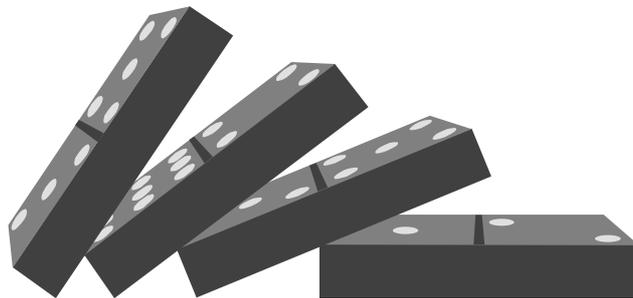


The Charismatic Catastrophe



Paul Fahy

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The Charismatic Catastrophe

Introduction

The state of the UK Evangelical church in the new millennium is a disaster! This is not an extreme statement; even moderate conservative commentators are now openly admitting this as a fact to be dealt with. Columns in journals regularly highlight a new area where the church has fallen away. Many books have now appeared lamenting the downgrade of theology and church practice, outlining where things need to be recovered. Even basic morals have been affected; stories of fraudulent practice, immorality, spiritual abuse and sexual assaults, amongst leaders and members, are rife – many documented in word or video footage. If there is any doubt, the church membership surveys show that the UK church, of all stripes, is in decline with up to 2,000 people leaving every week.

None of this should come as a surprise as Jesus and the apostles warned us that apostasy would predominate the time of the end and that great pressure would be put upon believers to desert the faith. Consequently we are urged by Jesus to watch and pray as the last day draws near.

If the church is to be reformed and survive, it is vital to investigate what the main cause of the falling away in standards has been in the last 40 years. Only by correctly evaluating the causes and routes of error can we avoid them in the future. It is my contention (and the contention of many others) that one of the key reasons for the church's downfall is the Charismatic Movement (CM). The key reason for this is not because it focuses on spiritual gifts (actually congregational participation in gifts is minimal) but because it is a Trojan Horse. Through the CM, churches and denominations have united in opening the door to occultism and paganism. This is the real problem with the CM - false teaching and aberrant practices of a pagan and occult nature.

The CM gradually established independent churches and whole new denominations, while its more subdued wing was once known as the Charismatic Renewal in traditional churches. For the first time in church history an effective network arose organically which spanned every denomination and crossed the world. Churches that previously had no truck with each other became open to Charismatic influences and many people owned a greater loyalty and kinship to the movement than to their own church. Often people would only put up with the weaknesses and lifelessness of their local assembly by having a shot in the arm at regional Charismatic 'celebrations' or Bible Weeks.

Very different types of churches began to sing the same songs, go to the same conferences, be influenced by the same books, have the same style of worship and listen to the same international figures. Traditional Roman Catholics, heretical Oneness Pentecostals, Radical Charismatics, classic Pentecostals, Anglicans, Baptists, liberal Methodists and many independents were heavily influenced by all things Charismatic. Only Brethren, Strict Baptist and Presbyterian churches, plus some Grace Baptist and independents largely resisted this onslaught, and these are now minority church streams in the UK.

This underground source of ideas within these churches spawned all sorts of innovations. Gradually, traditional historic practices were overturned as people expected to do the things which they had experienced in conferences, Bible Weeks and local ‘celebration’ meetings. The underground river of Charismaticism became a pipeline for the spread of information, establishing new independent national leaders, aberrant doctrinal ideas and radical practices. Individual expectations were raised by experiences in united public meetings and people demanded that their traditional churches change and adopt the new ideas. When some churches resisted change, disgruntled folk left to join the newly formed church groupings, particularly the Restorationist or New Churches. Even Pentecostal churches, which had a long history of practising spiritual gifts, gradually adopted the Charismatic style of worship and ministry.

Over two or three decades, the spread of new ideas into the churches changed the whole way Christians worshipped. For instance, apart from small enclaves, most churches abandoned the singing of hymns from hymnbooks in favour of lightweight choruses read from overhead projectors (now from computers). Whole generations of believers, in some circles, now know nothing of the solid, old hymns sung by our forebears.

The climax of this transmission of ideas was the Toronto Experience. This began in extreme American and Canadian Charismatic churches but rapidly spread to every denomination; the key UK centres being: an Anglican church in London, traditional Pentecostal churches in Kensington and Sunderland, and Charismatic Restoration churches in Brighton and Surrey. Many of these churches had previously little to do with each other, even some Restoration denominations had been at loggerheads for decades, but all were now brought into practical unity by this experience.

Now some may suggest that this unity was a good thing, but unity in error is never good. What happened through the CM’s transmission was the importation of rogue ideas into churches which would normally have not received them. In the late 1940s the wild heresies of Latter Rain were condemned as unorthodox even by Pentecostal churches in America. What happened is that, via the CM, these heretical ideas have now become mainstream accepted thought in most of the denominations.¹ The CM enabled the gradual infiltration of Latter Rain and other heresies into the person in the pew who had never heard of Franklin Hall, William Branham or George Warnock.

This is why the CM was, and is, so dangerous. Ideas and practices which begin in, say, California are picked up by an ‘apostle’ and carried to the UK. Days later all his churches are practising the same fad and believing the same ideas. After a while, through conferences, other churches also pick up the new fashion. For instance: corporate, unison shouting in prayer for additional power was an unheard of phenomenon in 1980s English churches, but had been known in small enclaves in America and also parts of Asia (where it had been condemned by people like Watchman Nee). After it was popularised in Korea by Yonggi Cho, representatives of Terry Virgo’s group travelled there and became enamoured with the practice. On their return, the practice was passed on as the new thing, first at leaders’ meetings and then to the member churches generally where it was declared to be a better way of doing intercession. Something that was just a weird aberration in Korea one day was a common practice amongst thousands of UK believers within a few weeks.

Other stranger experiences have travelled equally quickly and gradually faded away: the appearance of ‘gold’ teeth, ‘gold’ dust or olive oil on believers during worship being

¹ Apart from being a clear observation of historic fact, Latter Rain leaders state this categorically. For instance Bill Hamon in his book *The Eternal Church*. For more information on Latter Rain, see Appendices.

examples. One day it began in America, a week later people in England had similar experiences. Comparable odd experiences in pagan religions (like Hindu idols drinking milk) are conveniently ignored by Charismatics. Such mystical or fake incidents have occurred throughout history in cults and sects, but it is only in recent years that the Christian church has accepted them with open arms; such is the influence of the CM.

Many of these exotic ideas gradually disappear, as their redundancy becomes obvious; but some doctrines and practices grow to be accepted, despite their erroneous character. The Charismatic presentation of the doctrine of the Baptism in the Spirit is now received knowledge, apart from within a few small denominations; yet 20 years ago it was a hotly debated subject. Thirty years ago it was widely condemned as unbiblical by most conservative groups and virtually every Protestant theologian. Forty years ago only Pentecostals believed it and they were usually isolated because they taught it.² From the beginning of church history until 130 years ago no one had ever heard of the notion, as taught in the CM. The fact that the Charismatic presentation has no Biblical basis whatsoever seems to matter little. There is no NT command to seek such an experience and the phrase refers to the act of Jesus in baptising the church into a united body in him. The experience of being filled with the Spirit is a different matter entirely and is not a once for all event, but an ongoing supply.

This shows how certain Charismatic ideas became mainstream by continual exposure in songs, sermons and books, despite being unbiblical and being formerly considered as erroneous. The invisible Charismatic network is responsible for far more problems. This paper proposes to assess some of the fundamental ones; an evaluation of all the myriad errors would comprise several large books.

² Most Evangelicals until the 1970's considered Pentecostalism to be a sect similar to Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses. *'In the past, nobody wanted to talk to the Pentecostals.'* says historian Walter J. Hollenweger. [Interview in *Christian History*, 58, p43.]

Spiritual Issues

The Degradation of Scripture

The crucial problem that results from Charismatic dogma is the devaluation of the importance of the word of God. This is the most serious and fundamental drawback of all, and one that causes many other difficulties.

Some Charismatic leaders have actually denounced the Bible (while others have stated that they don't need it anymore) but the practice of nearly all the leaders tends to diminish its value. This is because other things usurp its place. The words of leaders, prophecies, experiences, subjective feelings and so on all claim prior place to followers of the CM. If a radical idea is questioned as being unbiblical the defence is that, '*God is doing a new thing*' and, as such, cannot be tested by scripture. Some leaders actually condemn those who check their teaching against the Bible; through fear, many gullible followers capitulate and never evaluate what is said.

Test all things

Personal judgment is suspended in Charismatic congregations. Demands are made by leaders that folk accept new experiences, teachings or practices without dispute or examination. Members are told to, '*drink not think*';³ judging the value of an experience is equated with unbelief. Frightened to be labelled as faithless, or afraid of missing out on an experience, folk abandon any discrimination as being rebellious and simply accept what they are told. This behaviour strengthens the hold of authoritarian teachers.

