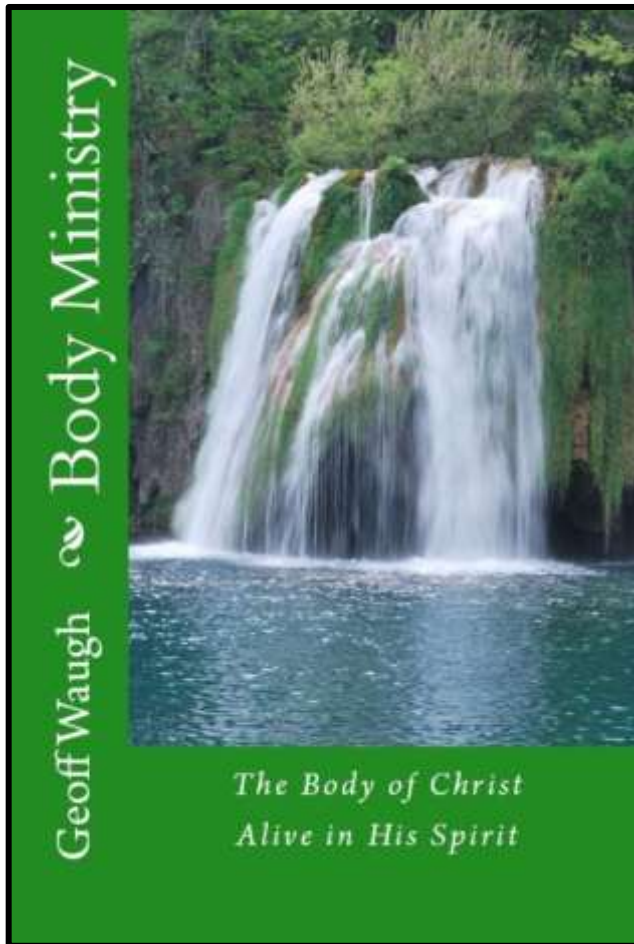


Body Ministry

The Body of Christ

Alive in His Spirit



Geoff Waugh

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Body Ministry: The Body of Christ Alive in His Spirit
is compiled from these two books into one volume:
[The Body of Christ, Part 1: Body Ministry](#), and
[The Body of Christ, Part 2: Ministry Education, Learning Together in Ministry](#) *is from chapter 15.*

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Logo: lamp & scroll,
basin & towel,
in the light of the cross

Body Ministry

The Body of Christ Alive in His Spirit

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- 2. Obedient Mission** with **7. Body Membership**
- 3. Mutual Ministry** with **8. Servant Leadership**
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Foreword

By Rev. Professor James Haire, Ph.D., Professor of Theology, Charles Sturt University, Canberra; Executive Director, Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture; Past President, Uniting Church in Australia; Former Principal, Trinity Theological College, Brisbane; Former Dean, Brisbane College of Theology; Former Head of the School of Theology, Griffith University; Former Missionary Theologian in Indonesia.

What is Christianity? Christians do not speak of Christianity as if it were some sort of ideology competing with other ideologies in the marketplace of ideas. Rather, Christians see themselves as those who are incorporated into Christ, who become the very Body of Christ. The identity of Christians is not, then, as those who promote a particular ideology. Rather, it is as those who bear witness to the action of God, Father, Son and Spirit, upon and within their personal and communal lives, present and past.

However, at the centre of all of this is the fundamental question: What is the very heart of the existence of those who call themselves Christians, and of the church? It is this. The inexplicable will of God to be for, and with, humanity implies that the church's life cannot begin to be understood in terms of the structures and events of the world alone.

The church is called to exist solely through the solidarity of Jesus Christ with those who are alienated from God, by Christ going to the extremes of alienation for humanity, so that humanity might through him come close to God, and live in the power of the Spirit. At the heart of this Christian faith is expressed the fact that God does not wish to be alone in celebrating the wonder of God's inexpressible love for humanity. God in Christ calls into existence the church, an earthly body of his Son, who is its heavenly head, in order that humanity may come close to God, and so responsively rejoice with God in the harmony which God has established for creation, as seen in the work of the Spirit.

If the being of the church and its life is predicated upon the grace of God in Jesus Christ as itself defining God's action in the world for the reconciliation of creation, including humanity, then its life is that which it receives from God in Christ, and which is continuously

empowered by the Spirit. The church's very existence will be shaped by the manner in which it confesses this truth. Thus, Christianity at heart, as it is expressed in the church, sees itself as being created and brought into being from outside itself. Moreover, it ultimately understands itself as being given meaning from beyond itself. It lives in the world in a very ambivalent manner. It inevitably needs some structure and organization in the world. The church needs to be analysed in order to prepare itself for mission in the changing situations of societies around the world. However, these always must remain secondary. Its primary self-understanding is that the church, the expression of Christianity in the world, is the object of God's self-giving love and grace for the sake of the world.

In this very helpful and timely book, the Rev Dr Geoff Waugh takes up the implications of these issues and applies them to ministry within and beyond the church, the Body of Christ. As the framework above indicates, Dr Waugh's analysis, evaluation and application of the theology of the living Body of Christ inevitably is no less than truly revolutionary, as is his analysis, evaluation and application of the theology of the living Spirit's work.

Dr Waugh has had a long and distinguished mission career, especially in education, in addressing the central Christian issues outlined above. It has been my honour and my privilege to have served alongside him for eight years (1987–1994) in Trinity Theological College, in the Brisbane College of Theology, and in the School of Theology of Griffith University, in Brisbane, Queensland, Australia. He has been a dear and valued friend, and especially one who day-by-day in his life has lived out what he taught. Moreover, he has had vast experience in his long teaching ministry, not only in Australia, but throughout the South Pacific, Asia, and in Africa.

His work is thus very important reading indeed for us all.

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Prologue: Change changed

***The mission Jesus gave us is still the same.
The context of that mission keeps changing.***

As world population explodes, so does the church. By 1960 world population passed 2.5 billion and 30 years later doubled to 5 billion. It passed 6 billion in 2000 and 7 billion in 2010. However, in most non-Western countries the percentage growth of the church already outstrips the percentage population growth.

Churches in Africa grew to over half of the population south of the Sahara. Church growth in China mushroomed to the greatest number of committed Christians of any country in the world, most of it in house churches, as in the New Testament.

Accelerating change changes us and the church. We now live through massive changes in our own lives and in the life of the church. Dynamic biblical forms of the church spring up everywhere now. We are rediscovering the church as the living body of Christ, filled with his powerful Spirit, alive in new ways, serving God and people in a constantly changing world in spite of, or because of, persecution.

Nearly 2000 years ago Jesus gave us our commission: “All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth, so go and make people my disciples, baptising them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you, and look, I am with you all the way even to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:18-20).

His final promise told us how we would do that: “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you will be my witnesses ... to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

That is still our task. We can only do it in the power of the Holy Spirit, as Jesus did. However, the context and the way of doing that task changes constantly.

Small church buildings, standing empty except for one hour a week, with wooden pews, an organ, and a declining, aging congregation look

like ancient history and bad stewardship. It may not be wrong but it is limited, it is not in the Bible, and it is fading into the past.

We have no New Testament instructions about buildings, pews, spires, bells, organs, clerical garb, or status (except as servant leaders).

Those surface structures change, even as we proclaim the unchanging gospel. Change changes our ministry, and us. We think, feel and act differently from all previous generations. We perceive each day in new ways now. We plan more and do more. Cars, planes, electricity, the internet, TV, DVDs, smart phones, tablets, and laptops changed our lives.

Church changed. For most of church history people walked to the services and socialised together with family and friends on Sundays. Now millions drive cars, fill Sundays with many other activities, and families are widely scattered. Yet, worldwide, the church grows exponentially.

1. Accelerating church growth

Every week a thousand new churches are established in Asia and Africa alone. Places such as Korea, Ethiopia, China, Central America, Indonesia and the Philippines are dramatic flash points of growth.

About 10% of Africa was Christian in 1900. By 2000 over 50% were Christian south of the Sahara. Now evangelists such as Reinhard Bonnke report more than a million attending crusade meetings, with hundreds healed and thousands believing in Jesus as Saviour and Lord.

In 1900 Korea had few Christians. Now over 50% of South Korea is Christian. The world's largest church is Seoul's Full Gospel Central Church pastored by David Yonggi Cho with over a million members by 2007. The largest Christian gatherings have been held in South Korea, 2.7 million attending one in 1980. Koreans have sent over 10,000 missionaries into Asia while North Koreans suffer cruel persecution.

By 1950, when missionaries left China, about 1 million Chinese were committed Christians. Now estimates soar well above 100 million.

At least 75% of Northeast India became Christian last century. Churches kept growing rapidly in Myanmar (Burma) since missionaries were expelled in the 1960s. The Kachin Baptist

Centennial Convention held the largest known baptismal Service in the world there in 1977 with over 6,000 baptised, double the number of the day of Pentecost! Revival in Indonesia after the attempted communist coup of 1965 saw 100,000 animistic Muslims turn to Christ on the island of Java alone, and Indonesia had the greatest movement of Muslims to Christianity in history.

Revival fires sweep across the world. Even the resistant Australian aborigines turned to Christ in large numbers from 1979 in a people movement revival resulting from the outpouring of the Spirit on Elcho Island in north Australia. Almost half the community there turned to Christ, then took revival into the arid desert tribes with missionary zeal. Revival movements continued in the nineties in Western Australia and the north, changing communities blighted with drinking, gambling and domestic violence.

Severe persecution accompanies these massive global movements to Christ. As in the New Testament church, so now.

Western Christianity is being transformed by this outpouring of the Spirit. Individual Christians and whole churches find new life in the Spirit, new power in mission, new zeal for God. "In a peculiar sense the latter half of the twentieth century may be said to be the coming of age of the Holy Spirit in the life of the church," wrote Harold Lindsell. "Under the name 'The Charismatic Movement' or 'neo-Pentecostalism,' a new force swept over the Christian world in America and Latin America - even around the globe."¹ He referred to charismatic renewal as The Third Force in Christendom: Catholic, Protestant, and then Pentecostal-Charismatic. This vast movement transcends and permeates all denominations and has created dynamic new movements and expanding networks, with over 600 million now involved, being around 27% of all Christians.²

The movement of the Holy Spirit across the world in the 20th century into the 21st century far eclipsed the marvellous beginning of that same movement in the early church. It continues to spread. Churches change and grow in power, along with persecution.

Modern developments provide the church with amazing resources. Reports of radio ministry into China and Russia tell how God uses this medium powerfully, along with the spontaneous expansion of the church through signs and wonders. Preachers now reach into the

homes of people worldwide through television. Now TBN, Trinity Broadcasting Network, broadcasts on free TV around the world. In some nations, such as Vanuatu, it was the only TV program available all day. Local channels kicked in at night.

Other media explode evangelism worldwide. More than 225 million indicated their desire to follow Christ through *The Jesus Film*, now translated into over 1,000 languages (www.jesusfilm.org), the most widely translated film in history.

Mass evangelism, with Billy Graham, Tommy Osborn, Reinhard Bonnke, Benny Hinn and others led millions to Christ, saw signs and wonders increase, and planted thousands of churches especially in developing countries.

An aggressive and powerful new church is emerging throughout the world. Reminiscent of New Testament church growth, this new style Christianity takes miracles, healing, prayer, prophetic preaching, multiplying home groups and house churches very seriously. Grass roots revivals gain incredible momentum.

This new style of Christianity is as old, and new, as the New Testament. It believes and acts on the words of Jesus, obeys his instructions vigorously, and moves in faith in spite of incredible opposition. This new breed of Christians often lives and dies amid opposition or persecution as in China, Africa and Muslim nations, yet the church grows like wild fire.

Virile churches multiply without the benefit - or hindrance - of building programs, staff salaries, bureaucratic committees, or large budgets. God moves powerfully by his Spirit. Lives change, miracles occur, marriages are restored, families reunited, addicts set free, and division gives way to unity and love, along with problems addressed in the New Testament letters.

Instead of declining, as in most Western countries, the number and percentage of Christians in the world is rapidly increasing. Now more Christians and more churches exist than ever before. Most of that growth reflects the dynamic and powerful ministry of the New Testament church. Ministry in the new breed of churches today is powerful body ministry, the ministry of the whole body of Christ in the power of his Spirit.

Body ministry in the power of the Spirit of God can unleash biblical Christianity yet again. We can repent of our sin in watering down the Scriptures to suit our unbelief, materialism, and comfort. The church can yet come alive in the dynamic power of the supernatural Spirit of God in our midst.

God is doing that. Evidence mounts from all countries and denominations. Book shops fill with testimony and discussion about the new moves of God's Spirit in the earth. The internet, CDs and DVDs abound with similar stories and sermons. Magazines, including the secular press, along with television and radio, often describe the impact of accelerating church growth and accelerating social change.

Biblical evidence and contemporary church growth show that truly authentic church growth can happen in the power of the Spirit of God producing great growth in quantity and quality.

The movement of the Holy Spirit across the world in the 20th century and into the 21st century far eclipsed the marvellous beginning of that same movement in the early church. It continues to spread. Churches change and grow in power.

Wagner popularised the concept of the Third Wave in ecclesiology. He described this current movement of the Spirit in terms of three waves, the Pentecostal movement from the beginning of the 1900s, the charismatic movement from the 1950s, and then the Third Wave with evangelicals and others also accepting the supernatural work of the Spirit.

Wagner coined the phrase *The New Apostolic Reformation* to describe this massive change in church life and structure. He called it *Churchquake!*

We are living through the greatest explosion of church growth in world history, accompanied by New Testament style church life. That includes the kind of miracles that Jesus demonstrated daily after the Holy Spirit anointed him for his ministry. It also includes the kind of ministry described in the Book of Acts.

2. Accelerating social change

Alvin Toffler wrote about the Third Wave in sociology.

He could not find a word adequate enough to encompass this current wave we live in, rejecting his own earlier term 'super-industrial' as too narrow. He described civilisation in three waves: a First Wave agricultural phase, a Second Wave industrial phase, and a Third Wave phase now begun.

He noted that we are the final generation of an old civilisation and the first generation of a new one. We live between the dying Second Wave civilisation and the emerging Third Wave civilisation that is thundering in to take its place.³

Think of church life during those three sociological waves. Church life changed through the agricultural, then industrial, and now the technological 'third wave'.

1. Churches for most of 2000 years of the *First Wave agricultural phase* were the village church with the village priest (taught in a monastery) teaching the Bible to mostly illiterate people, using Latin (and Greek and Hebrew) parchments copied by hand for 1500 years. Worship involved chants without books or music. These churches reflected rural life, with feudal lords and peasants.

2. Churches in 500 years of the *Second Wave industrial phase* (co-existing with the First Wave) became denominational with many different churches in the towns as new denominations emerged. Generations of families belonged there all their life and read the printed Authorised (1511) version of the Bible. They have been taught by ministers trained in denominational theological colleges. Worship has involved organs used with hymns and hymn books. These churches reflected industrial town life, with bureaucracies such as denominations.

3. Churches in 50 years of the *Third Wave technological phase* (co-existing with the Second Wave industrial phase in towns and cities and the First Wave agricultural phase in villages and developing nations) are becoming networks of churches and movements, among which people move freely. They tend to be led by charismatic, anointed, gifted, apostolic servant-leaders, usually trained on the job through

local mentoring often using part time courses in distance education. Their people have a wide range of Bible translations and use Bible tools in print, on CDs and on the internet. Worship involves ministry teams using instruments with data projection for songs and choruses. These churches reflect third wave technological city life.

Many churches, of course, live in the swirling mix of these phases, especially now with the Second Wave receding and the Third Wave swelling. For example, some denominational churches, especially those involved in renewal, may have a gifted 'lay' senior pastor not trained in a theological college or seminary. Some denominational churches function like independent churches in their leadership and worship styles. Some new independent churches have theologically trained pastors with doctoral degrees in ministry.

These changes have become increasingly obvious in the last 50 years. Many of us became involved in renewal and revival ministries both in denominational churches and in independent networks and movements.

I give many examples of those developments in my autobiographical reflections, *Looking to Jesus: Journey into Renewal and Revival* (2009), and in my accounts of revivals in *Flashpoints of Revival* (2009) and *South Pacific Revivals* (2010).

These books on renewal and revival are one small example of rapid change. They describe the swirling changes renewal and revival bring as they recapture New Testament Christianity in our day and 21st century context.

Even more! Telling the story has changed. You can read about it right now on a Google search and on many web pages such as www.renewaljournal.com – especially the Blog, updated regularly.

Furthermore, this book is updated regularly also – for free with Amazon's Print on Demand (POD). Check out the "Look inside" feature in a year's time and you may see more changes. No longer do we need to spend thousands of dollars to stock pile resources, when we can freely update and adapt them.

We live and minister in this revolutionary 'post-modern' era, full of freeing possibilities and challenges.

One way to visualise the successive waves and our current shift from the Second Wave into the Third Wave is to note phrases or descriptions used by prophetic social commentators for each era or phase:

1st WAVE - 2nd WAVE - 3rd WAVE

Toffler: Agricultural – Industrial - Third Wave

Cox: Tribal – Town - Technopolitan

Naisbitt: Agricultural – Industrial - Information

Riesman:

1st wave - tradition-directed: conformity Vs shame

2nd wave - inner-directed: character vs guilt

3rd wave - other-directed: approval vs anxiety

Subsistence villagers still think and act in a **First Wave** mode, rural townspeople tend to think and act in a Second Wave mode, and urban people in megacities usually think and act in a Third Wave mode.

The norms of the **Second Wave** Industrial Society still influence us all strongly. We are familiar with the organizational society of the town and its bureaucracies, especially the religious and educational ones. We organized the church around denominational bureaucracies.

However, the **Third Wave** megatrend swirling around us now involves adapting to different and smaller social groupings, more transient and diverse than ever before. Denominations continue to exist, of course, but now mix with many flexible, changing structures, such as networks of small groups or house churches and national or global networks for prayer and mobilising action together through websites and emails.

We have a mixture of both Second Wave people and Third Wave people in local churches. Second Wave people tend to emphasize institutional roles and responsibilities. Third Wave people tend to emphasize relationships and adaptation to change.

Clock face of 3,000 years

The huge changes we live through can be compared to a clock face representing the last 3,000 years, so each minute represents 50 years. On that scale the printing press came into use about 10 minutes ago. About three minutes ago, the telegraph, photograph and locomotive arrived. Two minutes ago the telephone, rotary press, motion pictures, automobile, aeroplane, and radio emerged. Less than one minute ago television appeared. Less than half a minute ago the computer and communication satellites became widely used, and the laser beam seconds ago.⁴

A former General Secretary of the United Nations, U Thant, noted that resources no longer limit decisions. The decision makes the resources. He saw this as the fundamental revolutionary change, the most revolutionary social change we have ever known.⁵

Other writers, looking from the 20th century into the 21st century, focused on the *problems* involved in accelerating change. We live through problems never experienced before. No nation and no aspect of life can escape their pressure. These include: the expansion of population, the burst of technology, the discovery of new forms of energy, the extension of knowledge, the rise of new nations, and the world-wide rivalry of ideologies.⁶ Accelerating change causes rootlessness in society through:

1. repeated moves of so many families (e.g. scattered relatives);
2. disruption of communities in urban sprawl (e.g. the lonely crowd) ;
3. increasing anonymity of urban life (e.g. unknown neighbours);
4. disruption of shift work (e.g. longer work hours); and
5. fragmentation of the family (e.g. divorce now common).⁷

Christian analyst and prophet Os Guinness listed these pressure points:

1. the 'apocalyptic horsemen'- war, disease and famine;
2. population crush as the culmination of the population explosion;
3. ecology - disasters from unforeseen imbalances or pollution;
4. the fear of a genetics race - biological engineering;
5. the fear of rising anti-scientism, after Hiroshima;
6. the tyranny of technology;
7. the shortage of time - acceleration;
8. the moral vacuum;
9. the problem of vested interests; and
10. the increasing lack of purpose in our generation.⁸

We live and minister in this revolutionary 'post-modern' era of changing values, and we live under the threat of thermo-nuclear

genocide and increasing terrorism such as planes flown into the World Trade Centre in New York on 9/11 – September 11, 2001.

As far back as November 9, 1979, a United States fail-safe computer indicated that America was under nuclear attack. Alarmed computer experts discovered the mistake only three minutes before the United States defence system would have retaliated with 10,000 nuclear warheads.⁹ Now the world faces possible fiery destruction. Apocalyptic themes fill books and films.

Our task is still the same as when Jesus said, “before the end comes the gospel must be preached to all peoples” (Mark 13:10).

Our Lord declared that he would build his church against which the gates of hell cannot stand (Mt. 16:18). His church smashes through those gates and sets the captives free.

Jesus is more committed to this task than we are! In the end he will hand over his kingdom to God the Father.

Meanwhile, we participate with him in his work in the world through his Spirit present and powerful in people, in churches, in communities and in nations.

Lifetimes of 62 years

Only during the last seventy lifetimes of 62 years has it been possible to communicate effectively from one lifetime to another, made possible by writing.

Only during the last six lifetimes did masses of people ever see a printed word. Only during the last four lifetimes has it been possible to measure time with any precision. Only in the last two lifetimes has anyone anywhere used an electric motor.

The overwhelming majority of all the material goods we use in daily life today have been developed with the present lifetime, yours and mine.

Many terms describe this 'post-modern' era, including these:

Alvin Toffler's *super-industrial*;

Daniel Bell's *post-industrial*;

Kenneth Boulding's *post-civilization*;

Bertram Gross's *mobiletic revolution*;

Harvey Cox's *technopolitan era*;

Zbigniew Brzezinski's *tecfinetronic age*;

Soviet Futurists' *scientific-technological revolution (STR)*;

Marshall McLuhan's *electric era* and *global village*;

John Naisbitt's *information society*;

David Riesman's *other directed culture*; and

Charles Reich's *communal society*.¹⁰

Toffler noted that many terms narrow rather than expand our understanding. He even rejected his own term 'super-industrial' as too narrow and limited, opting for 'third wave'. Some phrases are static. None of these terms convey the full force, scope, and dynamism of the accelerating changes engulfing us.

These avalanching changes can also be seen everywhere in global Christianity now with church networks, renewal, revival, home groups and house churches multiplying.

Vertical to Horizontal Communication

Vertical communication is shifting to horizontal communication. This dimension of accelerating change helps us understand the increasing shift from bureaucracy to networks.

Bureaucracies use vertical communication and authority. Church structures do this by passing down doctrinal and policy decisions vertically from national authorities to regional authorities to local parish and group members.

Horizontal or lateral communication, however, bypasses these vertical chains. Individuals and groups now have rapidly increasing means of communication, especially through electronic and mass media. Horizons widen dramatically. Options increase. Information pours into our lives. Networks transform bureaucracies.

Communication Shift from Vertical to Horizontal

Vertical Communication:

international
national
state
regional
urban
parish
department
section
group
person

Horizontal Communication:

Internet – mobility – education – transport – CDs – DVDs – smart phones – newspapers – paperbacks – telephone – films – speakers – vocation networks – visitors – radio – TV – magazines – books – media – arts

Many of these horizontal factors are also part of the vertical chains of communication and authority. Accelerating change, however, exposes

us all to a much wider range of information and experience outside our usual vertical structures or bureaucracies.

A current example is the grassroots spread of renewal and revival. In Second Wave times it could be firmly excluded from the denomination by being banished to another bureaucracy (Pentecostal), and therefore ignored.

Third Wave society opens new networks of information and experience. Our increasing mobility brings us into contact with it and we find brothers and sisters involved.

Our friends give us paperbacks to read and conviction or hope grows within us. Our renewal CD and DVD collections include gifts from friends. Visiting speakers and their multiplying CD and DVD messages and books introduce millions of us to their teaching and ministries. Our friends pray for us and God releases his Spirit more fully in our lives.

Yet all of this may happen outside our denominational bureaucracy, or also within it where that bureaucracy encourages an accepting and open attitude to renewal and revival.

So the 'third wave' of renewal is carried on the Third Wave of social change into all church structures. Our friendship networks become 'the bridges of God' into our churches and out into the lives of others.

Many of us have been involved in home groups and renewal fellowships where people discovered new dimensions of life in the Spirit, and many unbelievers found faith in a relaxed, caring environment. We discover the body of Christ in new ways.

Church becomes 'church without walls' – no longer bound by the 'bounded sets' of doctrinal divisions, but finding new relationships in the renewing 'centred sets' of relationships centred in Jesus himself.

These spreading networks of information and experience fit into wider megatrends of Third Wave society as described by John Naisbitt. These major trends powerfully impact church life and ministry.

Naisbitt's megatrends give us examples of how both society and church life continue to change, and in what directions.

Megatrends

These megatrends¹¹ apply to industrialized nations generally and affect other nations as well. We share in the global village. The major megatrends identify these shifts in our world:

1. From an Industrial Society to an Information Society.
2. From Forced Technology to High Tech / High Touch.
3. From a National Economy to a World Economy.
4. From Short Term to Long Term.
5. From Centralisation to Decentralisation.
6. From Institutional to Self-Help.
7. From Representative Democracy to Participatory Democracy.
8. From Hierarchies to Networking.
9. From North to South: America's northern industrial cities decline.
10. From Either/Or to Multiple Option.

Naisbitt's subsequent analysis, *Megatrends 2000*, with Patricia Aburdene (1991) identified the global economic boom of the 1990s, the renaissance of the arts, the emergence of free market socialism, global lifestyles and cultural nationalism, the privatisation of the welfare state, the rise of the Pacific rim, a decade of women in leadership, the age of biology, religious revival of the third millennium and the triumph of the individual.

We are watching those last two, religious revival and personal freedom, unfolding now in the church, as well as in society.

Patricia Aburdene in *Megatrends 2010* (2007) then examined how as individuals grow in consciousness and Spirit, so do their organizations, with a new emphasis on community, relationships and conversation in organizations and business.

This offers new hope for church organizations, and new scope for recovering biblical church life. It gives a sociological context for expanding body ministry.

Some of these megatrends increasingly change the church in society, and similarly change the forms of ministry.

Essentials remain unchanged. The church is still the body of Christ. However, the shape and expression of that body takes different forms in different cultures and different times in history.

We now live through these significant changes. The impact of a shift from vertical to horizontal or lateral communication already changes how people think and feel about the church. More people are more aware of alternatives than ever before, and think about and explore options, seeking out New Testament church styles and lifestyles.

Similarly the megatrend shift from hierarchies to networks affects the shape of the church. So do megatrends from centralization to decentralization, from institutional reliance to more self-help. These changes not only affect the whole culture, but also the church culture.

Increasingly local groups take greater initiatives, house churches or home cell groups multiply, people from different denominations mix much more freely and discover deeper unity in the Spirit than institutional or doctrinal structures generally provide.

Information spreads rapidly through networks of friendships, books and media. Increasingly we find our former divisions unbiblical and unnecessary.

An astounding example of this unity in the Spirit has been the love and fellowship discovered in interdenominational charismatic gatherings. People once separated by doctrine or traditions find new oneness and unity in spite of their differences.

They experience unity in a new depth centre – the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, truly one in Christ Jesus. That relational unity, in love for one another, transcends doctrinal and denominational divisions and fulfils Jesus' command that we truly love one another as he has loved us.

Many people discover this unity in home groups, cell groups and in the widely emerging house churches, a growing phenomena of the twenty-first century.

House churches

House churches are a clear example of these global megatrends.

200 Christian leaders from 40 nations met in New Delhi, India, in November 2009, to explore the scope and significance of house-based discipling communities and emerging house church movements worldwide.

The underground house churches in China report an estimated 100 million members. A similar phenomenon has emerged in the last 15 years in many other nations, especially in Africa and Latin America.

In the case of Bangladesh or India, with many hundreds of thousands of house churches, the various networks of house churches have already become the largest Christian movements in their respective countries.

Missiologist Wolfgang Simson from Germany, author of *Houses that change the world*, reporting on the Delhi conference, noted that the number of house churches in Europe have already reached or surpassed 10,000.

Australia could have up to 10,000, and New Zealand up to 6,000 house churches. Research in the United States of America by the Barna Research Group shows that between 6 and 12 million people are attending house churches, making house churches one of the three largest Christian groups in the country.

"But it is not about setting up house-based worshipping communities alone," says Dr. Victor Choudhrie, one of the convenors of the Delhi summit.

In India, many house churches are beginning to change not only the spiritual climate, but they begin to model the holistic life in the Kingdom of God at the village level, demonstrating God's ability to restore families, health and even to 'heal the land.' Dr. Choudhrie stated: "For example, constant prayer walking and the breaking of curses placed on the land has, in a number of areas, resulted in unprecedented harvests and other agricultural breakthroughs, demonstrating tangibly the blessing by which God is able and willing to upgrade and empower everyday life."¹²

The Sentinel Group (www.sentinelgroup.com) and my book *South Pacific Revivals* (2010) give many further accounts of healing the land resulting in profound community and ecological transformation.

These are emerging patterns and megatrends in church life and community life in the 21st century. They co-exist with traditional congregations, but are also transforming congregational life.

Millions of home groups, cells groups and study groups, for example, are becoming house churches, either officially or unofficially. They are becoming the primary fellowship, worship and ministry group for hundreds of millions of people around the globe.

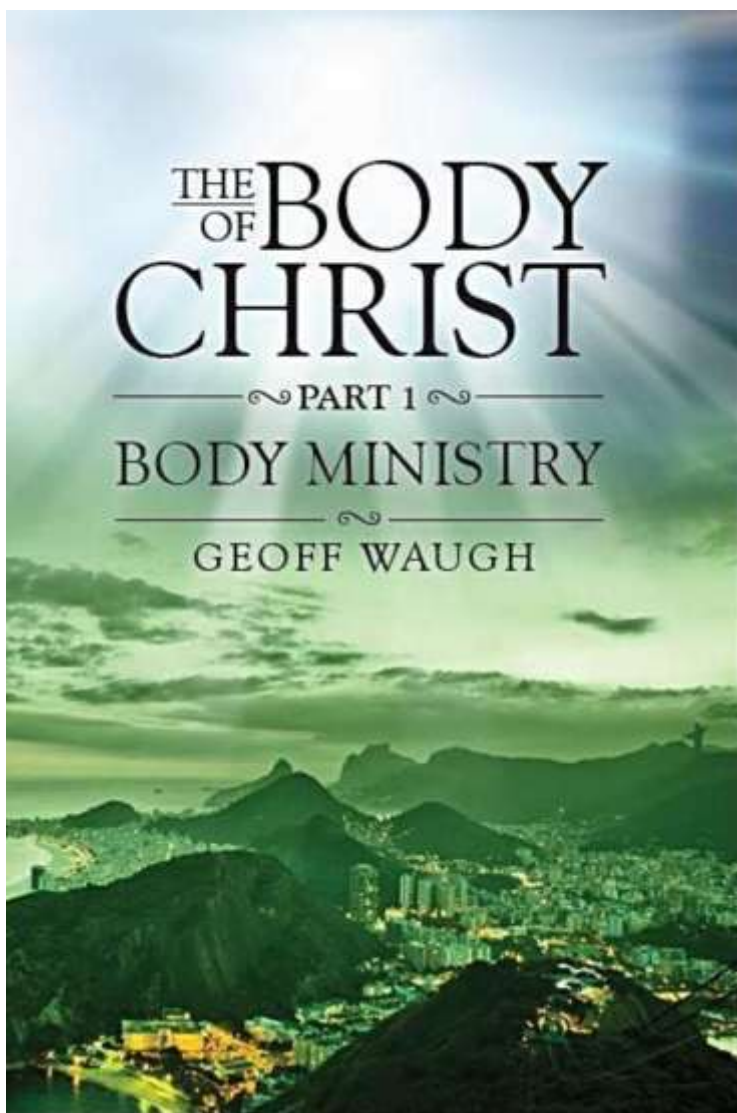
This does not do away with larger congregations, but can enrich them. Millions of people now meet in house churches or home groups as their most significant expression of the church, but also join with others in weekly celebrations of worship with hundreds of other people as well.

Traditional congregations remain alive (mostly) and well (often). Most of us will continue to be involved with them. They provide stability and security in a changing world. However, within them, and around them, home groups and house churches continue to multiply.

Both are vital in these times of transition, and the more that both congregations and groups are alive and well, the more the church will grow powerfully.

See Chapter 10 for a closer look at exciting possibilities for both. Congregational structures are coming alive in the Spirit of the Lord. So are mission structures such as small groups and house churches. Each can empower the other and both can free people for effective body ministry in the church and in the world.

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The Body of Christ, Part 1: Body Ministry

Part 1 in ***Body Ministry*** is compiled and updated
from *The Body of Christ, Part 1: Body Ministry*

Part 1

Body Ministry

Overview of Part 1: Body Ministry

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Preface to Part 1, Body Ministry

by Rev. Dr Colin Warren, Former Principal of Alcorn College, Senior Pastor of Rangeville Uniting Church before retirement and founder of Freedom Life Centre, Toowoomba.

In this brief Preface, I acknowledge that Geoff has had a very big impact on my life, both by the witness of his own life and by the quality of his teaching. I pray that you and your church will be greatly blessed as you read and put into practice these basic biblical principles to reach and bless the people who are searching for the living Christ but often do not know what it is they are searching for.

Geoff and I have worked with students and on mission enterprises together over many years. His writing has come from years of practical experience and a vast amount of prayerful study. He has pioneered a work the results of which only eternity will reveal. He has never sought recognition for his tireless and faithful service in honouring the Lord, in continuing to teach and to live in the power of the Holy Spirit. He writes out of varied experiences.

He was the inaugural Principal of the Baptist Bible College in Papua New Guinea (1965-1970). He has taught at Alcorn College and Trinity Theological College (1977-1994) and at Christian Heritage College School of Ministries (from 1995). He is the author of many books, mostly in Christian Education with the Uniting Church, but also on Renewal and Revival. "Geoff Waugh" on amazon.com lists some of these books.

It is important to note that in this important work, Geoff explores the ministry of the whole body of Christ when Holy Spirit gifts are recognised and are encouraged to be exercised. Then the artificial division between clergy and laity or pastor and non-pastor is removed. At the same time there is the recognition of Holy Spirit endowed leadership gifting such as that between Paul and Timothy. This means that Kingdom authority is expressed through Divine headship. His emphasis on body ministry thus becomes a reality.

Geoff illustrates this clearly with his [Case study Number 2](#). There the church no longer consists of passive pew sitters but participants in fulfilling the command of Jesus, empowered by the Holy Spirit to preach repentance, heal the sick and cast out demon spirits, having the certain knowledge that He is with them as He promised “to the end of the age”.

Geoff points out that if the church is to live and grow in today’s world, it must recognise the need to emphasize relationships and adapt to change. This change will include such simple things as the way men and women both old and young dress, and allow others the freedom to dress differently as they attend places of worship in a non judgmental atmosphere.

There is, too, the need to realise the reality that many are affected by a global sense of fear of nuclear destruction and of accelerated and constant change and uncertainty. The church can provide an atmosphere of security through rediscovering the unchanging gospel in a changing world.

Denominations that once were able to be exclusive and hold their numbers in rigid theological disciplines, have been invaded via cassettes, CD’s, DVD’s, and the internet that have widened the thinking horizons of their often theologically bound members, resulting in communication at spiritual levels not possible previously.

Geoff points out that if we are going to fulfil the Great Commission, we must first live the life of Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. It is only then that we can do the work of fulfilling Christ’s command to go.

I commend *Body Ministry* for you to read. All Christians will benefit greatly from reading this insightful book.

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Section I

Body Ministry

From few to many

Case Studies

Case study 1: traditional ministry

Peter was deeply committed to his calling to the ministry, ably supported by his wife, Petrina. His many talents found full expression in his ministry: preaching, teaching (including school Religious Education), counselling, visiting, charring committees, leading meetings, representing the church on denominational boards and in civic functions, administering church activities, interviewing people for baptisms, church membership and weddings, conducting weddings and funerals, and fitting in a bit of study when he could as well as attending seminars for church leaders.

The phone rang constantly, especially at breakfast or dinner when people hoped they could catch him before he was off again. He wished he had more time for his family, and knew that the strain was showing in family relationships and in his own reaction to stress, inevitable with the constant demands of the ministry. He wished he could find time for waiting on God and quiet reflection as well as study, but there was so much to do. His work was less than his best, because he had so little time to pray, wait in God, and prepare well, and because the constant demand of meeting people's needs saps energy and consumes time.

Case study 2: body ministry.

Paul and Pauline were both deeply committed to their ministry. They recognized that they had different gifts and calling within that ministry. They also believed strongly in the need for all Christians to minister in the power of the Spirit. They prayed regularly with people about this and saw their prayers answered. The members of their church asked for, expected, and used spiritual gifts. Church members prayed together for one another and for others. Most of the pastoral care and outreach happened in the home groups. Paul met with home group leaders one night each week, and enjoyed that. Mary met regularly with the leaders of women's day time groups, social caring groups and the music team in the church.

Paul usually preached once on Sundays, and the home groups, study groups and youth groups used the summary of the message. He encouraged gifted preachers in the church who also preached. Church members did most of the teaching (including all the school work) and those gifted with administration organized it all, usually part time with one specific area of responsibility they had chosen and loved to do. A small caring group organized volunteers to visit all the sick people. A keen task group made sure all visitors were contacted by phone or a personal visit during the week after they came to a service. The elders insisted that one day each week was family day for the pastor and his family so they encouraged them to spend time away to wait on God and bring their vision and the Lord's leading clearly in their ministry.

These case studies, though composite, are real. Many of us have served God in both of these models. I lived half my life in churches with traditional ministry, loved it, and lived it as a young minister. Then I found new freedom and fulfilment participating in body ministry within denominational churches, and teaching others about it. That is how I came to write the books listed in the appendix.

The church is the body of Christ. Ministry belongs to the whole body of Christ. What ministry?

Section I: Body Ministry explores answers to that question and the implications of those answers. Biblical ministry is Body Ministry.

Section II: Body Organization examines practical implications of that concept. Both these dimensions of theology and practice interact dynamically.

The church context of accelerating growth and the social context of accelerating change both produce major shifts in emphasis. I note these shifts in chapter headings for each topic. The headings are descriptive, not exclusive. They indicate important directions of change involved in effective body ministry. Other phrases could, and are used. These chapter headings attempt to indicate the main thrusts of change.

These directions of change are not an end in themselves. They are the process by which the church can grow in quantity and quality for the glory of God, fulfilling his purpose in the world as the body of Christ empowered by his Spirit.

These important changes in direction or emphasis enable effective mission, centred in Christ and his purpose for his body, the church.

Centred set theory adds a significant dimension to this change process. Centred sets perceive change as a continuing, dynamic process of movement to and from the centre. It is not merely linear change from one state to another (such as from few to many in ministry) but involves movement to, or from, the centre (such as many people involved in ministry through an intimate relationship with the Lord in the anointing and power of his Spirit).

For the church the centre is Christ, head of his church, and the process is one of obedience centred in him, his purpose, his will, his life.

Obedience to the Great Commission, for instance, is not so much doing what he said as being what we are, the body of Christ. The being (the body of Christ) involves the doing (in mission).

Depth Centre

The directions of change explored in each topic emphasize *being* the body of Christ more than just *doing* what he says. The two belong integrally together, but the being is the *depth centre* of the doing.

Suggested changes are more than techniques. If they were techniques without movement into the *depth centre* they would be *surface structures* which could even pull away from the centre.

For example, you can start home groups. Good move! However, if those home groups become mainly debating groups, arguing about different doctrines or spending 95% of the time discussing and only 5% of the time in prayer, worship, and ministry to one another, then the group may be a surface structure change which actually pulls away from the depth centre of really loving God together and loving and serving one another.

So that home group may actually head in the opposite direction, away from the centre, and cause more division rather than harmony and unity.

An illustration of the need for depth centring is the false dichotomy we create when we polarize and separate what belong together holistically.

John Yoder, for example, decries an evangelical dualism "between the social and individual or between the inward and the outward which has dominated wide ranges of evangelical thought for decades." He adds, "God may grant that we can outgrow it experientially as we receive feedback from open-hearted and vulnerable missionaries in worlds where the dualism cannot be sustained."¹³

Paul Hiebert, from that missionary world, gave another example. He commented on the *excluded middle* in the Western worldview. We too easily separate religion and science, excluding the realm of spirits and the supernatural from our daily life, as in this chart:

Western Worldview

RELIGION: faith – miracles - other worldly issues - sacred

(EXCLUDED MIDDLE)

SCIENCE: sight and experience - natural order - this worldly issues - secular

Most of the world's non-Christians cannot understand or relate to that Western worldview. Tribal people know the power of evil spirits and understand Jesus' power over them, silencing them and casting them out.

Most Western Christians do not do that. Western ministry education usually overlooks that. As a result, Hiebert observed, "Western Christian missions have been one of the greatest secularising forces in history."¹⁴

We can overcome a false dualism or dichotomy (social/individual, inward/outward, religion/science) with the concept of the *depth centre* as one way of seeing holistically.

