate of Evangelicals in the world today is 4.7 percent and that of the Pentecostals is 4.3 percent.

There can be debates as to who is growing faster, but it needs to be recognized that the Muslims are now on top of their game as far as strategy development is concerned. Islam used to be a desert people's religion, but today they have a cadre of well-educated, outstanding strategists who are developing their Mega strategy and are continuing to change their methods, if necessary, in order to reach that goal of making the whole world Muslim by the year 2080.

Secular Humanism:

Marin County, located near San Francisco, is known as one of the wealthiest and most liberal counties in the United States. Some Christian leaders living in this county invited a world-renowned theologian to speak at a breakfast dealing with social issues. The speaker, Os Guinness, opened his remarks by saying, "Those living in the West have to deal with three major issues today." He listed them as (1) the future of China in the world of tomorrow, (2) the battle between secularists in the West and those supporting Judeo-Christian principles, and (3) the rise of Islam.

Acceptance of homosexuality is an outgrowth of the homosexuals' strategy that functions on all three levels, but their main concentration appears to be the Mega level where they can best change the attitudes of the whole society. When looking at the ten mountains of culture, we can see that they are operating successfully in all ten at this time. They seem

⁵⁰ Patrick Johnstone and Jason Mandryk, *Operation World: Twenty-first Century* (London: Bethany, 2001), 2.

to have started at the top and then worked down. One of their main emphases is to find ways to influence public opinions.

An important part of their strategy is twofold, a war on Christianity and intimidations of those who resist what they want. The two professors who developed the strategy wrote that the time was right for them to target those whom they called the victimizers and homo-haters, and then they wanted to turn the tables on them and make homosexuals the victims. Anyone in the Western world today who speaks against the homosexuals will immediately feel the wrath of many, even to the point of losing his or her job or reputation. The Board of a mid-sized computer firm fired a CEO from his position because he contributed money to the cause in California that was trying to define marriage as only that between a man and a woman. The homosexuals have been very successful in the art of intimidation.

In many of the papers that explain the strategy of the gay movement, reference has been made to Saul Alinsky's book *Rules for Radicals, A Pragmatic Primer for Realistic Radicals*. It appears that the homosexual movement and Alinsky have many of the same ideological philosophies as well as the same method, which includes radical demonstrations, disrupting of the social order, etc. It would be incorrect to say that the gays have taken Alinsky's methods in totality, but it is of interest to note that Alinsky was active in the 1970s, the same time as the gays were becoming organized.

The homosexuals have been somewhat surprised as to the success they have experienced in such a short time. This has caused them to contemplate what they can do in the future. One goal seems to be the acceptance of pedophilia with youth over the age of 12. A good example of this was a movement in California recommending that the law would be changed to give younger persons the right to vote. The suggested new law would give young people between the ages of 15 and 18 one half a vote while those between the ages of 12 and 15 would have one-fourth vote. The reasoning was that the youth of the state needed to begin to take on responsibility at an earlier age. Many saw this change as being good. It was later discovered, however, that one of the prime movers behind the law was the NAMB (National Association of Men and Boys—a pedophile organization). They went a step further in their reasoning by saying that when a person is old enough to vote, then he or she should also have the responsibility as to how he or she wants to use his or her own body.

One expression of their desire to reach a larger community is seen in the new name they are using. The Homosexual movement until recently

called themselves the LBGT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transsexual) community. They have now expanded this to the letters LBGTQIAPD with the additional letters giving an expanded view of who they are. The added letters stand for Questioning, Intersexual, Asexual, Pansexual, and Demi-sexual. They continue to expand their outreach. Today, for simplicity's sake, they generally use only LBGTQ.

But the question remains, how do we determine the success of their Mega strategy? The exact number of LGBT persons active in the world is very difficult to come by. There are estimates ranging from 2 percent to 5 percent, but the change of society's attitude toward gays has been radically successful. If this were their objective, then they have succeeded. They continue to grow financially and in prestige, mostly in the West but more and more in the rest of the world.

One Model for Change:

Crossroad's Church in Cincinnati, Ohio: A Mega Strategy for Religion and Technology

A new positive phenomenon the United States is the growth of what is known as mega churches. Of the 50 largest churches in the United States, 35 of them have a weekly attendance of over 10,000 while the other fifteen have an attendance of over 6,000. When the attendance rate is lowered to those who have an attendance of 2,000 or more in a week, the number is 1,300. Most of these churches are what are called multisite churches because they hold their worship services, often via the Internet, in two or more locations.

One church that has excelled in the use of technology and business principles in a rapid growth pattern is the Crossroad's Church in Cincinnati, Ohio. This church is now just over two decades old and already claims to have a weekly attendance of over 38,000. In 2016 they added 6,000 more attendees, which gave them a growth rate of 25 percent.⁵¹

A large part of the growth of the church comes because the pastor has surrounded himself with leaders and people who have out-of-the box creative ideas. The church is stocked with members who have experience in graphic design, copywriting, project management, public relations, and social media strategy development. The age of the membership is, like many of the other mega churches, between the ages of 25 and 49.