To blindly accept all teaching from leaders without evaluation contradicts the Bible, which exhorts believers to test the spirit of teachers – including famous ministries (1 Jn 4:1), and to test all things – including much lauded experiences (1 Thess 5:21). People who carefully compared Paul's teaching with scripture were actually commended by the Holy Spirit not disparaged (Acts 17:11); believers are expected to judge what they hear and will be accountable for it. Corroborated charges against a local church elder should result in his rebuke in the presence of the church (1 Tim 5:19-20); how much more should unaccountable, maverick, Charismatic preachers be judged who: shatter lives, fleece the flock of money, introduce alien practices and dishonour God.

When the CM brings in one innovation after another it behoves people to test whether these things are Biblical. Yet hardly anyone in the CM ever does this because it would mean questioning leaders who have assumed too much authority. So practice after practice, concept after concept is introduced without any reference to scripture. Instead of everything being evaluated by God's word, the CM has foisted upon the church such innovative nonsense as: making animal noises, falling over, shouted corporate prayer, blowing the Spirit, spiritual mapping, territorial demons, multilevel apostles, demonisation of believers, end-time global revival, worship as entertainment and so on.

Subjectivity

Another characteristic of the CM is to emphasise the importance of subjective feelings, which is the corollary of emphasising the ministry of the Holy Spirit above the Word. The foolishness of this is obvious. The Holy Spirit inspired the Bible and always works in conjunction with it. Anything which claims to be of the Spirit yet contradicts the Bible is

³ A favourite catch-phrase of Rodney Howard-Browne during the Toronto Experience.

not of God. The Spirit encourages people to check things out against God's Word so anyone who does the opposite cannot be acting for God.

Our hearts can be easily deceived and corrupted and can be '*desperately wicked*' (Jer 17:9). Even if we are sincerely following our hearts, this is no guarantee that we are following God. The Devil tempts and lures our hearts to follow our inherent lusts or his strategy; this is why an objective measure is absolutely vital to ensure a pure walk with God. God demands that we use our brains in conjunction with our hearts. Christians are people who do what they know to be right as a result of being correctly taught. The urgent need to discriminate between good and evil is the essence of basic Christianity (Heb 5:12-14); without knowing how to discern what is right by sound judgment a believer is doomed to immaturity and is vulnerable to Satan's attacks.

Prophetic words

There is much we could say in this matter, but we must be brief. The abundance of false prophecies ought to have warned even the most trusting Charismatic follower, but apparently not. All sorts of excuses have been marshalled by false prophets to inveigle a way out of embarrassment, some of them simply ludicrous.⁴ Such failures should wake people up to evaluate all pronouncements against the Word and act accordingly. In the Old Testament a prophet who uttered false prophecy or who led people away with an accurate prophecy was to be killed (Deut 13 & 18). Yet time and time again ordinary trusting folk have obeyed a leader's false prophetic word and entered into dubious actions. Gullible people even follow men who leave a trail of unfulfilled prophecies in their wake. This is a case of a man's word having greater authority than God's and the sin in this is great.

Very frequently poor souls have got themselves into trouble by trusting a direct prophetic word given to them by a leader or an enthusiastic colleague. Even a genuine prophetic word in the NT did not have greater authority than the individual's purposed judgment (Acts 21:10ff). I have heard many tragic stories of lives being ruined by someone obeying a word of prophecy that was entirely wrong. We are to live our lives in obedience to God as he reveals himself to us in the scriptures. For example: if God tells us to work for a living (2 Thess 3:12) but a prophet demands that we leave secular employment, the 'prophet' is wrong – pure and simple, and should not only be ignored but should be disciplined by the church for acting falsely.

Blasphemous ideas

Part of modern Latter Rain teaching is that end-time apostles and prophets will have the authority to speak words which are on a par with scripture. This is part of the foolish notion about an end-time super army of invincible Christians that will subdue the earth before Christ is able to return. Such ideas are now being promoted in popular paperbacks by radical Charismatic authors. Christians can only entertain such notions if they have already downgraded the authority of the Word of God.

Submitting to the words of men in preference to scripture will only lead a person into bondage. It is the truth which makes us free and the only way to be sure of following the

⁴ For instance that God's mind was changed (in contradiction to Num 23:19; 1 Sam 15:29; Mal 3:6; Jm 1:17) or that modern prophets are acceptably wrong 60% of the time (according to Bob Jones, *The New Prophets*, David W. Cloud, p6-7). Paul Cain's failed prophecy of imminent revival in the UK was justified by Wimber by saying the revival had started 'in principle', 'in seed form as yet invisible', thus changing the meaning of the word 'revival'. Even this meaning failed. Coates' failed prophecy about Westminster was covered by his initiation of regular exuberant meetings in Marsham St and ferrying his church members up to them. These were called 'revival'. Occasionally someone will apologise for a failed prophecy, such as Mike Bickle in regard of Jones' predictions about a drought in Kansas City.

Lord is to understand his revealed will by reading his word and submitting to that word in our lives. Abandoning or neglecting a proper study of scripture and understanding its teachings is a guarantee to a weak, immature life blown about by every wind of popular doctrine.

Furthermore we must remember that God explicitly states that the end times will be pervaded by an immersion of the church in erroneous teaching which is inspired by Satan:

Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons. (1 Tim 4:1)

A great delusion and apostasy comes upon the end-time church (2 Thess 2:11). If we are close to that time (and many suspect that we are in it now), the only defence is to understand the truth of God's word. Only by knowing genuine doctrine can we spot erroneous teaching and escape delusion.

Zechariah 10:2-3 tells of a time much like our own where there is idolatry, delusion, lies, false prophecy / dreams and sheep in trouble, wandering around helpless. The real problem is that the shepherds failed to look after the sheep and God states that his anger against them will result in judgment. Looking after sheep is crucially about Bible teaching above all else. If people are taught properly, counselling cases diminish as people learn how to find grace for themselves. This is why the apostles needed to be freed up from practical constraints to concentrate on prayer and preaching (Acts 7). Helping people understand the word of God and equipping them to be able to minister is the great goal of leadership (Eph 4:11-12). The CM replaced this objective with a focus upon leadership, self, superficialities and experiences. The resultant chaos should be no surprise.

Examples of error and deception

God chasers ... are not interested in ... dusty truth known to every one. They are after the fresh presence of the Almighty, ... The difference between the truth of God and revelation is very simple. Truth is where God's been. Revelation is where God is. Truth is God's tracks. It's His trail ... the masses of people are happy to know where God's been. ... A true God chaser is not happy with just past truth; he must have present truth. God chasers don't want to just study from the mouldy pages of what God has done [i.e. the Bible]; they're anxious to see what God is doing.

Tommy Tenney; *The God Chasers*, Introduction.

It is no more the primary purpose of the church to teach the scriptures than it is for British Rail to promote timetables.

Gerald Coates; [*Evangelicals Now*, July 1996, quoted in *Contending Earnestly For the Faith*, 4.2, p8.]

The word will do you no good.

Paul Cain; [speaking at the *School of Prophecy*, Anaheim, Nov 1989 session 7.]

The second mark of a God mocker is a fear of confrontation and change. They are so stuck in religious tradition that they are closed to new revelation.

Stephen Hill (Brownsville Church, Pensacola); *The God Mockers*, chapter 1, (1997)

I am about to release prophecy on the church as you have never seen it before... I have a secret plan, and that plan is being unfolded ... Listen to the prophets — the little prophets, the big prophets, listen to those who speak one line and to those who speak volumes.

Glenn Foster; Prophecy published by the Sweetwater Church of the Valley; *Life for the Nations*, 7 October 1994.

The Degradation of Doctrine

Following directly from the degrading of scripture is the denigration of doctrinal truth. People within the CM are often actively discouraged from being intellectual, logical, rational, discriminating, thoughtful or studious about scriptural doctrine. Those outside who seek to live by God's word are frequently contemptuously denounced as 'Pharisees'. Thus people are encouraged to view rational Bible study as a lack of faith, a crutch used by non-Charismatics.

The reason for directing people away from traditional theology is twofold:

- Many Charismatic ideas and practices cannot be justified from scripture and do not stand close examination. Leaders do not want people to develop in Biblical understanding and confront these issues.
- Leaders are insecure and do not want people to question their authority. If people understood that what they teach is frequently wrong and opposed to Biblical doctrines, they would soon fall. Submission is strengthened by ignorance.

Historically the church has catechised its members; i.e. it taught them basic Christian doctrines in simple question and answer form, usually from infancy. As people matured, they would learn to accept a confession of faith which gave more information on crucial Biblical teaching. Often churches would recite a compressed précis of a confession in Sunday worship to remind folk of important teachings (e.g. the Apostles' Creed or the Nicene Creed). All these practices have vanished from mainline evangelical congregations except for a few Presbyterian churches. This loss has left people wide open to modern nonsense on vital issues. People do not know what to believe and what to reject.