The sacred and the secular, for instance, need not be separate nor dualistic. It is helpful (truer to reality) to see the sacred as the depth centre, or depth dimension of the secular, as Paul Tillich indicated.

Using centred set terms, the sacred is movement toward Christ, and the secular is movement away from Christ.

We live constantly in this mystery. So did Jesus. He kept reminding people that the first would be last and the least the greatest.

Respected religious leaders struggled with this, and rejected Jesus' claims. Outcasts and outsiders often welcomed him and followed him. So Jesus pointed out that prostitutes and cheats or 'traitors' like tax collectors would inherit God's kingdom first. They chose to move toward the Centre. Religious people often chose to move away.

What if religious people today are the same as religious people in Jesus' day?

What if outsiders embrace Jesus and follow him? Revivals, such as those among the 'Jesus people' of the 1960s and 1970s demonstrated this.

Those hippie' outsiders did not fit into formal church life, worshipped God with electric guitars and drums, wanted 'services' like concerts, and dressed very casually, but many discovered life in Jesus. All of us can do that, and then the church comes alive as we live together in God's kingdom more fully.

When the *secular* is grounded in God, in knowing and following Jesus, it becomes sacred. If God led you to your job, if he guides you in that job, if he inspires you and gives you creative ideas in your job, then your job has become sacred – filled with God, serving him, honouring him, and being led and empowered by his Spirit.

Similarly, the human can be increasingly filled with or grounded in the depth centre of the divine. Jesus, of course, lived that life uniquely, but we can increasingly as we too are filled with and led by the Spirit of God in everything, not just in church activities.

Then the natural becomes increasingly supernatural (divinely inspired and anointed) and the normal becomes increasingly miraculous as it is filled with God's presence, leading, provision, and empowering. Again, Jesus demonstrated that fully. We can live that way increasingly.

The following chart lists 50 examples of commonly divided domains which can be integrated in a depth centre paradigm.

The first concept of each pair can be grounded in the second, especially when they are firmly grounded in God and centred in Jesus our living Lord.

The secular, for example, becomes sacred (as in Jesus) because all of life – especially Christian life – is meant to be lived for God's glory, constantly led by his Spirit.

The Depth Centre

secular, sacred
human, divine
natural, supernatural
normal, miraculous
social gospel, evangelical gospel
love others, love God
free will, sovereignty
servants, heirs
die to self, life abundant
this age, the age to come
this worldly, other worldly,
outward, inward
external, internal
visible, invisible
contextual, eternal
body, soul
creation, redemption
concrete, abstract
quantity, quality
bigger, better
first, last
least, greatest
leader, servant
science, faith
Kingdom now, Kingdom then
cultural mandate, mission mandate
liberation, redemption
works, faith
success, faithfulness
sight, belief
technology, spirituality
ethics, faithfulness
means, ends
doing, being
form, function
organization, organism
expression, essence

surface, core
message, medium
verbal word, living word
diversity, unity
cognitive, relational
individual, communal
relevance, grounded
head faith, heart faith
professional, charismatic
task oriented, God oriented
my will, God's will
earthly, heavenly

At first glance, for Westerners, many of these pairs seem to be opposites or separated. Science and religion, for example. However, for a Christian, centred in God and moving God-ward, the secular nature of science is swallowed up in a profound sacred dimension of faith and worship. It is God's world. Each new discovery reveals more of his greatness, power and glory. Every scientific revelation produces wonder and worship.

Yet, when divorced from the centre, or secularised, these domains can become surface structures, even demonic. Consequently, in examining the organism of the body of Christ, lived out in its organization, we need to hold firmly to the depth centre, Jesus the Christ, the Son of the living God and the true head of his church.

Jim Belcher explores this concept in his integration of emerging church and traditional church. He argues for C S Lewis' term 'deep church' as a third way beyond emerging and traditional. His 2009 book explores deep church applied to truth, evangelism, gospel, worship, preaching, ecclesiology and culture. We can move beyond the surface structures of both traditional and emerging church life to find integration and unity in the depth centre of deep church. Looking beyond both traditional and emerging churches, Belcher says,

I believe there is a third way. It is what C S Lewis called the “Deep Church”. *Deep church* is a term taken from Lewis’s 1952 letter to the *Church Times* in which he defended supernatural revelation against the modern movement. He wrote, “Perhaps the trouble is that as supernaturalists, whether ‘Low’ or ‘High’ Church, thus taken together they lack a name. May I suggest ‘Deep Church’; or, if that fails in humility, Baxter’s ‘mere Christianity’?”¹⁵

We can humbly keep the ‘depth centre’ alive in our thinking and living as we see and respond to God in all of life, not just in church life.

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Chapter 1

Kingdom Authority

From meetings to ministry

Christ is king. In Paul's later writings he emphasizes this dimension in relationship to the church as Christ's body. Jesus, head of his church, reigns in and through his body, the church. That reign is cosmic, of which the church is now a part and therefore directly involved in cosmic principalities and powers. Kingdom authority permeates the church's life and mission as the body of Christ.

In Colossians 1, Paul explains that Christ alone is 'the image of the invisible God' and is pre-eminent over everything and everyone (v. 15). This includes being 'the head the body, the church' (v. 18). He is not just another divine being but in him alone 'all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell' (v.19). In his death and resurrection he triumphed not merely over sin and death but over the cosmic powers also (v. 20).

In Ephesians 1, Paul emphasizes that Christ is pre-eminent over the cosmic powers. He is 'far above all rule and authority and power and dominion' (v. 21) and 'head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all' (vs. 22-23). Paul then explains how this applies to the church which is his one body, not many different bodies (4:4). The ascended Head of the church gives spiritual gifts to his church, all of which come from Christ (vs 7-8). These include spiritually gifted leaders to equip us all 'for the work of ministry' and to build up the body of Christ (v. 12).

These passages from Paul lift the concept of the church as the body of Christ way beyond a cosy club of personal support and encouragement. We need support and encouragement but any human society could give that if its members care for one another.

The body of Christ is something more. It is the body of Christ the King. Like the kingdom of God, Christ's rule has been established and is yet to be realised fully. So the ministry of the body of Christ is his powerful ministry. Our support and encouragement is part of that in the power of his Spirit, such as praying for the sick and doing mission as Jesus did.

The ascended, victorious, all powerful Christ, having conquered sin and death and hell now reigns supreme. He is the head of his body, the church. He gives gifts to his church, specifically those called under his authority to exercise authority in the church as leaders so that all God's people may be equipped by him for his ministry in and through us. *That is body ministry.*

1. Church and Kingdom

The church can demonstrate God's kingdom of righteousness, peace and joy here on earth. Christ's kingly rule finds expression in the church, his body.

Jesus proclaimed and demonstrated the coming of the kingdom of God in his ministry from the very beginning: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe the good news" (Mark 1:15).

Then at the end of his ministry, the risen Lord he commissioned and empowered his church in kingdom authority from the very beginning: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations . . . and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age" (Mt. 28:18-20).

So what is the relationship of the church and the kingdom? George Ladd's pioneering theology of God's kingdom explores the relationship of the church and the kingdom.

a. The Church is not the Kingdom

Church and kingdom differ and yet share one centre. The church finds its depth centre in the kingdom of God where Christ is king.

To be 'in Christ' (Paul's great theme) is far more than pietism, or being saved. The new creation in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17) includes salvation, and much more. Its dimensions are cosmic and eternal. To be in Christ, to be saved, means being in the church empirically and in the kingdom eternally.

The two are distinct, yet one, both centred in Christ, in God. So Paul sings : "*For all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world of life or death or the present of the future, all are yours; and you are Christ's; and Christ is God's*" (1 Cor. 3:21-23).

Church and kingdom differ, but both belong together in Christ, in God. Both are centred in him who holds all authority in heaven and on earth.

Yet they vary. The simplest distinction is between the visible church and the invisible kingdom. However, both church and kingdom are visible and invisible. The church is also invisible, an organic union of those in Christ, and the kingdom manifests itself in great power in the world even for those outside the church.

God's kingdom pervades all history, but is yet to be realized in its fullness. The church is centred in that kingdom, though it is not the kingdom itself, and still prays "Thy kingdom come."

Jesus told us to pray for that – here on earth. It is not just a prayer for the kingdom of God to come fully at the end of the age, but also a prayer for God's kingdom to come here and now more fully.

b. The Church is created by the Kingdom

The mystical church lives under Christ's rule in the kingdom, but that church also finds its expression in human lives. God only knows those who are his. Wheat and tares grow together in the empirical church awaiting the final harvest (Mt. 13:24-43).

When the church is true to her calling and being she shows the life and power of the kingdom. Words and works display the gospel of the kingdom; the good news of God's dominion. This rule of God found full expression in the life of Christ, and now seeks that same expression in

his body, the church. Jesus Christ created his Church and works through his Church.

The risen, conquering Christ still manifests the kingdom of God in his body, his church. He inaugurated the church as the creation and expression of God's kingdom in which he has all authority.

c. The Church witnesses to the Kingdom

Christ's authority in his church (Mt. 28:18-20) and his empowering of his church (Acts 1:18) link the witness of the church with the power and life of the kingdom.

The kingdom of God is at the same time the kingdom of Christ (Eph. 5:5). The kingdom of God, the redemptive reign of God, is manifested through the person of Christ, and it is Christ who must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet (1 Cor.15:25).

Christ's reign includes the period of his coming in the flesh until the end "when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father" (1 Cor.15:24)

Church growth must reflect kingdom growth. Jesus spoke more about kingdom growth than about church growth. He saw God's kingdom steadily expanding until the promised kingdom has fully arrived (Mt.13: 18-52; Mk.4: 26-32; Lk.13: 18-20).

The church is not an end in itself; nor is church growth. Both are a means to the glorious end when the kingdom of God finally reigns complete. So the church fulfils its mission as it gives witness in word and deed to the powerful presence of God's kingdom. Jesus links witness and power inseparably: "you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you will be my witnesses" (Acts 1:8).

Church growth in the power of the Spirit witnesses to the kingdom of God. Jesus demonstrated God's kingdom with powerful words and deeds. So did his disciples. So did the early church. So must we. Massive church growth follows powerful witness, as in revivals.

d. The Church is the Instrument of the Kingdom

Our human body gives expression to the person within. The church as the body of Christ gives expression to the Person within, the head of the church.

Signs, wonders and powerful church growth characterised the early church. Kingdom life burst out in the church's life and ministry. Body ministry demonstrated kingdom authority. As with Jesus' ministry, so the early church ministered in God's power (Acts 2:43), prayed for God's power, expected God's power (Acts 4:30), and demonstrated God's power (Acts 5:12-16).

The church as the instrument of God's kingdom must reflect and express kingdom life and power. Then the church grows in power and effectiveness. Kingdom life finds expression in church life and growth.

As instrument of the kingdom of God, the church is meant to demonstrate kingdom life in power. The keys of the kingdom lie in the church's hands for Christ is truly the functioning head of his church.

Increasingly the church is not only proclaims the good news of the kingdom of God but also demonstrates that good news. Individuals, families, communities and societies are transformed.

e. The Church is the Custodian of the Kingdom

Jesus savagely criticised the spiritual leaders of Israel in his day because they would not enter the kingdom and prevented others from doing so. They were thorough biblical exegetes (John 5:39) but turned scripture into systems of doctrinal laws and burdens; they were keen proselytising missionaries seeking converts (Mt.23:15) but corrupting them; they taught God's laws, but did not practice what they preached (Mt.23:3).

The parallel with much Western Christianity, even in evangelical churches, is disturbing!

Christ has indeed given to his disciples, the Church, the keys of the kingdom of heaven. What his disciples bind on earth as they preach

the gospel of the kingdom will be bound in heaven; and what they loose on earth, those whom they loose from their sin and bondage, will be loosed in heaven. In a real sense of the word, it is the Church - the disciples of the Lord - who use the keys and perform the function of binding and loosing; but in a deeper sense, it is the presence of the kingdom of God through the Church which accomplishes these eternal ends. The kingdom of God does not function in a vacuum but is entrusted to us and works through us as we give ourselves to the rule of God through Christ.

The church, the body of Christ, has the right, authority and power to proclaim forgiveness and deliverance from sin. Those keys to kingdom life open the way into the fullness of our life in Christ.

Forgiveness and deliverance from sin transforms life totally. We become new creations in Christ Jesus, and agents of his redemption in the world. The gospel of the kingdom sets us free. Salvation, then, must be seen in a kingdom context. God's rule in and through Christ in and through his body, the church, transforms all of life. The church proclaims in powerful words and mighty deeds the great good news of redemption from sin's dominion.

So the miraculous signs of the kingdom cannot pass away, or else it would be not be the kingdom of God. Salvation includes all of life. It brings release from sin's dominion in all its forms: rescued from damnation, filled with the life of Christ, empowered by his Spirit, made whole, saved from the ravages of sin in sickness and death, made one with all God's kingdom people.

Granted, the church is weak. Kingdom life often lies untapped. Christians and the church, weakened by disobedience or faithlessness (that lack of faith which is sin and results in sin), often fail to manifest kingdom life.

However, accelerating church growth in the power of the Spirit of God, and the massive shifts in consciousness which our era brings, all point to the greatest demonstration of kingdom life and power the world has even known. Yet, as in the life of Jesus, it can remain hidden from those who, seeing, will not see, and hearing, will not hear (Isa. 6:9-10 Mt. 13:14-15; Mk. 4:12; Lk. 8:10; Jn.12: 40; Acts 28: 26-27).

God's kingdom is manifest, yet hidden; revealed, yet concealed. Those who ask, receive it; those who seek, find it; to those who knock, the door is opened. And the church has the keys!

2. Signs of the Kingdom

Scripture clearly shows the quality of kingdom life which the church is meant to demonstrate. We must look to Scripture to discover the kind of ministry the body of Christ should have.

Jesus, head of his church, announced the kingdom of God and demonstrated its presence. It was the central message of Jesus. His ministry revealed the kingdom of God.

Christ, the Messianic King, incarnate in his human body, proclaimed the kingdom of God as immanent. He called for response in repentance and faith (Mark 1:15). His parables described the mysteries of the kingdom; his discourses illustrated the ethics of the kingdom; his miracles displayed its power and authority (Matthew 12:28).

Similarly, Jesus gave that authority and power to his disciples: "Preach as you go, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons" (Matthew 10:7,8).

The early church did that also. Jesus and his church both combined proclamation and demonstration, preaching and acting, saying and doing.

Every chapter in the book of Acts (apart from when Paul is making his defence) shows demonstration accompanying the proclamation of the gospel.

The clash of kingdoms emerges as a strong theme in the epistles also. The church contends against the principalities and the powers, the world rulers of this dark age, and the spiritual hosts of wickedness (Ephesians 6:12).

The risen Christ, victorious over the powers of this age, vested with kingdom authority (Matthew 28:18), commissions and empowers his body, the church, for powerful mission in the world. The body of

Christ must be seen as the agent of the kingdom of God, where Christ rules in power and still proclaims that stupendous reality through his church, both in living word and dynamic deed.

Our secularised worldview has robbed us of a clear understanding of Scripture, and our theological streams miss the obvious. The kingdom of God has come in power, yet we may neither see nor expect it. Indeed, if it comes in power to disturb our neat doctrinal systems and orthodox practices, we may expel it or confine it to a manageable place and hour: healings at 9 p.m. on Sunday nights in the back room.

We can marginalize what is central, and centralize what is marginal. Consider the time we spend in churches on finance, buildings and orders of service in church services – none of which were central to Jesus and the early church. Consider the time Jesus and the early church spent on central concerns such as sharing the good news, healing the sick, casting out spirits, and demonstrating God’s kingdom.

Consequently, robbed of the supernatural manifestations of the kingdom of God in the church, we can settle for a sadly truncated gospel. Pentecostal or charismatic believers may also settle for this truncated gospel, with a comfortable Christ who makes us feel good in the meetings but does not disturb our secular materialism.

However, God reigns. Christ is King. His Spirit endues his church with kingdom life and power. He is clear on his purposes.

Jesus himself declared the kingdom charter, quoting Isaiah 61:1-2.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to Proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord (Luke 4:18-19).

These are signs of the kingdom of God.

When John the Baptist sent his disciples to ask Jesus about him being the Messiah, they saw that “In that hour he cured many of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many that were blind he bestowed sight. And he answered them, ‘Go and tell John what you have seen

and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are being raised up and the poor have the good news preached to them” (Luke 7:21-22).

Wagner categorises these lists of kingdom signs:

Category A: Social signs or signs applied to a general class of people. These include (1) preaching good news to the poor, (2) proclaiming release to the captives, (3) liberating the oppressed, and (4) instituting the rear of Jubilee (“Acceptable year of the Lord”).

Category B: Personal signs or signs applied to specific individuals. These include (1) restoring sight to the blind, (2) casting out demons, (3) healing sick people, (4) making lame people walk, (5) cleansing lepers, (6) restoring hearing to deaf people, and (7) raising the dead.¹⁶

He suggests that Category A signs may be fulfilled gradually and may have a longer effect in society generally, whereas Category B signs are usually miraculous or supernatural with a more temporary effect, mostly on individuals. They demonstrate God's power, meet people's needs and help people to understand and respond to the kingdom.

Body ministry, then, is powerful ministry by the body of Christ. It includes the signs of the kingdom as well as the words of the kingdom. Spiritual gifts, imparted by the victorious Christ through his Spirit, empower Christ's body for authentic mission in the world.

That mission and ministry will increasingly reflect the biblical pattern of powerful kingdom ministry. Then the church grows with the dynamic quality of kingdom life and multitudes being won to the faith. That is authentic mission.

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Chapter 2

Obedient Mission

From making decisions to making disciples

Christ himself, head of his church, clearly stated the church's mission. He emphasized this between his resurrection and ascension. The power dimension of the Great Commission is often overlooked. Jesus himself emphasized we could not fulfil his mission without the power of his Spirit.

His Great Commission may be examined in many ways. It includes the crucial dimensions of empowering and discipling.

1. Empowering

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me," Jesus declared (Matthew 28:18).

So the Body of Christ is the most powerful body on earth. Christ, its head, reigns supreme. He fills his body with his life and continues his redemptive mission in the world through his church. Body ministry is his ministry in and through his body.

This powerful dimension of the Great Commission has often been overlooked. Now it is emerging as a crucial focus, if not the very centre of the issue.

Jesus kept it central. He insisted that we needed his power to do his work.

Matthew records it: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me, go therefore, and make disciples . . . and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age" (Mt. 28:18-20).

Mark records it: “These signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover” (Mark 16:17-18).

Luke records it: “I send the promise of my Father upon you; but stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high” (Luke 24:49).

John records it: “He breathed on them, and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit ...’ (John 20:22).

Acts records it: “You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses” (Acts 1:8).

When empowered and led by the Holy Spirit (who is the Spirit of Jesus and the Spirit of God, Gal. 4:6), mission is powerful. Then we do not make plans and execute them in human wisdom and strength, but seek divine wisdom and strength.

Empowering by the Spirit of God and being led by the Spirit of God are central to obedient mission. We cannot claim obedience to the Great Commission when we do God’s work in our strength or our own ways and wisdom.

The Great Commission is not merely an external command too hard to obey. It is an internal compulsion, ignited in us by the Spirit of God. The Spirit has been given to the Church because it is her essence and nature to be a witnessing body.

We only need an evangelical movement or a missionary movement or a charismatic movement because we have fallen so far.

Body ministry, then, will obey the Head of the body, move in his authority, filled with the power of his Spirit. The Great Commission begins with the absolute authority of Christ in his church and all the cosmos; it issues in obedient mission, exercised within that authority, and exercising that authority in powerful ministry.

Powerful body ministry flows from obedient disciples, who, individually and as a body, obey their Lord.

The Great Commission calls for this total task of 'making disciples' in terms of becoming disciples in the body of Christ and growing in discipleship. It is one process. The kind of evangelism required for church growth and stated in the Great Commission is evangelism which makes disciples, not merely gets people to make decisions. Decisions may be inadequate and fail to make disciples.

Ray Ortland summarised holistic evangelism this way:¹⁷

Priority One: Commitment to Christ.

Priority Two: Commitment to the body of Christ.

Priority Three: Commitment to the work of Christ in the world.

Jesus would not turn aside from his redemptive mission. He lived fully in the kingdom realm. He did only his Father's will, not his own. So everything he did was mission. Within that mission, his evangelism was not meetings or a program. He saved. Those he touched were made whole when there was faith. He said, "Follow me." That was his program. He still calls us to follow him in obedient mission.

When empowered and led by the Holy Spirit (who is the Spirit of Jesus and the Spirit of God, Gal. 4:6), mission is powerful. Then we do not make plans and execute them in our own wisdom and strength, but in divine wisdom and strength.

Empowering by the Spirit of God and being led by the Spirit of God are central to obedient mission. We cannot claim obedience to the Great Commission when we do God's work in our strength or our own worldly ways and wisdom.

Indeed, obedience to the commission of Jesus flows not so much from our effort to do what he says, but it dynamically flows from his Spirit within us. Then we cannot help but be what we are - the body of Christ in the world. Body ministry is not the human effort to obey the law of Christ; it is the spiritual dynamic which lives out that law in obedient mission.

The Great Commission is the final mandate given by Jesus to his disciples. But the disciples needed the Spirit's power. Pentecost became the means by which the discipling was done. Pentecost made witnessing the norm for the church, the natural quality of its life. The Great Commission was given to the church as a command and as a law. Pentecost transformed this law from an external mandate into an "organic part of her being, an essential expression of her life".¹⁸

In other words, the command of the Great Commission has its depth centre in Christ himself who by his Spirit transforms law into life. We do what we are. Roland Allen also saw that it is the Holy Spirit, given to the church, who empowers it for witnessing. The "obligation depends not upon the letter, but upon the Spirit of Christ, not upon what He orders (Mt.28:19), but upon what He is."¹⁹

When the church becomes the dynamically Spirit-filled people of God, its powerful body ministry will see the "Spontaneous Expansion of the Church" (Roland Allen, 1927).

We are empowered by God's Spirit for mission, and are automatically involved in discipling those won to Christ.

2. Discipling

Jesus commanded us to make disciples. "Make disciples" (*matheusate*) is the imperative command, with "going", "baptizing", and "teaching", the participial descriptions of the process involved. It is holistic.

A people group can be said to be disciplined (a specialist term) when, in obedience to Christ's command, that people group has been reached with the gospel (in the going), a church has been planted (in the baptizing) and believers obey their Lord (in the teaching).

Indeed, the very act of baptising usually indicated that the new Christians have begun obeying.

Teaching, in the Great Commission, is not merely teaching information. It is teaching obedience: "teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you."

Powerful body ministry flows from obedient disciples, who, individually and as a body, obey their Lord.

However, the simple term 'disciple' is not so simple! It is used as a noun (make disciples) and a verb (to disciple the nations). It is also used for conversion (become a disciple) and for the process of growing as a follower of Christ (discipling people).

Donald McGavran used the term discipling for evangelism: making disciples of Jesus Christ. He also noted that the term was used in three ways.

These he called D-1, D-2, and D-3 discipling.²⁰

D-1 would mean the turning of a non-Christian society for the first time to Christ – the people group became disciples.

D-2 would mean the turning of any individual from non-faith to faith in Christ and his incorporation in a church – she became a disciple.

D-3 would mean teaching an existing Christian as much of the truths of the Bible as possible – he became a strong disciple.

To be discipled is both a commitment and a process. It is both an initial act and a continuing experience.

Evangelism brings people into a new relationship as disciples in the body of Christ. Making disciples is a broader term that includes evangelism but also includes continuing experience related to the process of sanctification and growth as a disciple of Jesus.

The Great Commission calls for this total task of "making disciples" in terms of becoming disciples in the body of Christ and growing in discipleship. Making disciples includes incorporation into the body of Christ.

Evangelism needs to focus on making disciples. The kind of evangelism required for church growth and stated in the Great Commission is evangelism which makes disciples, not merely gets people to make decisions. Those decisions may be inadequate and fail

to make disciples. Making disciples, not making decisions, is the key issue.

Wagner's 3-P evangelism makes this point strongly. He discusses evangelism as involving Presence, Proclamation and especially Persuasion.

Christian presence may not make disciples. Proclamation in itself may not make disciples. Persuasion is required for biblical evangelism which will bring people to a commitment to Jesus Christ and to each other in the body of Christ.

An early clear statement of this position was published by the Anglican Archbishop's Committee in 1918: "To evangelize is so to present Christ Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit, that men shall come to put their trust in God through Him, to accept Him as their Saviour, and serve Him as their King in the fellowship of His church."²¹

This definition incorporates the concerns raised by those who see making disciples as essential in evangelism. Other writers on evangelism urge including preparation as part of the evangelistic process (Hunter), the power of the Spirit as essential to the task (Wimber), and the need for ongoing propagation in Christian community (Snyder). A simple expanding of Wagner's three categories can include these dimensions:

PRESENCE AS PREPARATION
PROCLAMATION IN POWER
PERSUASION WITH PROPOGATION

The *presence* of Jesus certainly *prepared* people to respond to the claims of the kingdom of God, or reject them. His *proclamation* of the gospel was *powerful* in word and deed. Those *persuaded* to follow him he incorporated into his community which he then *propagated*, multiplying Christian communities in dynamic church growth.

Holistic evangelism can incorporate all these dimensions. We see it most clearly in revivals. People respond to the claims of Christ in huge numbers, as Christians everywhere demonstrate love and enthusiastic service. Increasing numbers of people, especially new Christians,

gossip the Gospel, share their testimonies, and pray for all kinds of needs, often seeing swift and miraculous results. So large numbers of people become involved in dynamic churches, often creating new home groups or planting new churches.

Evangelical and cultural mandates

Jesus demonstrated concern for the whole of life. His commission to make disciples includes obedience to him in all things. No part of life is excluded. Everything comes under kingdom authority.

So making disciples goes far beyond personal piety. It is holistic, involving all of life. Holistic mission has come to mean the whole mission of the church, embracing both the evangelical and the cultural mandates

A depth centred paradigm holds them together, while maintaining biblical priorities. Social ministry, caring for people, finds its depth centre in commitment to Christ and service for him in his Spirit's power. Indeed, recovering that powerful depth dimension unites compassionate social ministry with compassionate evangelism, and the cultural mandate with the evangelistic mandate.

Healing is one example. Donald McCavran observed frankly:

Now if you're sick you get a shot of penicillin. That's the typical reaction of the secular American; yes, of the secular American Christian. We're inclined to think that (Spiritual) healing is charlatanism. It's a bit disreputable. It was from that point of view that I first had to face the issue. . . .

But the evidence I uncovered in country after country - and in North America as well - simply wouldn't permit me to hold my former point of view. And I may say that as I meditated on it, my Biblical convictions also wouldn't permit it. In other words, God is not helpless today. It is ridiculous to assume the only way He can heal is through injections or operations.²²

Evangelistic compassion with kingdom power flows into obedience to the cultural mandate. Was it easier for Jesus to say "Your sins are forgiven," or to say "Rise and walk"? He did both.

"But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins," he then said to the paralytic, "Rise, take up your bed and go home" (Matthew 9:6).

Jesus' healing ministry was essentially evangelistic, holistic and kingdom ministry. He healed in compassion and people followed him. Here is a jolting object lesson on holistic evangelism and kingdom social ministry. Healings today often lead to evangelism, and to strong faith in Jesus as the living, powerful Saviour and Lord.

We may be standing on the brink of the greatest breakthrough into our secularism that the world has ever seen, except for Jesus himself.

As we live in the kingdom mandate, everything involves evangelism and caring for one another. Everything really is mission when, like Jesus, everything we do is depth centred in obedience to God.

A truly Spirit-filled, Spirit-empowered, Christ-centred kingdom ministry is mission, throbs with dynamic spiritual life and confronts everyone with the claims of the kingdom, just as Jesus did.

Priorities remain. Jesus would not turn aside from his redemptive mission. He lived fully in the kingdom realm. He did only his Father's will, not his own. So everything he did was mission. Within that mission, his evangelism was no narrow program. He saved. Those he touched were made whole when there was faith. He said, "Follow me." That was his program – calling for commitment to himself. He gave his life. The word was made flesh; the divine was human; all his life and death and resurrection were his mission.

The church is meant to demonstrate God's love and justice to the world. Where this happens, the cultural and evangelistic mandates flow together naturally and powerfully.

Unfortunately some church congregations can lose sight of this and become in-grown and isolated.

God's Spirit always thrusts us into mission. His love for us and everyone around us compels us to care as he does. One sure mark of being Spirit-filled is to be filled with compassion and to do something about it, just as Jesus did.

Chapter 3

Mutual Ministry

From spectators to participants

Body ministry frees us to be what God made us to be. The unity of the Spirit is expressed in diverse spiritual gifts and mutual ministries. It enables us to fulfil God's calling.

For example, a church organization may need people to fill the roles required for the organization to operate, so the focus there is on finding people to fill roles required. Often, by the grace of God, people fit the role well. However, body ministry starts from the body, not the role in the organization. Each member of the body of Christ is gifted by him for ministry in his body. Body ministry involves the exercise of those ministries and functions. Usually we try to recognise this and match the gifting to the role.

Many people use their spiritual gifts without having a specific role. Some serve one another without being deacons. Many pray for healings without being home group leaders. Others are gifted preachers or evangelists without being pastors.

A growing pattern in dynamic, Spirit-led ministries, sees gifts fitted to roles. In that case, the roles grow out of the ministries God has given. If God has gifted you in serving and organising, your role may be as part of a church team organising a range of caring ministries.

Because all organizations have roles, we will always have them in churches. Body ministry can function within those organizational roles, especially if they are flexible. However, as body ministry grows stronger and more dynamic, the roles change. New wine needs new wineskins. As changes in society and the church accelerate, they cause more changes historical institutional roles to emerging body ministry functions.

The roles of clergy and laity give us prime examples. I examine body ministry in the context of those roles and then comment on mutuality in body ministry.

1. Clergy

Accelerating social change, dynamic church growth, and multiplying body ministry flood the role of the clergy with new potential. The term 'clergy' is a non-biblical role term, usually professional. Like other role expressions, in itself it can be neutral. However, it can also be damaging by perpetuating a false division between clergy and laity in the body of Christ.

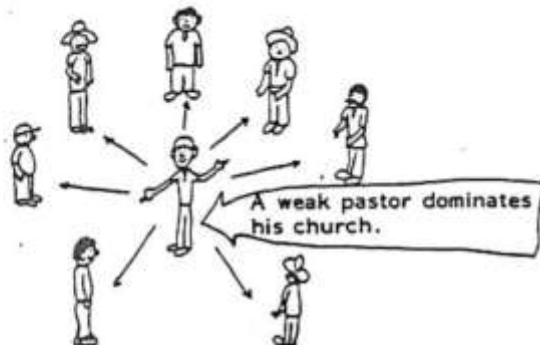
Mutual ministry in the body of Christ can release everyone in ministry, clergy included; especially clergy. Clergy can be freed to focus on their own gifts and calling as more people also use their gifts and fulfil their calling.

This major, biblical shift in the role of clergy can free many clergy from burn-out through the stress of the job and the relentless pressure of meeting people's needs.

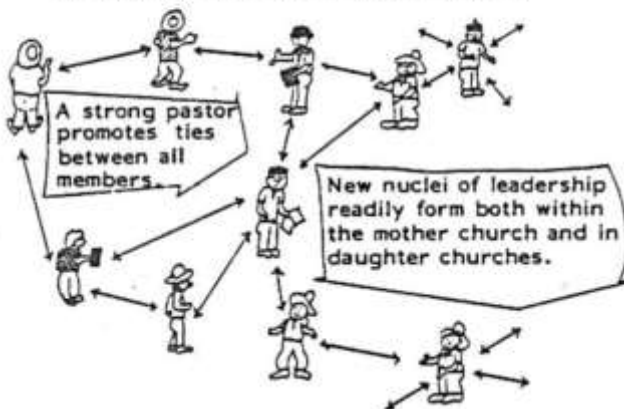
Renewal and revival restore this emphasis on shared leadership such as clergy equipping all God's people for their service and ministry as they discover their spiritual gifts. One result of people being filled with the Spirit is that they are also filled with a new desire to serve the Lord in the power of his Spirit.

A central problem in the traditional role of the clergy is clericalism. For years the church has allowed the clergy to do the work of the ministry while most Christians watch.

A PASSIVE, PASTOR-CENTERED CHURCH:



INTERACTION IN A DYNAMIC CHURCH:



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Building a network of strong relationships provides for the large number of ministries required in the local church in order for it to grow and reproduce churches.

Strong relationships liberates body ministry and frees us from the strangling limitations of clericalism.

Clericalism in ministry causes these problems:

1. A discouraged clergy. No one can do all the work of the ministry in a local church. Many pastors become discouraged, overworked and pessimistic.

2. Passive Christians. By allowing the pastor to do most the work of ministry in the church the remainder of the Body is robbed of its growth through their service. Most turn up to sit in the pews, and a few help out in needed roles such as Sunday School teaching.

3. An unevangelized world. The pastor doing the work of the ministry is not successful. The world is not being impacted for Christ that way. In fact many churches see few or no conversions.

In many churches the clergy-laity divisions have continued as in pre-Reformation times, so spiritual gifts and body ministry are ignored.

Why should the pastor do all the preaching, when many people in the congregation may be more gifted preachers and anointed for that? Why should the pastor do most of the visiting when many people in the congregation may be more gifted in pastoral care and in praying for the sick? Why should the pastor do much of the administration when many people in the congregation will be more gifted in administration?

Ministry does not depend on the 'paid' minister. In fact, ministry multiplies as more people are involved together in many ministries. The role of the clergy can change, and indeed must change to be biblical. Strong pastors release ministry among everyone.

Clericalism not only tends to produce weak, passive pastors and churches, it perpetuates that tendency through in-breeding. The models of the pastoral ministry foster that expectation in the church. The "squeaking wheel" principle focuses on maintenance, not mission, for the pastor must apply oil to every squeak.

So ministers soon either run into burnout or settle for small, manageable congregations. Clericalism stifles church growth.

John Sanford gives eight reasons why ministry burnout afflicts clergy. He has a chapter on each aspect under these headings:

1. The problem of the endless task - their work is never finished;
2. The airy work of the ministering person - the care of people does not always show results in measurable ways;

3. The revolving wheel - the work is repetitive;
4. Dealing with expectations - ministering involves dealing constantly with people's expectations;
5. Help through relationships - they must deal with the same people year after year in a ministering capacity;
6. Feeding the soul - energy in constantly drained spiritually;
7. The problem of ego-centricity - they have to constantly cope with people needing 'strokes' not wanting spiritual food;
8. Elijah's problem - the ministering person can be exhausted by failure, and by success.²⁴

Caught in a system of parochial expectations and endless human needs, professional clergy can easily settle for mediocrity and maintenance ministries which prop up the system. So clergy need small churches or they will burn out even more quickly.

Further, and tragically, professional clergy can be threatened by change. The weak pastor dominates and maintains stability. Anyone rocking the boat won't be welcome. Lay people coming alive in the Spirit and beginning to exercise body ministry can threaten many professional clergy.

Yet, body ministry and biblical expressions of mission require just that active, Spirit-directed involvement in ministry. However, professional clergy often find it hard to cope with such unprofessional ministry form "unlearned and ignorant men" (Acts 4:13). They still call councils to discuss what can be done about them!

Instead of the biblical doctrine of the Holy Spirit ruling in the church we have substituted another doctrine, clergy professionalism.

The problem of professionalism is one of attitude. Clergy need not be threatened. The dynamic of body ministry can free them to concentrate on their own particular gifts, free them to equip others for ministry, and free them to have more time to live life as God intended.

Body ministry calls for a new approach to the role of the clergy, not only as leader-equipper, but also in terms of that person's specific spiritual gifts. Some clergy will have the gift-mix to lead large and growing churches. They will be people of faith and vision, leaders who can inspire and equip others in ministry. Other clergy will have different gift-mixes more suited to being part of a team lead by the leader-equipper. Still others will minister best in rapidly growing small churches by freeing others to plant daughter churches. Yet others will minister most powerfully as professional clergy in the traditional pastoring role. Others again will fit into the body ministry as professional counsellors, evangelists, administrators, or other specialist ministries.

Team ministry is part of the answer for mutual ministry, but only part. body ministry goes further. Mutual ministry is not merely team ministry, although the ministry of a team can function well within the body. Often the team will be those who most enable others to minister, equipping them, supporting them, encouraging them, and ministering mutually with them.

2. Laity

The laity is the *laos*, the people of God. However, that is commonly used as a term applied to the unordained people of God. Like other terms, we are probably stuck with 'laity' in common language, but need to acknowledge that it is unbiblical. To be biblical we must speak of the ministry of the whole people of God. While 'clergy' and 'lay' are common terms, they perpetuate unbiblical thinking. Michael Harper identified four major differences commonly and mistakenly held concerning the roles of clergy and laity:

1. The ordained minister has more authority and power because of ordination and the office;
2. Clergy are more fully trained for ministry than lay people;
3. The clergy office is more permanent in the sense of being a life-long vocation with a fairly clearly defined function in the church;

4. Clergy are more fully committed to service in the church being a full-time professional in the religious field.²⁵

Body ministry can function with those unbiblical role differences but true body ministry dissolves the gap between clergy and laity. Clergy roles shift from domination to facilitating and encouraging the ministry of everyone.

Traditionally the church has seen the ordained clergyman as the one performing the ministry and the congregation supporting the minister by their presence, purse and prayers.

With prophetic vision Stephen Neill pointed out in the fifties that change was needed and was coming, even to ordaining lay people.

The Churches can meet situations of rapid change only if they are prepared to make far more use of lay people than, with some shining examples, they have been accustomed to do. Most Churches have become far too much pastors' Churches; in many, little more is expected of the layman than that he should sit through the sermon with reasonable patience, and take out his cheque-book at the right moment.

The question we are now considering is that of the possible ordination of the ordinary farmer or merchant or lawyer, who is prepared to give freely to the Church the time that he can spare from the ordinary occupation in which most of his time must be spent.

The proposal seems to us strange only because, from the point of view of the Early Church, we have got things thoroughly turned upside down. ... It is hardly too much to say that in those days almost anyone could celebrate the Holy Communion, and hardly anyone except the bishop could preach; whereas now almost anyone can preach (or, rather is allowed to preach!) and hardly anyone can celebrate Holy Communion. Lack of balance in either direction is to be deplored.²⁶

The point is vital. Ordination needs to change. In the process it could become more biblical.

Jesus was a carpenter. Many of his first apostles were professional fishermen. Paul, well schooled theologically, often earned his living in his trade of tent making and found that it helped his missionary work. Many Christian clergy still support themselves partially or entirely in 'secular' occupations.

That is increasing. Many part-time pastors now are also professional people such as teachers or lawyers, and many full-time pastors have not completed theological college or seminary. Fortunately modern facilities provide such ministry education, as explored in Part 2 of this book.

In one sense, ordination is irrelevant to body ministry. That ministry of the body will function through the gifts of all its members whether they be ordained officially or not, professional clergy or not, theologically educated or not.

However, the ordination of laity for ministry can help to facilitate fuller mutual ministry and give official recognition to those within the body who have special ministries in leadership whether full time, part time or spare time.

If ordination is the recognition by the church of ministry gifts in a person, then ordination increasingly applies to all God's people, for all are called to minister.

Kraemer's seminal book of over 50 years ago, *A Theology of the Laity*, makes the point strongly:

In the development of our thesis: the Church is Ministry (*diakonia*) and therefore ministry is incumbent on the Church as a whole and not only on a special and specialised body of people "set apart" for the ministry, we have strongly stressed "the ministry of the laity" as an *integral* part of the Church's life and service. *All* members of the ecclesia have in principle the same calling, responsibility and dignity, have their part in the apostolic and ministerial nature and calling of the Church. ...

I have said up to now, strictly speaking, nothing which has not been said by others. The only new thing, perhaps (and this seems to me very important), is the insistence on the laity's full, responsible

share in bringing the nature and calling of the Church to expression, and their belonging integrally in the doctrine of the Church. A doctrine of the Church which ignores or by-passes it in using generalities is incomplete and crippled. This amounts to saying that all our historic ecclesiologies are crippled.²⁷

Body ministry, fully understood and experienced, transforms the clergy-laity distinction into mutual ministry.

For example, a pastor will preach. When body ministry is allowed to move among the people, the most powerful word from God may not come from the pastor at all, but from some "unlearned and ignorant men" or women. This is more likely to happen in smaller groups, but can also happen in huge congregations where leaders facilitate sharing or speaking, such as recognised prophetic people giving an encouraging or challenging word.

A teacher will teach, but within the body the most powerful teaching may happen through those who have never functioned as recognised or formal teachers and who would not fit the role of teacher. At times, "a little child shall lead them."