⁵¹ Kelly Carr, "How To Become America's Fastest-Growing Church? Think Like a Startup," *Christianity Today*, April 20, 2018.

Many of the mega churches are considered multisite churches, but they have only an average of 3.5 sites outside of their main facility. Crossroads has experience with using the business concept of franchising. In using this model, they now have at least 35 groups meeting together in such far-flung cities as Seattle, Los Angeles, and Houston. It is refreshing to see how well the church uses technology to separate themselves from the traditional brick and mortar concept of church. They pride themselves in being known as one church in many locations.

Of course, churches such as Crossroads have many critics. One criticism is that they are drawing others away from smaller neighborhood churches and thus their growth is mostly transfer growth and not evangelistic growth. This is somewhat true, but it should be said that they have created a plan that reaches into the business world to create an appealing program that can connect with many people who not being reached by the traditional church. It should be noted that 95 percent of mega churches have both a conservative theology and a social philosophy. God seems to be using Crossroads in the development of a mega strategy to reach a nation.

What can be done?

Here is a suggested five-step plan to make the necessary changes for Evangelicals to think globally on the Mega level.

First, the three cover organizations that already have a worldwide apparatus would be the ideal starting place. I have already mentioned that the WCC does not have the interest in either evangelism or missions that would be necessary to create new and useful plans. They have stated that the main goal of their organization is the unity of believers. The Lausanne movement is already doing much in this area, but when it comes to the actual development of goals and objectives for churches to use, it fails. One reason is that the makeup of the Lausanne movement is not churches but rather para-church organizations and individuals. The WEA would seem to be the one that is best placed to be the conduit for the creation of a Mega strategy that could help evangelicals to reach more people. An important part of any Mega strategy would be to promote the idea with the leaders of the three cover organizations. Maybe the same strategy as the one the homosexuals used could be employed: forget the top leaders and concentrate on the board members of each of the three organizations.

Another group that would need to be convinced of the need for a Mega strategy is the leaders of the national unions of churches. The diffi-

culty is that they have many problems with which to deal, but I have found that often when they are presented with the possibility of new moves forward, they are ready to consider the possibilities.

Second, effective leadership is essential. A Mega approach needs to have the very top leaders in our churches involved in forming a strategy. One possible way to get more thought put into this project is to draw on the work of the multitudes of students now writing PhD dissertations and conducting Doctor of Ministry projects. So often when these works are finished, they wind up on a shelf, never to see the light of day again. If the writers of these works could see that what they are researching could be used in the creation of a Mega strategy, they might put more thought into what they are writing and make it more useful. We now have students from most of the countries of the world doing tremendous research and writing. Let's try to help them see how they can be involved in the plan. In one DMin program in the U.S., the students have been asked to be a part of the creation of a Mega strategy, and it has been very rewarding to see how many are doing excellent research and writing to contribute to forming a foundation for such a strategy. There needs to be more coordination between the academic and the practical worlds of our faith.

Third, we must attempt to find outstanding leaders in all the areas of the ten mountains. They need to be challenged to take the lead in the development of plans to influence their mountain. This is now being done in the area of business. Top Christian leaders are now coming together to see how they can use business in missions. In all the ten mountains, there are organizations that already exist, but they are often either separated from each other or they have not been taught how they can help in Global Evangelization. They need to be challenged. One open field is sports. There has been great success in the United States in helping to influence others through sports figures who are also dedicated believers. Many good organizations are now working effectively in winning prospective sports stars to Christ. The same is now gathering steam in Europe, but much more needs to be done in other parts of the world. Those who have experienced success need to be enlisted in the developing of a better strategy for using sports to win the world. This argument could be used for all the Ten Mountains of Culture.

Fourth, we need to help the leaders of our churches, denominations, and movements see what others are doing for growth and realize that, in the new age, we must be willing to learn from each other. This can be accomplished via books, literature, the Internet, conferences, and personal contacts. The church growth movement helped church leaders take off the blinders and help the church grow. This needs to be done once again.

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Fifth, we must realize that unless the Lord builds a church, those who build labor in vain. Many of the movements we have studied are far from being Christian, and we who are the believers must realize that we need to draw upon the power of the Holy Spirit. Arthur Glasser, my mentor at Fuller Theological Seminary, told the story of the time he went to visit Dr. Donald McGavran, who was gravely ill. Glasser was amazed that even at this stage in life the well-respected missiologist was bright and alert. McGavran asked Glasser this question, “Art, what part of the Great Commission has the church neglected the most today?” Glasser said that he thought about the question and considered what we are doing: “Going—we are sending out more missionaries than ever before, baptizing—we are baptizing multitudes, especially in the developing world, and teaching—we now have more Bible schools, seminaries, and courses than ever before.” Dr. Glasser then said that he was not sure of an answer and asked McGavran what he thought we had neglected the most. McGavran replied, “It is the part when the Lord said, ‘All authority has been given to me.’” In the church today, we have lost the idea that we are serving the Lord under the authority of Jesus Christ. One of the errors of the Church Growth Movement was that they put too much emphasis on the academic and practical and too little on the spiritual. Only if the Lord is in this movement will it succeed. We have the great advantage over many of the other groups in that we have the power of the Holy Spirit on our side, and we must realize that it is not only our job to create a Mega strategy, but also to issue in a world-wide revival so that all can become disciples of Christ.