So, many evangelicals are already weak in doctrine; and when they join the CM they are actively discouraged from developing in any kind of theological understanding. Believers of many years standing are today much weaker in doctrinal knowledge than children in Reformation times.

The scope of error

The Charismatic Movement is a direct cause of the many doctrinal aberrations that now plague the modern church. Apart from classic liberalism, if you take almost any modern erroneous teaching and identify its roots, you will find that it emerged from, or was spread via, the CM. Furthermore, most (if not all) the heresies which developed throughout the history of the church are emerging or abounding today. Over centuries faithful men combated these aberrations, sometimes completely alone (like Athanasius against Arianism), in order to preserve a genuine Gospel. Yet in one half of a century the CM has managed to re-introduce all these errors.

In another book I evaluate and examine these in detail. In short, I identify at least the following at large within so called 'Christian' churches:

- **Christological Heresies** (relating to Christ): Ebionism, Arianism (Subordinationism), Semi-Arianism (Eusebianism), Nestorianism, Docetism, Gnosticism, Marcionism, Manichaeism, Apollinarianism, Eutychianism, Monophysitism.
- **Theological Heresies** (relating to God): Pantheism (Monism), Panentheism, Deism.
- **Pneumatological heresies** (relating to the Holy Spirit): Macedonianism (Pneumatomachianism).
- **Trinitarian Heresies**: Sabellianism (Modal Monarchianism, Patripassianism),

Dynamic Monarchianism (Adoptionism), Socinianism.

- **Soteriological heresies** (relating to Salvation): Arminianism, Pelagianism, Universalism (Pluralism), Purgatory.
- **Ethical Heresies** (of Christian Living): Antinomianism, Latitudinarianism, Sinless perfection (Perfectionism).
- **Ecclesiastical Heresies** (Church): Montanism, Sacerdotalism, Sandemanianism.
- **Pagan Theology**: New Age ideas, implicit Hinduism, mysticism, occultism.

The CM has much to answer for.

An example

Let's take just one modern teacher as an example. Clark Pinnock was originally a respected Reformed theologian and writer. Gradually he became attracted to extreme Arminian views, which worsened into a form of Socinianism. The more he adopted erroneous ideas, the more attractive he became to Charismatics. After writing heterodox books like: *The Flame of God*, Gerald Coates invited him to speak at Pioneer conferences and fellowshipped with him, thus allowing Pinnock to infect thousands of gullible Charismatics who would never normally have read his theological works. His ideas include:

- SOCINIANISM - The Socinians said that God has not foreordained anything, therefore, does not foreknow the future. He is trapped by man's decisions. This is the current teaching of Pinnock. Seeking to strongly affirm the free-will of man, he posits a God who is not sovereign over all things, but also does not even know what will happen in the future. God can only know what is knowable; the future free actions of men cannot be knowable by definition. What is disingenuous in such writings is the claim that their teachings are consistent Arminianism when it is really Socinianism. (See Robert Strimple, *The Coming Evangelical Crisis*, p.140-1.)
- PURGATORY - 'It [purgatory] affords the possibility of progressive sanctification after death before entering heaven'. (*Flame of Love*, p 123f, 179; he even quotes the Roman Catholic catechism in support!)
- PATRIPASSIANISM - refers to the belief that God the Father was born in the incarnation, suffered and died. Clark Pinnock accepts patripassianism (*Flame of God*, p 27, 42, 91, 109).

Thus Pinnock teaches three major erroneous doctrines which were overturned by godly Christian scholars hundreds of years ago. His heresies blaspheme God by denying his attributes and person, deny God's sovereignty as Lord of all and attack the Gospel by teaching a possible salvation after death. Gerald Coates stated in a review that he had '*been so blessed and challenged*' by Pinnock's assault on the Biblical view of God's attributes in his book *The Openness of God*, and subsequently invited him to speak to Pioneer churches.

Following his lead, YWAM, Ichthus, Holy Trinity Church, Brompton as well as Coates' Pioneer group sponsored a conference in Coates' Westminster church on 'A Theology for Revival'. The principle speaker was Pinnock. The unofficial conference text was his book *The Openness of God*. Pinnock's opening address - in front of such luminaries as Graham Kendrick, Roger Forster, Sandy Millar and Coates himself - stated that God did not know the future and changed his mind in response to certain events in time. His third lecture emphasised: free will, including the ability to grasp salvation or reject God; stated that God existed in time not eternity; that God's love ensures that a second chance is real (purgatory); that believers can fall from grace (even after death) and that God needs our co-operation to fulfil his will. Such is the sad state into which Evangelicalism has descended within Charismatic circles.

A crucial error - ignoring God's sovereignty

Perhaps the most important doctrine that is jettisoned by Charismatics is that of the sovereignty of God. This doctrine is so fundamental that it undergirds the whole of our salvation and experience of God in this world. To fail to understand and hold that God is sovereign in all things is a catastrophic mistake.

God is sovereign in salvation. This means that the basis of conversion is the sovereign grace of God granted to those he chooses in his good pleasure. Thus salvation is not something initiated by man. Men only believe when God gives them faith. Men only repent when God grants repentance. Thus any teaching that salvation is based upon a decision by man, or by free-will, or by an action (such as raising a hand at a meeting) is false. This idea that man is responsible for initiating his conversion is known as Arminianism and is examined later in an appendix. Virtually all Charismatic churches are Arminian.

A worse notion about salvation is Pelagianism. This teaches that man does not just co-operate in salvation by making a decision (Arminianism), but performs his own salvation. He is not dead in sin but just needs reforming. He regenerates his own heart by choosing to do good; or he obeys the law by following the example of Christ in the flesh. Socinianism is a form of this but so is the teaching of CG Finney, whose emotional revivalist methods are now in vogue in Pentecostal and Charismatic works. Many who follow Finney's ideas have fallen into Pelagian teaching. Some have even tried to exonerate Pelagius, the Celtic British monk who started the heresy.⁵

Notions about conversion that elevate man and deny God's sovereignty are false and dangerous. This kind of error undergirds much Charismatic evangelism.

However, God's sovereignty is also denied in the area of Christian living as well as conversion. The Bible teaches that God is in control of all things. This control extends over every area of our lives - even the hairs on our head are numbered, just as a bird doesn't die without God's permission.⁶ This means that our problems are given to us by God to train us for eternal life. Nothing happens by accident, but every evil thing is allowed by God for a valid reason;⁷ thus we can claim that everything works for our ultimate good.⁸ Indeed the Psalmist states that God moulds our days;⁹ everything is predestined under God's hand. Indeed, if it were not so, how could God control history according to his purpose? How could the end of all things be sure and glorify him?

Now the CM does not believe this; indeed many of its teachings and practices are based on the opposite assumption. This assumption is the basis of Gnosticism; it teaches dualism - that there is a warfare in the spiritual realm between good and evil and this is represented on earth by the flesh and the spirit, material versus spiritual. Thus events have an uncertain end and the outcome is dependent upon our praying, faith and activities (see later on spiritual warfare and Word Faith).

Thus Charismatic believers are taught that the devil must be fought for them to be blessed, must be bound for them to prosper. Bad things are caused by the devil, good things are caused by God. When bad things happen they must be seen as evil and contended against.

⁵ This was done by *Revelation Church* in Chichester while promoting the aberrant Celtic Spirituality fad. It is a member of Gerald Coates' Pioneer network and the leader is considered a senior person in Coates' group and is a close personal friend of Coates.

⁶ Matt 10:29-30.

⁷ Isa 45:7; Lam 3:32-33; Amos 3:6.

⁸ Rm 8:28.

⁹ Ps 139:16 (Hebrew).

If many bad things are happening, then your faith is not strong enough to confront the devil and your suffering is your fault. This sick idea is even pushed on poor weak people who take very ill children to crusade meetings in wheelchairs, only to find that they were not healed - because the faith of the parents was not strong enough. Have the parents not suffered enough?

Now all this is false. The verses already given in the footnotes show this alone, despite the overwhelming teaching in the Bible from cover to cover. A believer can have no sure foundation in his life if he is at the whim of Satan, if there is no divine plan.

World affairs and Christian experience are not at the whim of Satan. Surely this is obvious to anyone who has read the book of Job, let alone clear teaching elsewhere. Satan had to ask God's permission to afflict Job, and this permission was granted in order for God to be glorified through the testimony of Job in his suffering. All things on earth, even hurricanes, tsunamis, tornadoes and all our problems are ordained by God for his glory in testimony or judgment.

God is sovereign; all things are under his feet. He ordains all things to comply with his glorious purposes, knowing the end from the beginning. Charismatics, both in teaching and practice, act as if the devil is in control of the world. Instead the Bible affirms:

- The LORD reigns; let the earth rejoice (Psalm 97:1)
- Whatever the LORD pleases He does, in heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all deep places ... He makes lightning for the rain; He brings the wind out of His treasuries. (Ps 135:6-7)
- The earth *is* the LORD's, and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein. (Psalm 24:1)
- Indeed heaven and the highest heavens belong to the LORD your God, *also* the earth with all that *is* in it. (Deut 10:14)
- The Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses. (Dan 4:25)

Charismatic teachings elevate both man as well as the devil and dishonour God's glory.