A counsellor will counsel. Yet, someone may pray with the counselee one day in the power of the Spirit so that the root cause of the problem is dealt with, deliverance sets them free and counselling is no longer required.

Mutual ministry in the body of Christ is revolutionary. The professional roles of preacher, teacher, or counsellor, in the above examples may be sometimes more powerfully fulfilled by non-professionals. Professionals can be blessed and strengthened by this mutual ministry.

We may be stuck with clergy and laity as terms, but we need to understand that they are not biblical terms. Lay is often used to mean not professional, not an expert, or amateurish. As such it can be offensive as well as unbiblical.

We can overcome this unbiblical dualism by using different language. Our language reflects and reinforces our concepts and theology, so the terms we use shape what we think and do. We all minister. Many will

be leaders and elders, some of these ordained, and some not ordained. Some leaders will be full time, some part time.

It also has direct bearing on education for ministry. If we take seriously the implications of body ministry, we will be cautious about a "lay training program" and even about "professional theological education" for clergy. So worldwide, we now find education for ministry and theological education available to all interested. Some may become ordained.

This wonderful shift in awareness and action is changing theological education and ministry education. It is for all interested, whether they become full time or part time clergy, ministers, and pastors or not. Book 2 – Ministry Education – examines this massive shift in detail.

The "ministry of the word" includes many ministries. No specific ministry such as the pastor or the preacher is the whole ministry. All ministries flow from the incarnated Word and the Spirit of God.

An international conference of Anglican (Episcopalian) leaders noted:

The ministry of the Church is that of the whole body of which Christ is the head, within the body every member is given gifts by the Holy Spirit with which to minister to the glory of Christ, and the Spirit gives gifts equally to young and old, male and female, and to those of every background within the body.

Emphasis needs to be given to the wide range and diversity of gifts and ministries; we need the whole spectrum of the rainbow.²⁸

The report gave three ways to implement these concerns:

1. Practical teaching on ministry and experience in groups small enough to discover, develop and exercise specific gifts in ministry;
2. Leadership has the task of recognising, identifying, affirming and facilitating the ministry of the members of the body; and
3. Help will be needed to develop and use the gifts and ministries through specific training, once gifts have been received from the Spirit.

Fresh winds of renewal began to revive the church, including traditional denominations, from the mid-twentieth century. All denominations, even the most conservative, had leaders involved in renewal, formed renewal committees, and participated in interdenominational renewal conferences.

My book, *Church on Fire* (1991), describes the impact of renewal in Australian churches by the end of the twentieth century with contributions from ministers and leaders in most denominations.

Denominational churches, Pentecostal churches and growing networks of independent churches gave expression to a wide range of renewal and revival ministries. They emphasized the place of spiritual gifts and releasing them through worship, evangelism and service. This new movement of the Holy Spirit helped to shift church life from being a spectator religion to the increasing involvement of every believer in ministry.

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Chapter 4

Spiritual Gifts

From limited to unlimited

The ascended, victorious, all powerful Christ, having conquered sin and death and hell now reigns supreme. He is the head of his body, the church. He gives gifts to his church, specifically those called under his authority to exercise authority in the church as leaders so that all God's people may be equipped for ministry. That is a powerful body, the body of the risen Christ.

Our Lord's intention for his church is for us to grow till we reach the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ who is all and in all (Colossians 3:11).

Body ministry requires spiritual gifts. The body of Christ ministers charismatically. There is no other way it can minister as the living body of the living Christ. He ministers in and through his body, by the gifts of his Spirit.

Spiritual gifts differ from natural talents

Charismatic gifts of the Spirit are different from natural talents. We can do much through dedicated human talent, but that is not body ministry through spiritual gifts. Natural talents do need to be committed to God and used for his glory. They can be channels of spiritual gifts.

Someone may sing beautifully or speak eloquently. That natural gift becomes a spiritual gift when it is anointed by God for ministry.

Spiritual gifts constantly surprise us. They often show up with great power in unlikely people and in unlikely ways.

A common misunderstanding, for instance, is that those with an effective healing ministry must be especially holy people. However,

many are not. They may not be faultless ‘saints’. Gifts of the Spirit are given by grace, not earned by consecration.

Young, immature Christians may have powerful spiritual ministries, as they discover and use their spiritual gifts. Many do. That is no proof of consecration or maturity, even though to please God we need to offer ourselves to him in full commitment.

Romans Chapter 12 explains this. The well known first two verses challenge us to offer ourselves fully to God and so discover his will for our lives. Paul then explains that knowing God’s will involves being realistic about ourselves and our gifts. If we know and use our God-given gifts, we fulfil God’s will for our lives.

Body ministry, then, depends on the use of spiritual gifts, not just the use of natural talents dedicated to God. Both are vital for committed Christian living, and both will be present in the church. However, the church is not built on committed natural talent, even though churches sometimes operate that way.

Spiritual gifts differ from Christian roles

Similarly, spiritual gifts are not Christian roles or tasks. All Christians witness, but only some are gifted in evangelism. Every Christian has faith, but some have a gift of faith as well. All must exercise hospitality, but some are gifted in hospitality. Prayer is for all of us, but some are gifted in intercession.

We all have Christian roles such as leaders, helpers, servers, prayers, and supporting one another. Gifts of the Spirit can flow through these tasks. Our spiritual gifts add a deeper dimension to our roles or tasks – they add the depth dimension to those ministries.

Spiritual gifts flow strongest in unity with incredible diversity.

1. Unity

Each passage on the gifts of the Spirit stresses the importance of being one body (1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Romans 12:4-5; Ephesians 4:4). The whole context of Paul’s teaching on the gifts of the Spirit is one of

unity with diversity; one body with many parts functioning in harmony. Paul repeats many themes in the three key passages in 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12, and Ephesians 4:

- **One body:** The church is the one body of Christ on earth (1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Romans 12:4-5; Ephesians 4:4-6).
- **Gracious gifts:** They are given, not earned and not achieved (1 Corinthians 12:1, 4, 6, 8-11; Romans 12:6; Ephesians 4:7-8, 11).
- **All Christians have gifts:** There are no exceptions; and each gift is important (1 Corinthians 12:7; Romans 12:6; Ephesians 4:7).
- **Gifts differ:** Value our differences; we need each other (1 Corinthians 12:4-7; Romans 12:4-6; Ephesians 4:7-8).
- **Unity:** They function in unity and promote unity (1 Corinthians 12:12-13, 25; Romans 12:4-5; Ephesians 4:3, 13, 16).
- **Maturity:** Spiritual gifts build up the body in maturity (1 Corinthians 12:7; Romans 12:9-21; Ephesians 4:12-15).
- **Love:** Love is the top priority; gifts must be used in love (1 Corinthians 13; Romans 12:9-10; Ephesians 4:4, 15-16).

Without unity expressed in love, diversity destroys the body's ministry causing chaos, division, sectarianism, and impotence. This is Paul's theme in 1 Corinthians 12-14.

Paul had to correct the divisions in Corinth by emphasizing the unity of the body, bound together in love. Gifts are not to be a source of division and strife, but an expression of unity and love. Unless rooted and grounded in love, the gifts are counter-productive.

Unity in the body of Christ allows that body to function well, not be crippled. No one has all the gifts. We all need one another. No one should be conceited about any gift that God has given. No one claim that their is gift the most important, and magnify and exalt it at the expense of others. Gifts are to be used in humility and service. We do not compete. We minister in harmony and co-operation.

Paul's great theme, "in Christ," expresses the unity essential for body ministry. In Christ we are one body. In Christ we live and serve.

Love lies at the heart of body ministry. The body is one, bound in love. The body builds itself up in love (Eph. 4:16). That is why 1

Corinthians 13 is central to Paul's passage on spiritual gifts in the body of Christ. "Make love your aim," he insists, "and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts" (1 Corinthians 14:1).

Jesus insisted on love. "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:34-35).

Our unity is not based on doctrine, but on Jesus. Unity comes from who we are, the body of Christ. This is a fact, not a hope. We are one in Christ. We are one in the Spirit. God has made us one. Unfortunately, being sinful, we often fail to live out that reality.

A Christ-like attitude, in humble kingdom thinking and love overcomes competition and critical spirits that divide us. That's where we see the Holy Spirit moving in power among us as we obey the Lord's command to love and serve one another.

Breathtaking community transformations are now happening around the world where we live this out in unity. Whole communities transformed by God now witness to his power to heal the land and the people when we repent and unite in obedience to his requirements.

Almolonga in Guatemala, Cali in Columbia and villages in Fiji all provide outstanding examples of this transformation.

Almolonga, Guatemala

The town of Almolonga in Guatemala in South America, typical of many Mayan highland communities, suffered from economic depression, inebriation, and crime. The four gaols were full this town of 19,000. Many criminals had to be transported to gaols in the capital city.

Guatemala City pastor Harold Caballeros reported that, "the town suffered from poverty, violence and ignorance. In the mornings you would encounter many men just lying on the streets, totally drunk from the night before. And of course this drinking brought along other serious problems like domestic violence and poverty. It was a vicious cycle."²⁹

Donato Santiago, the town's chief of police, said, "People were always fighting. We never had any rest." Now with crime dramatically diminished and the gaols no longer needed, police chief Santiago, says with a grin. It's pretty uneventful around here."

A few Christian leaders began regularly praying together from 7 pm to midnight in the 1970s. As they continued to pray in unity, increasing numbers of people were being healed and set free from strong demonic powers or witchcraft. Churches began to grow, and the community began to change. Crime and alcoholism decreased.

Within twenty years the four gaols were emptied and are now used for community functions. The last of Almolonga's gaols closed in 1994, and is now remodelled building called the 'Hall of Honour' used for municipal ceremonies and weddings.

The town's agricultural base was transformed. Their fields have become so fertile they yield three large harvests a year. Previously, the area exported four truckloads of produce a month. Now they are exporting as many as 40 truckloads a day. Farmers buy big Mercedes trucks with cash, and then attach their testimony to the shiny vehicles with huge metallic stickers and mud flaps declaring, *The Gift of God, God is my Stronghold* and *Go Forward in Faith*.

Some farmers provide work for others by renting out land and developing fields in other towns. They help people get out of debt by providing employment for them.

On Halloween day in 1998, an estimated 12,000 to 15,000 people gathered in the market square to worship and honour God in a fiesta of praise. Led by the mayor and many pastors, the people prayed for God to take authority over their lives and their economy.

University researchers from the United States and other countries regularly visit Almolonga to investigate the astounding 1,000 per cent increase in agricultural productivity. Local inhabitants explain that the land is fertilized by prayer and rained upon with God's blessings.

Unity did not happen overnight. It took time. It needed a small group of persistent leaders who began praying together, crying out to God for

mercy and for change. That usually happens when we are desperate and realise that we need God's intervention.

We are desperate, or should be. We live in tough times as persecution and calamities increase globally. But there is hope.

Some leaders now look beyond their doctrinal and denominational differences to seek the Lord together in unity, as he told us to do in humility, prayer, seeking him and in repentance (2 Chronicles 7:14).

God can change whole cities, such as happened in the city of Cali in Columbia.

Cali, Columbia

Columbia in South America was the world's biggest exporter of cocaine, sending between 700 to 1,000 tons a year to the United States and Europe alone. The Cali cartel controlled up to 70 percent of this trade. It was called the largest, richest, most well organized criminal organization in history.³⁰

The drug lords in cartels ruled the city through fear. At times 15 people a day were killed, shot from the black Mercedes cars owned by the cartels. Car bombs exploded regularly. Journalists who denounced the Mafia were killed. Drug money controlled the politicians. By the early 1990s the cartels controlled every major institution in Cali including banks, business, politicians and police.

The churches were in disarray and ineffective. "In those days," a pastor recalls, "the pastors' association consisted of an old box of files that nobody wanted. Every pastor was working on his own; no one wanted to join together."

A few discouraged but determined pastors began praying together regularly, asking God to intervene. Gradually others joined them. A small group of pastors planned a combined service in the civic auditorium in May 1995 for a night of prayer and repentance. They expected a few thousand people, but were amazed when 25, 000 attended, nearly half of the city's evangelical population. The crowd

remained until 6 o'clock the next morning at this the first of the city's now famous united all-night prayer vigils held four times a year.

Two days after that event in May 1995, the daily newspaper, *El Pais*, headlined, "No Homicides!" For the first time in anyone's memory, 24 hours had passed without a single person being killed. Then, during the next four months 900 cartel-linked officers were fired from the metropolitan police force.

By August 1995, the authorities had captured all seven of the targeted cartel leaders. Previously the combined efforts of the Columbian authorities, and the American FBI and CIA had been unable to do that.

In December 1995, a hit man killed Pastor Julio Ruibal, one of the key leaders of the combined pastors' meetings and the united prayer gatherings. 1, 500 people gathered at his funeral, including many pastors who had not spoken to each other in months. At the end of the memorial service, the pastors said, "Brothers, let us covenant to walk together in unity from this day forward. Let Julio's blood be the glue that binds us together in the Holy Spirit."

Now over 200 pastors have signed the covenant that is the backbone of the city's united prayer vigils. What made the partnership of these leaders so effective are the same things that always bring God's blessings: clean hearts, right relationships, and united prayer.

As the kingdom of God became more real in Cali, it affected all levels of society including the wealthy and educated. A wealthy businessman and former mayor said, "It is easy to speak to upper-class people about Jesus. They are respectful and interested." Another successful businessman adds that the gospel is now seen as practical rather than religious.

Churches grow fast. One church that meets in a huge former warehouse holds seven services on a Sunday to accommodate its 35, 000 people. Asked, "What is your secret?" they point to the 24-hour prayer room behind the platform.

A former drug dealer says, “There is a hunger for God everywhere. You can see it on the buses, on the streets and in the cafes. Anywhere you go people are ready to talk.”

Cali police deactivated a large 174-kilo car bomb in November 1996. The newspaper *El Pais* carried the headline: “Thanks to God, It Didn’t Explode.” Many people noted that this happened just 24 hours after 55,000 Christians held their third *vigilia* – the all night prayer vigil that includes praise, worship, dances and celebration mixed with the prayers and statements from civic and church leaders.

City authorities have given the churches free use of large stadium venues for their united gatherings because of their impact on the whole community, saving the city millions of dollars through reduced crime and terrorism.

Fiji, South Pacific

Fiji now has significant examples of effective community transformation, based on honouring God in unity between churches and communities. Fiji has experienced many military coups. In spite of this, Fiji also experiences significant unity in local village communities and among many churches.

The 2005 documentary report titled *Let the Seas Resound*, produced by the Sentinel Group (www.sentinel.com), identifies examples of transformed communities in Fiji, featuring reconciliation and renewed ecosystems. The former President of Fiji, Ratu Josefa Iloilo, and former Prime Minister, Laisenia Qarase, include their personal comments in this video and DVD report, now distributed worldwide.

In September 2004, 10, 000 people gathered to worship together in Suva, Fiji, drawn by reconciliation initiatives of both government and church leaders. Only four years previously such unity among government and church leaders was unimaginable. Ethnic tensions flared in the attempted coup of May 2000, when the government was held hostage for 56 days, and violence erupted in the streets of Suva.

As people of Fiji unite in commitment to reconciliation and repentance in various locations, many testify to miraculous changes in their community and in the land.

Three days after the people of Nuku, north of Suva, made a united covenant with God, the water in the local stream, which for the previous 42 years had been known as the cause of barrenness and illness, mysteriously became clean and life giving. Then food grew plentifully in the area.

Fish are now caught in abundance around the village of Nataleria, where previously they could catch only a few fish. This change followed united repentance and reconciliation among all the churches and in the whole village.

Churches in the Navosa highlands north of Sigatoka came together in reconciliation and unity. Some people in that area grew large marijuana crops worth about \$11 million. Nine growers were involved. The team leaders told the farmers that it was their choice, that they should obey God and trust him for their livelihood, without any promises from anyone to do anything for them. If they could not, then they should not participate in the Healing Process. By the time the Process had finished, the people had destroyed the crop as part of the reconciliation Process. After the HTL ministry, a total of 13,864 plants were uprooted and burnt by the growers themselves. There were 6,000 seedlings as well.

Many island communities in Fiji and the South Pacific now report similar ecological and community transformation. See my book, *South Pacific Revivals* for further examples of healing of the land through reconciliation and unity among churches and communities.

This is not only an island phenomenon, where it may be easier for whole communities to come together. It happens in towns and cities too.

When we obey our Lord who requires unity in his body, we see miraculous changes. That unity can be lived out amid God-given diversity.

2. Diversity

Our unity is expressed in the diversity of gifts. There is one Spirit; his gifts are incredibly diverse.

The point is developed in all the body passages of Paul. Diversity is to be celebrated, not squashed; encouraged, not smothered; developed, not ignored.

Body ministry will use these gifts. God's Spirit moves among his people in power to meet needs and minister effectively. Those gifts need to be identified and used, and in the process, as in Jesus' life and ministry, special anointings enable effective use of all the Spirit's gifts.

The best use of spiritual gifts is proper use, not misuse nor disuse. Paul describes various streams of God's gifting.

1. God our Father gives personal gifts in grace. Often seen in our personalities and preferences, these motivating gifts include prophecy, ministry, teaching, exhorting, giving, leading, and showing mercy in compassion (Romans 12:6-8). They blossom in us as we offer ourselves to God, not being conformed to this world but being transformed by the *renewing* of our minds (Romans 12:1-2).

2. Jesus Christ, the Head of his Church, gives leadership gifts to his church, including the gifts of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers (Ephesians 4:11). These gifts are the people – not just their ministries such as evangelising and teaching. They may be full-time or part-time, paid or unpaid. Most are unpaid, as with Jesus and the apostles. Think, for example, of the huge army of voluntary home group leaders giving pastoral care to millions of people, and reaching out to others in natural friendship evangelism.

3. The Holy Spirit manifests himself in our lives with gifts given to each of us for the common good. They include a word or revelation of wisdom, a word or revelation of prophecy, faith, various gifts of healing, miracles, prophecy or speaking from God, discerning spirits, various kinds of tongues, and interpretation of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:7-11).

Paul even ranks God's gifts in order of ministry importance in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guiding or administrating, and of different kinds of tongues (1 Corinthians 12: 28). We sometimes mix up the order and emphasize the least the most!

Not only are we rediscovering the many and varied gifts of the Spirit in the 21st century, but we are also rediscovering the vital biblical truth that these gifts belong to all God's people, not just the leaders, pastors or clergy. Together we learn to be supernaturally natural.

That motivates us all to be involved in ministries which include all the various manifestations of God's Spirit among us all.

The diversity of these glorious gifts can be summarised in the following way for a simple, practical application to ministry:

motivational gifts from God our Father,

ministry gifts from Christ Jesus our Lord and Head, and

manifestation gifts from the Holy Spirit our Comforter and Friend.

Motivational Gifts from God our Father

Romans 12:6-8 lists gifts in a passage about discovering and doing the will of God in the body of Christ, using our God-given abilities. This list corresponds closely to our natural God-made abilities filled with God's Spirit. Some writers suggest that knowing these God-given gifts in our lives motivates us to serve him well for his glory.

1. prophecy: so prophesy in proportion to our faith;
2. ministry: so use it in ministering or serving;
3. teaching: so use it in teaching;
4. exhorting; so use it in exhortation;
5. giving: so give liberally;
6. leading: so lead with diligence;
7. showing mercy: so do it with cheerfulness.

Most of us do all these things in various ways, but each of us will be gifted more strongly in some of these gifts. Knowing our gifting helps us serve the Lord with gladness, fulfilled in our calling.

Ministry Gifts from Christ Jesus our Head

Ephesians 4:11 summarises the leadership or ministry gifts given by the risen Lord, Head of his church. These gifts differ from all the other lists of gifts because it is the person who is the gift of Christ to his church, not just their ministry gift:

1. apostle: sent by the Lord (originally the 12);
2. prophet: speaking from the Lord;
3. evangelist: proclaiming the gospel of the Lord;
4. pastor: shepherding the Lord's people;
5. teacher: instructing the Lord's people.

Increasingly, these gifts are being recognised and developed in local churches. Usually, where people are gifted by the Lord in these ways, they become leaders in the church, often unpaid (as in home groups or specialised ministries such as with youth or children), sometimes paid (as on staff, part time or full time). This list in Ephesians is not a list of local church staff, although the staff will have some of these gifts. The more that the leaders in the church, voluntary and paid, can exercise and be supported in these ministries, the more the church will demonstrate the anointing and power of the Spirit in its life.

Manifestation Gifts from the Holy Spirit

1 Corinthians 12, gives two useful lists of manifestations of the Spirit in the body of Christ. Some people use the following helpful categories:

The power to know:

1. word of wisdom: a divine understanding for a need;
2. word of knowledge: a divine revelation about a person or event;
3. discerning of spirits: a divine awareness about spirit powers;

The power to act:

4. faith: a divine enabling
5. healings: a divine provision of wholeness;
6. miracles: a divine intervention supernaturally;

The power to speak:

7. prophecy: a divine word given;
8. tongues: a divine unknown language (occasionally known to others);
9. interpretation of tongues: a divine revelation of a message in tongues.

Paul emphasizes the importance of these gifts, and strongly argues that we need one another because we are all gifted differently. The eye cannot say it does not need the hand; the head cannot say it does not need the feet.

Gifts are gifts of grace. We all need God's grace as we grow in using these gifts, and appreciating them in one another.

1 Corinthians 12:28 then arranges various gifts in an order of ministry significance:

1. apostles
2. prophets
3. teachers
4. miracles
5. healings
6. helps – service
7. administration
8. tongues

Leadership in the church is crucial for it can release or stifle the use of the spiritual gifts of God's people. Leaders do not need to envy or fear God's gifting in his people. The more the body of Christ lives in its gifting and calling, the more the leaders themselves are able to live in their own gifting and calling, and not be overloaded with ministry which is neither their gifting nor their calling.

We all have many gifts from God but some people are gifted by the Spirit more fully than others in various ministries. Gifts may emerge unexpectedly as we believe and obey the leading of the Spirit in our lives. We often discover God's gifting as we serve one another in various ways, for the Spirit then anoints us for those ministries.

Preaching, for example, can become prophecy as it is anointed by the Spirit of God. That prophetic ministry may happen unexpectedly in the process of a sermon. It may also be given in preparation as a word directly from the Lord.

Compassionate service and healing prayer will at times be anointed powerfully by God's presence in signs and wonders to heal. Our gift, anointing and role then merge together into strong spiritual ministry.

So role, spiritual gift, and anointings cannot be clearly divided. Indeed, as the Spirit of God moves in greater power among all members of the body of Christ, the ministry of that body becomes increasingly anointed.

Then the professional is swallowed up in the spiritual; natural ability is suffused and flooded with supernatural life; the human is filled with the divine.

Jesus lived this way. He laid aside the rights and powers of his divinity, though still being divine. He became fully man, not superboy nor superman, but fully man, the second Adam without sin.

Then filled with the Spirit from his baptism at around 30, he lived and ministered in the power of the Spirit. He was filled with the Spirit, led by the Spirit, anointed by the Spirit, and empowered by the Spirit. He showed us how to live a Spirit-filled life.

Following Pentecost, his followers did the same, though not sinless like Jesus. They too were filled, led, anointed, and empowered by the same Spirit of God. So the gifts of the Spirit functioned fully among them also, though limited or marred by human weakness and sin, as Paul often pointed out in his letters.

You can ask for this, and expect it. The leaders and Christians in the New Testament church did that. They constantly prayed that believers would be filled with the Spirit. And they prayed for boldness to live courageously in the power of the Spirit and for God to confirm his word with healings and signs and wonders (see Acts 4:29-31). God answered those prayers.

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Chapter 5

Body Evangelism

From programs to growing churches

Remember how you came to have faith in God – probably through friendships. Friends or relatives lead most of us to trust in Jesus and they involve us in church life in what has been called *body evangelism*. It is evangelism that incorporates new believers into the body of Christ, the church. Body evangelism produces growing churches. Most churches grow through this kind of friendship evangelism or natural evangelism. The goal of body evangelism is to make disciples.

Commenting on body evangelism, Vergil Gerber noted that it is goal-oriented rather than method-oriented. “Body evangelism focuses on the goal of making disciples who are committed not only Christ but also to the body of Christ.”³¹

Giving an overview of early developments, Peter Wagner traced the beginnings of body evangelism as an identifiable model to a workshop with the Bible Fellowship Church in which faith projections were made for five years ahead. It worked. The church grew 26.5% in the seventies, outgrowing the previous three decades by 282%. Body evangelism produced significant church growth.

He teamed with Gerber to apply this model to 52 churches in Venezuela commencing in 1972. The decadal growth rates of those churches jumped from 60% in the previous ten years to 250% in the following two years. Body evangelism emerged as a powerful application of Jesus’ command to make disciples. Gerber wrote a manual on body evangelism which was used in leadership workshops conducted in fifty countries. Peter Wagner noted:

At the time of the Venezuela Experiment, Ray Stedman's book, *Body Life*, was very popular. It referred to developing biblical relationships among those who were already members of the body

of Christ. Gerber and I thought that “body evangelism” would be a good companion term to highlight the kind of evangelism that would bring unbelievers into membership in the body of Christ. It could thus be distinguished from crusade evangelism and saturation evangelism in stressing that evangelism is not complete until the persons being evangelised have not only made a commitment to Christ, but also to the local church.³²

The stream of body evangelism is wider than its technical use in which key elements are faith projections and goal setting leading to measurable results. Body evangelism is central to biblical teaching on the church and how it grows.

We talk to one another and share our faith. We involve friends in our groups and activities. God’s Spirit leads us and draws our friends to the Lord, especially as we pray for them. We discover that we are empowered by the Spirit to help people, pray for people, and involve them in the body of Christ, the church.

Body evangelism has many expressions such as friendship evangelism and witnessing in natural, caring ways in normal life. This powerful expression of the body of Christ raises the issues of program evangelism and power evangelism.

1. Program Evangelism

I attended and appreciated John Wimber’s course at Fuller Seminary then called “MC510: Healing Ministry and Church Growth.” It was controversial. John, a visiting professor with his team of Vineyard leaders, came each Monday night for 12 weeks. He involved other professors such as Peter Wagner and Charles Kraft.

Following the required hours of teaching input we had a voluntary hour of ministry application or laboratory practice. I loved it. Everyone stayed for these practical times of praying for people each week, learning to pray in faith and with authority, led by the Spirit. I have done that often in class and after preaching. People are blessed and we have seen many healed, sometimes quickly.

The well known evangelical author, John White, attended that class that year, and wrote about it in his book *When the Spirit Comes with Power*.

John Wimber's books *Power Evangelism* and *Power Healing* cover much of that subject's material. He compared power evangelism with program evangelism.

"There is a part of the Church today which is functioning with Program Evangelism," wrote John Wimber. "This is 'Method' Evangelism. This style of evangelism usually tries to reach the mind by natural means. It is often a one-way communication."³³ Evangelistic preaching is an example.

He cites examples like Crusade Evangelism, Saturation Evangelism and Personal Evangelism which tend to use verbal, cognitive methods to communicate Christ.

All of these have value and effectiveness. Program Evangelism has been used in all parts of the world and many now believe who may not have otherwise received Christ as Saviour. Crusade programs have won millions to Christ. It is, however, often incomplete.

Not only is it incomplete, but as Wagner and Gerber have indicated, it is often ineffective in making disciples who are responsible members of the local church.

After polling over 4,000 converts Win Ann discovered that 70-80% of them came into the church through relatives and friends, whereas less than 0.1% came as direct result of city-wide evangelism campaigns.³⁴ Lyle Schaller similarly discovered that 60-90% of people involved in the church were brought by some friend or relative.³⁵

Evangelistic programs are not as effective as body-centred evangelism through the local church. Body evangelism involves more people in the church than many programs do. Programs are useful, but supplementary.

The programs which are church based have proved to be more effective than programs across churches. That is one reason why

evangelists such as Billy Graham work so hard with their teams to involve local churches in bringing people and then nurturing them.

So, program evangelism may be useful in some situations, but it needs to be based in the local church and should be a natural expression of that church's life and witness.

Program evangelism, however, falls short of biblical models. It often depends on the preacher or evangelist. Body evangelism calls for more. It requires the involvement of the whole body of Christ in the power of his Spirit.

I enjoyed reading about models of evangelism that my friend Tony Cupit describes in his *Biblical Models for Evangelism*. Those models call us beyond our limited programs into wide ranging biblical evangelism. They include:

1 **repentance** – John the Baptist, Jesus and the early church required it (Matthew 3:2; Mark 1:15; Acts 2:36-38);

2 **new birth** – Jesus explained it (John 3:1-3);

3 **new life style** – Jesus lived it and called for it as with the Samaritan woman, rich young ruler and woman caught in adultery (John 4:39-41; Mark 10:21-22; John 8:1-11);

4 **story-telling** – Jesus' parables include evangelism as with the Prodigal Son, and the lost coin and lost sheep (Luke 15);

5 **preaching** – Peter, Stephen, and Paul all preached evangelistically (Acts 2:14-42; 7; 26);

6 **teaching** – Jesus and others taught the evangel, the good news (Matthew 7:7-14; 28:18-20);

7 **loving community** – Jesus and his church demonstrated a new way of living which won followers (Acts 2:42-47);

8 **personal witness** – Jesus and his followers, such as Philip and the Ethiopian, testified one on one also (John 3, 4; Acts 8:35);

9 **missionary** – Jesus lived mission and sent his followers on mission including the 12 and the 72 (Matthew 10:5-7; Luke 10:1,9);

10 **pioneering** – Jesus and his followers continually pioneered, especially Paul (Romans 15:20);

11 **personal example** – Jesus and his followers lived evangelistically as with Paul and Silas in prison (Matthew 5:13-16; Acts 16:25-31);

12 **household faith** – heads of households and even communities lead multitudes to faith as for Peter with the centurion Cornelius and Paul with Lydia and the Philippian jailer (Acts 10-11; 16:13-15, 33);

13 **stewardship/discipleship** – Jesus required radical commitment to follow him as for the rich young ruler and prospective disciples (Mark 10:21; Luke 9:57-62)'

14 **marketplace** – Jesus and his followers constantly engaged people evangelistically where they were as with Paul in Athens (Acts 17);

15 **apologetic** – Jesus, Stephen and Paul were all great apologists (without apology!) for truth and faith in God (Mark 12; Acts 7, 17);

16 **nurture and education** – family teaching is powerful as with Timothy's grandmother Lois and mother Eunice and in discipling groups as with Paul (2 Timothy 1:5; 1 Corinthians 11:1);

17 **pastoral** – Jesus had immense care and compassion for people especially the poor, outcasts and oppressed (Matthew 19:13; 23:37);

18 **healing** – Jesus and his followers compassionately healed people and many believed (Mark 2:10-11; Acts 5:12-16);

19 **persecuted believers** – Jesus suffered persecution as did his followers such as Philip in Samaria and Paul on his missionary journeys, but multitudes believed (Acts 5:29; 8:1, 4-5; 14);

20 **stones will cry out** – Jesus declared that would happen if people kept quiet about him, and his followers could not keep quiet even when ordered to stop as with Peter and John or Paul in prison (Luke 19:40; Acts 28:30-31).

These biblical models apply today, and many (including persecution) are powerful means of evangelism and church growth.

2. Power Evangelism

Biblical models go far beyond program evangelism. Power evangelism is centred in Jesus' final promise: "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you" (Acts 1:8).

John Wimber described power evangelism:

There is another part of the Church which functions with Power Evangelism. This means evangelism which transcends the rational. It happens with the demonstration of God's power in Signs and Wonders, and introduces the Numinous of God. This presupposes a presentation accompanied with the manifest presence of God. Power Evangelism is spontaneous and is directed by the Holy Spirit. The result is often explosive church growth. ...

The issue is not what the church is doing. The issue is what the church is leaving out! Where is the promised power of Acts 1:8? Where are the demonstrations of the manifest presence of God that we see illustrated throughout the book of Acts? Were they only for that day? Do they occur today? If so, can we get in on it? Is it possible for you and me to work the works of Jesus?

Power Evangelism is still God's way of explosively growing His church.³⁶

Body evangelism, when functioning in the power of the Holy Spirit, becomes power evangelism. The body of Christ moves in power.

Accelerating church growth provides vivid examples of power evangelism producing explosive church growth.

John Wimber gave some representative examples:

(a) David Adney reporting on China said: In one area where there were 4,000 Christians before the revolution, the number has now increased to 90,000 with a thousand meeting places. Christians in the

region give three reasons for the rapid increase: The faithful witness of Christians in the midst of suffering, the power of God seen in healing the sick, and the influence of Christian radio broadcast from outside.

The foundational work of pioneers like Watchman Nee prepared the way for this powerful growth, nurtured in multiplying house churches.

(b) John Hurston, in Korea added: The world's largest church, Full Gospel Central Church in Seoul, Korea, where Yonggi Cho is pastor, attributed the phenomenal growth of that church to "the constant flow of God's miracle power" from the beginning.

(c) A third example is from Peter Wagner's observations: In Latin America I saw God at work. I saw exploding churches. I saw preaching so powerful that hardened sinners broke and yielded to Jesus' love. I saw miraculous healings. I met with people who had spoken to God in visions and dreams. I saw Christians multiplying themselves time and again. I saw broken families reunited. I saw poverty and destitution overcome by God's living Word. I saw hate turn to love.

Power evangelism fulfils the biblical pattern of body ministry and evangelism. It goes beyond programs to the mighty acts of God in the midst of his people. Christ is alive in his church by the power of his Spirit.

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Section II

Body Organization

From some to all

Organism and organization intertwine as spirit and body. Church organization is meant to be centred in Christ, led by his Spirit, breathing his life. The depth centre of the organization is found in the living organism of the church, filled and empowered by God's Spirit.

The life of Jesus on earth, both human and divine, was integrated into one whole. His humanity found perfect expression because it was wholly centred in the depth dimension of his divinity. All the fullness of God dwelt in him, bodily (Colossians 2:9).

Similarly, the church is his body on earth, human and divine, institutional and charismatic. The body metaphor is more than metaphor; it is a fact. The organism is alive with the life of Christ, so the organization finds its true identity in that context. The organization is true to its being only as it is an expression of the life of the organism.

The problem is sin. Only Jesus had no sin. Christ in the flesh had divinity and humanity fully and totally in harmony because he was without sin. We are not. So our organization and institutional forms of the body of Christ are marred by sin. Organizational and institutional expressions of Christ's body are too limited, too culture bound, too distorted, too sin-ridden to truly reflect the glory of God as Jesus did.

However, to the degree that the organization is filled with the fullness of the God it will be true to its being as an expression of the body of Christ in which he dwells, the living head of his body.

No one organizational form of the church is the only one or the right one. In each culture and within cultures, institutional forms vary and take shape according to that culture or sub-culture.

Further, institutionalization, by definition, deviates from the life it institutionalizes. "Institutionalization inevitably corrupts the very belief system from which the institution stems. ... Christianity must be differentiated from Christianity as corrupted by various mechanisms of institutionalisation."³⁷

Institutional corruption and distortion easily quench the Spirit of God, as sin does in our lives. The organizational form of the church can be so culture-bound that the church is conformed to the world instead of transforming the world.

Body ministry must find expression in some institutional form or organization. The following pages explore that issue in terms of the church as a charismatic organism, the body of Christ. As the church grows with dynamic life, it is less bound by conformity to rigid social organizations and finds flexible forms which allow and produce accelerating church growth.

New wine needs new wineskins. Body ministry needs body organization which is charismatic and institutional, divine and human, Spirit-filled and Spirit-led. Body organization is explored here under the themes of divine headship, body membership, servant leadership, body life, and the expanding networks of churches or cells in the body.

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Chapter 6

Divine Headship

From figurehead to functional head

A Catholic prayer group in El Paso, Texas realised that none of them had ever obeyed Luke 14:12-14. They had not fed and clothed the poor who could never repay them. A loving prophetic word from the Lord through a charismatically gifted Sister called them to do that. They all agreed it was from the Lord. So they took enough food for 120 people working everyday, including Christmas day, at the city garbage dump just over the Rio Grande river in Juarez, Mexico. They all ate Christmas dinner together there in the dump where the people were working. Over 300 people turned up to eat. The food multiplied. People brought relatives and friends. Everyone ate. The eight carloads from the prayer group also ate. They had enough left over to take food to three orphanages.

Now a lively church exists there. The sick are healed. Everyone at the dump had TB originally. Within four years no one had it. Christian doctors see people healed through medicine, prayer and miracles. At regular meetings, not just on Sundays, people have more fun and joy dancing in church than in any dance hall. Their worship involves everyone in singing, dancing, and praying for one another.³⁸

When Jesus is truly the functional head of his church, not just the figurehead, his church comes alive. We listen to him, and do what he says, in any group, anywhere.

We find it difficult to conceive of the church without equating it with our human societies. That is a common problem. Jesus' disciples found it almost impossible to conceive of the kingdom of God without equating it with the world's kingdoms. So do we.

We tend to run the church according to social patterns. Church structures look like social structures. The word 'church' often refers to some social expression of the church, or to a building, neither of which are biblical. So we have great difficulty with the apparent lack of interest in the New Testament for institutional models of the church.

The New Testament church grew, rapidly. It could be counted: 3,000; 5,000; and great multitudes. This was undoubtedly the church of Jesus Christ, with all its faults. He lives in the midst of his body. He speaks.

Both the written and the living word of God express the Lord's headship in his church.

1. The Written Word

All Scripture is the inspired word of God; God-breathed (2 Tim. 3:16,17). Scripture communicates the word of Christ to his church.

We erode or deny the headship of Christ in his church when Scripture loses its authority. Where God's Spirit moves powerfully among us we rediscover the truth and power of Scripture. We declare that the cross the power of God for salvation, then and now. We believe in the supernatural, then and now. We know God answers prayers, then and now. That does not make all we do or say right, but it does preserve faith in what is right – God's Word.

Although church structures and traditions vary, the Word of God provides an anchor and an objective measure of faithfulness or aberration. Jesus was clear in what he said. God's word has been preserved for us through countless martyrdoms and fierce opposition.

Although church doctrines and structures vary, and must because humans vary, we find a central anchor and objective measure of faithfulness or aberration in the inspired word of God. George Peters related this dimension to church growth:

In many ways the *natural phenomenon* of the church - profession, form, structures, membership, ritual, observances, celebrations - take on the form of the environment, culture, and society with

modification and enrichment. Not so the *pneumena* - its soul and spirit, its confession, ordinances, function, mission and purpose.

Not the world but the Bible sets the agenda for the church. It is the sovereign prerogative of the gracious Lord to prescribe its membership nature, mission, purpose, progress, and destiny. *Here is the ultimate law of church growth:* It rests in the Lord. "I will build my church," He sovereignly declares in Matthew 16:18. Because of this, church growth will always contain an element of mystery that defies all human penetration, analysis, and definition and that casts us back on the Head of the church in prayer, trustful waiting and patient labours (1 Cor. 3:6-8).³⁹

Always there is the unexpected. God's purposes may be known, and yet are unknowable in their fullness. We continually discover that we have missed large slabs of the total picture. We have the Scriptures, as did the theologians of Jesus' day, and like them we often fail to see what is there. It must be divinely revealed to be truly known.

For example, theology usually emerges as an attempt to explain experience. It is faith seeking explanation.

Revival is an example. We become so accustomed to 'church as usual' that when God's Spirit moves in powerful ways, as in the New Testament and in the early church, we become confused.

Orders of service no longer make sense, swallowed up in the currents of the Spirit's outpouring. Old hymn may come alive in new ways, and are sung with new vigour, often with dancing, or lying prostrate in awe. New songs emerge, inspired by the Spirit. Preaching leaps from prophetic utterance, not just from carefully crafted sermons based on insights from the commentaries.

It may not be that the old way is wrong, but it is usually too limited, too culture bound and too predictable. Revival meetings are unpredictable. Spirit-led meetings bypass human agendas.

We return to Scripture to discover over and over again what we had missed. We see dimly, blurred and 'darkly' (1 Cor. 13:12), so we need

to hear and heed the Lord's voice through his Word, coming with fresh revelation.

Always there is the unexpected. God's purposes may be known, and yet are beyond finite grasp. We continually discover that we have missed large slabs of the total picture. We have the Scriptures, as did the theologians of Jesus' day, and like them we often fail to see what is there. It must be divinely revealed and illuminated to be known.

2. The Living Word

Scripture and prayer provide a means of communication with Christ our Head. Yet, like all means, they are the vehicle of communication, not the communication itself.

Speak to Him thou, for He hears, and Spirit with spirit can meet -
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.⁴⁰

The body of Christ is a living body, just as the Head is a living head. Jesus, Head of his church, still directs us by his Spirit within us.

Institutional forms and organizational expressions must yield to that. The living body of the living Christ gives substance to that reality. Then the inward union with Christ finds expression in the outward dimensions of church life.

Unless we grasp this, we will continue to secularize all we do, including ministry. A secularised church functions like any other secular society: voting, electing leaders, keeping minutes, and running a bureaucracy. That can easily bypass the Holy Spirit.