Conclusion.

The purpose of this book is to help the Church and its leaders look further at the possibility of the development of new strategies on all three levels and to allow some of the co-leaders to spend more time in the development of Mega strategies. As non-evangelicals continue to grow at a rapid rate, we need to spend more time rethinking our strategy, especially in the age of technology. We have the correct theology, but we may be lacking in the use of the new tools available for missions.

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About the Author

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World Evangelical Alliance

World Evangelical Alliance is a global ministry working with local churches around the world to join in common concern to live and proclaim the Good News of Jesus in their communities. WEA is a network of churches in 129 nations that have each formed an evangelical alliance and over 100 international organizations joining together to give a worldwide identity, voice and platform to more than 600 million evangelical Christians. Seeking holiness, justice and renewal at every level of society – individual, family, community and culture, God is glorified and the nations of the earth are forever transformed.

Christians from ten countries met in London in 1846 for the purpose of launching, in their own words, “a new thing in church history, a definite organization for the expression of unity amongst Christian individuals belonging to different churches.” This was the beginning of a vision that was fulfilled in 1951 when believers from 21 countries officially formed the World Evangelical Fellowship. Today, 150 years after the London gathering, WEA is a dynamic global structure for unity and action that embraces 600 million evangelicals in 129 countries. It is a unity based on the historic Christian faith expressed in the evangelical tradition. And it looks to the future with vision to accomplish God's purposes in discipling the nations for Jesus Christ.

Commissions:

- Theology
- Missions
- Religious Liberty
- Women's Concerns
- Youth
- Information Technology

Initiatives and Activities

- Ambassador for Human Rights
- Ambassador for Refugees
- Creation Care Task Force
- Global Generosity Network
- International Institute for Religious Freedom
- International Institute for Islamic Studies
- Leadership Institute
- Micah Challenge
- Global Human Trafficking Task Force
- Peace and Reconciliation Initiative
- UN-Team

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www.worlddea.org



Giving Hands

GIVING HANDS GERMANY (GH) was established in 1995 and is officially recognized as a nonprofit foreign aid organization. It is an international operating charity that – up to now – has been supporting projects in about 40 countries on four continents. In particular we care for orphans and street children. Our major focus is on Africa and Central America. GIVING HANDS always mainly provides assistance for self-help and furthers human rights thinking.

The charity itself is not bound to any church, but on the spot we are cooperating with churches of all denominations. Naturally we also cooperate with other charities as well as governmental organizations to provide assistance as effective as possible under the given circumstances.

The work of GIVING HANDS GERMANY is controlled by a supervisory board. Members of this board are Manfred Feldmann, Colonel V. Doner and Kathleen McCall. Dr. Christine Schirmmacher is registered as legal manager of GIVING HANDS at the local district court. The local office and work of the charity are coordinated by Rev. Horst J. Kreie as executive manager. Dr. theol. Thomas Schirmmacher serves as a special consultant for all projects.

Thanks to our international contacts companies and organizations from many countries time and again provide containers with gifts in kind which we send to the different destinations where these goods help to satisfy elementary needs. This statutory purpose is put into practice by granting nutrition, clothing, education, construction and maintenance of training centers at home and abroad, construction of wells and operation of water treatment systems, guidance for self-help and transportation of goods and gifts to areas and countries where needy people live.

GIVING HANDS has a publishing arm under the leadership of Titus Vogt, that publishes human rights and other books in English, Spanish, Swahili and other languages.

These aims are aspired to the glory of the Lord according to the basic Christian principles put down in the Holy Bible.

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Martin Bucer Seminary

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Solid training for the Kingdom of God

- Alternative theological education
- Study while serving a church or working another job
- Enables students to remain in their own churches
- Encourages independent thinking
- Learning from the growth of the universal church.

Academic

- For the Bachelor's degree: 180 Bologna-Credits
- For the Master's degree: 120 additional Credits
- Both old and new teaching methods: All day seminars, independent study, term papers, etc.

Our Orientation:

- Complete trust in the reliability of the Bible
- Building on reformation theology
- Based on the confession of the German Evangelical Alliance
- Open for innovations in the Kingdom of God

Our Emphasis:

- The Bible
- Ethics and Basic Theology
- Missions
- The Church

Our Style:

- Innovative
- Relevant to society
- International
- Research oriented
- Interdisciplinary

Structure

- 15 study centers in 7 countries with local partners
- 5 research institutes
- President: Prof. Dr. Thomas Schirmmacher
Vice President: Prof. Dr. Thomas K. Johnson
- Deans: Thomas Kinker, Th.D.;
Titus Vogt, lic. theol., Carsten Friedrich, M.Th.

Missions through research

- Institute for Religious Freedom
- Institute for Islamic Studies
- Institute for Life and Family Studies
- Institute for Crisis, Dying, and Grief
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