Unbiblical doctrines based on flimsy evidence

Charismatics have always been quick to accept strange teachings which are based upon the flimsiest of evidence. Many ideas have totally contradicted the Bible, and yet have been widely accepted by people who called themselves Evangelicals (Bible believers). For instance:

RESTORATIONISM

This was based upon taking Acts 3:21 to refer to contemporary times, a restoration of the church on earth to be as powerful and successful as the early church. Even a cursory examination of the text, 'whom [i.e. Jesus] heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.' shows that the restoration spoken of is the climax of the ages. It is the renewal of the earth which occurs at the Second Coming (Rev 21:1 and Rm 8:20-22). It is the fulfilment of God's eternal plan to restore man and his environment to his place lost at the fall. Restorationism was the most powerful, numerous and pervasive Charismatic juggernaut during the late 70's through to the early 90's. Even it's main voice 'Restoration Magazine' carried the word on its title page, and yet so few questioned the fallacy of its basic premise.

DELIVERANCE MINISTRY

This is based upon the exorcisms of demons from unbelievers by Jesus and the apostles. It fails to notice that there is no professional deliverance minister in the NT, that there is no teaching on this 'ministry' in the NT, it does not appear in the list of ministerial gifts and nowhere are Christians said to need deliverance ministry. Everywhere sin is to be repented

of and crucified rather than blaming a demon and kicking him out. The prevalence of exorcism in the ministry of Jesus and the apostles, was due to the climactic change brought about by the entrance of the kingdom of God which was instituted by Jesus. Such a dramatic, triumphal turn around in Satan's fortunes brought resistance and opposition. The entrance of light into his darkness exposed demonic influence and dispelled it (Jn 1:5-7). If there is any major deliverance ministry today, it is required in unbelievers, not believers; and it does not happen after a psychic build up in emotional meetings, but out on the streets.

BAPTISM IN THE NAME OF JESUS ONLY

This doctrine originated in heretical, oneness Pentecostal groups but became a vital practice in one early Charismatic UK stream. As well as avoiding the historic Trinitarian formula, it re-baptised church members who had been baptised in the name of the Trinity. This was supposed to ensure power in one's life. Apart from the obvious error of re-baptising people who had been genuinely baptised, such groups ignored the very specific words of the Lord himself: 'Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,' (Matt 28:19). How can such a basic command be disobeyed by those claiming to follow Christ?

WORSHIP MEETINGS, WORSHIP LEADERS AND WORSHIP MINISTRIES

The CM developed a notion of worship which spawned a whole new way of meeting together and initiated a brand new business opportunity. In simple terms, Christian worship became totally identified with singing certain songs and feeling moody. There is no Biblical basis for limiting worship to singing. Biblical worship is the sacrificial laying down of one's life in the service of God as a rational decision. This is precisely what Paul states in Romans 12:1: 'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable (*logikos* = rational) service' (*latreia* = service to God, worship). Worship is the expression of a surrendered life and is to be performed daily in a multitude of ways. Jacob worshipped while leaning on his staff (or bed-head) at home (Heb 11:21).

Praise is also the reflection of a life which testifies to God in some way. Thus our whole lives are to be a praise to God (Eph 1:6,12), so praise is not limited to singing. Neither is the offering of spiritual sacrifices, the sacrifice of praise, limited to singing. This involves giving thanks and includes spoken, not just sung, contributions (Heb 13:15). But more than this, it includes charitable acts towards others (Heb 13:16); an act which testifies to God's grace, a demonstration which praises God.

Furthermore, church meetings are to be practically focused upon edification: 'Let all things be done for edification' (1 Cor 14:26). Apostolic precedent and teaching insists that church services are based upon mutual edification, everyone able to participate. There is no such thing as a 'worship meeting'.

Now what the CM did was to ignore all this Biblical instruction / precedent and give the impression that praise/worship was what done by the church on Sunday when it sang songs and got lost in God by building up emotionalism through repetitive singing. In actual fact, this ascent up a mystical ladder through singing and loud music has more to do with occult religion than Biblical worship. Songs, or even certain types of songs, were identified with worship so that gullible people bought millions of records produced by worship leaders, worship bands, and worship organisations. Sincere people considered that if they played these CD's, they were worshipping, even if they were driving in a car or washing up. Now people can worship while performing practical chores, but not because they are

listening to Christian mood music, but because they are consecrating themselves to God in their heart.

The CM also established worship leaders as church authorities, having responsibility for up to half of the meeting, an office which does not appear in the NT church. The concept of the itinerant worship leader – have piano/guitar will travel – is even more unbiblical. All this was because a doctrinal error was foisted upon the church; that is that music and certain songs = worship. This concept will be further investigated later on.

Baptism in the Spirit

The Charismatic gullibility began with the acceptance of the Pentecostal doctrine of the baptism in (or with) the Holy Spirit. This teaches that there is a distinct second work of grace in the believer where the Spirit, upon the work of the individual (in believing, praying, waiting, repenting etc.), comes upon a person with power, imparts joy, gives gifts (usually tongues) and imparts dynamic power for evangelistic service. This is virtually considered as important as conversion; Christians without this experience are effectively viewed as second class believers. Ordinary Christians, without this experience, cannot live life to the full. The very name of the Charismatic Movement arises from the Greek word for 'gifts' in 1 Corinthians 12:4 (*charismata*), grace-gifts which supposedly come only after having this experience.

The baptism with the Spirit is indeed an essential part of salvation, as described by John the Baptist (Matt 3:11) and Jesus (Acts 1:5) and recollecting by Peter (Acts 11:16). The phrase only occurs on these three occasions. It is never mentioned by the apostles in the letters (apart from Paul below), the doctrine is never discussed under this title and no one is ever commanded to seek an experience by this name.

Clarification on this subject is found in Eph 4:5 which says that there is only one baptism.¹⁰ and 1 Cor 12:13¹¹ which explains that the baptism was a once for all, past event¹² which brought us into the body of Christ. The baptism with the Spirit is that which brings us into the body of Christ and unites us one with another; 'in whom [Christ] you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit' (Eph 2:22). It is a single event; there are no subsequent Spirit baptisms. Thus it is clear that we cannot speak of seeking to be baptised in the Spirit. All Christians have been baptised in the Spirit at the birth of the modern church at Pentecost; it is that which has joined them to Christ. No subjective experience of it is required, but acting in faith on the good of it is commanded (Rm 1:17, 6:3-4,11; Gal 3:14).

This much is crystal clear and overturns all Charismatic notions about a subjective, individual baptism. The post-Pentecost experiences of a reception (not always called a 'baptism') of the Spirit in Acts must be explained in submission to the clear scriptural evidence elsewhere. These events refer to new impacts of the Gospel on specific groups of people: Roman Gentiles, Samaritans, Paul, and Greek Gentiles (John's converts). Only in connection with the first occurrence, in Gentiles and Jews, is the experience called a 'baptism'. They are the record that the one baptism of the Spirit extends to all types of seeking people: outright pagans (Cornelius), half-converted Jews (Samaritans), persecuting zealots (Paul), and legal religious folk (disciples of John). These were special events (like other unique events in Acts) during a transitional period as the impact of

¹⁰ Water baptism is not in view here as Paul is not talking about church ordinances but our unity on the body, and water baptism is repeated for every new Christian.

¹¹ For by one Spirit we were all baptised into one body.

¹² Aorist tense in the Greek.

Pentecost touched the elect people of God. The implication of two stages for some of these (like the disciples) is due to the fact that they were saved before the cross and received the benefits of the ascension after the cross, which were not applicable before (Jn 7:37-39). Such a transition is never to be repeated. Only these disciples lived to see the change from one dispensation to another, from the old covenant to the new.

What is clear?

- All believers have been baptised in the Spirit if truly converted (1 Cor 12:13). All the elect are baptised (Acts 2:39). Believers do not have to do something to gain this baptism in the Spirit. The Spirit is given to those who repent and are baptised i.e. truly converted (Acts 2:38).
- The baptism is the act of the Holy Spirit in uniting all Christians in Christ and constituting the body of Christ (1 Cor 12:13).
- Baptism in the Spirit is not linked with a repeated experience in the church but is connected directly to the exaltation of Jesus (Acts 2:33). The baptism is the pouring forth of the Spirit upon the church.
- There is only one baptism with the Spirit (Eph 4:5).
- In the individual believer, it is effected in regeneration – being born again and cleansed by the Spirit (Jn 3:1-8).
- It is not a repeated experience dependent upon fulfilling certain conditions. Jesus brings us into the good of it at conversion (once only - Eph 4:5; Matt 3:11 - **He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire.**).
- In the believer, the Spirit acts like fire – burning up corruption. The main work of the Spirit in us after conversion is sanctification (Isa 4:2-4). The mark of a Spirit-baptised believer is thus repentance and obedience.
- Water baptism is a sign of Spirit baptism (Titus 3:5-6).
- The power which the Spirit gives is the power to witness (Acts 1:8).
- The mark of the Spirit-baptised church is the powerful declaration of the Gospel.