Jesus Christ, the living Head changes all that!

For example, obedience to the Great Commission comes not from mere outward observance of the written Word, but naturally from our dynamic life in Christ.

The Living Word transforms the letter into life. "The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life," said Jesus (John 6:63), and Paul added, "the letter kills, but the spirit gives life" (2 Cor. 3:6).

Then the Bible comes alive, anointed and empowered by the Spirit who inspired it. Preaching becomes prophetic words from God as we wield the sharp two-edged sword of the Spirit. Teaching lights fires in minds, hearts and wills. Serving demonstrates Christ's love and healing through his responsive body, the church. Prayer is transformed into intimate communion and sensitive response to the Lord, our Head. Faith grows bold and strong. The church grows with unleashed power when Christ is no longer a figurehead or absentee land-lord but is sovereign Lord with kingdom authority.

Carl Lawrence gives an outstanding example of this in his book *The Coming Influence of China*.⁴¹ The Conclusion in this book gives an account of how Jesus built his church through obedient people.

Two teenage girls 'just prayed and obeyed' as they were led by the Lord. They established 30 churches in two years on Hainan Island in China. The smallest church had 220 people, and the largest nearly 5,000 people.

That kind of radical obedience to Christ the Head of his church produces a radical biblical kind of leadership in the church.

Such heroic missionary ventures may seem unrealistic and impossible for us. Not so! We can all do this.

Personally in our own lives we can become more sensitive and responsive to the Living Word, God speaking to us through his Spirit. That often leaps out at us from the Scriptures. We can respond to the specific word to us coming from God's Spirit as we meditate on the written Word, and obey.

As we pray, we can be led by the Head of the Church, our Lord, again through his Spirit. We may be prompted to contact or help certain people, or send money to someone, with even a specific amount revealed to us.

Home group leaders and home group members can become increasingly responsive to the Spirit's leading. That changes the way we worship and pray. Our singing may arise not just from a prepared

list, but from the Spirit's leading. As we pray for one another we can be Spirit led.

Increasingly God's people discover and live this way. It may not yet be revival, but it is often renewal in the Spirit's anointing. Then Jesus, by his Spirit, is far more than a figurehead in his Church. He is increasingly the functioning Head of his Church.

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Chapter 7

Body Membership

From firm to flexible structures

We are members of Christ's church; that sounds organizational.
We are members of Christ's body; that sounds organic.
In fact, the two can be one, and are one theologically and in reality.

The church must find its expression in human society, so it must have organizational characteristics. They may be as simple as a home group gathering regularly together, or as complex as a multi-million dollar denominational agency. As institutional forms grow more complex they become more binding and we find ourselves conformed to the world, instead of transforming the world.

The Holy Spirit cannot be confined by institutionalization. He never has been. He continually breaks free of human limitations and blows where he will. Christ, by the power of his Spirit is building *his* church.

Instead of a dictatorship or a democracy, God made the body of Christ an organism with Christ as the head and each member functioning with gifts of his Spirit. Understanding spiritual gifts, then is the key to understanding the true expression of the church.

The charismatic nature of the church as Christ's body is expressed through the spiritual gifts of its members. So both the charismatic dimension and the institutional dimension co-exist in the church. The charismatic dimension of the church is its essence, for the church is charismatic by definition, nature, and function. The institutional dimension is its cultural or social expression.

1. The Organism

The body of Christ is an organism, a community, with interpersonal relationships, mutuality and interdependence. It is flexible and leaves room for a high degree of spontaneity. The Bible gives us this model for the church: the human body (1 Corinthians 12).

The charismatic dimension in both ministry and organization does not do away with professional abilities and functions but fills them with the active, powerful presence of Christ by his Spirit and so transforms them from being merely professional to being charismatically gifted as well as professionally competent.

For example, a professional counsellor may be less effective than a non-professional friend who gives love and care in the power of the Spirit of God. The dynamic power of charismatic ministry lies in the active presence of God's Spirit filling that ministry or at least guiding it. However, a Spirit-filled, Spirit-led professional counsellor can draw powerfully on both gifting and training.

Implications for church organization are immense. Although the professional tasks and organizations will probably continue, the ministry of the whole body requires flexible forms which allow and intentionally foster body ministry. Counselling, teaching, preaching, social care and evangelism are transformed by the Holy Spirit guiding and empowering those activities.

Charismatic Anglican David Watson gives an example of this from his own experience. As the church he led in York in England grew into fuller expressions of charismatic life it needed restructuring to provide adequate pastoral care through elders who were charismatically gifted as pastors not just elected to fill an institutional role of leadership. They cared for area groups, especially mentoring the group leaders.⁴²

Watson emphasizes that where Christ is central and head of his body, he will provide leadership through gifted elders who in turn lead or care for the whole body, especially through pastoral and teaching gifts in small groups or cells of the body. An organic model of the church expresses the real headship of Christ in his body through the spiritual gifts of his people in body ministry.

Paul was clear about this. The risen Lord gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers to his church “to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:11-12).

Paul’s three main passages on the church as the body of Christ give basic lists of spiritual gifts needed for ministry. Other gifts could be added. The Ephesians 4:11-12 list refers specifically to anointed leadership in the church, given by Christ, the risen and ascended conqueror, to equip and empower the members of his body for their ministries. The passages about spiritual gifts show how God’s people are equipped for their ministry. Each passage emphasizes the importance of ministering in love and unity.

2. The Organization

In times of accelerating change and exploding church growth, the institutional model of the church needs to be flexible and responsive to its environment. Further, if it is to allow a truly charismatic ministry to function with strong spiritual gifts, it must be sensitive and responsive to the Holy Spirit.

The early church gives a startling picture of such a flexible institutional model. They were constantly led and empowered by the Spirit even though they were also very human, with typical faults and problems. The New Testament authors addressed those problems, especially in the epistles.

The church then met in many house churches, still as the one church in one place, inter-related. It was extremely flexible, needed everyone’s involvement, and could multiply anywhere. The church in China today, and in African villages, and in Latin American communities, uses this style of organization.

The institutional model of the church then was a house church model. That model has been repeated all through history. It enables rapid church growth in many parts of the world today. Most large churches now use this model in home groups and interest groups

Members of a church organization are also members of the living body of Christ. So 'membership' is used in both those ways.

Organizational membership often involves attending the meetings, paying the dues, abiding by the rules, and possibly being elected or appointed to office. Any society can do that. Most do.

Organic membership of the body, however, functions by living in Christ and ministering in spiritual gifts.

These two kinds of membership need to be differentiated when discussing church membership. Usually 'church membership' means organizational membership; it is an institutional expression of the church. Usually 'body membership' means the organic functioning of the members of Christ's body, and its members being united by the Spirit of God in the one body, the church. The two can merge, but may not. Organizational patterns can dominate and restrict us.

Organizational habits can also reverse their meaning over years. John Calvin in Geneva, for example, refused to identify with clerical pomp and ceremony and so wore the poor man's cloak when preaching, but in time that turned into the Geneva gown, a clerical institution. Francis of Assisi also wore a poor man's cloak, which has now become a religious uniform unrelated to what poor people wear.

Those quirks are minor compared with the massive maintenance programs of large religious institutions. Denominations which came into being for mission, often breaking away from hardened institutional forms, in turn can become maintenance-oriented and so lose the very vision which gave them birth.

The organizational form of the church needs to be continually responsive to the Head of the church, or it becomes secularised and the Spirit of God is quenched. Leadership in the church must be especially responsive to the Spirit to avoid this.

Organizational life in the church can remain flexible and responsive to the Head of the church as it keeps its organic life alive in the power of the Spirit.

Youth with a Mission

An outstanding example of body organism dynamically expressed in body organization is Youth with a Mission (YWAM).

The vision for Youth with a Mission began in 1956 when a 20-year-old American college student, Loren Cunningham, spent some time in prayer while on tour with a singing group in the Bahamas. Leaning back on his bed he saw what he called a "mental movie." There was a map of the world and waves were breaking all over it. The waves began to turn into young people, thousands of them, spilling on to every continent and sharing the good news about Jesus. The picture faded.

"Was that really you, Lord?" he asked.

This idea, radical at the time, that young people could be missionaries, stayed with Loren. Four years later, in 1960, he started an organization with that purpose: Youth With A Mission (YWAM).

By the summer of 1960, Loren had graduated from college. With experience in leadership, and a vision on his mind, he became an Assemblies of God minister and a leader of youth activities in Los Angeles. Loren led a youth mission trip to Hawaii, learning as he went along, and developing the vision for YWAM. It would be an organization that sent young people out after high school to gain a sense of purpose before going to college, and that welcomed all Christians no matter what the denomination.

From December, 1969 to the summer of 1970, YWAM held its first School of Evangelism with 36 students lodged in a newly renovated and leased hotel in Lausanne, Switzerland. By the end of the year, YWAM purchased the hotel and made Lausanne, Switzerland its first permanent location.

By 1974, the School of Evangelism was being offered in New Jersey as well as Lausanne. The New Jersey school leader, Leland Paris, noticed that many YWAM students had no Christian background, having only recently come to Christ through the "Jesus Movement" of the 1970's. "I remember asking a student about his religious background," recalls Leland. "He said, 'Drugs.'"

After consulting with Loren and other YWAM leaders, Leland began a school that would focus on biblical foundations and character development as well as missions. The school, the Discipleship Training School (DTS), quickly caught on and was also offered in New Zealand and Los Angeles, which added an outreach phase to the program. This format: three months of lectures followed by two or three months of outreach, is still used in most Discipleship Training Schools today.

By 1970, YWAM had a total of 40 full-time staff. That year, Don Stephens found a castle to act as the Munich, Germany base for 1,000 volunteer YWAM staff and he began to prepare an outreach for the 1972 Olympics. This was the first of many YWAM Olympic outreaches.

In 1977, YWAM leased the Pacific Empress Hotel in Kona, Hawaii and began the cleaning process and renovations in order to turn it into the campus for what was initially called the Pacific and Asia Christian University.

The following year they founded King's Kids - a ministry to involve children and teenagers in missions. The vision was growing.

YWAM teams began visiting refugee camps in Thailand. Gary Stephens, brother of Don Stephens, led a team to one of them. He remembers:

"They did what even the refugees had been unwilling to do: shovelled out the human waste, repaired broken sewage pipes, and fixed toilets." Gary reported back that the refugees marvelled. Here were young people who were paying their own way to come and do a job no one else would consider. Time after time they were given the opening they hoped for: They were asked why they had come."

By 1980, YWAM had 1,800 full-time staff. Two of them, Steve and Marie Goode, heard about the refugee crisis in Thailand, and decided to go there for three months to help. They stayed longer, and ended up directing YWAM's refugee camp ministry.

Faced with massive need, YWAM's refugee ministry in Thailand became a huge effort. The YWAM response kept growing. In 1992 the 90 YWAMers there and 4,000 refugee staff clothed 53,500 people, immunized 11,000 children per month, trained 109 agricultural students, distributed 44,000 letters monthly, and gave 26 pastors a year of Bible training.

Loren's vision included ships visiting the world's port cities. They launched the *Anastasis* in 1982 as the first in a fleet of YWAM Mercy Ships. That vision has been established as another global ministry bringing hope and healing to the needy in port cities around the world.

The pressure to provide professional care on such a large scale forced YWAM's mercy ministries to grow up. "The understanding that YWAM would operate in three major categories--evangelism, training and mercy ministries--was developed with the beginning of the Cambodian refugee crisis," said Don Stephens.

In 1984, Steve Goode, became YWAM's international director of Mercy Ministries. He wrote: "Where we work there are things that are not very pretty, not very conducive to praising God. Like boat people where all the women have been raped; like abandoned children wailing in their anguish; like people who rip you off; like people whose blank, staring eyes tell you they have nothing left to hope in. In the midst of all the heartache we are able to reveal the heart of God through worship, to show people that our great and loving God is present in the ugliness of a refugee camp to heal, restore and give hope to the hopeless."

At the end of the decade, YWAM changed the name of its university to University of the Nations, based in Hawaii. The university provides training programs in hundreds of YWAM locations globally.

In 1992, YWAM's international leaders met in Egypt. YWAM's leaders sensed the whole mission should focus in a more costly and concerted way on the needs of the Muslim world. The 30 Days Muslim Prayer Focus, the Red Sea Covenant, and the Reconciliation Walk were born in their prayer times there.

The 30 Days Muslim Prayer Focus, initially a small effort within YWAM, has been embraced by denominations and organizations worldwide. On its 10th anniversary in 2001, millions of people worldwide prayed for the needs of Muslims using one million prayer guides produced in 35 languages.

The Reconciliation Walk saw Christians walk the more than 1,500 miles of the First Crusade, proclaiming verbally and in printed form their regret for the way the Crusades misrepresented Christ. The Walk marked the 900th anniversary of this Crusade, and culminated in Jerusalem in 1999. Over 2,500 people participated in some portion of the Walk. Wherever they went, the walkers were met by overwhelmingly positive response by both media and by individual Muslims, Orthodox Christians and Jews. In Turkey alone, an estimated 70 percent of the population heard the message. The deputy mayor of Istanbul commented: "This project is very important to Turkey. You can see how much it means to the Turkish people when they line both sides of the road and applaud."

In June, 1995, the last Cambodian refugees left the Thailand camps. A chapter ended in YWAM's history, but another began. Experienced YWAM staff followed the refugees home and began mercy ministries in Cambodia and throughout Southeast Asia. Although church planting was never the immediate intent of the refugee work, by the mid-90s, there were an estimated 52 churches in Cambodia as a result of the Christian witness in just one Thailand refugee camp.

By the year 2000, YWAM had over 11,000 staff from over 130 countries. Frank Naea, who is both Samoan and Maori, became its first non-western President. This reflected YWAM itself, which had become almost 50 percent non-western.

"I walk away astounded," commented Loren Cunningham, "astounded that I'm allowed to be a part of this mission, that is so diverse and so global with such wonderful people. I love being with such radical people. They can be radical in their praise and celebration and then the next minute radical in their repentance and weeping before God." He added, "I think the future will so much more glorious than the past. That's what I fully expect."⁴³

YWAM is one among many organizations that have maintained visionary obedience to the Great Commission in the miraculous power of God's Spirit.

We live in an amazing time in history when millions of God's people are serving him in flexible organizations expressing the dynamic organic life of the body of Christ led and anointed by his Spirit.

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Chapter 8

Servant Leadership

From management to equipping

Sir Peter Kenilorea, the first prime minister in the Solomon Islands, a strong Christian, contributed this excellent motto to his nation's crest: *To lead is to serve.*

Terry Fulham (in his book *Miracle at Darien*) demonstrated Kingdom and servant leadership in an Episcopal church in America. He accepted 'leadership' there on the basis that no decision would be made by the elders (or board) until they were in total unity in the Spirit. No vote would be needed. They believed Jesus could lead his church. So they required unity. When they did not have unity, they waited and prayed till they did.

That astonished one elder. He often opposed the majority, mainly to debate. Now he found he was taken seriously, not relegated to a minority vote, and he needed to seriously interact with everyone until consensus could be reached, led by the Spirit.

Leadership in the body of Christ, as in the kingdom of God, differs from all other leadership in human society. Authentic Christian leadership is Spirit-filled, Spirit-led and Spirit-empowered, hidden and charismatic, yet manifested in power and visible institutionally.

Leadership in the New Testament church was like that. Increasingly it is like that today.

In the mid-twentieth century Bishop Stephen Neill noted:

There has been a great deal of talk in recent years about the development of leadership ... But is the idea of "leadership" biblical and Christian, and can we make use of it without doing grave injury to the very cause that we wish to serve? ...

How far is the conception of “leadership” really one which we ought to encourage? It is so hard to use it without being misled by the non-Christian conception of leadership. It has been truly said that our need is not for leaders, but for saints and servants. Unless this fact is held steadily in the foreground, the whole idea of leadership training becomes dangerous.⁴⁴

Jesus taught that. It emphasizes the vital dimensions of servanthood and eldership.

1. Servanthood

The radical nature of Jesus’ leadership, and what he demanded of his followers, is best expressed in his own words. Responding to the request of James and John for leadership or prominence in his coming kingdom and in answer to the other disciples’ reaction to this request, Jesus said,

You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant - and whoever wants to be first must be your slave - just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many (Matthew 20:25-28).

Jesus insists that the world’s concept of leadership must not operate in his church: “*Not so with you.*” Leadership is not about position nor hierarchy nor authority; it is a question of function and of service. The greatness of a Christian is not in status but in serving.

Jesus underscored his revolutionary teaching: greatness comes through serving, not through being served. In God’s kingdom the standard of achievement is found not in exercising power over others, but in ministering to them and empowering them.

Jesus’ disciples, like us, missed the point constantly. Jesus told them to be humble and to serve, and every day he demonstrated how to do it. Yet, they often debated about who was the greatest. They argued about that as they trekked with Jesus, and then were ashamed of themselves (Mark 9:35-37).

They did it again at the last supper when Jesus needed their love and support the most (Luke 22:24). So Jesus had to punch home his lesson once more, lay aside his garments, grab a bowl and towel and wash their dusty feet, dressed as the lowliest slave. Any of them could have been humble and done that, but none did. He reminded them that they had to be serve as he did (Luke 22:23-27; John 13:12-17).

Jesus dramatically emphasized his teaching by washing his disciples' feet. Then he told them to do just what he had done: *"If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, so you must also wash one another's feet"* (John 13:14). That lesson was so important that he gave it to them in a final, confronting act of love just before he died.

Jesus rejected both political and religious authority. He established Kingdom authority – serving others. His rejection of earthly power is so revolutionary that his disciples continually missed it.

Where would Jesus fit in our church patterns today? Would he savagely attack ecclesiastical political power plays and status seeking? Would he call our divisions sin? Would he denounce in scathing terms our religious pomp and ceremony? Would he reject hierarchical positions, titles, and garb. Once he did.

Even more fundamental to the nature of his kingdom and the ministry of the church are other questions. Would he disturb the meetings? Would he cast out demons? Would he heal? Would his preaching so provoke his hearers that they would oppose him? Would he be more at home outside our religious systems than within them? Would he so threaten our systems that we would have to denounce, expel or ignore him?

Leaders in many persecuted churches, where the church grows powerfully, face all that now. That's where you see servant leadership in sharp focus.

"Who serves?" is a very different question from "Who leads?"

Does this do away with leadership? No. It requires the Kingdom's kind of leadership, which is serving others. It requires servant leadership led by the Spirit of God.

The New Testament regards all Christians as ministers and servants. Body ministry must be servant ministry. If leadership is a legitimate term for kingdom life and body ministry, it must be servant leadership.

It is both a radical leadership style among other styles and also the life-style of every Christian. It is the ministry of every member of Christ's body. The great leaders in the Kingdom may be the least obvious – humbly and courageously serving others, unnoticed.

2. Equipping for Ministry

Servant leaders are called and anointed to equip others for ministry.

In one sense we are all called and anointed to do that. Some do so as parents, raising children. Some are carers, showing others how to care. Some are team leaders, serving and inspiring the team and empowering them for service also.

Among spiritual gifts there are many different ministries including leadership and administration. Our problem is that those words carry so much political and hierarchical freight that we can hardly use them without distorting them.

Leadership in Christ's body means service, ministry, and being least or last, not greatest or first. Jesus reminds us that the first shall be last, and the last first. Leadership is a spiritual function of serving and empowering others, not overpowering them.

Jesus Christ makes leaders. The Ephesians 4 passage is a clear statement of that kind of giftedness. He appoints some to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers in his body to serve that body and equip the members of that body for their ministry.

Michael Harper summarises their function as:

- Let my people go - the apostolic function of the Church
- Let my people hear - the prophetic function of the Church
- Let my people grow - the evangelistic function of the Church
- Let my people care - the pastoral function of the Church
- Let my people know - the teaching function of the Church

Go to my people

Speak to my people
Reach my people
Care for my people
Teach my people.⁴⁵

Leadership gifts in the body of Christ equip that body for ministry. Again, using such loaded terms, it needs to be stressed that this is quite different from mere human ability to lead; it is spiritual giftedness. Like other spiritual gifts, leadership may find expression in and through natural ability, but it is then natural ability anointed in Spirit-led power.

The amazingly diverse, flexible nature of spiritual leadership needs emphasis. No one model has it all, even though we all are called to be servant leaders.

Paul's way of developing leaders was to recognise and encourage the special gift and role of each person, especially elders. Paul was undoubtedly a leader, a servant leader in the strong sense of the term. He served with his apostolic gifts. He equipped the body for ministry.

The term servant leader recaptures essential dimensions of the equipping ministry. When 'leader' is understood as spiritual giftedness, it becomes stronger than ever. Christ, head of his body, gives that kind of equipping leadership to members of his body. Enormous authority is vested in that understanding of servant leadership, precisely because those leaders serve others, and equip others for ministry.

This specific equipping ministry in the body applies especially to leadership of large churches. As a church grows larger, it is vital that the pastor be an equipper. The ministry will be done by the whole body, not just the 'leader'. No one person can do it all.

Body ministry requires leadership which is both humble and powerful, leading by serving. All spiritual gifts need to function this way, especially leadership gifts. Powerful leadership grows from humble service.

John Sweetman, Principal of Maylon College, Brisbane, Australia, noted emerging leadership characteristics which encourage mutuality and ever deepening relationships. He summarised the research findings of Ron Carucci, in *Leadership Divided* (2006). Carucci describes six patterns of high-performing relationships that emerging leaders demonstrate in the 21st Century, and he contrasts them with typical patterns of existing leaders.

1. Rank - a level playing field

Existing leaders have tried to resist command and control but have still relied on rank to make decisions. While they have made strides in distributing power, they still appreciate authority and feel that people should understand their place and role in the organization. They are happy to call the shots if and when needed.

Emerging leaders avoid rank as a means of making decisions and influence. They don't like to "rule the roost" but try to build consensus, eliciting and listening carefully to the opinions of others. They are only comfortable with authority when it is freely given by followers and are looking for trust based on honesty and exposure.

2. Meaningful conversation - a great cup of coffee

Existing leaders are generally uncomfortable with emotional language and personal intimacy. They see results and clarity as being more important than connection. While the literature on emotional intelligence has impacted their world and made them more aware of understanding themselves and others, they still see relationships as a means to an end. Many still lack genuine integrity.

Emerging leaders are very comfortable expressing emotion and dealing with the emotions of others. They are suspicious of those who are emotionally guarded and won't speak honestly about themselves and their feelings. Sometimes this leads them to inappropriate disclosure, but it is a risk they tend to take. They feel that it's important to say how they feel as well as what they think.

3. Inclusion/Engagement - a voice at the table

Existing leaders are very aware of the nature of team. They recognise that the leader is a member of the team and that all members of the team need to be included in the decision making process. However, they are not absolutely sold on the idea of group decisions. So while they try to include people to encourage buy-in, they also work to steer the group towards the final answer they have pre-decided. They become impatient if this doesn't happen or the process drags on.

Emerging leaders want everyone to equally enjoy the party. They don't care if the process is lengthy and are happy for everyone to have their say. They will often seek out opinions of those who are not even involved in the decision. They use decision making as a means to build inclusion and ownership, passion and commitment. For them, the result is less important than the process.

4. Dreaming - an imaginative dream

Existing leaders believe that effective performance is about setting goals, monitoring progress, and achieving measurable results. The process of setting targets and intentionally moving towards them is vital. They dislike inhibiting bureaucracy, but see the importance of strong processes that enable definite progress. Results are fundamental. Anyone in the organization can have vision as long as they can achieve the results that are expected.

Emerging leaders can dream for days. They are very idealistic, wanting to achieve great things, and are passionate about causes. However, they see most processes as unnecessarily bureaucratic and inhibiting creativity. So they don't generally value data and structure (it's too monotonous) and have a tendency to be impulsive. They may also struggle with holding others accountable, preferring for them to dream and enjoy freedom.

5. Generosity - a diamond in formation

Existing leaders are committed to developing those they believe will most contribute to the organization. They are aware of the most effective leaders around them, judging this by their

performance. They develop others by offering advice and helping them solve their problems, and they enjoy it when their support is appreciated. They can be blunt and awkward giving feedback at times. They tend to stick to facts and ideas and are not comfortable disclosing personal shortcomings or failures.

Emerging leaders are less prescriptive in whom they will help, wanting to give to anyone who is in need. They enjoy the ensuing relationships. They fear failure over their large dreams, and so are keen to learn from existing leaders, but they won't necessarily take their ideas on board. They want guidance but not direction. They also want to hear about the failures of their leaders as well as their successes, and want their voice to count in the lives of these existing leaders.

6. Gratitude - a grateful champion

Existing leaders want to enthusiastically reward a job well done, writing notes or providing public recognition. They usually recognise achievement rather than capability. All the potential in the world counts little for them if nothing is accomplished. Compliments are offered as expressions of gratitude for the attainment of ends. They often can be harsh or at least withhold appreciation if results do not meet expectations.

Emerging leaders want a champion who will cheer them on as much for who they are as for what they do. They want someone who will believe in them and care deeply for them, no matter what their outcomes. They need constant appreciation to keep going. Their feelings of uncertainty can be consuming if they feel they've lost ground in their leader's eyes. Belief in them and gratitude for them will sustain their courage and endurance.⁴⁶

These emerging leaders in 21st Century Western society demonstrate qualities of servant leadership. They focus on relationships, as do all communal societies. They lead, but in co-operative, mutually supporting ways. They seek to serve, not to dominate.

Biblical servant leadership is grounded in Jesus, the Lord of his church. It reflects his leadership style as servant and yet as Lord.

Catholic theologian Hans Kung typically goes to the heart of the issue, identifying four 'constants' of the ministry of leadership in the church, moving from the outward to the inward:

(a) Essentially, the ministry of leadership in the Church does not intend to form a domination but a service to the community: a permanent service in the Christian community in the sense of a spiritual orientation. ...

(b) The administrative ministry in the Church claims essentially not to be an autocratic form of management which would like to absorb the other functions; it is placed among a multiplicity of diverse functions and charisms; its task is to stimulate, co-ordinate and integrate; it serves the communities and the other ministries. ...

(c) The service of leadership in the Church claims essentially not to be rigid and uniform system of offices, but a service among others, and one which is itself diversified: flexible, mobile and pluriform according to time and place. ...

(d) The service of leadership in the Church claims essentially not to be a service at the arbitrary disposition of men; it must be thought of as fulfilling the commission of the Lord of the community, and as a free gift of the Spirit.⁴⁷

Note the amazingly diverse and flexible nature of spiritual leadership. Spiritual gifts, including leadership gifts, vary incredibly. Ministers, pastors, priests, group leaders, and specialist ministry leaders can all demonstrate servant leadership.

Jesus equipped his leaders for powerful ministry and leadership.

Paul recognised, trusted and encouraged of the gifts and calling of each member of the churches he established, especially the elders. Paul was undoubtedly a leader; a servant leader in the strong sense of the term. He served with his gifts, as Jesus served with his. He equipped the body for ministry.

We rediscover mutual ministry when the church's powerful leadership gifts in servant ministry equip the whole body for its ministry. Those

leadership gifts in turn release powerful gifts for body ministry among all the members of the body.

The term servant leader recaptures essential dimensions of the equipping ministry. So long as 'leader' is understood charismatically as spiritual giftedness, it becomes stronger than ever.

Christ, head of his body, gives that kind of equipping leadership to members of his body. Enormous authority is vested in that understanding of servant leadership. Those leaders become anointed and empowered by the Spirit to do what Jesus requires.

That's the secret! So often we do things in human strength, following human methods, using the world's methods. We are all trained that way at school and in business. Some of that can be neutral, but much of it is being conformed to this world, not being transformed.

One simple example illustrates how traditional meetings can be Spirit-led.

I attended an elders' meeting in a traditional church which had had a Sunday evening charismatic service. Tension ran high among some elders because many of the enthusiastic youth from Sunday night began attending the traditional morning service with the pipe organ and wanted to include singing charismatic choruses in the morning service. Many older people strongly opposed this, saying, "You have Sunday night for that."

Wisely the senior minister opened this tense elders meeting with a time of prayer where anyone could participate, and the leading of the Spirit was appreciated. We had three ordained ministers as part of that eldership, none of them paid by that congregation. We ministers all shared in leadership in both morning and evening services, along with others.

As we prayed together, I felt that I received a simple solution which I certainly had not thought of previously and no one else had either. So after the prayer I suggested that we consider adding an hour of chorus singing before the traditional 11 am service. Everyone seemed pleased with that solution. Youth turned up, with some older people, in increasing numbers and enthusiasm to worship for an hour before the

traditional service began. They loved it. They carried over their zeal into the hymn singing in the traditional service and the worship there lifted as well, as did the offerings. No one objected to that!

It may not be an answer for other churches, but it was for that church at that time. We encouraged one another and served one another.

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Chapter 9

Body Life

From passive to active

Jesus said the church is his body, and that he is the life of the body...

In the early church all Christians were intimately and actively involved in the vibrant life of the body. Their witness to unbelievers coupled with their deep love for each other rocked the Roman Empire. And it must be so again.

In focusing on the gifts of the Spirit and the power in which they are operative we must not lose sight of the two-fold reason for the manifestation of these gifts. They are clearly stated as:

- (1) for the work of the ministry; and
- (2) for the building up of the body of Christ.⁴⁸

Body ministry finds expression in the body life of the church community.

So body life refers to the life of the body of Christ, its essence and its expression in our life together. Our ministry is an integral part of our life together.

This book examines the ministry of the body of Christ. That ministry finds its centre in Christ and its expression in the life of the body. That life, the life of Christ in his body, involves us in concern for people and concern for the task, our mission and ministry.

These two concerns of people and task are not poles on a continuum, for the task of the body is concerned with people. Its task is people – people won to Christ and incorporated into his body. The depth dimension and centre of the task is people becoming centred and established in Christ and in his body, the church.

People and task are integral to the life of the body of Christ.

1. Concern for People

The more we are concerned with people, the more our task will be accomplished. Similarly, the more we fulfil our task, the more people will be won to Christ and his church.

Body life, then, functions best where there is high concern for both people and task. Admittedly, as Lyle Schaller (1977:52) pointed out,

leadership in the church varies in its focus on people and task. Some tend to be task leaders, others are more strongly social leaders caring for people. Large churches need the former as senior pastor, whereas small churches up to around 200 can function effectively with the latter. However, even those gifted greatly in task-oriented leadership build strong teams with intense loyalties and trust. Further, those teams will need people in them who are strongly people oriented as part of the total equipping ministry of the leadership team.⁴⁹

Body life does both. It is concerned with people and task, although the term usually focuses on people in the body – meeting their needs and developing their ministries. So, our concern for people is out task in body life.

Relational theology emphasizes this dimension of body life. Bruce Larson, one of its early spokesmen wrote:

In relational theology we say emphatically that the quality and scope of relationships and the ability and willingness to relate are marks of orthodoxy rather than doctrine, ethical performance or spiritual heroism. . . .

Our goal is relationship, and our ministry is to relate in redemptive ways, even as Jesus Christ related to us by his incarnation, death, and resurrection, and by His Holy Spirit becomes available to us now as the indwelling presence.⁵⁰

To be "in Christ" is relational language. Body life is relational.

The unity and diversity of the body of Christ find practical expression in relationship. Paul describes the depth of relationship involved in

body life in his discussion of the gifts of the Spirit in the body of Christ, translated in this paraphrase by Eugene Peterson as:

The way God designed our bodies is a model for understanding our lives together as a church: every part dependent on every other part, the parts we mention and the parts we don't, the parts we see and the parts we don't. If one part hurts, every other part is involved in the hurt, and in the healing. If one part flourishes, every other part enters into the exuberance (1 Corinthians 12:25-26, *The Message*).

If one part of the body suffers, all suffer. If one part of the body is honoured, all rejoice. This passage strongly expresses our mutual interdependence in the whole community of the church.

Small groups in the church increasingly capture this dimension. Large churches need their expanding network of small groups or people become lost and lonely in the crowd. Small churches also need the cell group in order to deepen the fellowship and mutual commitment of the members of the body. One reason for the mushrooming growth of small groups and house churches is because it can provide significant relationships in the loving, caring, praying body of Christ.

Spiritual gifts flourish in close fellowship. The unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace is far more than a nice sounding bit of theology. Where we have loving concern and unity in the group, spiritual gifts flow with greater power.

The Spirit is grieved, quenched and resisted by disunity. Many people have discovered the redemptive power of a group that cares for one another. Add the dimensions of spiritual giftedness to that and you discover Christ in the midst forgiving, releasing, healing, restoring relationships and building up his body in love.

Something of that caring relationship can be rediscovered in the larger group also, but it is harder to achieve because large groups tend to be more impersonal.

Another aspect of the deepening commitments in body life is the rediscovery of Christian community. Many of us have been involved in a huge range of committed Christian communities. These can vary

from commitment to a weekly home cell or house church to living together in Christian households or communities. Again, our discovery of the significance and potential of committed communities is often a result of the renewing power of the Spirit of God.

That can be revolutionary in a society committed to nuclear families or single parent families. It can also provide some answers to those social needs and the fragmentation of families. Extended households can give care and nurture to many people.

Extended families or hosting people, such as students, is a growing aspect of caring for people in church life today. Rather than relegate needy people to institutions there is a growing trend to find host families for them, not only in the church but also in society as a whole.

The Blind Side

The 2010 Oscar nominated film *The Blind Side*, gives a simple, powerful example. It tells the true story of a Christian family embracing a homeless African American, told by Michael Lewis in his 2006 book of that name. Sandra Bullock won an Oscar for her role as the gutsy Leigh Anne Toughy.

Sean and Leigh Anne Toughy included street kid Michael Oher in their home with their own two children, to the surprise of many of their Christian friends. Michael went on to play an offensive lineman for the Baltimore Ravens of the National Football League.

Many books and films give outstanding examples of Christian caring and community such as those about Mother Teresa, L'Abri Fellowship founded by Francis Schaeffer, and committed communities such as The Evangelical Sisterhood of Mary, and St Francis of Assisi and his followers, and so many more.

Body ministry calls for the kind of life within the body of Christ where people know and love one another, not just attend meetings together. Committed communities help to develop this kind of body life.

Further, in the wider context of committed community living, individuals can concentrate more fully on their specific gifts and

ministries as others minister in other areas, all mutually supporting and enabling one another in prayer and practice.

2. Concern for Task

The task of the body of Christ is worship and mission – loving God and loving others.

Paul's use of the metaphor of the body for the church has great significance for mission. As a body the church must fulfil its mission in loving service. Body life involves us in mission together. We do not fulfil our task if caring for the body becomes an end in itself.

The amazing and truly surprising aspect of that mission is that the more the body is the body, true to her being, the more mission happens. Being the body of Christ means loving, serving, ministering, redeeming individuals and society.

The whole life of the whole body makes mission powerful and effective.

Worship, fellowship, witness and service all belong to that mission. The stronger the body life is in all those areas, the more effective will be the mission and health of the church.

1. Worship is mission

One of the most significant rediscoveries of church renewal is the power of worship. The worshipping community brings people into the presence of God. There sinners repent and Christians renew their commitments. This has been and is still true of revivals. It is now becoming true of regular worship in the local church where that worship is alive in the power of the Spirit.

God moves. Hearts melt. Lives are changed. Healing power is released. Then a church service is transformed from a nice, polished, sacred concert into the house of God. His presence fills his temple.

2. Fellowship is mission

Small groups and house churches are changing the face of the church globally. People care for one another. Part of that caring involves

many people finding Christ through the warmth of Christian fellowship. Most people come into the life of the church through friends.

Growing churches are friendly churches. They find ways to encourage and develop fellowship, caring, unity and love. Church growth research constantly points to friendship and fellowship as key and indispensable features of healthy church life.

3. Witness is mission

Witness obviously is mission. Jesus' final promise on earth is about witnessing in the power of the Spirit. "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you shall be my witnesses ... to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

The book of Acts tells the result. The whole church, not just the leaders, active in body life, supported one another, gossiped the gospel, and reached out to the needy in the Spirit's power with healing and deliverance. They turned their world upside down (Acts 17:6).

So it is today. Powerful witness builds powerful churches. Spiritual gifts release power in body life for many kinds of witness to the presence and might of God. About 10% of Christians in a given church will be spiritually gifted in evangelism but all will witness.

Others will be gifted in hospitality, pastoral care, wisdom, knowledge, discerning spirits, healing or even miracles. All these witness to Jesus being powerfully present in his body by his Spirit.

4. Service is mission

Service too is part of holistic mission. The powerful ministry of the risen Lord to people in need becomes a means of effective mission. Compassionate service, and signs and wonders testify to the reality and love of Christ, revealed in the life of his body.

Powerful social service and social action expressed in obedience to the Spirit and filled with him, is mission. That may be through individuals, but also through caring groups in the body.

Body life, therefore, is powerfully expressed through its mission in the life-giving tasks of worship, fellowship, witness and service.

Body life in the church is concerned with both people and with the task or mission of the church. Effective body ministry functions in a rich environment of vital body life, alive in the Spirit.

That growth produces an expanding network of churches or groups where dynamic body life is lived out in effective body ministry. These networks now explode globally, and are one of the most significant and radical developments in church life today.

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Chapter 10

Expanding Networks

From maintenance to mission

The Methodist Church started as a renewal or revival movement of small groups (class meetings) within and apart from the large congregations of the Anglican Church. Eventually that renewal movement grew from small groups to a large denomination, though still retaining its dynamic small groups when it functioned at its best. That took a lifetime. Wesley remained Anglican to his death. His followers became Methodists.

What once took a lifetime, now takes a decade or less. All around us networks of mission structures explode. Many of our young people move in and out of them rapidly, such as with Youth With a Mission (YWAM) on short term missions. Many older Christians move in and out of new mission structures such as The Healing Rooms, Elijah House, Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International (FGBMFI), and many others. Some new movements develop rapidly into new networks of co-operating churches.

Effective body ministry calls for deeper commitment to Christ and his body and its ministry in the world. That commitment usually finds practical expression in both the large groups and the small groups, both the congregational models and the mission models.

Ralph Winter's famous distinction between modality and sodality structures paints two sides of the same coin. He saw that on the one hand, the structure we call the New Testament church is a prototype of all subsequent Christian fellowships where old and young, male and female are gathered together as normal biological families in aggregate.

On the other hand Paul's missionary band can be considered a prototype of all subsequent mission organized out of committed

workers who affiliate themselves in a second decision beyond membership in the first structure.

These technical terms are more easily understood as congregational structures and mission structures. Other terms have been used which pick up similar distinctions, such as Bloesch's "two patterns of discipleship" which he calls parochial and para-parochial. Snyder observed:

The principal point of contact between Bloesch's "two patterns of discipleship" and Winter's "two structures of mission" is the recognition of the practical utility of a more restricted second-decision, committed fellowship for carrying out the Christian mission in the world. Both argue (correctly, I believe) that these two structures are justified biblically and find numerous precedents throughout the history of the Church.⁵¹

Snyder describes the church as the large group and mission structures as small group structures. The large group is inclusive. The small group is usually exclusive in the sense of being a tighter homogeneous unit, more committed to specific tasks such as mission, discipleship, specific ministry, renewal, study, or deeper relationships in body life.

Various authors give these two structures of the large congregational group and the smaller mission groups different names:

Winter - modality & sodality

Wagner - congregational & mission

Bloesch - parochial & para-parochial

Snyder - large group & small group

Even more fascinating is the mushrooming explosion of these small groups today, the sodalities within the modalities, the mission structures within the congregational structures.

Tie this in with the megatrend from hierarchies to networking, from the vertical to the lateral, and a whole new picture emerges.

The church today is moving through accelerating change into an explosion of small groups, committed communities, and mission structures.

Congregational structures remain a vital part of the picture, and with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit these become even more dynamic and powerful. We are seeing more super-churches emerge. However, within those large groups we are already seeing the truly revolutionary explosion of the small group in mission.

Body ministry finds fullest expression in an integrated, holistic combination of the large group and the small, the congregational and the mission structures. These two sides of the same coin are even better understood as the sodality finding its depth centre in the modality; the mission structures grounded in the congregational; the small in the large. That saves us from loose canons doing their own thing.

The body can survive without legs but it can't get around well. The body can survive without hands but it can't serve well. Congregational structures can survive without mission structures (as many churches in the Reformation did), but they can't proclaim Christ effectively around the world without mission structures.

Both congregational structures and mission structures are needed for effective body ministry.

1. Congregational Structures

The church is one. Christ's body is one. Unity is not a union of organizational structures; it is unity in the Spirit in the super-glue eternal bond of peace.

Organizational expression will be as diversified as is the human race. It adapts to different people groups, different cultures, different times in history, and today it is adapting to the increasing acceleration of social change.

This is so revolutionary that we barely glimpse the implications. The swirling changes from Second Wave industrialism into Third Wave technological society fundamentally alter the role of the congregational and the mission structures and more truly merge them into inter-related and inter-dependent body ministry.

In one sense, that merging renders the distinction artificial; both are mission - aggressive mission; both are one body in Christ - dynamically powerful in the gifts of the Spirit.

One way to see this is to think of renewal transforming a denominational bureaucratic system through exploding small groups active in mission through body ministry. Millions of these small groups populate the planet. Yet many people in them also function in large congregational structures as well.

The small groups are often inter-denominational. That is not new. Many of us belonged to inter-denominational groups at school, college or work. What is new is the explosive multiplication of these groups now. Some of them grow into a movement or network in a decade.

So new, fluid patterns of body ministry now emerge. This is also part of the shift into "Third Wave" society. Alvin Toffler prophetically described the flexible, emerging lifestyle of a person in the Third Wave. Using the language of nearly half a century ago he contrasted the person committed to the Second Wave organization with the Associative person increasingly involved in Third Wave structures:

Where the organization man was subservient to the organization
Associative man is almost insouciant towards it. Where the organization man was immobilised by concern for economic security, Associative man increasingly takes it for granted. Where the organization man was fearful of risk, Associative man welcomes it (allowing that in an affluent and fast-changing society even failure is transient). Where the organization man was hierarchy-conscious seeking status and prestige within the organization, Associative man seeks it without. Where the organization man filled a predetermined slot, Associative man moves from slot to slot in a complex pattern that is largely self-motivated. Where the organization man dedicated himself to the solution of routine problems according to well-defined roles, avoiding any show of unorthodoxy or creativity, Associative man, faced by novel problems is encouraged to innovate. Where the organization man had to subordinate his own individuality to "play ball on the team", Associate man recognises that the team, itself, is transient. He may subordinate his individuality for a while, under conditions of his own choosing; but it is never permanent submergence.

The word 'associate' implies co-equal, rather than subordinate, and its spreading use accurately reflects the shifts from vertical and hierarchical arrangements to the new, more lateral, communication patterns.⁵²

This may sound radical, but it is also freeing. The Spirit of the Lord gives liberty, and more and more people are discovering that.

Catholic educationalist and social prophet Ivan Illich brought these issues sharply to bear on institutional church structures:

The traditional demand for increased personnel at the parish level and the simultaneously burgeoning process of overinflated bureaucratic machinery masks the increasing irrelevance of both these aspects of the structure. Organizational explosion results in a feverish search for more personnel and money. We are urged to beg God to send more employees into the bureaucratic system and to inspire the faithful to pay the cost. Personally, I cannot ask God for these 'benefits'

Changes on the institutional periphery are as faithful to 'Parkinson's Law' as changes in Rome: work grows with available personnel.⁵³

The bureaucratic system, as Laurence Peter showed, tends toward inefficiency. People are promoted to their level of incompetence and remain stuck there. His 'Peter Prescription' to over-come the 'Peter Principle' of incompetence is simply "forward to a better life" not upward to incompetence.⁵⁴

Change in society makes that increasingly possible. Congregational structures are becoming freer through more effective, flexible ministries. These changes release the ministry of the whole body with growing numbers of Christians discovering and using their gifts.

2. Mission Structures

Emerging mission structures, flexible and responsive to changing needs and opportunities, can be dynamically led by the Spirit, as Jesus was.

Flexible mission structures look increasingly like Jesus or Paul leading their disciples in ministry and mission together, responsive to the Spirit's leading and empowered by the Spirit for ministry together in a hurting, needy world.

Some mission agencies, tied to Second Wave bureaucratic structures, create an unbiblical paradox. They recruit highly committed youth from the free-flowing, flexible, relational youth culture, but then train them in a more rigid institutional structure such as with months of lectures to mostly passive listeners, who may occasionally interact with questions. Then the recruits move back into mission in free-flowing, flexible relational communal societies overseas or in the youth culture at home!

Interestingly, and sadly, those keen and competent mission recruits then tend to replicate their own institutional training. Jesus and Paul and many effective missionaries did not do that.

Now new mission structures are emerging in our changing environment. Classrooms can become mission models, with teachers and students interacting, praying for one another, healing, moving in the Spirit, and even casting out spirits. That's revolutionary. I have seen that in theological and ministry college classrooms with Catholics, Anglicans, Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists and Pentecostals involved.

Many of us have become involved in renewal groups, meetings, conferences and courses where we do what we sing and speak about. We are learning to minister to one another, lead and empowered by the Spirit of God.

Bible study groups can move from having long discussions about biblical issues to actually ministering to one another in prayer and prophecy. Many people in small groups now expect needs to be met in the group, and to see healings and revelations from God.

Not only are congregational structures moving into new forms of powerful ministry as the whole body comes alive with spiritual gifts, but so are mission structures as they find new forms of dynamic ministry especially through small groups and networking.

Mission structures tend to use the team model. Traditionally they have been the committed missionary bands like Paul's, or the missionary monks and friars of the middle ages, or the missionary agencies today, both denominational and independent. That still applies.

However, the mission structures in a rapidly changing context take on powerful new forms in mission, such as in homes and in the workplace. Small groups can function anywhere.

Networks are a typical and growing example. They may be as informal as multiplying networks of home cell groups or house churches. They may be committed groups organized for mission outreach within or across denominations as with social welfare teams in soup kitchens or beach missions. They may be service agencies supporting helping any of those organizations as with World Vision, Teen Challenge or Healing Rooms. They may be independent groups, large and small, national or international, mono-cultural or cross-cultural.

Further, the inter-relationship of the congregational structures and the committed groups of mission structures feed into one another, support one another, and merge into inter-related ministries. You may be involved in a few of them as well as in your local church.

The vertical to horizontal power shift that networks bring about is liberating. Hierarchies promote moving up and getting ahead. Networking empowers the individual. People in networks tend to nurture one another, such as in effective mission groups.

The early church multiplied in house groups. Mission groups spread rapidly to Samaria and to Antioch and beyond. The church grew spontaneously in the power of the Spirit of God.

Today, that same Spirit is moving in global networks of people groups in similar spontaneous expansion through committed communities of incredible variety.

This revolutionary perspective is not too hard to grasp if we look at China: missionaries expelled; churches shut; congregational structures wiped out or taken under strict political control.

Then what? Amid severe persecution, a fantastically growing hidden church, invisibly religious yet with total commitment, driven underground yet spreading like wildfire fanned by the very persecution aimed at destroying the church. That church grew through an explosion of mission structures. Only the power of God can do that and it is now happening world-wide.

A more traditional development is the large congregation fed by and feeding the growing number of small group active in various forms of mission. Those group can be for adults, youth, children, men, women, sporting teams, surfers, 4WD enthusiasts, dancers, artists, vocational interest groups, and any kind of common interest group.

Elton Trueblood, a pioneer of small group mission structures last century saw this development as not only possible but preferable:

A final danger concerns organization. There are many who would welcome some uniting organization (of small groups) ... but this would be a grievous mistake. ... In that fresh burst of life we are trying to describe there ought not to be any "leaders." The Fuhrer principle is always wrong.

Having said this, we must go on to say that those who want something definite have a valid point. They are afraid that the fresh Christian movements of our time will be confined to bursts of enthusiasm. They do not see how a wholly fluid fellowship will be very effective; it needs structure; it needs backbone. They are right; no invertebrate movement ever succeeds, but the way to provide backbone is not to elect officers; the way to provide backbone is to insist on the discipline. If there could grow up fellowship groups all over the world, differing somewhat in creed and in social emphasis but united everywhere by a common discipline, it would be a genuine order, even though it would not have a name and would not be noticed in the Encyclopaedia.⁵⁵

During revival and strong moves of the Spirit, the emerging discipline is one of being led by the Spirit in unity and harmony. That is always challenged, often by attacking spirit forces. The answer lies in keeping Jesus as Lord and following his Word, led by his Spirit in humility and constant repentance.

The two following scenes from Australia both illustrate astounding church growth rarely seen there. In each the power of the Spirit of God released through multiplying body ministry has involved a dynamic symbiotic inter-relationship of mission structures with congregational structures.

1. Australian Aborigines

Revival broke out on Elcho Island near Darwin in the far north of Australia in March 1979. Missionary work among aboriginals had seen only small growth there, and aboriginal pastors led a church of about 30 members. God moved among the people causing repentance, restitution, confession and powerful praying. About 500 came to the Lord in revival meetings, and the community changed.

Drinking and crime decreased. The incidence of gambling dramatically declined and families have been reunited throughout the community. Teams from Elcho Island ministered by invitation throughout Australia, especially among desert aboriginals, and have seen the same outpouring of the Spirit. Groups met in homes every night and gathered for meetings in halls or churches at weekends or on special evenings. Although the intensity of the revival through the eighties has died down, effects remain. Communities have a much better standard of living than before the revival.

2. Independent Churches

Networks of independent churches increase rapidly. One of the fastest growing movements in Australia is Christian Outreach Centres (C.O.C.).

Clark and Anne Taylor commenced a church in their home in 1974 with 25 people. By 1977 they had 1,000 people attending, and had started other churches. During the first decade C.O.C. grew to 3,000 and they planted 35 churches. They emphasized outreach and nurture through home groups using video teaching by the senior pastor. These tapes circulated widely for individual and group study. By 1975 they had a weekly TV program, "A new Way of Life." People were converted and healed in their homes as well as in church.

They commenced their school in 1978, which moved to the present location in 1982 when C.O.C. built their new auditorium which could

seat 5,000 people. The school expanded from Preparatory to Grade 12 and now has over 1,600 students.

They established their tertiary college, Christian Heritage College (CHC) in 1986. CHC has grown from offering one course in education with an initial enrolment of nine students, to around 40 courses and a student community exceeding 800. The college offers a range of accredited degrees in Business, Education and Humanities, Ministries and Social Sciences.

By the end of 1988 there were 136 churches in the movement including churches in New Zealand, and the Solomon Islands.. During 1989, churches were established in Papua-New Guinea, Fiji, Vanuatu, the United Kingdom, and Malaysia. The movement experienced rapid growth with 44 new churches opening in 1990. Pastor Neil Miers became president of Christian Outreach Centre International in 1990.

By 2010 C.O.C. had around 1600 churches in 30 countries including Australia, Bulgaria, Chile, Denmark, Egypt, Fiji, France, Germany, Iceland, India, Malaysia, Malta, Nepal, New Zealand, Philippines, PNG, Serbia, Singapore, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Thailand, Tonga, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Vanuatu and Zambia.

The Movement has always been strongly involved in helping people in need especially through Global Care. This relief agency poured millions of dollars into worldwide relief. They had people on the ground in the February 2009 bushfires in Victoria, Australia and were the only not-for-profit relief organization still in the region two weeks after the devastating fires which killed 173 people and left thousands homeless. Global care had 500 people involved in the on-going relief work in the bushfire region, working with Rotary, Samaritan's Purse, the Salvation Army and the YMCA.

This movement is one example of exploding movements of church growth across the world today. Most of their churches began as a home group, and grew from there.

Ministry in the body of Christ can be, and should be, biblical body ministry released through effective body organization.

Case Study

China miracle

This concluding example of powerful body ministry is a wonderful contemporary account reported by Carl Lawrence.⁵⁶

The Spirit told us what to do

Two young women set off to plant churches without plans or training because Jesus said to “go”.

After we prayed, the Holy Spirit would tell us exactly what to do.

***We would keep praying and he would tell us what to do,
and we would do it.***

Then we prayed and then he would tell us what to do.

We would do it and keep praying.

Several high-ranking church leaders from Europe visited a pastor in Hong Kong. The pastor took them to visit some of the Three-Self churches. They found them inspiring, and uniquely Chinese, but they wondered aloud if perhaps they weren't seeing the real church.

On the final day of their visit, the pastor hoped to show them what they wanted to see. He knew they would not really be satisfied unless they met a real church planter. As it turned out, they saw something incredibly beyond what they ever expected to find in China.

At their last stop, the pastor discovered that two young women had just returned from their mission station for a short visit, so he asked them to come to the hotel late, to meet the visiting church leaders.

These young ladies had both become Christians as teenagers while listening to radio broadcasts, and they each had immediately felt the call to be a missionary. The pastor had met with them and attempted to teach them how to witness right where they were.

“No,” they insisted, “the Bible you gave us says Jesus said to go to all the world. We want to ‘go.’”

“But,” the pastor argued, “you have only been Christians for six months, and you are so young.”

They replied, “Pastor, we have read everything Jesus said and nowhere does he ask people how old they are. We want to go.”

Smiling, the pastor asked them, “But can you give me an exegesis of the five classical appearances of the Great Commission in the New Testament?” Their disappointed faces made him feel ashamed. “Very well. We need some workers on Hainan Island.”

“Hainan Island, we have never heard of it.”

The pastor said, “It is an island off the mainland. The people there are fishermen. It is very rough. There are no Christians there. For young ladies it might be very dangerous.”

Excitedly they responded, “How soon can we go?”

“Well, I have to go back to Hong Kong and make arrangements. There will be . . .”

They interrupted him, “Oh no, no, we must not wait. Our Lord said ‘go,’ not sit around and plan. We will go to this place - what did you call it?”

“Hainan. Hainan Island.”

They looked at each other, “Hainan, yes Hainan. That is where the Lord wants us to go.”

They had been there for two years and were now back for a short period of time to try to get Bibles and other literature for their new churches. The pastor had not seen them since the day they insisted that they ‘go now’!

After the arrangements were made, he went to the lobby at the appointed time and waited for the ladies to arrive. He watched the bellboys in their crisp, tailored uniforms, and the tourists who

attempted to be casual in their designer clothes. Then he spotted the two young women. *Oh no*, he thought as they walked in.

Their black pyjamas and broad-brimmed fishermen hats stood in stark contrast to the appearance of the sophisticated hotel receptionist making her way towards them.

The pastor moved quickly to intercede. "It's all right, they are here to see me." Several people stood staring as he greeted them as politely as possible without drawing too much attention. "Come, we will go to my room to meet some people from Europe."

Once in the room, the two European church officials graciously greeted them. He proceeded to ask the young ladies questions, interpreting for his guests as he went along.

"Pastor, ask them how many churches they have established on Hainan."

The women put their heads down and answered, "Oh Pastor, we have only been there two years . . . yes, two years. Not many. Not very many." Their voices were apologetic.

"How many?"

"Oh, not many, not many. We have only been there a short time. The people were not very friendly. . . Sometimes they became very vicious. Yes, sometimes they told us they were going to drown us in the ocean . . . several men threatened us Oh my, and because we were so young, even some of the other ladies did not like us. Yes some even called us terrible names . . . so not many churches . . . no, not many. . . ."

The pastor interrupted and slowly repeated the words, "How many? How many?"

There was a moment of silence, then one of the women looked up with embarrassment and anguish, as though confessing to a crime,

"Only . . . thirteen."

The pastor looked astonished and interpreted for the guests, "Thirteen."

One of the guests repeated the number, "Only thirteen, only - my goodness. I haven't planted that many churches in my lifetime."

One of the pastor's assistants interrupted, "No, Pastor, she did not say thirteen. She said thirty."

The pastor looked at the two young women and asked, "Thirty?"

"Oh, yes, not many, we have done very poorly. Only thirty . . ."

The two guests could only mutter, "Thirty churches in two years . . . my word. . ."

Again the women began to apologize when the pastor interrupted to ask another question, "How many people are in the churches?"

"How many? . . . Oh, not many. . . ." Again both heads went down, apologizing for their failure. "Not many."

The process repeated itself until, again, the pastor looked like he was ready to shake them and practically yelled, "How many?"

"Only two hundred and twenty people. Not many, no . . . not many. "

Quickly multiplying in his head, the pastor said, "Two hundred and twenty in thirty churches?"

"Oh, no, in only one, but that one is a very small church, very small. There are bigger ones. . . ."

As the pastor interrupted he heard the numbers repeated by his guests: "Two hundred and twenty is small? Dear Lord, I wish I had some that large."

"Ask them how many are in the big churches."

The process began, but with a more reverent inquiry: "And how many in the big churches? You know, the biggest one?"

"Oh, not many"

“I know, ‘not many.’ But, please, ladies, how many?”

“Oh, less than five thousand. Only four thousand nine hundred Yes, less than five thousand. We have just started.”

From behind the pastor came the sound of weeping: “Dear Lord, forgive us.”

“What did they do? How did they do it? Ask them what they did?”

When asked, they looked astonished. “What did we do? Why nothing. Yes, we did nothing, nothing.”

“You did nothing? You have thirty churches - the smallest with two hundred and twenty people, the largest with almost five thousand new Christians! And you did nothing?”

“No, nothing. We just prayed.”

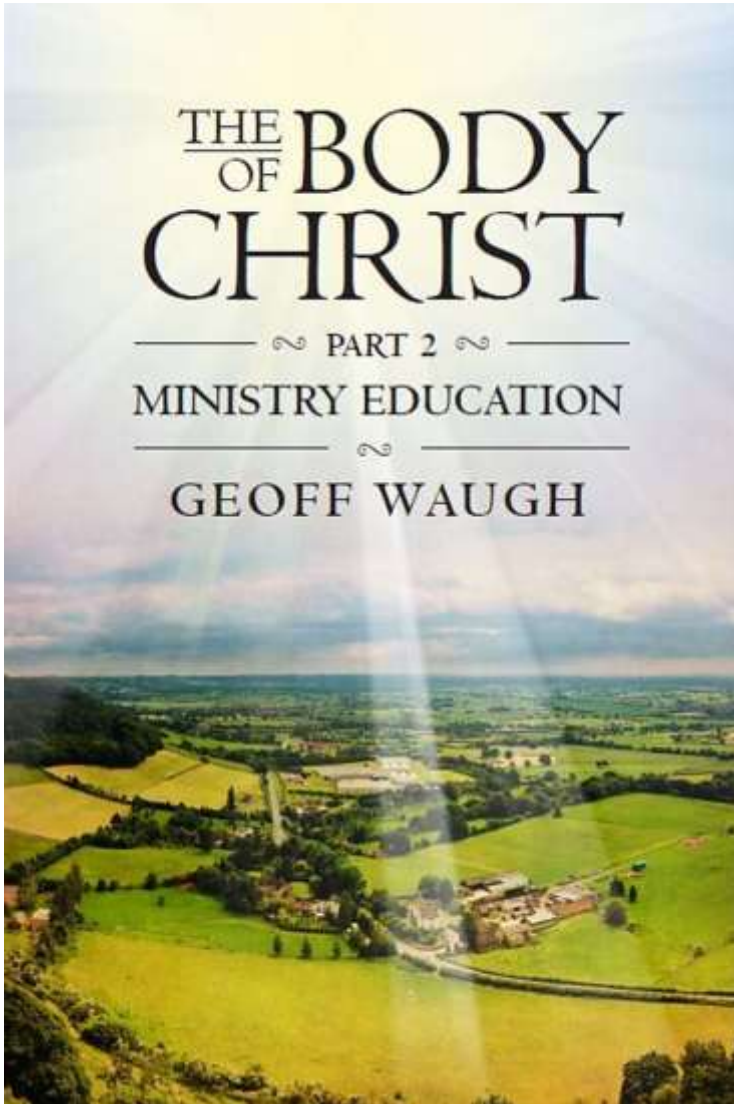
“I know you prayed, but what else did you do?”

“After we prayed, the Holy Spirit would tell us exactly what to do. We would keep praying and he would tell us what to do, and we would do it. Then we prayed and then he would tell us what to do. We would do it and keep praying.”

“Dear Lord, they *just* prayed . . . and the Holy Spirit told them exactly what to do and they prayed. . . .”

The pastor laid his hands on the shoulders of the two sisters. Behind him his two guests, on their knees weeping, joined as they ‘just prayed’.

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The Body of Christ, Part 2: Ministry Education

Part 2 in ***Body Ministry*** is compiled and updated from *The Body of Christ, Part 2: Ministry Education*

Part 2

Ministry Education

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Preface to Part 2, Ministry Education

By Rev Dr Lewis Born, former Moderator of the Queensland Synod of the Uniting Church in Australia and Director of the Department of Christian Education.

Body Ministry and Open Ministry Education come in its right time for adult education, gospel communication, and the growth of the church.

Open Education promises to become the most commonly used adult educational methodology of the new millennium. The demand is likely to increase. This indicates that the work of Geoff Waugh is a significant contribution to the current educational enterprise. It is particularly valuable to Christian Educators. The author's orientation is theological and his target audience is the faith community, its nurture, growth and outreach.

To this point in time the educative process has been inhibited by dependence on structured courses, the classroom and qualified teachers. Accelerated technology, as Mr Waugh observes, has made modern resources commonly available to individuals, churches and schools in every village community. By this medium Open Education for the first time in history is able to offer high quality education from the world's best teachers to people in their own lounge, church or local group meeting place.

All this coinciding with the renewal movement has stimulated interest in theological learning to an unprecedented degree in the history of Christendom. The incredible numerical religious revival in the illiterate Asian and Latin church has been stimulated and served by modern technology. This gives Open Ministry Education and therefore Mr Waugh's work a global relevance, which he has applied in the Australian context.

As a fellow Australian I am appreciative. My appreciation is greatly enhanced by a deep respect and affection for the author. He is a competent teacher, an excellent communicator, an informed, disciplined renewalist and an experienced extension educator. All these qualities combine to commend the author and his work.

Introduction

From traditional to open ministry education

You can now have high quality ministry education, almost anywhere. A church or group can offer courses with accredited programs, using modern technology. Church leaders can teach their own people, using abundant resources. They can enrol their people in dynamic leadership development courses using a huge range of distance education materials. Or you can study at home alone.

Scene 1: A large church in any city

They allocate trained full time and part time staff to run their accredited Bible College diploma, bachelor and post-graduate courses using modern resources. Their students may be enrolled in the distance education courses of a theological college or seminary or university. The large local church trains its own leadership on the job in apprenticeship style courses using these distance education materials. The students include staff and volunteers. They grow in their personal and corporate gifting and anointing. Many other people in the church also study subjects there part-time for their own enjoyment and development.

Scene 2: A small church in any town

They run small study groups for their people enrolled in accredited distance education courses. Study group leaders are usually volunteers such as teachers. Their students may be enrolled in the distance education courses of a theological college or seminary or university. The small local church trains its own leadership on the job in apprenticeship style courses using these distance education materials. The students may be staff and volunteers. They grow in their personal and corporate gifting and anointing. Many other people in the church also study subjects there part-time for their own enjoyment and development.

In other words, you can now study ministry courses at diploma, bachelor and post-graduate levels at home or in a study group in your church. You can enrol right now in distance education programs in ministry, personally or in a local church study group.

Seminaries are cemeteries?

I taught in a denominational Bible College and a theological college. We provided distance education courses in theological and ministry studies. Then I taught at Christian Heritage College in Brisbane, Australia. Their School of Ministries is also the Bible College of the large church which established the college.

Christian Heritage College grew from offering one course in education with nine students in 1986, to around 40 courses for a student community exceeding 800 in 2010. The college offers of undergraduate and postgraduate courses in the Schools of Education and Humanities, Social Sciences, Business, and Ministries. These government accredited courses are equivalent to university programs, and are recognised nationally and overseas. A local church, Christian Outreach Centre, established the college starting with their Christian school and then their teachers college and its expansion into many other tertiary courses.

Higher education is new for many churches involved in renewal and revival. Churches touched by revival, especially some Pentecostals, were suspicious of degrees because they seemed to put out the fire. Many Christians still believe that study quenches the fire, not fuels it.

Seminaries are cemeteries, they said. However Spirit-filled study can fan the flame and set people on fire. Local churches can now run their own accredited courses using distance education materials, taught in their own way to their own people.

Our ministry is the ministry of Jesus Christ in his church and in the world. Jesus was certainly filled with the fire of the Spirit and has set people on fire for 2000 years. This is the vital starting point and the most radical. Jesus ministered in the power of the Spirit of the Lord. So can we.

Third Wave Megatrends

The emerging social context in which we now live and minister has been called the Third Wave (by Alvin Toffler) and its major characteristics described as Megatrends (by John Naisbitt). I examine these in *The Body of Christ, Book 1: Body Ministry*.

Alvin Toffler's Third Wave should not to be confused with Peter Wagner's "third wave" of renewal (first the Pentecostal wave, second the charismatic wave, and the third wave embracing the supernatural in all denominations). Those waves of renewal and revival in the twentieth century penetrated all the three sociological waves of tribal life (as in rural Africa or China), town life (as in country towns), and technological life (as in huge cities).

The Industrial Revolution saw a shift from a **tribal**, agricultural society to the emergence of the **town** with its mine or factory, printed media and supporting bureaucracies including schools and suburban churches. Professional ministry gradually shifted from the village priest for all the people to denominational ministers educated in theological schools using the classroom lecture model.

We now experience a radical social restructuring ushered in by the accelerating changes of a **technological** revolution. No terms fully describe it. "Post-modern" is a current term used to label these profound changes in structures and in thinking.

John Naisbitt identified worldwide trends shaping this new era, many of which apply directly to education for ministry. He described

American cultural changes but these trends also apply to all societies experiencing the global technological revolution.

Two of his list of *Megatrends 2000* apply particularly to open ministry education: the triumph of the individual, and religious revival.⁵⁷

The triumph of the individual

The great unifying theme at the conclusion of the 20th century is the triumph of the individual (Naisbitt).

Networking frees people from bureaucratic restrictions. New relationships emerge in voluntary associations, such as in the church and in its activities. Technology empowers the emerging freedom of the individual. Millions now communicate freely within the electronic global village.

The freedom of the individual, under God, has now increased in church life and in education for ministry. Individual gifts and callings are openly pursued, encouraged and can be directed into effective ministry within the body of Christ.

Gifted ministries emerge in ordinary people, fuelled and trained by the best teachers and leaders in the world through CDs, DVDs, TV programs, and internet communication. These now include dynamic preaching and teaching such as on YouTube.

In other words, you can use any or all of these resources as you serve God in the power of his Spirit, doing what he leads you to do, such as in your local church, personal networks, home groups or house churches.

Religious revival

At the dawn of the third millennium there are unmistakable signs of a worldwide multid denominational religious revival (Naisbitt).

Naisbitt noted widespread religious revival including charismatic renewal, such as one-fifth, or 10 million, of America's 53.5 million Catholics in 1990 being charismatic. Now one third of practising Christians worldwide are Pentecostal/charismatic.

This dramatically affects education for ministry. An urgent task for us all is to make ministry education in renewal as widely available as possible to meet this rapidly expanding worldwide revival.

Open education for ministry gives you access to the world's leaders in renewal and revival. Millions of cassettes circulated among renewal and revival networks in the 20th century. Now CDs and DVDs and YouTube reach millions more. So do TV programs. They help to inform and inspire, to liberate and equip leadership and to multiply ministry.

This opens the way for a global shift in both the concept and the methods of ministry education.

The prevailing concept of ministry education has been the theological college or seminary providing a thorough grounding in biblical, theological, ministry and mission studies. Most denominations ordain ministers on successful completion of these studies. That was true for me also.

That pattern continues, but is changing radically. Now most theological colleges or seminaries also offer their studies to anyone interested through distance education. Christians anywhere can pursue Christian and ministry studies at undergraduate and post graduate levels. I have taught many of these courses, including post-graduate students building on former studies in other disciplines. Most of these students were not seeking ordination as pastors.

Along with this major shift in the concept of ministry education as now applicable to all Christians, we live through a global shift in the smorgasbord of ministry education possibilities.

Open ministry education makes theological or ministry education available to everyone. Leaders, including pastors already involved in a huge range of ministries, can now access accredited and unaccredited courses in ministry education. They do so - in exploding numbers.

Most universities and seminaries have rapidly expanding distance education programs available through modern technology, especially the internet.

Now, for example, we can copy Bible passages in many versions straight from www.biblegateway.com and use them immediately in our power point presentations in church, in home groups, and in personal correspondence through emails, smart phones and tablets.

In other words revival is changing the church and affecting the world, as revivals do. You can participate as a leader in revival, a leader of a home group or house church, a leader of youth or children, and a leader in your own home. You have open ministry education available to you right now.

CDs and DVDs, computer memory sticks and emails, smart phones and tablets, teleconferencing and power point, YouTube and church or college websites powerfully changed our communication, teaching and learning. Google replaced library visits!

This book explores those possibilities.

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Chapter 11

Open Education

From narrow to wide

Composite Case Study

*Mission Department,
Community Church.
December, 2010.*

Dear Mum and Dad,

Another great year almost gone and passing into history! So much has happened since we came here ten years ago as raw teachers in the church's mission department. When we moved here we didn't dream that we'd now be heading up the ministry education for our rapidly multiplying home groups and house churches.

Pedro our head pastor, humble and Christ-like, is full of faith and vision. He loves his people and his work. So it's easy to be united and loyal. He's built a strong ministry team and seen the main congregation grow to over 1,000 in a decade. The church also planted five other churches which all have a few hundred members now. Most of them began as house churches. The pastors of those churches, including their home group leaders, all study some of our open education courses available on CD, DVD and on our church website. Often they use those studies for their home groups as well.

This weekend we had our retreat with the church leaders. Some are full time, some part time, and some are spare time volunteers. Our families get away together from Friday evening to Sunday afternoon to pray and plan. It's great. You should see how well our young Cindy cares for the children during our session times. She's so creative; a natural teacher, like her mum!

These retreats help our team enormously now that our churches have grown so much. We identify and develop our spiritual gifts in our ministries. Revival continues to spread, transforming communities and even the ecology. As communities come together in reconciliation, repent of our divisions, care for the needy, and pray for one another, even the food crops grow abundantly. We are often amazed.

At last we've finished our doctoral studies with the Open Seminary. All through those years of distance study we took courses and chose assignments to fit our needs. An extra bonus is the stack of books, CDs and DVDs we used, as well as the text book library we've built up. They now form a useful ministry education section in our local church Library and Resource Centre, not only for our own use but for others also. Students in our open education program use these resources. Some of our best students use them for their own degree study programs.

Occasionally we've had visits from a few of our seminary professors in their travels. Their wide experience has helped us all. We've appreciated having them stay with us and speak at weekend seminars in our churches. Sometimes we linked with them in teleconferences or videoconferences for our local seminars in our open ministry education courses.

Our open ministry education courses are open to anyone, of course, but geared to church leadership. Local leaders use the materials in weekly seminar groups. There they can work in depth to train and develop the leaders in their churches. Many of our courses are distance education subjects provided by the Open Seminary, so our people can also study toward accredited ministry and mission degrees. Volunteers, such as school teachers help us by leading many seminars. They love to use their teaching skills and gifts to help others learn. Seminar classes have lively interaction with students accessing materials now on laptops as well as smart phones and tablets. They can hold course notes, digital books, concordances and handy applications in the palm of their hand now!

People across the country use our open ministry education resources, including our published and electronic materials. We prepare courses to help study groups or seminar classes apply Scripture to their lives and ministry. Courses can be taken at different academic levels, but most assignments include practical ministry tasks. That includes leading home cell groups or planting new house churches.

These open ministry education courses grew out of our work in our own church but they also meet needs in many other churches as well. We now call the program our OPEN School, that is, our Open Pastoral Education Network.

We love adapting accredited courses to our local situation, and also preparing our own study materials for our people. We use photocopied booklets and print-on-demand books as well as memory sticks used to copy our resources into students computers and a growing range of electronic equipment and applications.

What a privilege it is to encourage and equip leaders and people at all levels of our church and mission life. Your love, support and prayer are a vital part of our lives and this ministry. We're truly grateful, as once again we celebrate another year and our King's birth.

Thanks again, and God bless abundantly.

Love always,

Lin and Jon

1. Open Ministry Education

Revival swept through Latin America, and around the globe, in the mid-20th century. Churches multiplied. House churches sprung up rapidly, and many grew large.

A new form of anointed, biblical leadership emerged. Pastors were often untrained lay leaders, yet powerful evangelists, church planters and unpaid pastors in house churches.

Along with exploding church growth, the new technology opened the way for dramatic growth and informal leadership development through radio, TV, cassettes then CDs and DVDs, and the internet.

A movement known as Theological Education by Extension (TEE) began in Guatemala in 1963 when Ralph Winter and James Emery, soon joined by Ross Kinsler, commenced extension centres for rural pastors away from the residential Presbyterian Seminary. Teaching staff visited the extension centres weekly for seminars which helped students reflect together on their home study materials and on their field experience as part-time lay leaders, or full time pastors in training.

This early form of distance education for ministry reached leaders and pastors in their own localities.

Reflecting on his experience, Ross Kinsler wrote:

The challenge facing theological [and ministry] education today is

- to take an open attitude to structures and methods and to design programs that will be open to the whole people of God,
- to take an open attitude toward curriculum design so as to build on the students' interests and needs and motivation,
- to take an open attitude toward the role of the student and the role of the teacher so that both can become fully involved in determining and developing the learning experiences,

- to take an open attitude toward evaluation and to discover more relevant, more human, more Christian ways to validate our program.⁵⁸

Half a century on from those early beginnings, open education has exploded globally. Open universities, theological seminaries and colleges, and most tertiary institutions now include distance education.

Almost half a century ago the Special Committee on Theological Education in the Episcopal Church in America observed that "The pillars on which former concepts of ministry rested were special education, ordination, representation of a visible body (usually a congregation) and a salary for services to that body. These four pillars are being shaken to their foundation."⁵⁹

We still live amid that shaking. New, vital forms of ministry emerge all around us in the 21st century. It is freeing and revolutionary. The church in revival around the world grows so fast that the old forms of education for ministry fail to keep up. New wine bursts the old wineskins.

So what do the new wineskins for ministry education look like? They are all around us in the west and the east, in developing and developed nations. Many of us are now involved in these emerging forms of education for effective revival ministry.

Ministry education, along with education in general, increasingly includes open education – available to individuals, churches, denominations and global movements.

Open ministry education uses a variety of resources such as audio and video cassettes, CDs, DVDs, internet, radio and TV, email and faxes, tablets and smart phones, laptops and memory sticks, date projection, photocopied and print-on-demand publications (such as this book). Even traditional resources such as libraries and books can be increasingly accessed on the worldwide web and other electronic media.

These resources continue to multiply around the world. They make teaching, preaching and ministry available to millions of people. That creates a fundamental shift in ministry education. Not only can local leaders, preachers and teachers multiply their ministry this way, but

inexpensive CDs, DVDs and books now bring the teaching of leading world figures into homes and churches everywhere.

These technological aids emerge as part of a third wave of social change in human history. Sociologists grope for adequate words to describe this massive change beyond the agricultural first wave and industrial second wave.⁶⁰ The current technological change is the context for accelerating church growth and leadership development. Ministry multiplies in the whole body of Christ amid this revolutionary social change.

Three stage rocket

The current educational revolution is like a three stage rocket. Each stage thrusts educational processes further and faster into new dimensions and greater orbits.

Stage 1 is traditional education in the ***classroom*** where teachers impart knowledge and develop students' skills. We all understand that system, and are products of it. It still has great value where teaching is good, but it is often limited especially in terms of education for rapidly expanding ministries in the church, the body of Christ.

Stage 2 takes the ***classroom to the students*** wherever they may be, as in Theological Education by Extension (TEE). It takes many forms. Extension education involves people interacting with teachers in their own life context, usually through weekly seminars or study groups. It makes education available beyond traditional colleges or seminaries and beyond the limitations of full time study. But it adds the important dimension of group interaction along with input from teachers or tutors who run the group study sessions or seminars.

Stage 3 goes further. It provides high quality education ***beyond the classroom*** in 'schools without walls'. Using educational technology such as CDs, DVDs, the internet, computers, laptops, smart phones and tablets along with printed materials or books, it provides courses or resources to individuals and study groups anywhere, at any time. It multiplies teaching indefinitely. It can reach everyone with relevant courses for personal study as well as for seminars or study groups.

Open education is only one way of educating for ministry, of course. Traditional education will continue and can be effective and dynamic. Many people still prefer to enrol in classroom courses, interacting with

their teachers, as in Bible Colleges and theological seminaries. I have taught that way for half a century.

That interaction can now happen anywhere with new resources available for students and study groups. Students may not only interact with their distance education lecturer or tutor (as by phone, email, video-conferencing or lecturers' visits to tutorial groups or churches), but students can also interact with the local tutor or teacher who may guide them through the distance education material.

The current information and technological explosion rockets us into new developments in education for ministry, and new means of resourcing the ministry. When that ministry is seen as the ministry of the whole body of Christ, it makes possible a kind of ministry formation never known before. We are rediscovering body ministry at the same time that educational resources are making the world's best teachers and preachers available to everyone.

2. Distance Education

Distance education has many forms and varies widely from one institution to another. It also varies considerably within an institution as new possibilities keep emerging. Courses that began as correspondence lessons mailed out, became distance courses with Study Guides and Readers and taped lectures available, and then became resources provided on the internet.

Theological Education by Extension (TEE) was not only a pioneer of early distance education for ministry and leadership development, but is also an excellent, proven model of effective open ministry education.

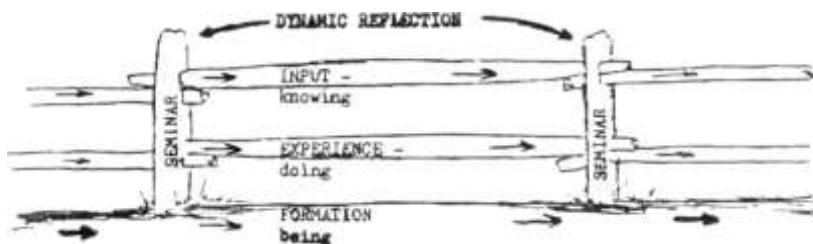
TEE combined decentralised seminars and home study with field experience. It made the learning program or study available to people in their environment or local situation.

Methods vary. Usually, however, TEE involves teachers leading weekly study groups for local leaders in the church using materials which form part of an educational program. Different courses are offered, often involving different teachers. Colleges can make teaching staff available, or leaders in local churches may offer courses this way as tutorials.

This education for ministry involves four important components:

1. Input (knowing) - material to be learned, usually cognitive;
2. Experience (doing) - applying learning in ministry or field work;
3. Formation (being) - spiritual formation for effective ministry;
4. Dynamic Reflection (seminars) - usually weekly in study groups.

Education for body ministry can be widely used this way. I adapt the well-known split rail fence analogy to illustrate distance education.⁶¹



Seminar groups can meet anywhere, at any time suitable to the group, preferably weekly. Group leaders will usually be those already involved in leadership among that group of people, such as a pastor, teacher or home group leader.

The 20th century saw cassette tapes proliferate. Education institutions could easily tape lectures and provide them to distance education students. Distance students often knew the content of those lectures better than internal students because they had cassettes they could play indefinitely. I did that. I still have Edwin Orr's marvellous post-graduate teaching on the history of Evangelical Awakenings recorded on cassettes in his class lectures – which I studied at home, externally.

Technology in the 21st century made the familiar cassette redundant, except for regions without electricity where hand-wound cassette players are still used.

Educational institutions and many churches now offer CDs and DVDs for personal or group use. Many churches now make the sermon available immediately after the church service. You pick up your copies on your way out, and can pass copies on to your friends. That

sermon, or teaching, can then be seen or heard repeatedly by many. It may also be available on the church's website, and on YouTube.

These dramatic changes in our communication reflect a little of the massive changes now accelerating in our world.

Churches and study groups now have access to high quality distance education. Many large churches, and even small ones, produce their own study materials including recorded preaching and teaching on CDs, DVDs, and church websites. Economically produced materials such as photocopied booklets and print-on-demand books, available as needed, make study resources widely available. Students now download materials, including recorded teaching.

For example, you can now publish high quality print-on-demand books economically and make them widely available. Materials published on the web, including YouTube videos, are available world wide. Many people and groups now publish that way. For example our 20 printed issues of the *Renewal Journal*, are now available worldwide on www.renewaljournal.com, along with other resources.

Individuals and churches can use these resources for their ministry education. Not only do churches have immediate access to these electronic resources but churches and colleges or seminaries increasingly produce their own resources and made them immediately available to their people and others interested.

This is the 'school without walls'. Many of our friends in Africa, Asia, or the South Pacific access and use these resources.

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Chapter 12

Unlimited Education

From centralized to decentralized

Open education opens the way for powerful ministry education. That can include the ministry of the whole body of Christ – everyone. It is not limited to training pastors or priests. They are included, of course, along with an ever expanding range of ministries for everyone.

Some of those ministries will be to lead. It may be leading a congregation, or a house church, or a cell group, or an interest group such as for women, men, youth, vocational groups, university fellowships and many more. Other ministries will serve in other ways.

Open education opens the way for anyone anywhere to study any area of interest, such as Biblical Studies, Church History, Theology or Ministry and Mission. Some people see those subjects as belonging only or mainly to specialist teachers in theological colleges or seminaries lecturing students in seminary classes.

Now, with open education, you can explore those subjects in your local study group or church, or on your own. You have access to an amazing array of fascinating resources. Millions of people do that now. Many people study for ministry degrees in that process.

So what are some of the specific advantages of such open, unlimited education for ministry, and what are some problems and their solutions?