So why are so many people convinced of a special ministry of the Spirit through an experience in believers? This is because the Spirit does minister in various ways to believers after conversion, but not by a baptism. The Holy Spirit is said to fill believers, and they should pray for this always (Eph 5:18). Part of the effect of the one baptism is the potential of many fillings (even at Pentecost the disciples were 'filled' not baptised and they were filled again soon afterwards – Acts 4:31). The Spirit also seals believers (Eph 4:30; 2 Cor 1:22). This is a doctrine which is a part of the assurance Christians have that they belong to Christ, the seal is the guarantee of our salvation. Then there is the witness of the Spirit (Rm 8:16-17) confirming that we are sons of God. The Spirit is also our comforter, one who draws alongside (Jn 14:16) to strengthen and encourage us.

Is a distinction here important? Yes, firstly because we must be Biblical and accurate if we are to avoid error. Secondly, the baptism in the Spirit doctrine contains many potential errors. By this teaching a multitude of pagan ideas have entered the church as people sought vibrant experiences. Associated ideas like the transmission of power by laying on of hands became part and parcel of the Charismatic baptism. Results like tongues, falling over, ecstatic feelings and exotic behaviour became valid expressions of the gift. All these phenomena are common in occult religions when a master lays hands upon a devotee and the potential for corruption is great. The wild excesses of the Toronto Experience are but a logical outcome of this and again are common in the occult and Hinduism.

So, the prime admission factor in joining the CM is accepting the validity of, and submitting to the baptism of the Spirit. Since this is invalid, in the way practised by

Charismatic churches, Charismatic Christians are starting on a path of doctrinal error from day one. Falling for other lies and doctrinal novelties becomes easier the longer one stays within the movement.

Examples of error and deception

DENIAL OF HELL

I have problems with hell being eternal punishment.
Gerald Coates; [*Evangelical Times*, Jan 93.]

DENIAL OF VARIOUS DOCTRINES

Gerald Coates believes that the filling of the Holy Spirit can come before conversion and that this explains why non-believers came be slain in the spirit at his meetings.
[*Contending Earnestly For the Faith*, 4.2, p8.]

As a supposed representative of Evangelicals on Melvin Braggs's *2000 Years* (ITV) documentary/discussion of Christianity on 13 June 1999, Coates stated:

- That it is acceptable practice to meditate upon dead saints;
- That dead saints in heaven participate in fellowship with the church on earth;
- That various sacramental icons (e.g. symbols) were of use in communion with God.

DENIAL OF GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY AND TRANSCENDENCE

Man was created on terms of equality with God.
Kenneth Hagin; [*Berean Call*, June 1993.]

Faith is a force just like electricity or gravity ... we are a class of gods.

Kenneth Copeland; (spoken on TBN TV programme with Paul Crouch. *Berean Call*, June 1993.)

DENIAL OF SUBMISSION AND REVERENCE TO GOD

Never go to the Lord and say, 'If it be thy will ...' Don't allow such words to be spoken from your mouth.

Benny Hinn; [*Berean Call*, June 1993.]

DENIAL OF THE EFFICACY OF CHRIST'S ATONEMENT

Do not be surprised if there is weeping wailing and gnashing of teeth among the saved who stand before the Lord ... the blood of Jesus Christ will not cleanse [the rebellious Christian] from all sin ... such sins will stare him in the face at the judgment.

R.T. Kendall; [*Once Saved Always Saved*; p125ff.]

The Degradation of Truth and Holiness, the rise of error and ungodliness

The CM speaks a great deal about revival. The froth and bubble of their exuberant meetings are frequently described in revival terms and a global revival is a key object of prayer. In Psalm 85 the sons of Korah speak about revival and its consequences. These are specifically outlined as being truth and righteousness (v11-13). The result of any genuine revival from the Lord is that truth will prevail in sound preaching and godly application, resulting in a growing holiness amongst the Lord's people. Is this the case with the CM?

The Spirit witnesses to the truth

The real test of any ministry is truth; not gifts and not power. The work of God is a work of love in the believer and love always rejoices in truth (1 Cor 13:6). It is impossible for God to work in a believer by his Spirit and the result to be a disdain of the Bible and its truth. The Spirit inspired and preserved the Bible; he always works on the basis of truth so that Jesus called him the '*Spirit of truth*' (Jn 16:13, 14:17), just as he called God's word '*truth*' (Jn 17:17). Jesus equated his own words with his Spirit: '**The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life**', (Jn 6:63). The Spirit brings life and quickens, but he does this in connection with the word of God, which is truth.

Gifts can be demonically inspired (2 Cor 11:14) and are frequently seen amongst oriental false religions. There is nothing special in healings, tongues, words of knowledge and prophecy in themselves; they are all present in occult religions. Jesus even warns us that people can serve him assiduously, move in prophecy, perform miracles and cast out demons, yet fail to be saved believers (Matt 7:22-23). The weakest and most immature NT church was one that excelled in the most spectacular gifts (Corinth). Gifts are no evidence of spiritual maturity. Knowing the truth is (Heb 5:12-14). Godly men will follow the truth and excel in it. We should listen to such men. People who teach error should be avoided at all costs, even if they can raise the dead.

The most flagrant errors are being pushed upon the Evangelical church in these times by leaders with a reputation for supernatural power or because they are considered to be prophets or apostles. Some examples of the many false teachers follow. I will allow a few doctrinal statements to make the point, but these could be multiplied for each person as so much heresy is being spoken these days in the CM. For more information see books like: *Christianity in Crisis & Counterfeit Revival* by Hank Hanegraaff; *Power Religion* by Don Carson and others; *Charismania* by Roland Howard; *The Agony of Deceit* by Mike Horton and others; *The Drift into Deception* by Agnes & John Lawless; *The Toronto Blessing* by Nader Mikhael; *Wimber the Gnostic* by John Goodwin; *The Confusing World of Benny Hinn* by Fisher and Goedelman or *Vengeance is Ours* by Al Dager.

Examples of flagrant error and ungodliness

Kenneth Copeland

- '*You don't have a god in you. You are one*'. '*You are all little gods*'.¹³ The Godhead is inviolable; God does not change or grow (Mal 3:6; Jm 1:17) so there is no addition to the Godhead of a few 'little gods'. As well as being God, Jesus is the firstborn of a new race of people (Rm 8:29; Col 1:18; Heb 12:23). We are united in Christ because we

¹³ Kenneth Copeland, *The Force of Love*, tape BCC-56, Fort Worth, Texas. Copeland, *Praise the Lord*, Trinity Broadcasting Network. Earl Paulk, Casey Treat and Robert Tilton have made similar comments.

become part of that new race of spiritual mankind when we are born again (2 Cor 5:17). Christians never become God, though they partake of his glory so that they can testify to him (1 Pt 4:14; 5:1,4,10). To call a mere man, 'god' is blasphemy.

- 'Satan conquered Jesus on the cross.'¹⁴
- 'Heaven ... must be a planet.'¹⁵
- 'The biggest failure in ... the whole Bible is God.'¹⁶
- 'As a believer, you have the right to make commands ... Each time you stand on the word you are commanding God.'¹⁷
- Copeland teaches that Christ did not claim to be God and says that Jesus appeared to him and reaffirmed this personally to him. [This spirit could not have been the Lord then!]¹⁸

Kenneth Hagin

- Develops doctrines from personal appearances of a spirit being which claims to be Jesus and then speaks unbiblical heresy, much as other Word Faith proponents like Cerullo or Copeland. These spiritual manifestations cannot be of God since they speak lies. An example is the section of *How To Write Your Own Ticket With God* entitled 'Jesus Appears To Me'.
- 'Man was created on terms of equality with God, and he could stand in God's presence without any consciousness of inferiority.'¹⁹
- If you are born again, you are, 'as much an incarnation as was Jesus of Nazareth'.²⁰
- Teaches that we should have 'faith in my [our] faith, keep saying it until it registers'. Faith is a force activated by positive confession ('name it and claim it'). God is forced to act by this confession like a delivery boy. Our words are the most important ingredient of faith.²¹ [We are never to put our faith in formulas or our own words. Our faith is in God.]
- Praying to Jesus for victory is 'a waste of time' believers have to 'write their own ticket'.²²
- 'Christ's physical death on the cross was not enough to save us.'²³ 'The cross is actually a place of defeat'.²⁴

Earl Paulk

- 'Jesus was God in the flesh. We must be as He was in the world, even greater in volume and influence.'²⁵
- 'We are on earth as extensions of God to finish the work He began. We are the essence of God, His on-going incarnation in the world.'²⁶
- 'The interpretation has been made that Jesus Christ conquered death, but if that were so, why would Paul's epistle to the Corinthians, written at least ninety years later, say that the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death (I Corinthians 15:26) Jesus Christ

¹⁴ *Christianity in Crisis*, Hank Hanegraaff, Harvest House Pub. (1993), p11.