1. Advantages

This discussion examines distance education using seminars available to students. Seminars may be in study groups, in the local church, in regional study centres, or at the seminary such as for night classes or weekend intensives.

Individuals can study on their own, as millions do. That has many personal advantages such as not being dependent on a study group. But here we examine the advantages of study for ministry in flexible group settings, such as seminars that any church can offer.

The following comments summarise the discoveries of Presbyterian missionaries who pioneered this approach with Theological Education by Extension (TEE) in Latin America.

There are advantages for (a) the student, (b) the learning process, (c) the teaching institution, and (d) the church.

(a) Advantages for the student:

Open ministry education makes teaching available to everyone; it can tap all levels of intelligence, ability and experience.

It can be in-service learning, on the job, and relevant to it.

Those involved can more easily cover their costs because they normally earn their income as they study and pay as they go.

More mature people can be involved than may otherwise be possible; these are often the most highly motivated and disciplined.

Students have the opportunity to test their interest, ability and calling at any stage, including their later years.

Students can form their own groups or be part of various groups using the materials; groups can be flexible and functional.

Group seminar times can be more flexible to fit local needs or circumstances because the materials are always available.

Open education and adult learning principles apply more fully because students choose their own goals and means of reaching them.

Individuals can multiply the learning/teaching process by using the materials themselves in other groups that they lead or facilitate.

Printed resources can be used without the accompanying recordings. This makes them readily available to anyone interested.

(b) Advantages for the learning process:

Open ministry education puts the learning where the people are; most learning does not take place in schools, but in life.

Seminars in good distance education allow and require interaction linked with personal assignments and feedback.

Discussion in the group tests ideas with experience and promotes mutual fellowship, help and co-operation.

The closer the subject is related to life the more effective it is; this is a basic part of the group interaction and personal study.

Physical surroundings are those of the home or hall in local use, so students are helped to develop study methods related to their situation.

Extension avoids the professional orientation often associated with extracting the students from the local area; learning happens there.

More time is available to explore subjects this way because of the fewer number of courses studied at any one time.

An additional screening feature of the longer period of learning (possibly life-long) is the on-going discipling required to stay involved.

Materials and presentation allow better use of group time which is enhanced by prior preparation and discussion relevant locally.

Library and resource materials can be made available where the people work and are used in that context, including access to internet resources.

Courses have greater relevance to the local situation because they are run there; tutors can apply learning to local issues and concerns.

Learning levels in any course can be adapted to the educational abilities of the students.

The pace of learning is more flexible; some may move more quickly through the materials than others.

Some groups choose to spread courses over extra sessions for fuller discussions, application and appropriate action.

CD and DVD resources can be stopped at any point for further group comment or discussion as the need arises.

Recorded teaching materials can be replayed in the group, or personally, for revision or clarification.

Recorded resources can be replayed indefinitely in a wide range of settings such as for skim learning, later revision, checking, and further use in other groups.

Students gain insight and skill in inductive group processes which is immediately transferable to other group involvement.

(c) Advantages for the teaching institution:

Distance education courses cost much less per student than college teaching and use resources more effectively, such as volunteer tutors who are gifted and keen to teach.

Traditional colleges usually cost more per student than is warranted for education, but extension programs do not.

Extension avoids the problem of artificial status often associated with learning in an institution; it is localized.

The teaching institution can serve people it would never help otherwise, and these are often the ones most needing it, and best fitted for it – the real leaders in church life.

There are few limits to the number who can be involved because it allows for all those interested or needing it to be reached.

The faculty need not be overloaded because others can be involved in supervision of courses or used as tutors or group leaders.

In some cases, coaching by tutors can provide income for them without the high costs of employing extra professional staff.

Extension modules allow a wider offering of courses than usual, which in turn provides greater variety in the teaching offered.

The whole range of different courses remains available to any group at any time; various courses can be offered simultaneously.

Extension centres can be anywhere; they are functional units, easily moved around as needs arise in the group.

The teaching process can be multiplied indefinitely as these resources can be made readily available anywhere.

Study groups have the advantage of input from other groups with whom the material was prepared, such as recorded class sessions.

The insights on recordings usually stimulate further insights and related discussion in seminar groups beyond what is on recording.

The teaching institution can maintain accreditation standards, at various levels, by monitoring groups or marking the assignments.

The courses of the institution become available to the whole church, not just to college students, so the teachers' ministries are widened.

(d) Advantages for the church:

Traditional colleges cannot prepare enough leaders for renewal and revival growth but open ministry education allows interested or potential leaders to be involved and helped.

Leaders can be prepared for their work more effectively, without undue cost; study is inter-related with their work.

All leaders can gain useful insights normally reserved for professionals; these can be immediately applied in ministry.

Courses allow a screening for prospective high level leaders who may benefit from further study at more intense levels.

The real leaders, who are often older and unable to attend college, can be helped this way; it avoids limiting courses, staff and facilities to young people who may, or may not, eventually be leaders in the church.

The materials allow and stimulate the growth of local leadership; they do not depend on a visiting teacher.

The program encourages responsibility in the local church for mounting relevant courses and applying them in that situation.

Resources provided in the program give local leaders extra tools they can use in their own ministries and leadership.

Any church or group or person can plug into this program at any time to utilise it for the goals and procedures of that group.

Groups or churches can buy and develop the resources as part of their resource centre or library, ready for use as needed.

Churches can offer a wide range of in-service or training programs as they accumulate these resources and others like them.

Churches can set standards for their leaders by requiring the successful completion of relevant courses.

Where the church sets standards or goals using the materials, those courses become a motivating force within the church.

The courses can be organised and supervised by volunteers at little or no cost to the church; people involved buy their own materials.

The group experience becomes not only a study group but also a significant fellowship and support group within the church.

These resources help to fulfil the church's task of equipping the members for body ministry and effective mission, TEE in Latin America proved to be a shining example of these principles and advantages in a rapidly growing revival context. TEE is particularly relevant for part-time leaders in the church. The Guatemala experiment, for example, met that need. They reported that probably 90% of the preaching, teaching, and evangelism in the rural churches was carried on by the laymen and women, and the few ordained men were rapidly approaching retirement age.

Ralph Winter, a pioneer of the TEE movement, emphasised that this form of distance education was so radical because it selected and equipped the real leaders, not just potential leaders.

We told people it cost less per student. We told people it allowed a smaller faculty to deal with a larger number of students. We said that it stressed independent study and reflection, that it attracted more candidates to the ministry, that it allowed teaching on several levels more easily, that it allowed students to stay closer to the people of their own kind rather than be uprooted and sent off to a capital city, etc., etc.

And we even predicted that people would gravely misunderstand the whole idea if they thought of it primarily as a new method of teaching rather than a new method of selection...

But the underlying purpose for working by extension is in fact much more important than any of the kaleidoscopic varieties of extension as a method - it is the simple goal of enlisting and equipping for ministry precisely those who are best suited to it.⁶²

That is the genius of open education. It reaches and helps equip all people for ministry, especially the functioning leaders such as home group leaders.

Distance education, like any other established program or institution, is prone to goal displacement. The very reasons for its development can be displaced by the goal to merely maintain the system which has been created. Then the system can take over, and the vital goals of equipping people for mission and church growth can be lost.

These, and associated problems which have emerged, need examining before we move on to explore emerging directions for theological and ministry education.

2. Problems and solutions

Many of the advantages of open ministry education and Theological Education by Extension (TEE) carry associated problems. The following clusters of problems and solutions came from actual programs in Latin America exploding church growth in revival.

(a) At the local level, Kenneth Mulholland evaluated a large program of TEE in Bolivia.

Its aims were to address these needs:

- To fill the need for simultaneous training on several different educational levels,
- To provide teaching more specifically adapted to each sub-cultural unit,
- To offer continuing education for pastors of churches experiencing upward social mobility,
- To respond to varying cultural norms that recognise students' maturity and leadership,
- To address the problems of semi-literate church leaders unfamiliar with tertiary level abstract thought, and
- To overcome the danger of professionalism in the ministry.⁶³

The 211 students, mainly pastors, studied an average of two courses a year. The TEE courses encountered these problems:

- failure of students to complete assignments,
- inadequate materials,
- lack of teachers trained in the use of learning materials,
- lack of textbooks prepared by nationals,
- lack of culturally adapted materials,
- cross-cultural problems in the areas of communication and understanding,
- lack of identification of the extension teacher with students,
- lack of sufficient theological preparation on the part of teachers involved,
- the extended time needed in order to graduate, and
- the high subsidy necessary to maintain the program.⁶⁴

The evaluation itself is a creative response to the need and also part of finding solutions. It highlights the value of on-going evaluation, re-diagnosis and adjustment. Those pioneers noted, for instance, that the cross-cultural problems applied equally or even more to the residential theological schools.

(b) On a wider scale, David Rambo examined positive and negative aspects of TEE programs. He noted the value of TEE to prepare mature leaders for ministry, reach more leaders, re-evaluate theological education, provide more economical programs, challenge the clergy-laity dichotomy, enhance the church's outreach to the world, promote contact and fellowship between groups, strengthen residential programs by providing better students for more intensive study, and provide a means for fuller inter-church or inter-mission co-operation.

The associated problems he identified were:

- Western teachers and missionaries continued to dominate,
- there was a shortage of well trained seminar leaders,
- cultural overhang continues and in some programs is intensified,
- quality materials are needed,
- contextualisation of materials and seminars needs more attention,
- the extended period of time can be daunting and a burden, and
- accreditation and recognition are often seen as sub-standard.⁶⁵

(c) TEE pioneer Ross Kinsler examined more comprehensive problems, which also point the way to continual improvement of all educational endeavour, especially innovative areas like extension and distance education.

He noted these crises in theological education:

- economic: problems of exporting Western systems;
- pedagogical: the need to humanize the classroom and teaching;
- ideological: to overcome elitism and dependency; and
- biblical: the professional, oligarchic clerical patterns.

Kinsler then underscored the importance of openness - the need to remain open to emerging needs and alternative solutions. He addressed the shift from closed to open education, from pedagogy to adult learning, and from competition to more humanizing co-operation.

Kinsler noted Paulo Freier's objection that "extension" can be not only inadequate but detrimental when associated with transmission, condescension, messianism, cultural invasion, manipulation, or imposing something already determined, designed and fabricated.

That is vital. Extension and distance education models need to avoid the imperial and embrace servant-hood; avoid the imposed and foster creativity; avoid the pre-packaged answers and ask significant questions.

It is certainly true that some extension programs have merely extended the old system of theological education so as to impose it on more people. But the challenge facing theological education today is to take an open attitude to structures and methods and to design programs that will be open to the whole people of God, to take an open attitude toward curriculum design so as to build on the students' interests and needs and motivation, to take an open attitude toward the role of the student and the role of the teacher so that both can become fully involved in determining and developing the learning experiences, to take an open attitude toward evaluation and to discover more relevant, more human, more Christian ways to validate our program. If theological education by extension should bake this enormous, unending challenge and join forces with theological educators of all traditions, then perhaps we should look for a new name ... "open theological education."⁶⁶

My preference is *open ministry education*.

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Chapter 13

Continuing Education

From classrooms to life

Accelerating change continues to revolutionise all of life, including how we learn. We now have more options than ever. Usually classrooms have been the main means of teaching, even for ministry education. Now, however, open education has arrived.

Education for ministry in traditional classrooms often limits that ministry. The learning itself can be counter-productive. The dominant pattern of passive students sitting in desks for years can produce limited or ineffective ministry.

“The medium is the message” implies that separating content and method is both naive and dangerous. The main content of any learning experience is the method used. Classroom lecturing methods usually restricts ministry.

Good teachers tackle that problem in many ways. Some teachers include ministry in the class. That may be interaction, probing questions, demonstrations, group work, group assignments, practical assignments applied to ministry, and a multitude of classroom methods which involve students in ministry such as preaching, students preparing and leading seminars, tutorials, and applied ministry such as praying for one another or for people in need.

Marshall McLuhan's emphasis on the medium as the message is strongly demonstrated in Christianity. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth" (John 1: 14). Jesus' incarnation demonstrates the medium being the message.

The method used in education teaches powerfully. Jesus lived that. He taught that. So did Paul. James made that point also, saying, "be doers of the word, not hearers only, deceiving yourselves" (James 1: 22).

Increasing change can help us see the unchanging good news of God's Kingdom even more clearly. We become freed from past limitations, and discover new freedom in the unchanging truth revealed in new ways.

1. Increasing Change

John Naisbitt describes our changing era. I refer to each of his megatrends and comment briefly on their significance for open ministry education.

1. From an Industrial Society to an Information Society:

"Although we continue to think we live in an industrial society, we have in fact changed to an economy based on the creation and distribution of information."

Naisbitt cites Sputnik in 1957 as the beginning of the globalisation of the information revolution. He argued that "satellites transformed the earth into what Marshall McLuhan called a global village. Instead of turning us outward toward space, the satellite era turned the globe inward upon itself. ... Today's information technology - from computers to cable television - did not bring about the new information society. It was already well under way by the late 1950s. Today's sophisticated technology only hastens our plunge into the information society that is already here."⁶⁷

Education for ministry now benefits from media which liberate education from confinement in classrooms and make it available in 'schools without walls'. Open Universities now enrol vast numbers.

Educational and communications technology enable high quality distance education.

For example, the computer replaced the typewriter, the photocopier replaced the duplicator, the CD replaced the audio cassette, the DVD replaced the video, the resource centre is assimilating the library and going electronic, the internet increasingly replaces snail mail with email and web resources.

Internet journals and books now offer more options than printed copies. They can reach more people, anywhere in the world. Anyone with internet access can download them and use them.

Quotes can be immediately woven into other tasks, including more articles and messages. The information is immediately available for multi-media uses. It may be adapted to power point for study groups or printed in Study Guides and Readings.

We did that with the 20 printed copies of the *Renewal Journal* now all available on renewaljournal.com.

*Now you can download information from articles in the Renewal Journal web page (renewaljournal.com), reproduce it for your home group, study group, church paper, or tertiary study. You can adapt it, and turn a summary of it into a hand-out, OHT, power point, tablet, smart phone, or for data projection. I've done all that with this adapted article and many other articles. An earlier version of some of these chapters is now available to you in my articles originally printed in the Renewal Journal.*⁶⁸

2. From Forced Technology to High Tech / High Touch

“We are moving in the dual direction of high tech / high touch matching each new technology with a complementary human response.”

Naisbitt argues that people reject the kind of technology which forces a dehumanising process on them, or they find ways to humanise the process.

Ministry education resources and media should not replace personal interaction; they can enable it. Our educational media frees the tutorial group from dependence on a visiting teacher, but needs to facilitate group discussion and application. Study group leaders can use these resources mainly for personal information, and then conduct groups without them, or use them as group resources. A DVD can lead into lively discussion and be applied in ministry in the study group.

Individuals and groups can and do use media constantly. The challenge is to use them creatively, involving students or participants in high touch interaction. That is not strange to revival groups. They constantly pray for one another. Learning about ministry can lead into ministry in the group or in the student's situation.

Now you can apply your ministry education material directly to your ministry, both in a study group and in life. You encourage and enable

one another as you share resources, pass around your USP memory sticks and email resources or share them on social networks.

3. From a National Economy to a World Economy

“No longer do we have the luxury of operating within an isolated self-sufficient national economic system; we now must acknowledge that we are part of a global economy.”

The world economy affects us all. Global economic shifts impact all nations, and affect our superannuation and bank balance.

So we find ourselves working within a word economy. Media that once ‘cost the earth’ has become ‘dirt cheap’! Computers, laptops, memory sticks, smart phones and tablets, cell phones are now widely available and affordable. I smiled at the computer printed notice on the mud brick wall of an African village church: *“Kind reminder: Please switch off your mobile phone during the service”*.

Ministry education media plug into worldwide resources. Revival leaders reading this book in Africa or China will probably have access to the internet and cell phones. They too can plug into resources now available globally.

Now you can access ministry education materials from America, Australia, and England or Europe such as on your computer, smart phone and tablet. Increasingly you will use and access media from developing nations also. Many revival leaders are there, and we can learn from them.

4. From Short Term to Long Term

“We are restructuring from a society run by short-term considerations and rewards in favour of dealing with things in much longer-term frames.”

Open ministry education programs fit this long term situation admirably. They are geared best, indeed primarily, to life-long learning and continuing education and on-going ministerial formation. They provide on-the-job resources, and then enable people to keep learning, adapting, and ministering amid change.

Ministry education applies to all of life. Ministry continues. Many of us are involved, or have been involved, in continuing education for ministry. That may include completing degrees or attending seminars or conferences. These activities contribute to life long learning in a huge range of ministries.

Now you can weave on-going study or ministry education into your life-long goals and continue to grow in your ministry ability and credentials.

5. From Centralization to Decentralization

“We have rediscovered the ability to act innovatively and achieve results - from the bottom up.”

We are familiar with this trend and encourage it in many of our church structures. It also applies to education for ministry. We choose resources and studies from a widening range of possibilities.

At the *personal level*, increasing numbers of people study for theological or ministry degrees, often by open education or distance education. At the *church level*, innovative congregations or creative people in churches find ways to enrich the ministry education of their people, and this may include external studies in education for ministry which was once available only to full time college students. At the *college level*, many colleges now offer external studies or distance education with decentralised programs related specifically to local contexts and guided by local tutors.

Now you are no longer dependent on other people to chart your course or even your beliefs. You do that, led by the Spirit in fellowship with God’s people.

6. From Institutional to Self-Help

“We are shifting from institutional help to more self-reliance in all aspects of our lives.”

Institutional Christianity is big business, but many traditional churches decline while home groups and house churches multiply. Independent churches attract increasing numbers. Some denominational congregations experience rapid growth sitting lightly within traditional structures, often challenging those structures prophetically.

Large numbers of educated and committed Christians join or form study groups, renewal groups, charismatic congregations or covenant communities.

Continuing ministry education is another example of self-help programs. We follow personal interests including study for various degrees now increasingly accessible from colleges and seminaries around the world. This self-help option is increasingly taken where external study is available.

Now you can choose your own courses in study and ministry according to your calling, gifting and anointing. Those courses can fan the flame in you and set you on fire for powerful ministry if you choose your study well.

7. From Representative Democracy to Participatory Democracy

“We are discovering that the framework of representative democracy has become obsolete in an era of instantaneously shared information.”

Ministry is increasingly participatory. We see it most clearly in home groups, house churches, and short term missions. All these tend to be primarily or fully participatory. People share in ministry and decision making together.

The process of open ministry education is geared to enabling enablers, or facilitating facilitators. It provides a resource for leaders and those involved in ministry, usually interacting together. This calls for participating fully in group processes and learning leadership skills which enable others to minister. So it provides a resource which the people using it can choose, use and infuse in their own growth as well as in their work. It helps leaders to equip others for ministry.

Now you can form your own study group or apply open ministry education resources to your group as you all participate together in deciding what to study and how to study it.

8. From Hierarchies to Networking

“We are giving up our dependence on hierarchical structures in favour of informal networks.”

Naisbitt identifies three fundamental reasons that make networks a crucial social form now:

- (1) the death of traditional structures,
- (2) the din of information overload, and
- (3) the past failures of hierarchies.

He adds,

The vertical to horizontal power shift that networks bring about will be enormously liberating for individuals. Hierarchies promote moving up and getting ahead, producing stress, tension, and anxiety. Networking empowers the individual, and people in networks tend to nurture one another. ...

*In the network environment, rewards come by empowering others, not by climbing over them.*⁶⁹

That is crucial. It fits tightly with our Christian commitment to love and serve one another. And it helps to overcome the flaws of bureaucratic Christianity, such as the Peter Principle: "In a hierarchy every employee tends to rise to his level of incompetence."⁷⁰

Laurence Peter offered a better option, a biblical one: "forward to a better life".⁷¹ Instead of climbing over others, we serve others. Instead of climbing up the bureaucratic ladder, we move forward or even sideways into our calling and ministry. That may mean becoming a bishop, if that is God's purpose for you to lead and serve others, but the role is not the goal. Loving and serving God and others is our task.

Networking is everywhere. We see it in our growing use of short term task groups (instead of long term committees). It's there in supportive, nurturing home groups or cell groups (instead of formal prayer meetings and Bible studies in pews). We link up with friends for short term missions (instead of being life-long missionaries).

Ministry education can help prepare people to function well in a networking environment. Not only do ministers and leaders need to know how to facilitate task groups, study groups and home fellowships (rather than be threatened by them), but the shape of ministry can be transformed in this context. Task group specialists and cell group leaders can minister and enable ministry. They can disciple others and be disciplined.

Now you will get your rewards and fulfil your ministry “by empowering others, not by climbing over them” as you network together and support and encourage one another.

9. From North to South

“More Americans are living in the South and West, leaving behind the old industrial cities of the North.”

This megatrend is domestic to America, but has wider implications. Naisbitt notes that from 1980 for the first time in U. S. history more Americans lived in the South and West. He identifies the frontier qualities of local administration and the swelling immigration with its creative potential. It forces rethinking and adaptation.

Rethinking and adaptation are essential components of good open ministry education.

One significant example, among others, showing a creative response to growing needs and opportunities is the School of Intercultural Studies (formerly School of World Mission) at Fuller Theological Seminary in the bellwether state of California. Founded by pioneer Donald McGavran, it has the largest missiological faculty in the world, champions church growth around the world, attracts hundreds of international students, offers courses externally through its Fuller Online and Individualized Distance Learning programs and fosters global research and publication. Overseas students from nations seeing revival challenged Fuller staff to address exploding church growth and grapple with its implications for us all.

Now you can enrol in a huge range of biblical and ministry education courses either personally or in a study group, not merely as preparation for ministry but also as participation in ministry.

10. From Either/Or to Multiple Options

“From a narrow either/or society with a limited range of personal choices we are exploding into a free-wheeling multiple-option society.”

Demarcation lines along denominational or doctrinal differences once characterised churches, theological colleges, and even Bible colleges. These increasingly blur and merge within the unity of the Spirit and in the ecumenical landscape.

Renewed Baptists, for example, may identify more deeply with Catholic Charismatic spirituality than with their own historical distinctive beliefs. 'Rebaptism' is a burning pastoral issue as increasing numbers choose to move freely among differing groups. Multiplying home groups discover authentic unity and raise Eucharistic problems. Traditional understandings of ordination and ministry are increasingly challenged.

In other words, you can receive degree level ministry education and may be ordained to your calling and ministry in your lifetime whether you are male or female, employee or boss, and working in the church or in the world. Many churches and denominations already do this. Open ministry education can assist you to move through your multiple options to fulfil your God-given calling.

These megatrends shape our lives and ministry in an era of accelerating change. Christians see the hand of God in all of life, not least in the astounding explosion of world wide church growth. God calls us to serve him in our moment in history, a moment filled with incredible challenge and potential.

This is not mere theory. It is happening. I have participated in this kind of open ministry education as a missionary teacher, as a college or seminary teacher, and as a short term mission teacher in many nations.

2. Increasing Choice

We now face more options than ever, with more potential than ever. The inter-related dimensions of increasing change and increasing choice liberate education from closed classrooms into open education.

In ministry, the widespread use of modern media makes the world's best teachers and preachers available to individuals, homes, study groups, churches or the public through DVDs and internet links such as YouTube. Local churches often make their worship services available to anyone interested on DVD and their website. So education for ministry is profoundly affected.

We have more choices and more resources available to us than ever before. That liberates us all into new possibilities.

Ivan Illich described the massive shift now happening in education and pointed the way ahead, especially for adult education. He identified four educational networks:

Educational resources are usually labelled according to educators' curricular goals. I propose to do the contrary, to label four different approaches which enable the student to gain access to any educational resource which may help him to define and achieve his own goals:

1. Reference Services to Educational Objects - which facilitate access to things or processes used for formal learning.
2. Skill Exchanges - which permit persons to list their skills the conditions under which they are willing to serve . . . and the addresses at which they can be reached.
3. Peer-Matching - a communications network which permits persons to describe the learning activity in which they wish to engage, in the hope of finding a partner for the inquiry.
4. Reference Services to Educators-at-Large - who can be listed in a directory giving the addresses and self - descriptions of professionals paraprofessionals, and freelancers along with conditions of access to their services.⁷²

These networking resources can be summarised and illustrated as:

1. **Educational Objects** - e.g., gardens, libraries, museums, shops, factories; and churches and homes.
2. **Skill Models** - e.g., persons who can teach a foreign language or music; and ministry skills and leading mission teams.
3. **Peer Matches** - persons interested at a given time in language, music, etc.; and in common interest groups and ministry activities.
4. **Educational Leaders** - who can assist in exploratory activities; and ministers and specialist church staff and volunteers.

We can easily apply these ideas to church ministries both in leadership development (e.g. in music, drama, small groups) and in enriching the life of the Christian community or extending its ministry in mission.

Open ministry education fits networking. It provides resources to individuals and groups anywhere. Modern technology such as the computer and the smart phone make networking in education more universal, inexpensive and dynamic than ever before.

Open ministry education uses Illich's four networks:

1. It is an *educational object*. The media and accompanying materials provide a means for individuals and groups to learn. These resources can be used by any group finding them helpful for learning about ministry in the body of Christ.

2. As a *skill model*, open ministry education resources provide leaders or groups with materials to extend their own skills in leadership, teaching or ministry. Most people who buy the resources are already competent in some leadership area, and use this model to assist them in their work such as with seminar groups or study groups.

3. Open ministry education facilitates *peer matching*. Teachers get together to study teaching and to teach, elders to study eldership and to disciple people, leaders to study leadership and lead teams, all in the context of their ministry in the body of Christ.

4. The open ministry education models bring *educational leaders* into contact with those desiring to learn from them or interact with them.

Both education for ministry and ministry itself change this way. Education for ministry is available to more people, in fact to everyone. Ministry multiplies as learning and doing merge together.

As change increases, so do the options available. These changes affect ministry in the church, for the church lives amid constant change. This shows up in changing styles of dress, language and behaviour. Once women wore hats and men wore suits in church. Ancient English was normal, and good Christians avoided all movies. Now dress is often casual, English is contemporary, and churches and Christians use TV and movies for ministry and evangelism.

Still more central to change in ministry is the creeping obsolescence of church life geared to norms of 50 to 100 years ago. Ministry, as described in *The Body of Christ - Book 1: Body Ministry* now rapidly changes old patterns in many churches, especially through small

groups or house churches. Ministry is increasingly seen to be the task of the whole body of Christ, not just the domain of professional clergy.

The choice is yours! What is your interest, calling or gifting? You now have a huge array of options before you. These options offer widening range of choices in what you can do and how you can do it. You also have a widening range of choices in how you will develop your gifting and your interests.

Open ministry education is available to you. You can choose personal study or group study from a vast range of options in adult education.

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Chapter 14

Adult Education

From pedagogy to self-directed learning

Pedagogy is usually teacher-directed learning. We are familiar with that, even to degree level study. Adult education, on the other hand, offers many possibilities for self-directed learning. Applied to Christian living and ministry that is important for God-directed learning and ministry.

Our learning is often institutionally directed. We can, however, be increasingly God-directed, led by the Spirit as Jesus was. Adult education now offers more choices than ever before and more opportunities to be Spirit-led and Spirit-empowered.

The miracle of God's will for us is freedom under God. Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is freedom (2 Corinthians 3:17). We can grow in our submission and freedom.

This chapter explores that freedom as it applies to adult education and self-directed learning. Your options, right now, include a huge range of adult education possibilities, local and national, short-term and long term, informal and formal.

Malcolm Knowles, a pioneer writer about adult education, introduced the rather unwieldy term 'andragogy' for self-directed adult education. He explained:

The body of theory and practice on which teacher-directed learning is based is often given the label "pedagogy," from the Greek words *paid* (meaning "child") and *agogus* (meaning "leader"). Pedagogy has come to be defined as the art and science of teaching, but its tradition is in the teaching of children. The body of theory and practice on which self-directed learning is based has come to be labelled "andragogy," from the combining form *andr* of the Greek word *aner* (meaning "man"). Andragogy is defined, therefore, as the art and science of helping adults (or, even better, maturing

human beings) learn. These definitions do not imply that children should be taught pedagogically and adults should be taught andragogically. Rather, the two terms simply differentiate between the two sets of assumptions about learners, and the teacher who makes one set of assumptions will teach pedagogically whether he or she is teaching children or adults, whereas the teacher who makes the other set of assumptions will teach andragogically whether the learners are children or adults.⁷³

I prefer the term self-directed learning rather than the technical term. It explains itself, although Christians will want to keep submission to God alive in our self-directed choices as being continually God-directed.

Children learn this way, as well as in teacher-directed schools. In fact, good teachers make room for plenty of self-directed learning and initiative in the classroom. Some formal examples of that are innovations such as open classrooms, non-graded schools, learning laboratories, community schools, and non-traditional study programs. Also, within traditional teacher-directed classrooms there is room for a lot of guided self-directed activity as in the library, personal projects, and group interactions.

Open ministry education thrives in a self-directed learning context, especially for adults but also for children and youth.

Self-directed learning does not rule out teacher-directed imparting of information and truth (passing on the faith once delivered to the saints), but places it in the wider context of self-directed discovery. You not only choose your path but also those who guide you on it.

Pedagogy tends to perpetuate the teacher's frame-work and content; self-directed learning moves beyond that restriction. We learn from interactions with many people. We learn together.

Mutuality transforms self-directed learning. We choose our route but also our companions.

In its broadest meaning, "self-directed learning" describes a process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for

learning, choosing and implementing appropriate leaning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes. Other labels found in the literature to describe this process are "self-planned learning," "inquiry method," "independent learning," "self education," "self-instruction," "self teaching," "self study," and "autonomous leaning." The trouble with most of these labels is that they seem to imply learning in isolation, whereas self-directed learning usually takes place in association with various kinds of helpers, such as teachers, tutors, mentors, resource people, and peers. There is a lot of mutuality among a group of self-directed learners.⁷⁴

The Christian community is meant to be such a body! We all learn together, and we help one another.

Such openness to one another and to God allows his Spirit to direct us more fully. The depth centre of self-directed learning is Spirit-directed learning, grounded in our knowledge of the Spirit of God and our response to him.

1. Principles

Knowles describes four vital principles of modern educational practice. I apply them to open ministry education.

They cover a new conception of the purpose of education, a shift from a focus on teaching to a focus on learning, an emphasis on life long learning, and an explosion of new delivery systems.

(a) A new conception of the purpose of education:

Rather than producing "educated" or "knowledgeable" people by transmitting information to them, the task now in a rapidly changing world is to produce competent people who can apply their knowledge under changing circumstances. Open ministry education aims to equip people to become competent in their on-going use of self-directed learning..

Competency models of learning increasingly replace content-transmission models. Learning contracts increasingly replace course outlines and replace set tasks in a course. Adults negotiate.

We see that most clearly in practicum courses or field education. Students submit their learning contracts or agreements for assessment and approval, and then report on how they fulfil those contracts or agreements.

Open ministry education can do that. It emphasises competent leadership for effective ministry. Each seminar can apply learning to life, and together we learn from life experiences. Seminars can involve dynamic interaction combining input with reflection on experience so that understanding and competency grow.

Adult learners can apply their learning immediately in most cases. They are learning ministry skills along with theory. This can apply to Bible study as well as ministry studies. What are helpful questions arising from a Bible passage? What are its implications for us today? How do we respond to its challenge?

Leaders, or people involved in body ministry, become more competent in that ministry as they reflect dynamically in small groups on their ministry, relating it to the input they gain in the process of the course. Ministry education resources can foster group interaction and reflection. Further, those in the group determine their own learning route, whether to use the resource without formal study, or to complete study requirements at the level they choose.

(b) From a focus on Teaching to a focus on Learning.

Good adult education places a strong emphasis on self-directed learning in which the teacher becomes a facilitator and a resource person. Not only does today's information explosion require this shift into facilitating self-directed learning, it is also the way adults function. They seek relevant resources. Knowles cites the research of Allen Tough which showed that

- (1) most adults have from 1 - 20 major learning projects each year, the average being about 8;
- (2) only about 10% of those projects were part of educational institutions;
- (3) there is a "natural" learning process adults normally follow;
- (4) adults usually turn to someone for help at points in the process;

(5) they generally go to "helpers" who are not trained teachers, but if they do go to teachers "the teachers interfere with their learning by instituting their own pedagogical sequence of steps rather than flowing with the learners' natural sequence"⁷⁵

Applying these principles to ministry education means that we give greater attention to the learners' needs than the teachers' program. Constant feedback from students, formal and informal, enables this.

Open ministry education can facilitate self-directed learning. It can do this in a myriad of ways, guiding group interaction, rather than focusing on the teacher's agenda. The group's agenda and reflection become the focus for learning, and individuals bring to that their own particular needs and tasks.

(c) Lifelong Learning.

The organising principle for all education has become lifelong learning. Constant change demands it. Adult education must provide resources and support for self-directed continuing education.

Open ministry education obviously fulfils this need. It is not the only model of continuing education in ministry, but is a significant one. Hence its special relevance to ministry in this era of rapid change.

Resources need to be updated continually so that they remain relevant. That is another reason for keeping session outlines general, rather than specific, and replacing outdated resources (such as cassettes) with new ones for more specific or current input.

Home group leaders, for example, learn how to facilitate interaction and mutual ministry in a group rather than how to give a Bible study lecture. We all continue to learn how to be more effective as we discover and apply the Bible to life, personally, communally and even nationally as many Christians do when attending conferences.

(d) New Delivery Systems

A key to this process of self-directed learning is the use of educational services in different times and places as needed. New ways to deliver these systems include current terms like non-traditional study, external degrees, multimedia learning systems, community education,

learning communities, learning resource centres, educational brokering agencies, learning networks and extension. Those are some current innovations now spreading across the whole range of formal, and informal education.

Open ministry education obviously uses these resources, and is a provider of adult learning options. It delivers the learning process to students in their own living and ministering context.

The resources can be used in any context where they fit. They free ministry education from limitations imposed by attending seminaries, and provide resources for local leaders to guide seminar sessions and learning processes such as in team ministries. They tap into current resources including DVDs, laptops, smart phones and the internet.

Four learning principles apply to education in general and especially to open ministry education. They emphasize

- 1 the *goal* of ministry education as competency in ministry,
- 2 the *focus* of ministry education as learning rather than teaching,
- 3 the *extent* of ministry education as lifelong, and
- 4 the *resources* of ministry education as multi-dimensional.

These self-directed learning principles are based on important assumptions. They open the way for more specific God-directed study and ministry with the greater individual freedom of choice.

You can be led by the Spirit, as Jesus was. You can be led by the Spirit as Paul was (though in a lesser way than Jesus). Both of them had brilliant understanding of Scripture as well as amazing revelation from God's Spirit. You and I will have lesser insight and anointing, but we too can be Spirit-led and grow in our understanding and in ministry.

Jesus grew in wisdom (Luke 2:52). We can too.

2. Foundations

Important foundations about adult education lay the groundwork for building effective self-directed learning. Knowles and many others emphasise these.

A child may be served better by teacher-directed pedagogical methodology whereas the adult is served better by adult approaches to learning.

Foundations for adult education include these important principles: as people mature they move from dependency toward self-direction, their experience is a rich resource for learning, their learning readiness is oriented toward their social roles, their orientation is toward immediate application, and their motivation shifts from mainly external rewards to internal satisfaction.

(a) Adults move from dependency toward self-direction

Adult learning shifts toward self-directed learning at all levels. Placed in the context of Christian ministry, self-directed learning is even more relevant. People involved in a range of ministries are normally highly committed and motivated to serve their Lord. They welcome learning experiences which help them minister effectively.

The concept of the learner in open ministry education, then, is not a passive pupil dependent on the teacher for input, but a highly motivated self-directing learner ready to give and receive in the dynamic encounter of input, experience, ministerial formation, leadership development, and interaction with peers, facilitators and with the Spirit of God.

(b) Experience is a rich resource for learning

We learn by doing. That axiom applies to all ages. Adults accumulate a wealth of experience which is a rich resource for learning for themselves and for others. So do people of all ages, but adults have the advantage of wider experience which comes with growth and maturity.

Experience is a prime resource for interaction and application. Adults learn from one another, especially in ministry. Open ministry education can facilitate group sharing of experiences, and reflecting on them. Adults' readiness to learn grows out of their life tasks and ministry. The learning group or seminar can also become a ministry group as people interact, pray for one another and respond to God together.

(c) Learning readiness is oriented toward social roles

Adults want to learn about areas of personal interest, ability and social occupations. That is why continuing education is popular now including for Christians. They are highly motivated to know more about the Bible, Christianity and all kinds of ministry and service. Christians usually engage in ministry education to gain information and be more competent in ministry.

Open ministry education meets this need. Self-directed learners explore seminars and courses relevant to their interests and abilities. They use ministry resources for their personal and local needs and organise seminar groups to work through relevant learning materials.

(d) Orientation in adult learning is toward immediate application.

Adult perspectives change from postponing applied knowledge toward immediate application. So the orientation toward learning shifts from subjects to performance.

Open ministry education courses in leadership, worship, music, counselling, social welfare, youth and children's ministry, home groups and house churches and Bible teaching are popular because they meet felt needs and opportunities.

(e) Motivation shifts from mainly external rewards and punishments to internal satisfaction.

Traditional pedagogical motivation comes from rewards and punishments, especially through grading. Imagine Jesus giving a grade! What kind of grade?

Meaningful assessment, evaluation, mid-course correction, and guidance all appeal to adults. Grades still motivate degree students, but the deeper and lasting motivation for Christians is not the grade but the ministry. Open ministry education can motivate learners through internal incentives, self-directed exploration, and mutual cooperation and support.

Motivation for adults is intrinsic. They begin the course because they want it, and the course itself is meant to provide further motivation as

the students share their experiences and insights together and support one another personally, relating their learning to their ministry. Motivation is high in ministry education groups because they live for and serve God. They are motivated to learn from the input, from others in the group, and from reflection on experience. Learning is anchored in life.

This is the changing scene in church life today. Many of us participate in adult learning experiences because we want to be more effective in serving God and helping people. All large churches and many small ones offer a wide range of ministry education opportunities.

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Chapter 15

Mutual Education

From competition to co-operation

One student we prayed for one morning in class went to her doctor that same day for a final check before having a growth removed from her womb. That afternoon her doctor could find no trace of the growth after checking with three ultrasound machines, so he cancelled the scheduled operation.

“My class at college laid hands on me and prayed for me,” she explained to her doctor. “I believe God healed me, and that’s why you can’t find the growth any more.”

“I don’t know if God healed you,” he responded. “But I do know that you don’t need an operation.”

Our class studied Christian ministry in the power of the Spirit. We usually began each class with prayer, and that day our prayer included praying for specific needs such as that woman’s health. One of those praying in class was a medical doctor. She prayed with strong faith, joining us in laying hands on the ‘patient’ student, knowing that God heals through prayer as well as through medicine. What rich resources we have for ministry – right there in the group.

I love hearing medical people pray for healing. They have medical skills as well as faith in God. A nurse in one of our week night meetings prayed for another lady who had severe back pain.

“L4, be healed in Jesus’ name,” the nurse commanded as she lay her hand on the woman’s back. It takes medical knowledge plus the revelation of a ‘word of knowledge’ to be able to pray like that. All

pain immediately left the lady being prayer for. Apparently the problem was in the Lumbar 4 (L4) section of her spine.

Many people are not healed so quickly. Perhaps most are not healed so quickly in our materialistic Western society. There are many reasons for that, including our Western scepticism, lack of compassion or faith, and our sinfulness such as jealousy, competition or failing to forgive others freely as God has forgiven us.

We all can learn more together about effective ministry. That learning is enhanced and expanded rapidly when we share our experiences and learning together. The 'teacher' usually shares from his or her experiences, but others can do also. So the more that our ministry education fosters mutuality, the more we can learn from one another.

We call this ***open education***, or ***open ministry education***. It is open to everyone and everyone can be involved. It is not just for leaders. Our leaders can help us, but their main job is to equip the saints for the work of ministry for building up the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:12).

This chapter on Mutual Education explores two key aspects of open ministry education:

1. Aims and objectives
2. Implications for our ministry

1. Aims and objectives

Educational study applies to all of life, not just teaching. So studying the aims or objectives of education helps us in ministry and mission as well. Education aims to help us grow in many ways, including learning in affective, behavioural, and cognitive ways (adapted here from taxonomies by Krathwohl, Waugh and Bloom!).⁷⁶ We all learn in all of these ways:

Affective ways (attitudes, emotions, feelings, values, commitments),
Behavioural ways (skills, abilities, achievements, actions) and
Cognitive ways (knowledge, thinking, understanding).

We learn in many ways as in apprenticeship, learning to talk, using different languages, making a cake, driving a car, or living a Christian lifestyle by loving and serving one another.

We learn in all these ways, in knowledge, as well as in attitudes and skills, progressing through ascending levels. Applied to Christians this includes our growing commitment to Jesus and his requirements.

Our commitments show up in the highest levels of these domains, affective (attitudes), behavioural (skills) and cognitive (knowledge):

Affective (attitudes): progression of learning through
Receiving – you hear, or pay attention, perhaps passively.
Responding – you participate, react, or get involved.
Valuing – you give significance or meaning to it.
Organising – you incorporate it into your thinking or living.
Characterising – you integrate it into your life, your character.

Behavioural (skills): progression of learning through
Awareness – you know it can be done, or learned.
Attempting – you try it with varied ability, gradually improving
Achieving – you master it, with increasing skill.
Applying – you use it in a range of situations.
Adapting – you relate it effectively to other possibilities.

Cognitive (knowledge): progression of learning through
Knowledge – you remember or recall it.
Comprehension – you understand it.

Application – you use it in various ways.

Analysis – you identify elements and principles of it.

Synthesis – you compile it by combining elements in patterns.

Evaluation – you assess it and make judgments about it.

Creativity – you use it to develop something new.

Notice how Jesus powerfully taught, demonstrated and required change or growth in attitudes and behaviour, not just knowledge. His powerful teaching demonstrated Kingdom attitudes and action: loving the outcasts, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, freeing the oppressed, confronting the proud, washing the feet of arguing disciples.

We can apply these educational principles to our learning. Together we can learn to minister to one another more effectively.

Open ministry education can help us all grow in all these domains of education and learning about life and ministry. As we minister to one another and serve one another, we can learn to be more effective in ministry.

We can expand our aims and objectives in learning to minister by doing more of what Jesus, Peter, Paul, and the leaders in the early church did. They aimed to proclaim the kingdom of God, heal the sick, cast out demons, feed the hungry and demonstrate the gospel.

Here is a summary of these aims and objectives applied to praying for people, personally and together. Many now do this.

Affective (attitudes): progression of learning through

Receiving – you hear about effective praying with and for others.

Responding – you get involved in praying with and for others.

Valuing – you find this praying significant and valuable.

Organising – you incorporate it regularly in life and ministry.

Characterising – you integrate this praying into your life.

Behavioural (skills): progression of learning through

Awareness – you know you can learn to pray powerfully.

Attempting – you pray with varying results, gradually improving

Achieving – you grow in faith and authority with increasing skill.

Applying – you pray for others in a range of situations.

Adapting – you pray for others effectively in new situations.

Cognitive (knowledge): progression of learning through

Knowledge – you recall what Jesus and others taught on prayer.

Comprehension – you understand prayer more fully.

Application – you pray in various ways.

Analysis – you identify what is involved in praying effectively.

Synthesis – you adapt elements of praying in various patterns.

Evaluation – you assess what is involved in praying effectively.

Creativity – you pray in new, effective ways as the Spirit leads.

All these aims and objectives apply to all kinds of ministry.

2. Implications for ministry

Here we look at how leaders or teachers can facilitate learning together about ministry in mutual education.

Much of our learning about ministry comes from applying theory in practice. We learn to pray with authority by doing it and we learn from experience. We learn to serve people by serving them and we learn from experience. Theory helps. Practice applies the theory and we often learn more by doing it.

Implications for learning about ministry together involve these essential elements of climate, planning, meeting needs, objectives, learning plans, learning activities, and evaluation, as Knowles describes. These elements apply fully to open ministry education.

(a) Climate

The atmosphere for adult learning, and indeed all normal learning, needs to be relaxed, trusting, mutually respectful, usually informal, warm, collaborative and supportive. Unfortunately much traditional pedagogy (at all age levels including adults) tends to be formal, authority-oriented, competitive and judgemental. It need not be, but the bias is that way because of the teacher-directed process. Effective teachers avoid that bias, but schooling tends to impose it, particularly in large classes.

The learning climate can help us feel accepted, respected, and supported, with a spirit of mutuality between teachers and students as joint inquirers, where there is free expression without fear of punishment or ridicule. We all appreciate an atmosphere that is friendly and informal where we are known by name and valued as individuals.

The shift from teachers as content-transmitters to facilitators of learning highlights the need for such a climate in learning at all ages.

That climate is strongly Christian. We are all brothers and sisters of one another and have only one Teacher (Matthew 23:8). Open ministry education can be explored in mutual servant-hood, helping one another.

The teacher, seminar facilitator, or group leader offers his or her knowledge, and enables others to share theirs also in a climate of mutual respect.

(b) Planning

Instead of the teacher primarily planning the work pedagogically, self-directed adult learning calls for mutual planning by learners and facilitators. This can be much more demanding for the teacher as well as for the learners. Both can draw on the huge number and range of resources available.

One of the most relevant resources in open ministry education is the experience of the group. Learning tasks in a seminar can be built around the immediate context of ministry. Seminar leaders need to develop this skill and sensitivity. Seminars can then draw on the rich

resource of group members as they reflect dynamically and learn inductively in an action-reflection mode.

Old time Bible Studies tended to be a teacher talking to passive listeners. Maybe there was time for questions and at point it could move from being teacher-directed to mutual learning.

Renewal and sharing groups focus more on the group interacting together around the topic – any topic. If the topic is praying for others the group will have many powerful examples and discoveries to share together and help one another to learn.

(c) Meeting needs

Identifying needs in mutual education involves everyone in the educational process, but applies most to those learning. They identify needs and examine them together. Felt needs predominate. They also motivate leaning.

Primary needs become a major focus in learning. They usually motive us most strongly. We take a course in counselling because we want to help people in need. We explore prayer and healing because sick people need prayer as well as medical aid. We learn to lead worship because we worship in home groups as well as Sunday services. We learn to teach children and youth in church programs because teachers are needed. We study community needs because we want to help people in need.

Secondary needs also need attention! They may be felt less intensely, or may be unfelt needs unrecognised by the learner. The facilitator's role often involves identifying these needs also. A group leader or seminar teacher can show how Bible study is relevant to counselling, praying, worshipping and teaching, even though Bible study may not be the primary purpose of the sessions.

For example, we all pray for others in some way. Often this may just be a general prayer, "God bless Mary." It may be more personal, with or without laying on hands, "God bless and heal you." It may be more specific such as, "God heal that disease." It may be a command based on a 'word of knowledge' or revelation like, "L4 be healed in Jesus' name."

Increasing numbers of people, including young people, are now praying for others with faith, compassion and authority. Many of them have learned to listen to the Spirit of God for revelation on how to pray and what to command.

(d) Objectives

Traditionally leaders and teachers identify and set objectives in the subjects they teach. Subject-centred teaching requires this. Self-directed adult learning, being person-centred rather than subject-centred, requires setting objectives mutually. Learners and facilitators work together to identify the goals. That process will normally cover the whole range of general purposes, program goals and specific learning objectives.

Open ministry education needs to do this. If the learning only imposes subject-centred curricula and externally determined objectives, it will domesticate rather than liberate, and limit ministry rather than equip for ministry. This is a major problem.

Objectives for self-directed learning are partly achieved, of course, by offering a widening range of courses from which learners can choose according to their own needs and objectives. Many churches offer a range of training courses or experiences and those options begin to give learners a range of choices.

However, more significantly, the group process in seminars and the individual tasks can focus on the learner's objectives. For example, a typical opening group task in seminars can be for individuals to say why they are doing that course, to identify their main concerns and objectives, and for the group to identify its common goals.

Sessions on prayer, for instance, can give those involved an opportunity to share their aims, hopes, challenges, and desired outcomes about praying for people. Learning together in the group can be very powerful and effective.

We have prayed regularly for one another in many home groups and class situations, all of us learning to ministry together more effectively.

(e) Learning Plans

An important shift in education is from a curriculum to learning plans.

Where content-transmission determines curricula the learning process is linked to logical sequences in course syllabus materials. However, with accelerating change that process becomes increasingly obsolete, especially in ministry.

A curriculum usually imposes external requirements, whereas learning plans use negotiation between learners and facilitators. Subjects are increasingly replaced by learning projects sequenced according to learning readiness. Radical self-directed learning has no subjects, for the learners are the subject, not the object of education. They determine their learning process.

For example in a home group following a curriculum the group tends to be more passive, such as listening to a Bible talk. This is useful. However it can be more useful by applying it in ministry. One of the simplest ways to do that is to share needs together and do something about it, such as praying for those needs. The needs then can become material for future studies and topics.

Open ministry education reflects that transition. It arose out of a need to adjust learning to the local ministry context and to provide ministry formation in that context. How do you, for example, prepare people to pray effectively in faith for healing?

So, open ministry education focuses on the students' concerns so that increasingly the subject of learning is the student's needs and opportunities in ministry. No longer is the student an educational object to be filled with set content in a jug-mug style of pouring information in the empty, passive 'mug'. The content or information becomes a resource used by students, not just a subject to master. So people can learn to pray as Jesus did.

(f) Learning Activities

Learning plans lead to appropriate activities. Content-transmission leads to techniques such as lectures and assigned readings.

Self-directed study leads to inquiry projects, independent study, experiential discovery and reflection, and dynamic interaction between everyone involved in the learning process.

Adult self-directed learning "is alive with meetings of small groups - planning committees, learning-teaching teams, consultation groups, project task forces - sharing responsibility for helping one another learn," Knowles observes, and "the teacher's role is redefined as that of a procedural technician, resource person, and co-inquirer; more a catalyst than as instructor, more a guide than a wizard."⁷⁷

That is a fine description of an open ministry seminar and its teacher's task. The ideal may not be fully achieved, but needs to be embraced.

We have done a lot of that, not only in Australia but also with leaders and pastors in many different cultures. They love the communal approach and sharing stories.

Our leadership seminars and ministry education involve people in ministry, not just talking about the theory. In fact we often start with praying for specific needs, and seeking revelation or 'words of knowledge' right from the beginning.

Sessions become lively when pain goes and people testify to God's presence and power.

People overseas often pray with more expectation of God's presence and power than we Westerners do!

(g) Evaluation

Grades degrade (note Illich's objections to schooling⁷⁸). That may overstate the case because many people value helpful assessment by competent instructors in specific fields. However, a grading system can degrade subtly by imposing competitive and comparative criteria.

Knowles sees evaluation in terms of re-diagnosis, because:

the same procedures that are used for the diagnosis of learning needs are being employed to help the learners measure gains in competence. ... Because of the similarity of these two processes, **I find myself thinking less and less in terms of the evaluation of learning and more and more in terms of re-diagnosis of learning needs.** And I find that when my adult students perceive what they do at the end of a learning experience as re-diagnosing rather than evaluating, they enter into the activity with more enthusiasm and see it as being more constructive. indeed, many of them report that it launches them into a new cycle of learning, reinforcing the notion that learning is a continuing process.⁷⁹

Education through self-directed learning not only moves away from content-transmission toward competency but in that process changes evaluation from grading of content mastery to an on-going re-diagnosis of learning needs, objectives and procedures.

“A rose by any other name ... ?” No. This is more than substituting the word 're-diagnosis' for 'evaluation'. Diagnosis as a continuing process can encompass evaluation. But the focus is different; working through issues raises new issues.

With typical clarity and brevity, Kinsler sums up these principles of adult leaning:

1. Adults are the subject of the leaning process and they must be involved in the planning and execution of that process;
2. Adults bring a wealth of experience to the process which must be respected and utilised;
3. Adults are highly motivated toward solving real problems and dealing with real issues.

“The challenge is not 'to teach' these people but to learn from and with them through shared faith, study and action.”⁸⁰

Applied to open ministry education, the challenge is to provide resources and assessment that enable group members to learn from one another as they interact with the input, with one another, and in ministry.

This is now a common process in ministry development around the world, especially in developing countries. They love to learn together. They love to talk things over while still acknowledging the wisdom and experience of their leaders. They are so often closer to the New Testament culture than we Westerners are.

So communal cultures often demonstrate a New Testament style of sharing and learning together. They appreciate biblical insights into healing the sick, casting out spirits, sharing goods in common to meet needs, and valuing spiritual gifts and ministries. They can evaluate ministry in New Testament terms rather than in Western terms and adjust what they do accordingly.

Assessment Examples

Open ministry education can use self-directed learning tasks with appropriate assessment. The following examples are some of the most common. We have used all these and found them helpful and creative.

1. Learning Agreements.

a. **A practicum or field education unit** offers wide scope for significant learning agreements. Written requirements for a practicum may include:

- i. A learning agreement related to the student’s practical ministry.
- ii. Regular reports summarising each week’s ministry including preparation.
- iii. Core group reports covering regular ministry core group sessions of at least an hour.
- iv. Research exploring issues related to the practicum ministry, such as an essay on “What is involved in effective Spirit-led ministry?”
- v. The student’s final report, approved by the practicum supervisor, evaluating the practicum experience in terms of the learning agreement.

vi. The supervisor's final report, evaluating the student's work.

Many Bible Colleges now offer practicum units or field education subjects. We have seen students involved in very effective ministries in a wide range of activities in their church.

b. **Projects.** Students propose a ministry project and complete an appropriate learning agreement. It could be a local church ministry project (e.g., lead a group), a study project (e.g., research a practical ministry area such as a field questionnaire or survey), or writing a ministry resource (e.g., planning an evangelism or mission project).

c. **Mission trip.** Students can be part of a short term mission, including being involved in the planning. A mission team of 11 law students visited churches in Australia for a month, singing, testifying, touring and praying for hundreds of people. They then applied what they had learned in their own home locations. Many students from Australia have participated in short-term missions overseas, and have reported on that.

2. Course units offer scope for learning agreements and mutuality.

a. Students can **choose from set topics** or questions they will complete, e.g. one or two topics from a comprehensive list. We see students put great effort into topics or themes they have chosen to study within the context of a course.

b. Teachers may indicate criteria for an assessment task and the student then **proposes or selects their topic or task**. We have been surprised at how some students are innovative and imaginative in their choice of their topic or task.

c. Students may **propose a written ministry task** such as writing an article for a church paper or ministry journal, using assessment guidelines. We have seen some students publish their paper or article in their local church paper or even start a new church publication.

d. Students **propose an oral or practical ministry task**, prepare it, do it, and evaluate it. The teacher may also determine this task, allowing room for student application to ministry. We often see

students deeply committed to the tasks they fulfil, and they love doing it and they grow in their ability to evaluate what they do.

e. Students prepare **Case Studies** of real ministry situations such as in counselling. That assessment is typical for counselling courses. Many other ministry situations led themselves to reporting as a case study and then evaluating the result.

f. Students **write real blogs** related to ministry and report on these. Students can explore ways to use the internet for evangelism and ministry networking, such as using social networking sites like Facebook to inform and inspire.

g. Students **record ministry tasks** on smart phones or tablets and make that available on a DVD or YouTube. We have seen many students do that. Some have prayed for the sick in shopping malls and led people to the Lord through that, and then shared that message and example on YouTube and Facebook.

3. Class work and weekly seminars offer scope for assessable ministry tasks.

a. Students present a **class presentation** as in preaching or teaching. Students can prepare multi-media presentations, doing creative ministry while also covering a set topic.

b. A 30 minute to one hour **tutorial**, weekly, may be led by students or the teacher, focused on interaction, discussion and application, not just a talk or presentation. We have had interesting seminars prepared by students, not just a talk or lecture, but a lively discussion and application as we are “doers of the word and not hearers only”.

c. Students present a **seminar and interact with the class**. Assessment may be by the student, the class, or the teacher, or by them all, according to identified criteria. We have had interesting class assessment when the class gives feedback on what they enjoyed most, learned most, appreciated most, and how they might make it better.

d. Students present a **seminar which is assessed on a written report** covering preparation, presentation, and evaluation or re-diagnosis. Assessment may be on the report only, or on the

presentation and the report. If they are assessed on their report only, then students are often more free to innovate and demonstrate as they are led by the Spirit! We have had interesting class tutorials this way with powerful classroom ministry.

e. Students lead a **ministry task away from the classroom** and hand in their written report covering preparation, presentation, and evaluation or re-diagnosis. We have had marvellous reports of God moving powerfully in students' groups, as students led their group to pray for one another and encourage one another.

f. Students prepare and present a **debate** in class on a ministry topic, e.g. "Every church service should conclude with prayer ministry for any needs." We have had hilarious times with witty debates and challenging ideas strongly presented.

g. Students prepare and present **role plays** of actual ministry tasks in class, then it is assessed - by the students themselves, and/or the class, and/or the teacher. Role plays may become actual ministry times. Two Lutheran Bible School graduates did a role play on Acts 3, with a crippled youth in PNG. As 'Peter' grabbed him and said, "In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, get up and walk" the crippled lad jumped up completely healed.⁸¹

Not only can we teach the theory of being Spirit-filled and Spirit-led, but we can model it as we work together in mutual education. Indeed we must!

We suffer 'cognitive dissonance' if our teaching about being Spirit-filled and Spirit-led demonstrates the opposite – not being Spirit-filled or Spirit-led, but filled with our own information and led by our lecture notes!

My journey in teaching constantly grapples with this paradox. Can we be truly Spirit-filled and Spirit-led as Jesus was, and as Peter and Paul were? The answer must be a resounding 'Yes'. Otherwise we deny the truths we teach.

So a huge challenge for us all is to demonstrate what we teach.

Note: This chapter has also been reproduced and expanded in the booklet [*Learning Together in Ministry.*](#)

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Chapter 16

Theological Education

From closed to open

Open ministry education opens theological education to reach far more people with tools to equip them for their ministry. Open ministry education is both viable and essential in theological education.

Traditional theological education continues to dominate Western models of training for ministry. It grew out of the “second wave” of the industrial revolution with its towns, factories and denominations.

Revival around the world is changing that. So is the “third wave” of our information revolution. Leaders emerge from within renewed churches and in revival contexts. They are already active in ministry.

Most theological seminaries and colleges provide for those dynamic, emerging leaders with distance education courses. Open ministry education options will continue to proliferate and can be the source and means of profound revolution in education for ministry.

Senior pastors and their staff can run their own open ministry education program, using available resources and courses. Church planters and pioneering house church leaders can study courses directly aimed at equipping them for and in their ministry.

Bases for Change in Theological Education

Ross Kinsler⁸² explored this position thoroughly in six categories which show the limitations of traditional seminary training and the potential of open ministry education. Here I adapt his conclusions.

Each basis for change is significant and revolutionary. We are now living through those changes in both ministry styles and in ministry education.

These bases for expanding theological education from traditional seminary or theological college courses to open ministry education include the theological, historical, sociological, educational, economic and missiological bases for change.

1. Theological Bases: What is the ministry?

Traditional training patterns reinforce the clergy-laity dichotomy, debilitate against ministry at the congregational level, and make churches dependent on highly trained, professional pastors.

Open ministry education allows all kinds of leaders to prepare and grow in ministry. It stimulates the dynamics of ministry at the local level by involving people in study that is inter-related with ministry in their own context. It enables the congregation to develop their own leadership for ministry without being dependent on outside, highly trained professional clergy.

The advantages of open ministry education include resourcing of local leaders and providing them with in-service tools to develop their own leadership and involve others in ministry. It focuses on ministry; body ministry. It aims at preparing and equipping members of the body of Christ for ministry in that body.

2. Historical Bases: Can the people participate fully in theological study and ministry?

Kinsler says, "History teaches us that the Western academic-professional system of clergy tends to be static, incapable of responding to the needs of the masses, and preoccupied with position and privilege at the expense of dynamic, corporate ministry.

Theological education can in fact be a major obstacle to the growth of the church and fulfilment of her ministry."⁸³

Open ministry education, on the other hand, opens up the possibilities of preserving the values of theological education without destroying the dynamics of leadership formation in church life where local leaders can obtain help while involved in their normal life and ministry.

Recent history, especially in revival contexts, shows how powerful open ministry education can be for equipping the saints and their leaders for effective, dynamic, Spirit-filled ministry. It places the resources and ideas in the hands of local leaders and gives them a means to work together with others in body ministry.

3. Sociological Bases: Who are the leaders?

Western churches have developed an academic-professional model of ministry which is self-defeating in terms of effective leadership. It separates young, inexperienced people from the normal processes of leadership formation and places them artificially over other members who are often more experienced and are the real leaders in the local Christian community.

Open ministry education provides theological education and ministry formation for the real leaders within their own situation. Some may gain ordination recognition; many may not. But all can minister. Local, natural leaders obtain, use and often supervise the program, and in the process involve others in ministry formation also.

4. Educational Bases: How can the leaders be trained?

Traditional theological education tends to follow the elitist trends in society and perpetuate the image of education as the accumulation of information.

Open ministry education offers a break from this pattern in an attempt to define education in terms of life and ministry interacting dynamically. Many programs, perhaps most, do not fulfil this potential, and need to move beyond the inadequate or even the detrimental to more effective equipping for ministry in the life-related

context. The challenge is to produce materials and study guides which facilitate applied ministry while learning about it and reflecting on it.

5. Economic Bases: What kind of theological education can we afford?

Traditional residential theological education is extremely expensive and creates heavy financial burdens for the church as well as producing pastors who require support at professional levels. This is especially acute in cross-cultural situations. Ted Ward says that the only kind of professional training more expensive than overseas theological education is astronaut training, and Lois McKinney gives an example of a seminary in a developing country which cost an astronomical \$3,125,000 over 25 years to produce 6 pastors for rural ministry.⁸⁴

Open ministry education is capable of serving large numbers who are not trained away from local ministry but taught in that ministry and for that ministry. It is not burdened with residential costs, and is mostly supported by those involved who pay their own way. Local churches cover the costs. Students usually pay for their own materials. Where accreditation is involved, students pay course fees to the accrediting institution.

6. Missiological Bases: What are the goals of our theological training programs?

Traditional theological institutions are too limited in their outreach and have inherent fallacies which focus away from effective mission by training the inexperienced and immature, imposing academic standards which further limit leadership to the highly educated (whether effective in mission, or not), and produce professional clergy emphasising professional models of ministry. Alternatives are needed, and increasingly used, such as options which reach leaders, equip them for ministry and develops their gifts for effective mission.

Traditional theological education will probably continue unless removed by government edict (as in China) or financial collapse (as in many developing countries). Significantly, the church is exploding most in revival in places like China and developing countries.

We may not like the implications! Some seminaries have become cemeteries. But they need not kill and bury zealous students called to serve God in the power of his Spirit. They can fuel the fire, not quench it.

Seminaries need to focus strongly on preparing their graduates for their ministry of equipping the body of Christ for ministry. Through distance education they can also equip distance students, usually people already involved in many ministries.

A century ago, Anglican missionary Roland Allen saw the need and potential for this. He lived long before distance education became common, so almost all Christian leaders were trained for ministry in residential theological schools. He noted:

Schools can only give opportunities, they cannot create leaders. When they are content to give opportunities some who are real leaders will attend them and use their training to advantage, but many will attain to positions of leadership without that training.

God creates His own leaders for His Church: our part is to recognise them"⁸⁵

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Chapter 17

Contextual Education

From general to specific

Contextual education frees people from imposed packages of information. Learners become the subjects of education through enquiry and encounter, rather than the objects or receptacles into whom some kind of finished product is poured. We are moving from a 'jug-mug' concept of education (pouring information into passive recipients) to a 'helping hand' concept where we learn together and help one another. That can be powerfully liberating.

Contextualisation transforms learning. Open ministry education can facilitate that process. Commenting on the radical nature of Theological Education by Extension, Kinsler noted its importance for indigenization and contextualization of ministry education:

Another word that has been used in recent years to express the same fundamental concept is "contextualization". The concern of theological educators in many places is to liberate our institutions and churches from dysfunctional structures in order to respond in new ways to the Spirit of God in our age and in our many diverse contexts. Theological education by extension is a tremendously versatile and flexible approach to ministerial training; it is also now a spreading, deepening movement for change, subversion and renewal.

Contextualization transforms both theology and ministry.

1. Theology in Context

God speaks to us in our various contexts. Scripture is the inspired record of that contextualisation. God's word came to, and through, human beings in their various environments. They understood and expressed that word contextually, using their own language, thought forms and other cultural milieu.

Supremely, God communicated in and through his Son, the Word made flesh. That Word was and is eternal, yet found contextual form in Palestine 2,000 years ago. He lives today. His word often transforms a person or group as they theologize either informally or intentionally and formally.

Open ministry education invites God's people into that theologizing process and enables it to happen both as a personal discipline and especially through interaction with others. That interaction not only becomes the main focus of the regular learning seminars or classroom but it also permeates ministry in the body of Christ, especially through spiritual gifts.

We discover the significance of open ministry education when local people discover that they are being invited to become the primary agents of both ministry and theology. For theology itself is the interplay of Christian life and reflection, of Gospel and context, of God and history.

When open ministry education challenges God's people to do theology in their own contexts in terms of their own experience, we shall all be amazed at the power, creativity and depth of their theologizing. God inspires his people.

The task of open ministry education, then, includes contextualising theology, asking significant questions, reflecting dynamically together, and in that process seeking to know what God is saying.

That process links the various strands of education, theology, ministry, experience, and spiritual formation into an integrated whole. Then the content and process of learning unite. Educationally, the lesson is always about the learner. He or she is the content.

It is about the meanings the person brings to the process. Your story is a huge part of your theology. You probably bring a Western, analytical, sceptical, cautious world view into all your theology because that is the context of our learning and living.

Biblical theology will challenge that, and you may discover a leap of faith into the miraculous, the supernatural, the reality of being led and empowered by the Spirit as Jesus was, as Peter and Paul were, and as millions are today.

Good open ministry education challenges traditional theological education as well as traditional education. It comes to grips with issues like Paulo Freire's concerns.

Freire criticised severely traditional education because it imposes prefabricated information on the students and requires them to memorise it and store it up for possible future application. It gives out gratuitously answers for which the students have not asked questions, solutions for problems which they do not face. It creates dependence on the teacher, books, the school, and others in general rather than developing the students' ability and confidence in facing their real needs and problems. Genuine education takes place when the students begin to analyse their situation and take steps to overcome their needs, solve their problems, formulate and answer their own questions. . . .

Traditional education is domesticating; it treats the students as an object, a thing to be shaped or filled, an animal to be trained by rewards or punishments. Freire begins with the person; he enters into dialogue with the person in order to learn with him about his world. As the person reflects upon his problems, faces them, and takes action to solve the, he becomes more truly human. ... In this process no one teaches anyone; people learn together in the real world.⁸⁶

Open ministry education encourages this process when it functions well. Students gather in seminars to reflect together concerning issues they face, and to relate input received to life and ministry. Ideally, that input will also be the result of their own quest. They write the agenda for their learning.

Herbert Zorn described some implications of contextual theology for open ministry education, applying it specifically to Theological Education by Extension. He emphasised that theological education must become a seedbed rather than a sheltered garden:

The pedagogical implications of this model present a challenge to administrative and teaching staff. This model demands mobility to meet students at places convenient to them and adaptability to teach in all sorts of situations. An inductive method of teaching which is open to the experiences and doubts arising out of the mainstream of everyday life is required to challenge continuing

interest and commitment. Instructors find the roles of teachers and students radically changed, at times reversed. At best, the instructor becomes the moderator of discussions and a catalyst who brings together the varying experiences of the students with the informing power of the Gospel. The resulting theology is a joint venture of all involved in the learning process.⁸⁷

The challenge is not to teach information in pre-packaged lectures but to learn from and with one another through shared faith, study and action.

Body ministry calls for such mutuality. No expert has the answers. All can contribute, and often those who can contribute most are the most humble and Christlike. Their existential knowledge, their awareness of God, and their openness to the Spirit of God will often result in great wisdom and powerful ministry.

That does not exclude the scholar! However, scholarship will need to be subject to God's Spirit; and a lot of academic knowledge can be frightfully secularising, faith destroying, or dysfunctional. It need not be, just as professional ministry need not quench the charismatic. But it often does.

God's calling for some will be in scholarship. Academic ability combined with charismatic ministry produces a Paul, and others who like him were full of faith and gifted in articulate leadership and teaching and writing profound theology.

Open ministry education can serve the whole body of Christ. It is not the only means of theologizing in context, but it can be a very effective means. Some students who begin this way may indeed continue in academic pursuits beyond other people either by extension (as through the Open University or similar tertiary distance models) or in scholastic communities. They may interact in the context of scholarly debate. They too will be ministering in context. We need scholars who can help us minister as Jesus and the early church did.

Contextual education is an idea whose time has come. We need to take the concept seriously because the contexts of our time are so varied - and those in education need to be reminded that life looks vastly different from within some of those other contexts. The questions of academy are not the immediate day-to-day questions

of the parish. But, by the same token, the concept of context must not lead to the strange conclusion that the world of the university must be abandoned as the context of theological education.

The fact is that here we are ill-served by either/or proposals. "Contextual" training in which extension education is based is an excellent concept; but why suggest that the context of the parish must displace the context of the intellectual world of the university as the place where the meaning of the gospel is explored? Why not both?⁸⁸

Both indeed. All life comes under the lordship of Jesus. Academia can minister to some; extension can minister to many. We need one another in the body of Christ. Some will be scholars, although only a few of them may be also called and equipped for powerful leadership. Hence this book is one small step to combine the academic with application in ministry.

Theology in context will cover the whole range of theologizing, and the greater number involved, by far, will be involved as part of local church ministry. Open ministry education caters primarily to that great need.

Open ministry education is not limited to "low level" theologizing. External studies and related forms of extension are increasingly available at all academic levels and need to be. As open schooling spreads, and educational technology continues to expand, extension models will also expand.

Many Christians now study through to doctoral levels by distance education while also involved in ministry. It takes longer. It often involves intensive courses such as for two weeks full time.

The context for theologizing and especially for theologizing in ministry is vast. Accelerating change, technological resources, and the megatrend to decentralisation in an information society all hasten that process.

Peter Wagner⁸⁹ noted that theological seminaries are now able to extend in many ways:

- *academically*, across levels ranging from functional literacy to university;

- *culturally*, adapting materials to each ethnic group without extracting students;
- *time-wise*, adjusting schedules to times when the students can meet;
- *geographically*, taking the seminary to the student;
- *economically*, with budgets relevant to the local economy; and
- *ecclesiastically*, putting ministry education back into the local church context.

These possibilities are more viable now than ever. The contexts continue to change. That change opens further possibilities for global impact of ideas and methods. Open ministry education is one example of that accelerating process of change affecting theology and ministry.

Open ministry education need not be a substitute for a solid theological education. It can be a powerful attempt to return ministry and theology to the people, where they belong, and engage leaders in solid, biblical, Spirit-filled ministry and theology.

We are now seeing theologizing emerging among a new generation of charismatic theologians, Asian theologians, African theologians and Latin American theologians. Many of these theologies are radical and confronting. They challenge us to re-think our traditional Western philosophical theologies. They often require us to get our hands dirty and scarred by identifying sacrificially with the poor, oppressed, needy and marginalized, just as Jesus did. And many of those theologians become martyrs like Jesus, Peter and Paul.

2. Ministry in Context

As ministry and theology are returned to all the people it fulfils the biblical pattern. Many prophetic voices call for that renewal of the ministry and mission of the church. It is literally an idea whose time has come. It contextualises ministry. Contextual ministry is body ministry, the ministry of the whole body of Christ, not just a professional few. Ministry and leadership are charismatic.

Anglican priest Michael Harper⁹⁰ pressed the issue:

The plain answer is - the Lord will provide the necessary *charisma* of leadership and *charismata* for the particular ministry a person may be called to. The spiritual ability will be given, and the signs will be evident to the whole church.

It is here that the church today has made the greatest mistake, with the most tragic consequences. It has assumed that one can send a person to theological college or seminary and train him to be a minister. It has tended to select people for ministry on the grounds of what they may one day become, rather than on the basis of what they already are and have in Christ. *Charisma* cannot be earned or learned. ... God alone bestows it. ...

What we are saying in a nutshell, is that the Church generally has put the cart before the horse. Men are trained so that they may become ministers rather than trained because they are ministers, who already possess and are exercising their charismatic gift in the church and the world.

That is the enormous challenging us in the church and the world today as God pours out his Spirit on all flesh.

Roland Alien bears repeating: "God creates His own leaders for His Church: our part is to recognise them."

Allen's arguments can be further summarised:

1. The apostles required maturity and experience with Spirit-filled giftedness for leadership; we ordain young, inexperienced graduates.
2. The apostles say nothing about full-time employment in the church; we require it.
3. The apostles selected the real leaders; we emphasise a subjective, internal call.
4. The early church valued spiritual and practical formation in life and ministry; we value academic credentials.
5. The early church allowed full ministry including the sacraments; we deny this to many groups.

Pioneering missionaries such as Roland Allen saw the need to implement these New Testament principles. They followed the biblical pattern more radically than most.

Renewal and revival has changed many of our entrenched traditions as it did for those missionary pioneers. Take the sacraments for example.

Now millions of people celebrate a 'love feast' or common meal with friends of all or no denomination. They may not call it communion or the Lord's Supper or the Eucharist. But for them it is obeying the Lord's command to remember him as we literally break bread together – not just eat and drink religious symbols.

John and Charles Wesley, George Whitefield and their Moravian Brethren friends did that in a love feast at Fetter Lane in London on January 1, 1739. The Spirit of God fell on them and many of them fell to the floor. When they 'recovered' they sang the Anglican *Te Deum*. Many of those Spirit-filled Anglican became the leaders of the Evangelical Revival in England.

Whitefield began preaching in the paddocks to the Kingswood colliers from February and saw thousands converted. By April 20,000 were attending his open air meetings, and he invited John Wesley to come and continue the work. Initially Wesley opposed the idea of preaching in the fields, but he saw what God was doing outside of the traditional church, and he too began his field preaching from April, 1739, and continued that for over 50 years.

Ross Kinsler applied these points to Theological Education by Extension (TEE), and they apply equally to open ministry education:

TEE is taking up the challenge posed by Roland Allen. It provides a rationale and a way by which the bonds of human tradition are being loosened, local communities are being recognised fully as the church, God's people are being equipped for mission. . . .

The potential, pragmatic significance of these developments is enormous. The missionary expansion of the church can proceed ... unencumbered by the demands of Western-style professional ministry.⁹¹

Open ministry education provides an effective means to equip servant leadership and multiply body ministry. It can contextualize theology and ministry, and so fulfil its potential in the liberating power of the Spirit.

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Chapter 18

Ministry Education

From pre-service to in-service

Open ministry education shifts the focus from training for ministry to training in ministry, or from preparation for ministry to participation in ministry.

That ministry has been discussed in previous chapters. Here I comment on the role of open ministry education in developing body ministry and servant leadership

1. Body Ministry

Both body ministry and open ministry education transform ministry and release or tap into the gifts and ministries of God's people.

The Body of Christ, Book 1 – Body Ministry explores how body ministry through spiritual gifts transforms ministry from within. Professional ministry may remain, but becomes centred in the depths of charismatic ministry and is subject the Spirit of God among his people.

Similarly, open ministry education transforms theological education from within. Real leaders receive help in their ministry and that ministry involves others in the body of Christ. So a new form of ministry and of theological education or ministry education emerges.

Theological Education by Extension (TEE) pioneer Ross Kinsler noted these transforming possibilities of open ministry education:

The extension movement may provoke radical change, not to destroy the church or its ministry but rather to undermine its perpetual tendencies toward hierarchization, legalism, traditionalism, dead orthodoxy, and unfaith. This kind of subversion ... is healthy and necessary. It is dynamizing ... Theological education by extension may in fact render its greatest

service to the church and its ministry by challenging existing structures.⁹²

Neither body ministry nor open ministry education (as in TEE) are limited to traditional patterns of clerical ministry and theological education. They transform them.

It is not so much that professional ministry is wrong, but that it is limited, and limiting. Professional ministry can prevent body ministry unless it intentionally equips members of the body of Christ for ministry.

Open ministry education aims to equip members of the body of Christ for their ministries. This affects its methodology and theology.

Everyone, of course, uses educational methods according to their own ends. Extension of traditional courses can be used to domesticate and indoctrinate. However, it can also be a means of liberation, releasing the gifts and ministries of the whole body of Christ.

An increasing number of open ministry education courses now facilitate, equip and release local ministries. They offer resources that can be used and adapted by the whole body of Christ, such as for small groups, counselling, friendship evangelism and creative mission including short term cross-cultural mission. These now proliferate.

2. Servant Leadership

Open ministry education can equip and release effective ministry in the body of Christ by helping those gifted in leadership within the body. They can then more effectively serve the body by equipping that body for ministry. This is a full-orbed approach to leadership development and ministerial formation, for it involves the whole person.

Ministerial formation is as concerned with personal growth and maturity as it is with theological knowledge, with spiritual gifts and commitment for service as well as pastoral skills. . . .

The principal model for ministerial formation is Jesus himself, who continues to call his followers into his ministry and mission, and the classic text is Mark 10:42-45, which speaks of service and self-giving. One of the enigmas we face is that theological

education, along with all other kinds of education, leads to privilege and power, whereas ministerial formation is fundamentally concerned with servanthood.⁹³

Servant leadership is another transforming role of open ministry education, both in those who teach and those who learn. It may never assume the privilege and the power of professionally trained clergy, and most of those studying may never be ordained to positions of status and power. That could be one of its great strengths.

Not that all professional clergy abuse privilege and power! The greatest among us are servant leaders, as Jesus insisted. However, acquiring status, position and power easily corrupt.

Nor is open ministry education limited to part-time non-professionals. Another powerful aspect of this model is its flexibility. People involved may be ministering in the church full time, part time or spare time. Open ministry teaching can be offered at all levels sociologically and academically. Whatever the level of learning, the goals and demands of the gospel must continually challenge all involved.

The churches in the West as well as in many growing traditions have adopted the patterns, life style and symbols of the secular world where power, prestige, and wealth are the criteria of the successful church and clergy. However, one person said, "it shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant." Extension theological education is directed toward working out this value system in the church.

The extension movement challenges and humbles because it brings down the high altars of academic prestige, professional privilege, clerical status, and institutional presumption. It goes against the elitist tendencies of our societies and against the selfish bent of natural man. It calls in question our own position and self image in the light of Jesus' example and his commandment to his disciples: "It shall not be so among you."⁹⁴

Servant leadership does not remove leadership; it transforms it. So the task of theological education, a task which fits open ministry education, is the equipping the equippers for ministry; serving the servant leaders who will serve the body of Christ by leading that body into powerful body ministry.

We are moving away from training that fits a minister for a traditional priestly office to training that is designed to give ministers the tools, insights, knowledge, and spiritual formation needed to prepare the members of the body for that ministry.

We are seeing the reshaping of theological education as training in ministry so that leaders equip the body for ministry in accord with Ephesians 4:11-12:

He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.

Accelerating church growth and social change open new possibilities and potential for theological education in ministry. Open ministry education can fulfil that potential. It helps to equip God's people for body ministry in powerful mission.

A case study

I conclude with a personal case study, just one among thousands of similar current examples.

From 1965-1970 I taught in schools and Bible Schools among the rugged Enga tribes of Papua New Guinea's towering highlands north of Mt Hagen. There I discovered new expressions of the church and ministry indigenous to their village communal culture. That changed my perspectives for good – both forever and for the better. We saw God's Spirit transforming individuals and communities, and later revival accelerated that process in the seventies. There I also began university studies in education and ministry by distance education.

From 1977 I taught ministry at the Methodist's Alcorn College in Brisbane, and continued distance education studies with Fuller Theological Seminary eventually completing doctoral studies in missiology – the study of mission. Then Alcorn College merged with Trinity Theological College in the Uniting Church, a merger of former Methodists, Presbyterians and Congregationalists. So this Baptist minister found himself teaching ministry at the theological college and inaugurating its distance education program, later developed into a national distance education college.

The Bible College principal at Christian Outreach Centre in Brisbane then invited me to write the submission for the government accredited ministry degree program of the School of Ministries at Christian Heritage College, founded by Christian Outreach Centre, an Australian Pentecostal, charismatic movement which now includes 1600 churches worldwide with a huge social welfare arm. That degree submission included innovative distance education courses and provides under-graduate and post-graduate courses in ministry.

So I experienced open ministry education while studying for several decades through in-service, open education models with the University of Queensland (in educational studies), the Melbourne College of Divinity (in theological studies) and with Fuller Theological Seminary (in ministry and mission studies).

While studying myself, I had the privilege of teaching ministry students at Alcorn College, Trinity Theological College and Christian Heritage College. That gave wide scope for developing open ministry education courses for theological and ministry studies to post-graduate levels.

This book is a reflection on that study, teaching and ministry journey. I believe it points the way to dynamic ministry in the body of Christ, and to ways we can equip and serve the whole body of Christ in the power of his Spirit.

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Epilogue

The Unchanging Christ

Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today and for ever; the depth centre of our lives; the still point in a changing world; the Lord of the universe; the beginning and the ending; the first and the last; the alpha and the omega.

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by the Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high (Hebrews 1:1-3).

Jesus reigns over all, pre-eminent in everything.

He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers - all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross (Col. 1: 15- 20).

Jesus reigns. He is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and

on earth and under the earth, and every should tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2: 9- 11).