¹⁵ *Christianity in Crisis*, Hank Hanegraaff, Harvest House Pub. (1993), p393

¹⁶ *Praise-a-thon* programme on TBN April 1988, quoted in *Christianity in Crisis*, p125.

¹⁷ Kenneth Copeland, quoted in *Alpha – the unofficial guide*, p67.

¹⁸ See *Alpha – the unofficial guide*, p72.

¹⁹ *Christianity in Crisis*, Hank Hanegraaff, Harvest House Pub. (1993), p11.

²⁰ Kenneth E Hagin quoted in: *Alpha – the unofficial guide*, p72.

²¹ *Having Faith in Your Faith*, Kenneth Hagin Ministries, Tulsa, (1988), p4-5.

²² *How To Write Your Own Ticket With God*, this booklet is now incorporated as chapter six of *Exceedingly Growing Faith*, Kenneth Hagin Ministries, Tulsa, (1988), p20.

²³ E. McDonald, *Alpha – the unofficial guide*, p104.

²⁴ Kenneth E Hagin, *The Believer's Authority*; Faith Library Pub, (1992), p16.

²⁵ Earl Paulk, *The Ultimate Kingdom*, (1986), p121.

²⁶ Earl Paulk, *Held in the Heavens*, (1985), p 125.

conquered death individually, but it is left to the church to conquer death on a corporate basis.²⁷

- *'Is it possible that there will be a people who so possess the authority of Almighty God, as Elijah did, that they, as a group, will say to death, hell, and the spirit of Satan, "We will NOT die. We will stay here and be changed, and we will call Jesus Christ to return to this earth as King of Kings and Lords of Lords"?' Yes, that is what I believe the church must do! ... "all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," and the church today has that same power. Death will not be conquered by Jesus returning to earth. It will be conquered when the church stands up boldly and says, "We have dominion over the earth".'*²⁸

Paul Crouch

- Towards a critic of Word Faith heresies: *'To hell with you ... Get out of the way ... or God's going to shoot you if I don't ... I don't want to see your ugly face.'*²⁹
- *'I am a little god! Critics, be gone'*³⁰

Paul Billheimer

- *'Jesus is the first person ever to be born again. Why did his spirit need to be born again? Because it was estranged from God.'*³¹ This ignores the fact that Jesus committed his spirit to God before he died (Lk 23:46). Jesus suffered as a man, his spirit is God and could not suffer or be tainted.
- *'It was not sufficient for Christ to offer up only his physical life on the cross. His pure human spirit had to "descend" into hell ... The Father turned him over, not only to the agony and death of Calvary, but to the Satanic torturers of His pure spirit as part of the just dessert of the sin of all the race. As long as Christ was "the essence of sin" he was at Satan's mercy in that place of torment.'*³² [On the contrary, the Bible states that it was Christ's death as a man on the cross which provided our atonement, not some mystical, spiritual redemption in hell. On the cross Jesus stated that atonement was 'finished'. Jesus did not go to hell to be tortured by Satan. Jesus went to Hades to set captives free. In fact, he actually stated that he and the thief would be in paradise the same day as his death (Lk 23:43), that is the place reserved for elect saints in Hades until heaven was opened for them by the cross (Lk 16:19ff). Satan is currently bound in the aerial regions around the earth; he is not thrown into hell (the lake of fire) until the day of judgment.]

Benny Hinn

- Was one of the first modern Charismatic preachers who claimed to 'throw' or 'blow' the Spirit at people, 'proved' by their falling over. This is sheer blasphemy. The Spirit is God and we should fear him.
- Regarding himself, he continues the heretical Word Faith and Mormon notion that believers are God: *'I'm Benny Jehovah'*.³³ *'You are a little god on earth running around ... I am a little Messiah walking on earth.'*³⁴

²⁷ Earl Paulk, *The Proper Function of the Church*.

²⁸ Earl Paulk, *The Proper Function of the Church*, p13.

²⁹ *Christianity in Crisis*, Hank Hanegraaff, Harvest House Pub. (1993), p219.

³⁰ Paul Crouch, TBN *Praise The Lord* programme, 7.7.86.

³¹ Paul Billheimer, *Destined For the Throne*, Bethany House, p35-37.

³² Paul Billheimer, *Destined For the Throne*, Bethany House, p83-84.

³³ *Spiritual Warfare Seminar*, Jubilee Christian Centre 2.5.90. Quoted in *The Confusing World of Benny Hinn*, Fisher and Goedelman, Personal Freedom Outreach, St Louis, (1996) p12.

³⁴ Trinity Broadcast Network's (TBN) *Praise The Lord Show*, 6.12.90.

- Regarding his critics: *'I wish I could just ... find one verse that says, "If you don't like 'em, kill 'em"... don't attack God's servants ... you stink... I wish God would give me a Holy Ghost machine gun – I blow your head off.'*³⁵
- Regarding the Godhead: *'There are nine of them ... the Holy Spirit has a soul and a body separate from that of Jesus and the Father... God the Father ...walks in a spirit body and he has hair ... has eyes ... has a mouth ... has hands.'* [Another Mormon idea.]³⁶
- Regarding the nature of Christ: *'He who is the nature of God became the nature of Satan when he became sin. ... First he died spiritually and then he died physically...Jesus Christ knew the only way He would stop Satan is by becoming one in nature with him.'*³⁷
- *'Every unbeliever is filled with a demon spirit.'*³⁸

The sheer number of errors preached by this man is overwhelming, and the above are merely scraps from a mountain of evidence. Furthermore, Hinn has been publicly exposed on various television programmes for making false claims about healings, sometimes for people who subsequently died. His finances have also been called into question and the US Federal government has made enquiries into his tax position.

Morris Cerullo

- *'You're not looking at Morris Cerullo – you're looking at God. You're looking at Jesus.'*³⁹
- States that God is about six foot tall and twice as broad as a human body with no eyes, nose or mouth.⁴⁰
- Claimed in 1972 that the USA was about to witness a great revival;⁴¹ it never occurred.
- Stated that the whole world would be reached with the Gospel by 2000.⁴²

John Wimber

- Former Vineyard leader and colleague of Wimber John Goodwin states: *'It is a common statement of Wimber's that "God is greater than His word". This phrase has become a mantra for John Wimber and is used repeatedly on tapes, and live at seminars and conferences. This phrase means two things. First, there is truth in extra-biblical sources ... and secondly that the phenomenon (sic) experienced by attendees of Vineyard seminars and services do not need to be validated by Scripture. They could, according to Wimber, contradict God's Word and still be "from the Lord".'*⁴³

³⁵ TBN's *Praise The Lord Show*, 9.11.90.

³⁶ Orlando Christian Center broadcast, Trinity Broadcasting Network; 13.10.90; quoted in *The Confusing World of Benny Hinn*, p6. Similar statements are quoted in *Christianity in Crisis*, p124.. Although he once repented of this error after receiving many condemnations in 1991, he later repeated it again. His repenting is serious in itself since he made the errors under the divine 'anointing' specifically claimed to be a revelation from God. He took up the errors again on TBN 3.10.91 and on TBN's *Praise The Lord Show*, 23.10.92.

³⁷ Compiled from Orlando Christian Center broadcast, Trinity Broadcasting Network; 9.12..90 and sermon late 1988 Quoted in *The Confusing World of Benny Hinn*, p7-8.

³⁸ *Good Morning Holy Spirit*, Thomas Nelson, p146. This phrase was amended in later editions as were many others.

³⁹ *Christianity in Crisis*, Hank Hanegraaff, Harvest House Pub. (1993), p11.

⁴⁰ Morris Cerullo, *Miracle Book*, Cerullo World Evangelism Inc., San Diego, (1984), px-xi.

⁴¹ *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, 18.11.1978.

⁴² Morris Cerullo, *From the Heart, Victory*, Jan/Feb 1992, 6

⁴³ John Goodwin, *Testing The Fruit Of The Vineyards*, St Matthew Pub. Ltd. p6-7. Quoting from Wimber's: *Church Planting Seminar*, tapes 1,2,3,4,5, March 28, 1981 and others.

- *'It's not a worthy goal just to be informed by the Bible... It's evil when you hide behind doctrinal beliefs'*.⁴⁴ Compare: Jn 7:16-17; Rm 6:17, 16:17; 1 Tim 4:15, 6:3-5; 2 Tim 4:3; Titus 1:9, 2:1; Heb 5:12-14; 2 Jn 1:9.
- Called God, Christ and faith: *'a force'*.⁴⁵
- Called Jesus, *'a blasphemer'*,⁴⁶ who sometimes had *'little or no faith'*.⁴⁷
- Conducted meetings that had *'openly Occult and demonic manifestations occurring'*.⁴⁸
- Endorsed heretics, universalists, occultics, humanists and enemies of the Gospel as sound evangelicals such as: Robert Schuller,⁴⁹ the Pope, Morton Kelsey,⁵⁰ Agnes Sanford,⁵¹ Ruth Carter Stapleton,⁵² John and Paula Sandford⁵³ and Kenneth Hagin.⁵⁴
- Stated that: *'there is nothing theologically out of line with ... [being] healed as a result of touching the relics of saints'*.⁵⁵

There is simply not the space here to continue listing the many and varied errors of John Wimber. They could (and have) fill whole books. He was the main, single reason for leading gullible Christians, who wanted power, into occultic, Hinduistic, pantheistic and Gnostic heresies in the 1980's.

Bob Jones

- Stated that the end-time prophets, Jones' spiritual 'grandchildren', will *'possess the Spirit without measure. For they are the best of all the generations that have ever been on the face of the earth. ... They will move into things of the supernatural that no one has ever moved in before. Every miracle, sign and wonder that has ever been in the Bible, they'll move in it consistently. They'll move in the power that Christ did... They themselves will be the generation that's raised to put death itself underneath their feet.'*⁵⁶
- *'My hands turn blue, and then they turned purple. And when that happens that means you've got some intercession that's gone up. You've got some intercession that's gone up that papa's saying yes to [Jones calls God 'papa'.] ... When my hands turn purple it means you're getting through to the top.'*⁵⁷
- *'That's what the children are entering into: they'll have the Spirit without measure, they'll walk through walls; they'll be translated.... Incorruptible flesh will they have and the lightning in their hands will be the hiding place of their power.'*⁵⁸

⁴⁴ Ibid, p11,13.

⁴⁵ Ibid, p7, 12, 15.

⁴⁶ Ibid, p12.

⁴⁷ Ibid, p16.

⁴⁸ Ibid, p12.

⁴⁹ Open humanist who teaches a gospel of 'possibility thinking' and that Christ's Spirit dwells in every person.

⁵⁰ Kelsey is an Episcopalian priest and Jungian psychologist who equates Jesus with a witch doctor having 'extra-sensory perception' as any shaman. He receives guidance from the dead, equates the Holy Spirit with 'the self' and commends false religions and divination. Wimber dedicated a seminar series to this man.

⁵¹ Agnes Sanford is a popular Christian writer whose ideas are almost New Age and Pantheistic. Her ideas are Jungian, combined with Shamanistic occult techniques. She started the inner healing epidemic. See Hunt, *Seduction of Christianity*, chapter 9, for a concise summary of her zany and dangerous beliefs.

⁵² Stapleton is a disciple of Sanford and promoter of inner healing. She has said that people can be 'born again' by listening to great music or staring at great works of art.

⁵³ Yet more disciples of Sanford with Pantheistic tendencies.

⁵⁴ Leading proponent ('father') of Word Faith errors, disciple of the heretic E. W. Kenyon.

⁵⁵ Goodwin, op cit p17.

⁵⁶ Bob Jones, tape: *Visions & Revelations* (1988) quoted in Cloud, *The New prophets*, Way of Life Literature, Oak Harbour, Washington, p10.

⁵⁷ Bob Jones, *Visions & Revelations*, 1989.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

Does any of this occult rubbish need further comment?

Rick Joyner

- *‘He [Jesus] could have banished them [demons] to hell on the day of His resurrection, but He left them here for us because He wants His bride to share the honour! ... The Lord has called His bride to rule and reign with Him as joint heir. ... her great position.’*⁵⁹ What presumption is this that we share honour with Christ in defeating Satan. We have no ‘great position’ except that of being ‘in Christ’, the greatness and the glory is the Lord’s alone.
- His book of visions, *The Final Quest*, is an example of modern Gnosticism.⁶⁰ The ascent up a mountain finding new levels of revelation is pure Gnostic mysticism; he even has an angel named Wisdom explain truths to him and uses occultic imagery like eagles to symbolise modern prophets. Even Pentecostal teachers condemned it. Classic Pentecostal preacher Joseph Chambers stated that it was ‘*absolutely the biggest pack of “ultimate lies” from demons and devils that I have ever reviewed ... Rick Joyner is an ultimate false prophet.*’⁶¹
- In his *Final Quest* visions he meets and talks to the apostle Paul, who then states that he has been waiting to meet Joyner. Attempting to communicate with the dead is necromancy and is forbidden. It is also impossible (Heb 9:27), those attempting it actually talk to demons masquerading as people. Furthermore, note the incredible arrogance of Joyner in considering that Paul looked up to him! What is more, he states that Paul fell short in his apostolic calling and work.⁶² This contradicts the real Paul who said, ‘*I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.*’ (2 Tim 4:7-8).
- He calls the people who refuse to believe his new revelations as ‘*the hordes of hell*’.
- His whole book/vision is comparable to modern computer games or fantasy board games like ‘Dungeons & Dragons’ where people rise in different levels as they gain skills and gifts. Joyner talks to eagles who eat snakes, meets angels, encounters vomiting vultures and urinating demons, collects gemstones, finds rooms of silver and gold, enters glorious gardens like Eden, etc. This is sheer fantasy bordering on lunacy. Why are his books in the Christian best-seller lists?

Classical Pentecostal and Renewal apologetics vs. Charismatic extremism

Now some Charismatics would state that they are nothing like the aforementioned leaders. They contend against them, deplore their errors and declare that the foundation of their own ministry is the Bible and that they are sound evangelicals. But is this true? UK organisations and church leaders in this category would include: PWM (Clifford Hill and colleagues), Moriel (Jacob Prasch), most of the self-appointed ‘discernment ministries’ or ‘watchmen’ (like Tricia Tillin), and many of the contending type journals (like *Vanguard* or *Contending Earnestly For The Faith*). They would consider themselves to be ‘moderate

⁵⁹ Rick Joyner, *Epic Battles Of The Last Days*, p14.

⁶⁰ Gnosticism was a cultic heresy which plagued the early church and was particularly combated by the apostle John. It taught a blend of mysticism and ritual by which leaders imparted a special, revealed knowledge (‘gnosis’) to disciples whereby one escaped this evil world of the flesh to ascend gradually to the spiritual world of God. The adepts thus had their divine spark fanned into a ‘god-consciousness’ by which they transcended material things (equated with evil) and lived in a spiritual world, which was the only true reality. Rituals included: hymns, repetitive chanting, drugs, meditation, ecstatic experiences and so on. Many aspects were similar to practices now found in the CM and New Age variations. Full enlightenment was by a continual ascent up a never-ending path, requiring constant new experiences of revelation. (More later.)

⁶¹ *Paw Creek Ministries*, Review article from website.

⁶² Rick Joyner, *The Final Quest*, Morning Star Publications, 1996, pp. 131-132

Charismatics'. These folk have rightly withstood some of the extremes found in the CM and continue to point out current errors – like the false Celtic spirituality, false claims of revival, false practices, false prophecies and so on, but are they in line with historic Christianity?

One problem in recent years is that some Charismatic folk have gradually realised the errors of the CM when confronted by an extreme like Toronto. In this they were aided by some of the above ministries, but were then sucked into another aberration. As the folk left churches they were vulnerable and desperate for confirmation in the faith as they lost their foundations. Some lost friends, churches, all hope of local fellowship, their good name; some even lost their jobs or their homes. These people needed hope and a new fellowship framework, so they quickly jumped on an anti-charismania bandwagon, only to be trapped into a subtler form of 'moderate Charismatic' unorthodoxy.

The dividing issue between the CM and the above groups is really that of eschatology. Most of the UK CM, especially restoration churches, are postmillennialists, and this is why they can buy into a triumphalist, global expectation of social and spiritual revival in the future. On the contrary, the above 'moderate Charismatic' ministries are all premillennialists (Mostly Dispensational Premillennialists) who correctly draw attention to a growing apostasy in the church at the end. The problem is that neither group realises that the Biblical and historical position is amillennial. The end is a time of contrasts, the wheat and the tares come to fulness at the same time. There is a growing apostasy in a professing national church but God's purposes in the real, hidden church will be fulfilled, and this church will be persecuted for testifying to the truth (not secretly raptured away). Some groups feel so strongly about their Dispensational premillennialism that they hold it as a main feature of their confession (e.g. Vanguard Magazine), thus condemning many great teachers as heretics (e.g. Martyn Lloyd-Jones for instance). This is extreme and unbiblical. We do not separate over secondary doctrines.