Jesus, King of Kings, Lord of Lords, Head of His Church, proclaims:

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age (Matthew 28:18-20).

We are his people, his servants, his followers, his disciples, his body, his.

We multiply body ministry by open ministry education till all things are reconciled to God through Jesus the Christ who loved us and gave himself for us. We give ourselves to him and his mission in the world. He is with us to the end.

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Appendix: Resources

Renewal Journal Publications

See

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for Blogs on each book

PDF Boks, eBooks, and Paperbacks

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[Pentecost on Pentecost & the South Pacific](#)

[Great Revival Stories](#), comprising:

[Best Revival Stories](#) and

[Transforming Revivals](#)

[Renewal and Revival](#), comprising:

[Renewal: I make all things new](#), and

[Revival: I will pour out my Spirit](#)

[Anointed for Revival](#)

[Church on Fire](#)

Renewal Books

[Body Ministry](#), comprising:

[The Body of Christ, Part 1: Body Ministry](#), and

[The Body of Christ, Part 2: Ministry](#)

[Education](#), with

[Learning Together in Ministry](#)

[Great Commission Mission](#) comprising:

[Teaching Them to Obey in Love](#), and

[Jesus the Model for Short Term](#)

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[Fruit & Gifts of the Spirit](#)

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[The Christmas Message – The Queen](#)

[Holy Week, Christian Passover &](#)

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[Holy Week](#), and

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[Risen: 12 Resurrection Appearances](#)

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[Risen: Long version & our month in Israel](#)

[Mysterious Month – expanded version](#)

[Risen: Long version](#)

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[Kingdom Life in Mark](#)

[Kingdom Life in Luke](#)

[Kingdom Life in John](#)

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[The Reign of Jesus](#)

[The Life of Jesus](#)

[The Death of Jesus](#)

[The Resurrection of Jesus](#)

[The Spirit of Jesus](#)

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[Discovering Aslan - comprising:](#)

[Discovering Aslan in The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe](#)

[Discovering Aslan in Prince Caspian](#)

[Discovering Aslan in the Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'](#)

[Discovering Aslan in the Silver Chair](#)

[Discovering Aslan in the Horse and his Boy](#)

[Discovering Aslan in the Magician's Nephew](#)

[Discovering Aslan in the Last Battle](#)

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[*Light on the Mountains* – Geoff in PNG](#)

[*Looking to Jesus: Journey into Renewal &*](#)

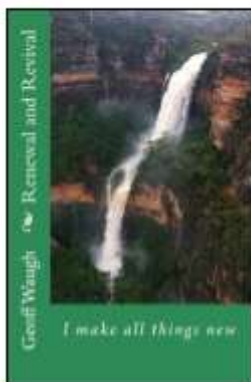
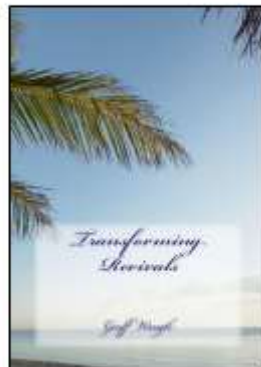
[*Revival* - Geoff's autobiography](#)

[*King of the Granny Flat* by Dante Waugh](#)

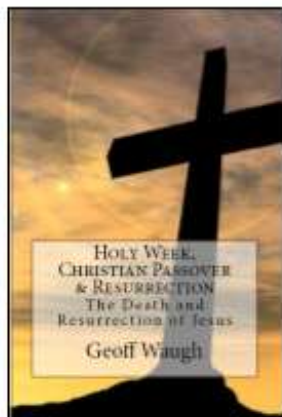
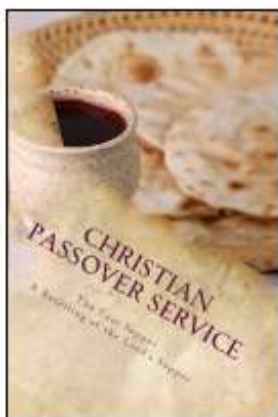
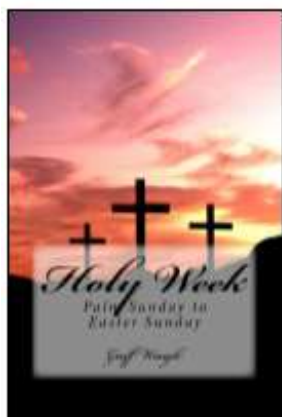
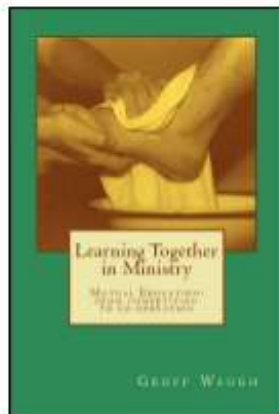
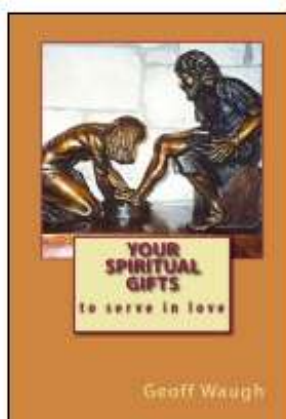
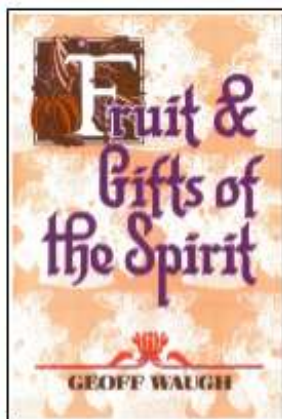
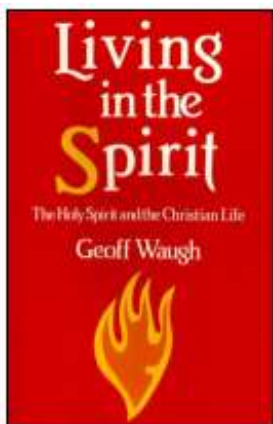
[*Journey into Mission* – Geoff's mission trips](#)

[*Journey into Ministry and Mission* -](#)
autobiography

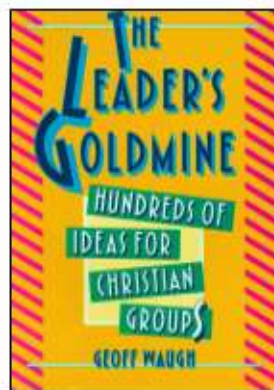
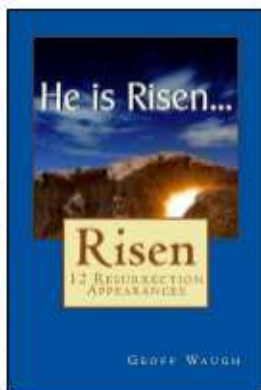
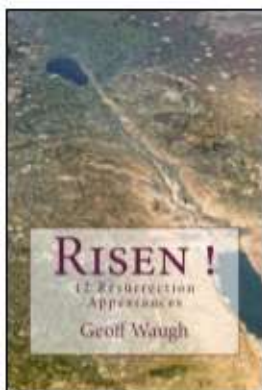
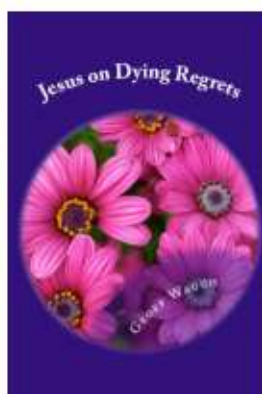
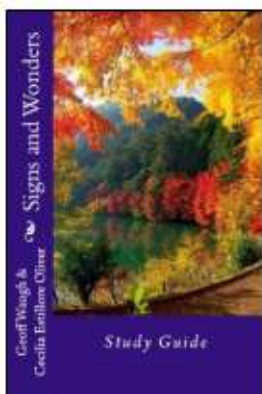
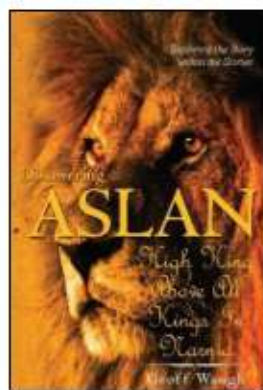
[*Travelling with Geoff* by Don Hill](#)



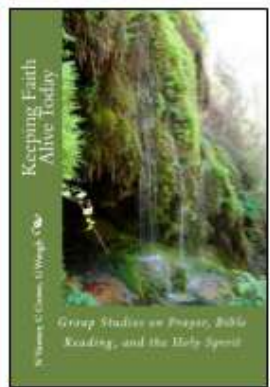
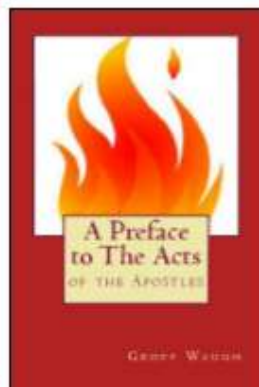
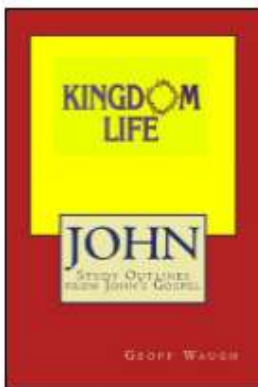
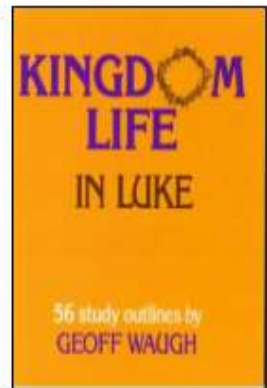
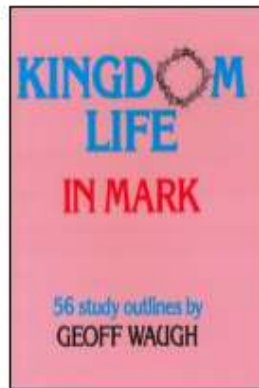
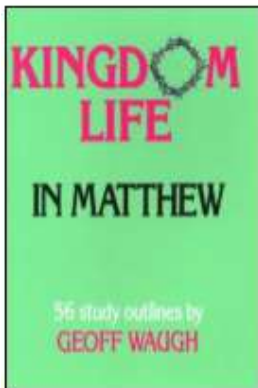
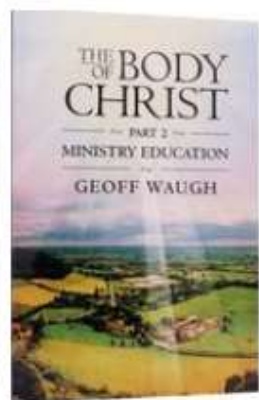
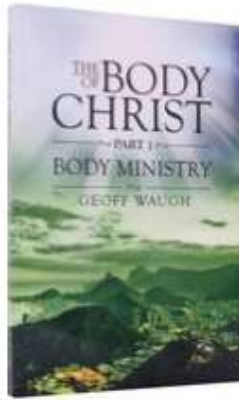
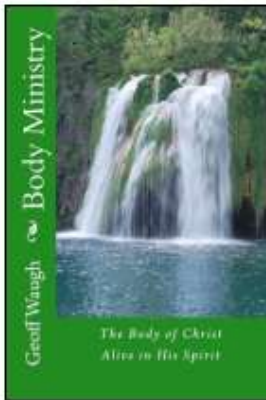
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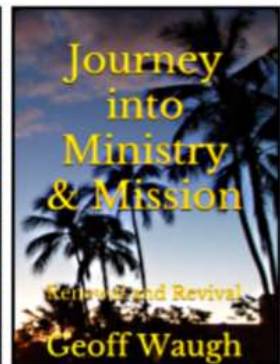
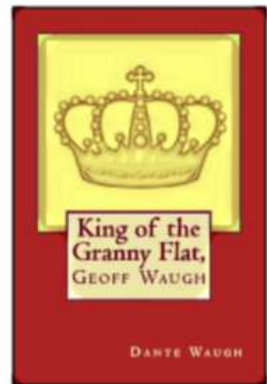
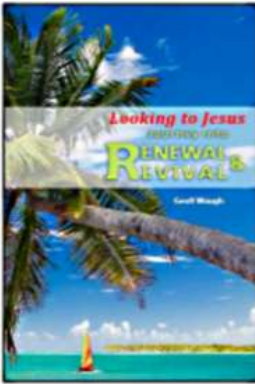
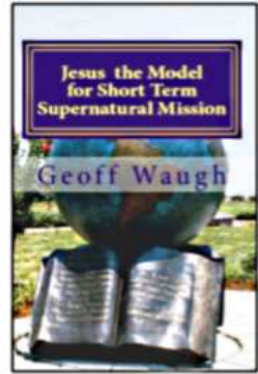
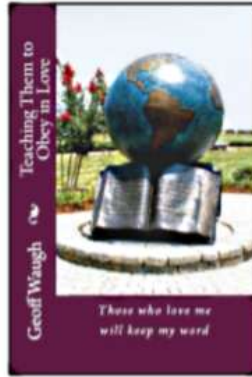
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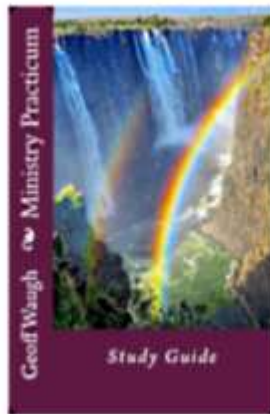
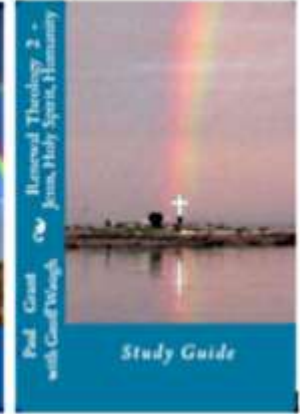
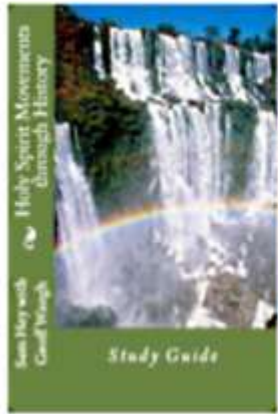
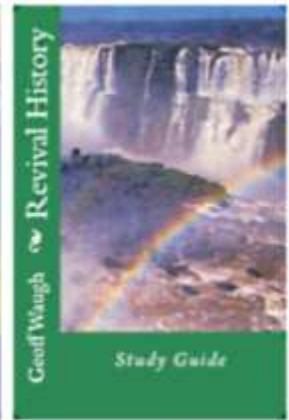
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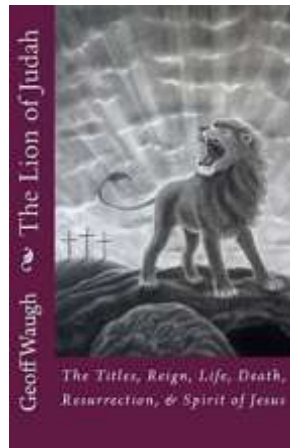
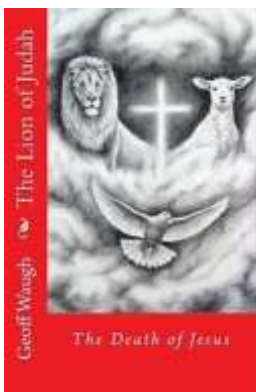
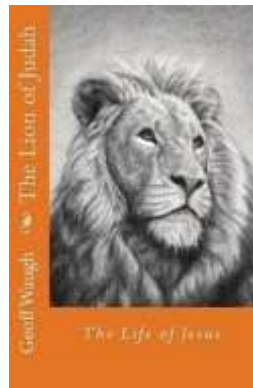


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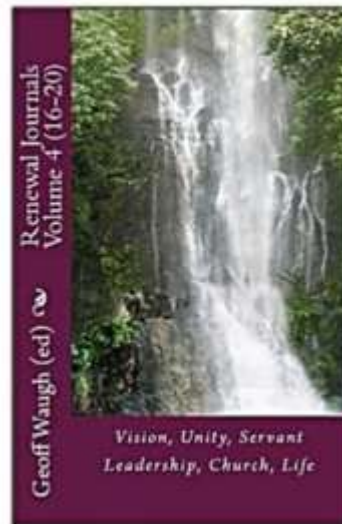
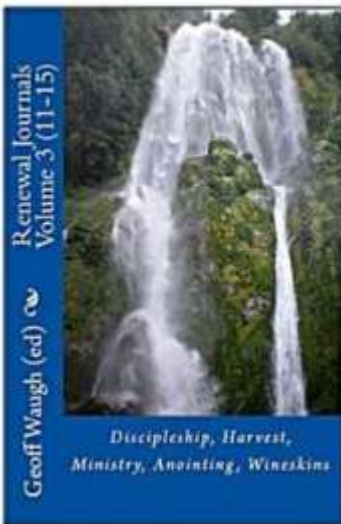
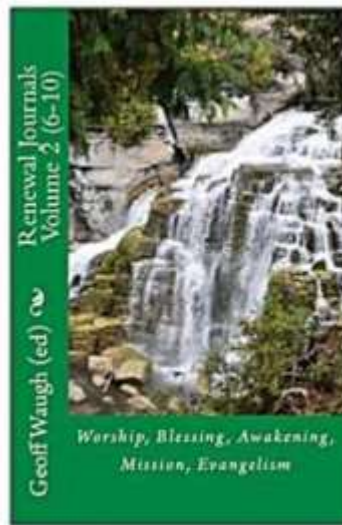
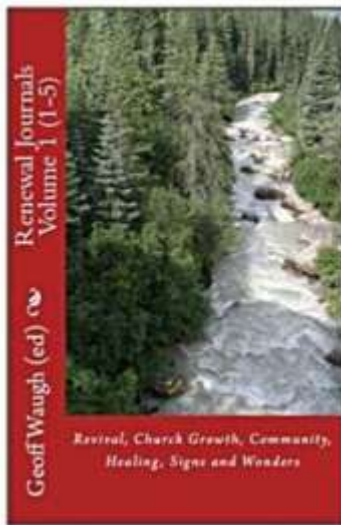


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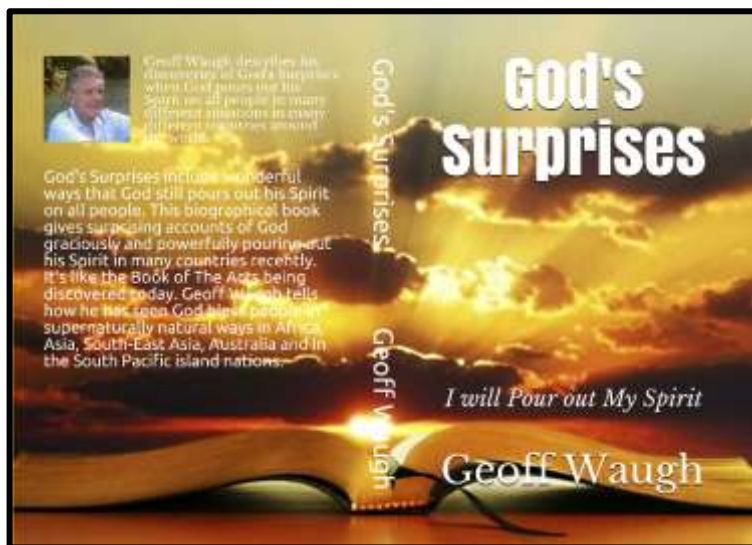
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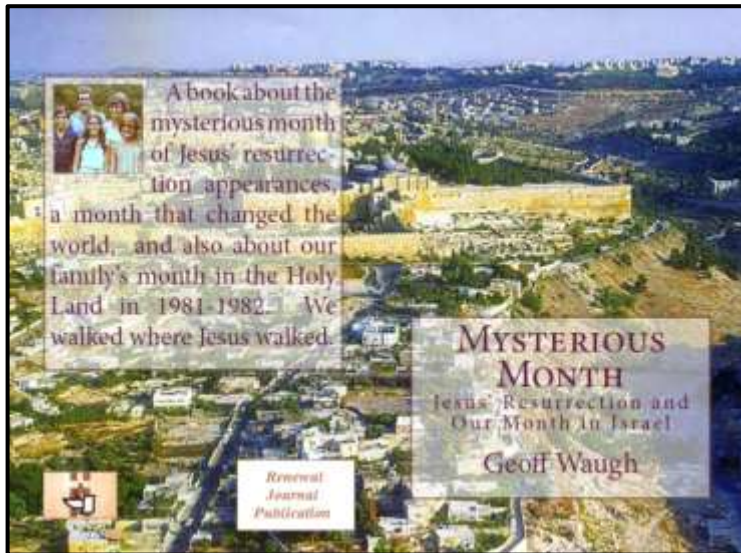
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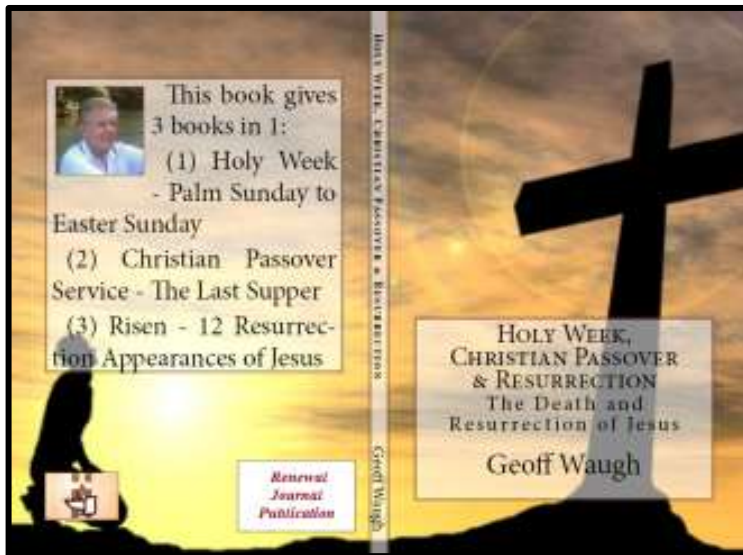
[God's Surprises](#)



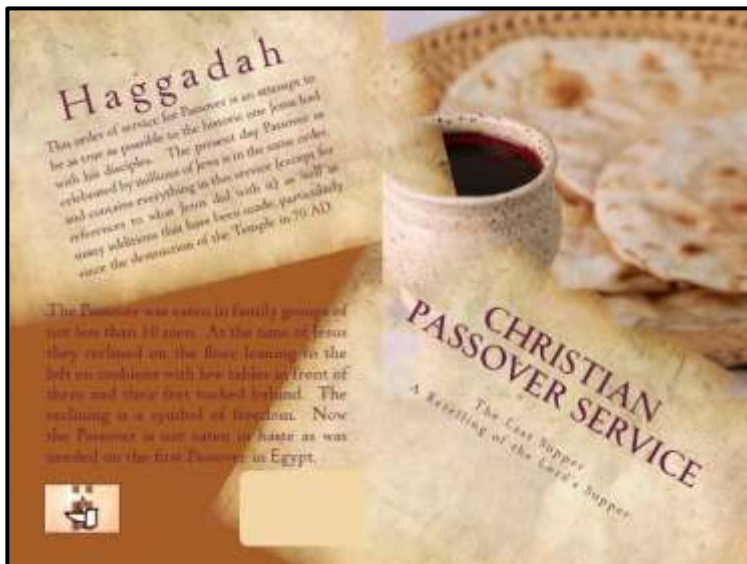
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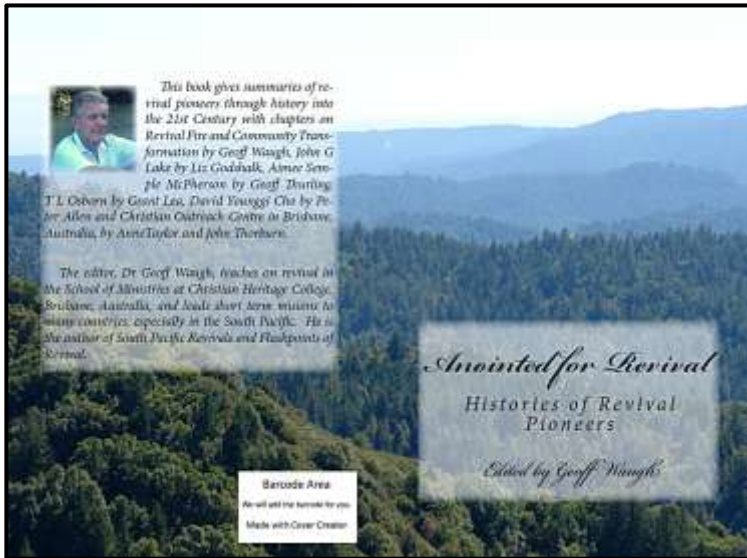


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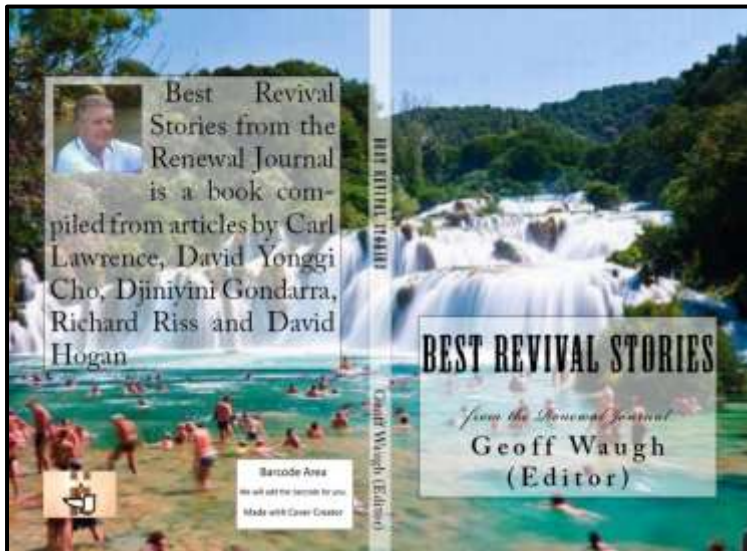
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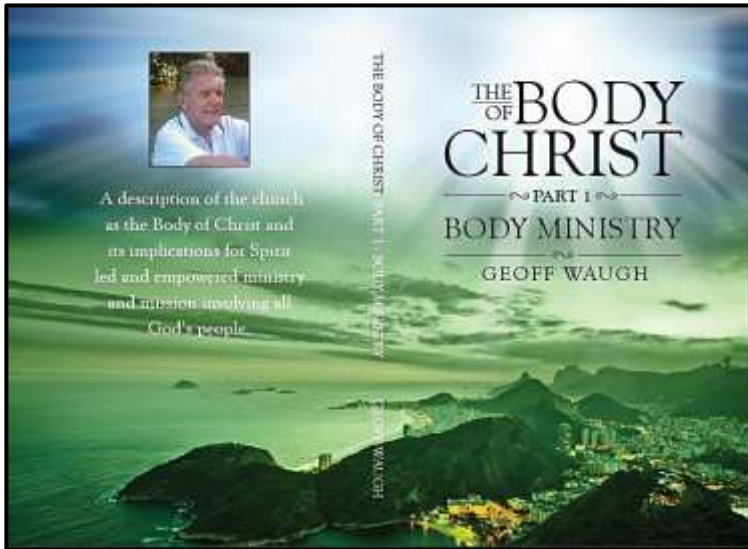
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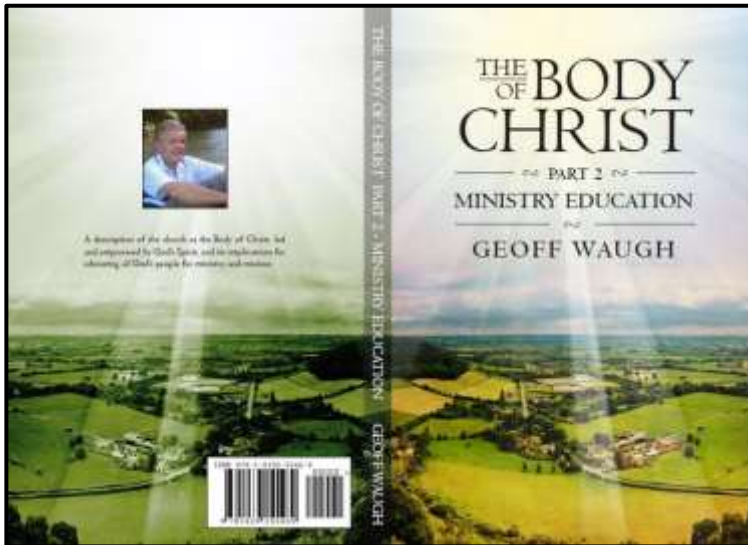
[**Anointed for Revival**](#)



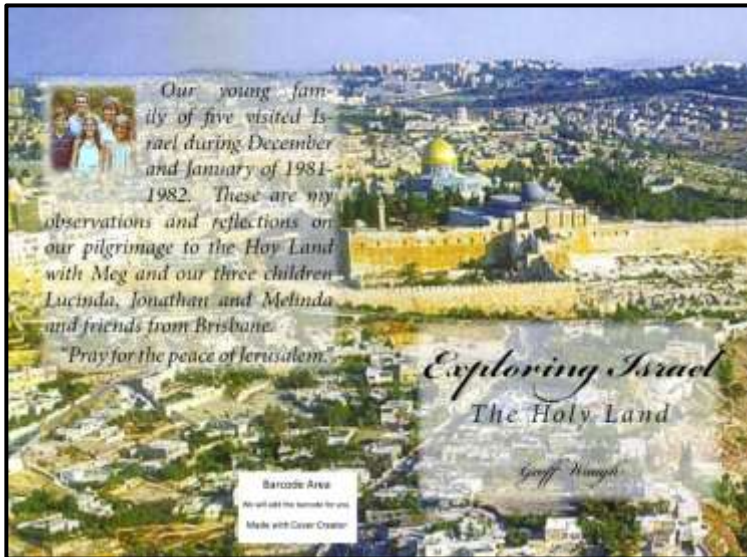
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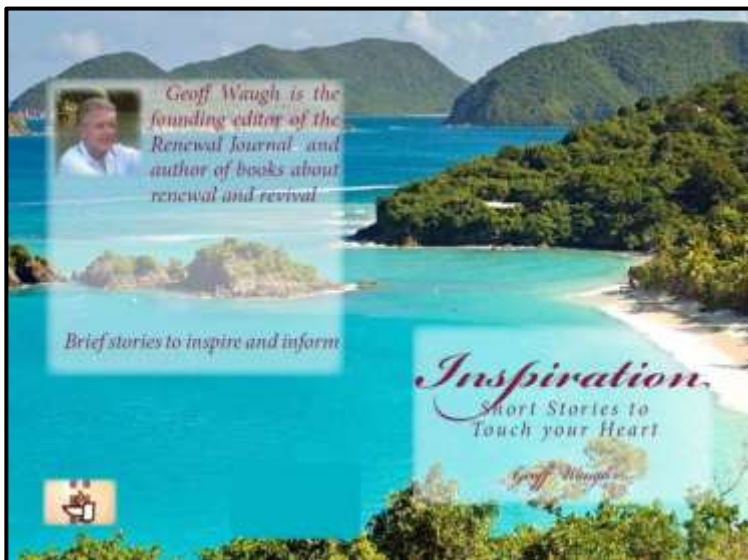
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[Great Revival Stories](#)



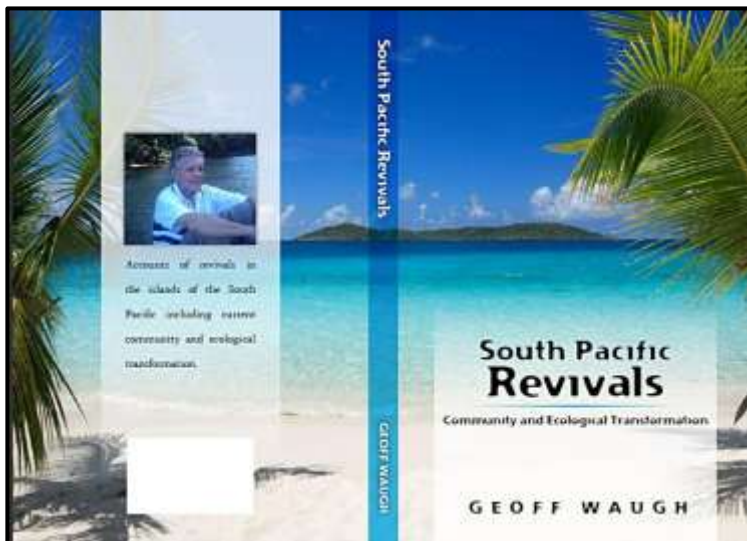
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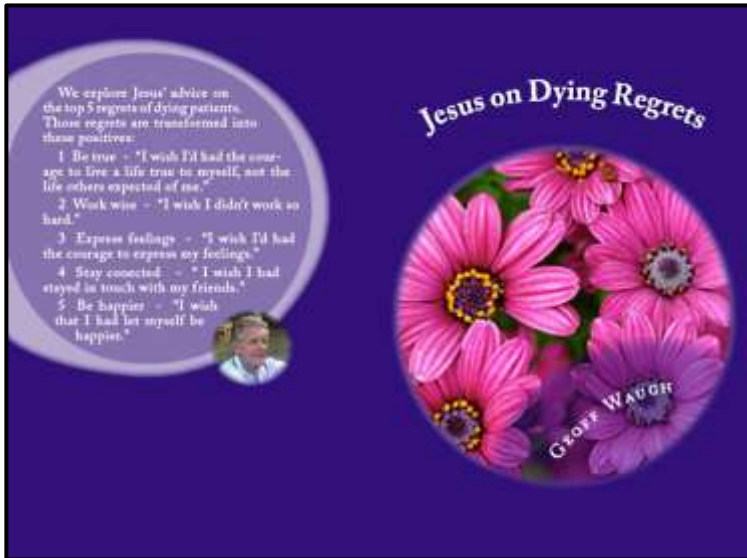
[**Revival: I will pour out my Spirit**](#)



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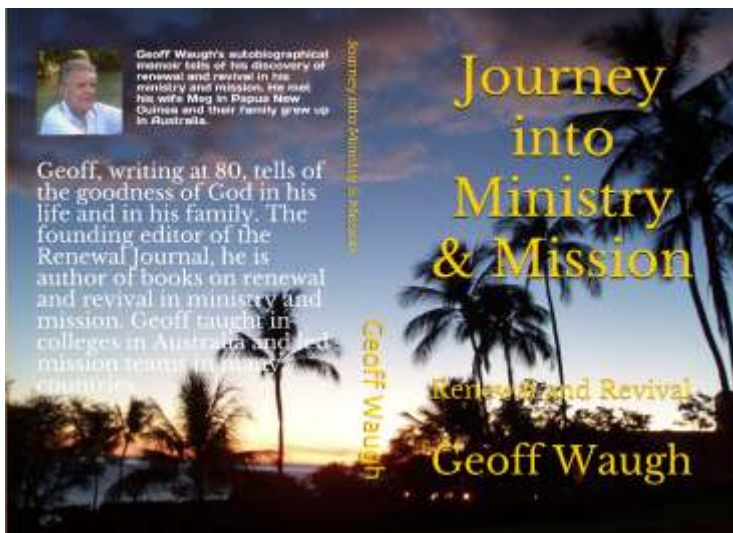
[Transforming Revivals](#)



[*Jesus on Dying Regrets*](#)



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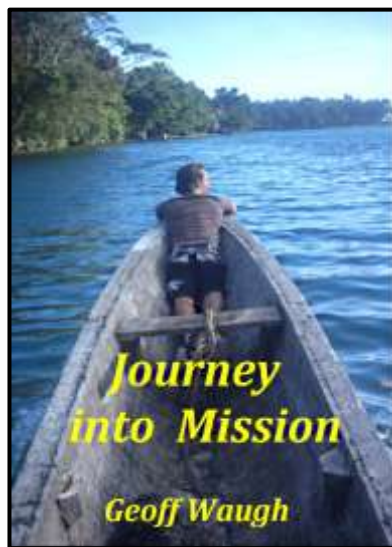


Journey into Ministry and Mission

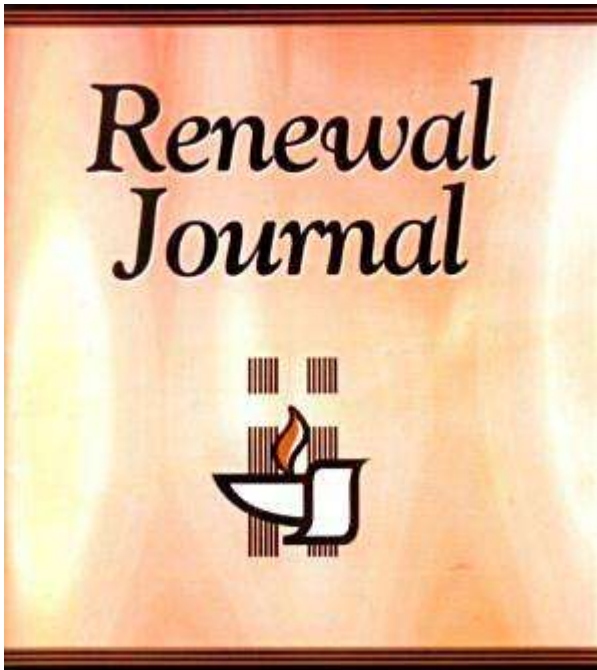
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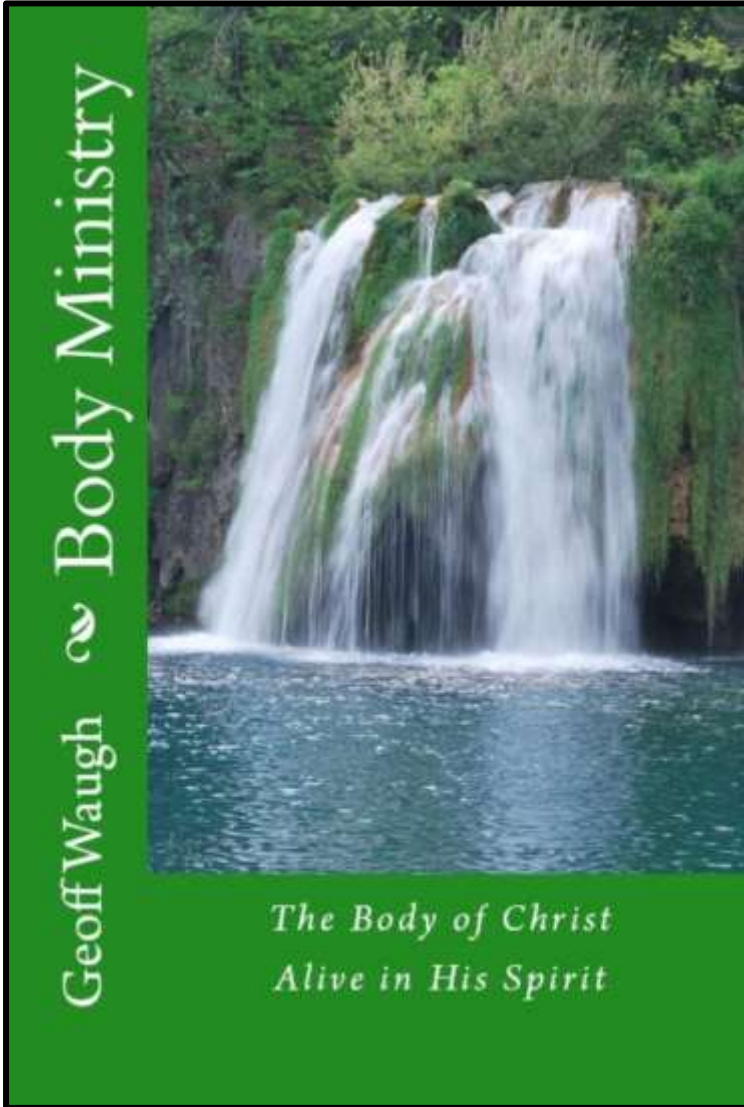
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About the Author

Rev Dr Geoff Waugh, a Baptist minister, taught on renewal and revival at Alcorn College (Methodist), Trinity Theological College (Uniting), the Brisbane College of Theology (Uniting, Anglican, and Catholic) and Christian Heritage College (charismatic) in Brisbane, Australia, as well as in Bible Schools in Papua New Guinea (Baptist) and in the South Pacific Islands (with Churches of Christ and United Churches). He led short term missions and taught church leaders in Africa, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, Burma/Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, China and in the South Pacific nations of the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji. He is the founding editor of the *Renewal Journal* and is the author of books related to renewal and revival including two translations of *Flashpoints of Revival* in Korean. Geoff is father to three adult children and grandfather of eight, lives in an extended household with two of those families, and is grateful to his family and to God for his strong evangelical heritage and for enriching fellowship with God's wonderfully diverse people.

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Endnotes

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