One of the most dangerous ideas amongst these 'moderate Charismatics' is the fascination with Jewish (Hebraic) roots of the faith. This arises directly out of Dispensationalism, the foundation of which is a dichotomy between the church and Israel. Despite the clear warnings about Judaizers in the NT and the need to abandon Jewish religious forms, many have left the CM only to be misled into becoming legalists, ritualists or bound by a false method of interpretation. Having written extensively on this in my booklet *The Veil of Moses*, there is no place here to investigate this error at length. It will suffice to make the following concise points:

- THERE IS ONLY ONE ETERNAL DIVINE COUNSEL AND PLAN, historically expressed in various covenantal forms. This counsel is between God the Father and Christ. The Father gave the Son a people (Jn 17:2,6,9) whom Christ agreed to die for. Christians are included in covenant with God by being united 'in Christ', and sharing his righteous life, thus being the fulfilment of Abraham's seed (Gal 3:28-29). Thus there is only one form of salvation.
- THERE IS THUS ONLY ONE PEOPLE OF GOD NOT TWO (Eph 2:14). That people is the church (1 Pt 2:10), which includes Jews as well as everyone else (Col 3:11).
- THE MATERIAL PROMISES ARE FULFILLED IN THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF CHRIST AND HAVE NOW BECOME SPIRITUAL REALITIES. Thus the temple is not of stone but is the people of God (1 Cor 3:16). The nation is no longer ethnic but a holy, spiritual nation (1 Pt 2:9).
- THE NT WAS WRITTEN IN GREEK, even though mainly written by Jewish authors, since Greek was the lingua franca of the empire at the time. Even the most common version of the OT scriptures was the Greek Septuagint at the time of the NT.

- THERE IS NO VALUE IN JUDAISM AS A RELIGION; it has been cancelled by God (Heb 9:11-14, 10:9) and a new, living way established (Heb 10:20). This means that there is no spiritual value in adopting fleshly, rabbinic methods of interpretation. Modern Judaism is not even the Judaism of Jesus' time, but is a reconfigured Pharisaism based on the Babylonian Talmud - hence Rabbinic Judaism.
- WHEN A PERSON BECOMES A CHRISTIAN, HE BECOMES A NEW CREATURE IN CHRIST (2 Cor 5:17) and thus loses all physical, national and ethnic priorities. At a human level we do not cease to be English or Jewish, but these have no spiritual value whatsoever.
- CELEBRATING JEWISH FEASTS IS SPECIFICALLY STATED TO BE A BONDAGE because the reality to which they testified is in Christ who has now come (Gal 4:9-11, 5:1,4; Col 2:16-17).
- THE KINGDOM WAS SPECIFICALLY STATED BY JESUS TO BE TAKEN AWAY FROM ISRAEL (Matt 21:43).

Regarding individuals, the scope of errors can be seen in the following:

Jacob Prasch

Prasch is a real problem to the cause of Christ's kingdom. His belligerent, almost violent attitude towards people who disagree with him is astounding and betrays a lack of grace. His behaviour has split churches and even his own followers, large numbers of whom have abandoned him after being damaged. On one occasion his actions resulted in a court action which found against him requiring his public apology and recantation. His espousal of demonic rabbinic hermeneutics⁶³ is dangerous and misleading. His doctrinal teaching is filled with errors, poor Biblical understanding, and forced conclusions. He openly adopts theological systems which are unbiblical and opposed to the sovereignty of God (Dispensationalism, Arminianism), no matter how much he claims to moderate them. His extreme anti-Reformation statements are so full of historical inaccuracies that they have received widespread condemnation from Church History professors. Yet many still revere him as a champion of moderate Charismaticism. It would fill a book to list all his published errors, a sample follows:

- He teaches a new approach to interpreting scripture by using rabbinical Jewish methods, mainly 'midrash'. This leads to arbitrary and novel ideas; virtually anything he feels like saying can be supported by this method, for instance: Leah is a type of the Gentile church while Rachel is a type of Israel. As Jacob had to learn to love Leah before he could get Rachel, so '*Jesus desiring Israel ... has to take the Gentile church first. Only after he loves the Gentile church ... [does he get] Israel*'.⁶⁴ The Bible states, however, that all the elect have been loved since eternity (Eph 1:4-5). Only those whom God loves in eternity are saved. Furthermore, God does not change or do anything imperfectly. If God loves anyone, he loves perfectly from the start. His love does not grow or fade (Eccles 3:14). Even at the level of an imagined typology, Leah would have to represent Israel, not the 'Gentile church' since God 'married' Israel (Jer 3:14) before the NT church existed. But even this falls apart when one notes that the NT church comprises of Gentiles and Jews with no dividing wall of partition. The whole exposition is nonsense – but attractive to the gullible because of its novelty.
- Prasch is guilty of many historical errors in his vindictive writings; for instance: '*The Reformers did not rediscover the gospel*' (Moriel Newsletter 7, p5). '*We must*

⁶³ 'Demonic' is not an extreme adjective Here. Rabbinic Judaism teaches terrible blasphemies against Christ, encourages violence to Christians and awful lawlessness, such as paedophilia. To give just two examples from the Talmud - Jesus is said to be boiling in excrement in hell and was conceived illegitimately during menstruation [*Gittin*, 57a, 56b; *Kallah*, 1b (18b)]; '*Pederasty with a child below nine years of age is not deemed as pederasty with a child above that*'; [*Sanhedrin*, 54b]; '*intercourse with a small boy is not regarded as a sexual act*,' [*Kethuboth*, 11b, p58, note 1].

⁶⁴ Jacob Prasch, *Daughters of Zion*, taped sermon, Moriel tapes.

remember that the reformers were humanists' (7.2). 'The only way most Protestant followers of the Reformers sought to convert souls was by the sword' (7.11). 'The same Luther who inspired the Reformation also inspired the Holocaust' (7:9). 'The little known Caspar Schwenkenfeld, [sic] the reformer of Silesia ... was by far the most doctrinally sound of the Reformers' (7.10). [In fact Kaspar von Ossig Schwenkfeld was a formally declared heretic who rejected justification by faith and taught false views on the nature of Christ's person.] 'Erasmus, the greatest Christian humanist. Unfortunately, church history has never done him justice' (7.5). [All sound Christian historians accept that Erasmus was never truly converted but remained a committed Roman Catholic.]

- *'He [God] will give all power and dominion to their long awaited Messiah [Jesus].'*⁶⁵ This Dispensational notion is wrong, God has already given all power and authority to his Son, (Matt 28:18).
- *'To God one man without sin is worth all the men with sin.'*⁶⁶ Although this is true in the case of Jesus, this is not what Jacob is saying in his contextual reference to the typology of a sacrifice. Jesus' sacrifice is of infinite value because he is a being of infinite worth. He not only has an uncorrupted life but possesses eternity of life. One hypothetical sinless man would only redeem his own life and no one else's.

The Spirit bears holy fruit

The real fruit of any godly ministry is holiness. The Spirit of God is the Holy Spirit and he can only produce that which is holy. His main occupation amongst saints is the work of sanctification in us. Therefore, any operation of the Spirit in believers will result in increased holiness. Conversely, any ministry that claims to be of the Spirit, but which denies holiness or tends towards sin, can only be of Satan. The history of Pentecostalism and the Charismatic Movement reveals a disproportionate number of powerful leaders who demeaned God's word, fell into public sin or who led people into loose moral living.

Some had problems with alcoholism (A.A. Allen) others were trapped in immorality (Charles Parham). R. A. Torrey said that the Pentecostal meetings which he attended *'seethed with immorality of the grossest character.'*⁶⁷

Some have openly admitted to being antinomians (against God's law, e.g. Gerald Coates). Others had many failings; accredited American minister George Hensley was married four times, sold illegally distilled whiskey, was arrested and imprisoned on a chain gang but escaped and fled to Cleveland. So called prophet Bob Jones was brought to England by John Wimber and laid hands on many national Charismatic leaders to impart his 'anointing'. Yet even then Wimber knew of Jones' aberrations and occult roots. His paranormal experiences began in a mental asylum to which he had been incarcerated after extended alcoholism, violence, immorality and drug abuse. After this he began to talk to demons and he had an 'angelic' (demonic) messenger who gave him information. Clifford Hill visited him in 1989 and immediately discerned a demonic presence in him. (See *Blessing the Church*, p194). Eventually, in 1991, Wimber was forced to dismiss him for 'gross sexual sin'- using his 'prophetic' gift to manipulate women sexually - and other offences. This is the man of whom Mike Bickle (leader of the Kansas City Fellowship) said, *'There is nobody ... that had a more integral role in establishing our foundations'*. (Quoted from, *What's the problem*, by Ernest Gruen.)

⁶⁵ *Final Words of Jesus*, p11

⁶⁶ *Final Words of Jesus*, p31

⁶⁷ *Christian History Magazine*, No. 58, p57-58.

Many have been caught out in lies and false prophecies. The recent failed prophecies of Gerald Coates of revival in Westminster in 1996 or the destruction of Lake Taupo, New Zealand in 1991 are nothing new. Charles Parham prophesied a global end time revival which would usher in the second coming of Christ to occur in the 1920's. It didn't. Marie Woodworth-Etter prophesied the destruction of San Francisco in 1890. The principal Pentecostal leader in India declared that Ceylon would sink into the sea on 16 October 1907. This was verified by several other tongues and warnings were published in Pentecostal journals. Many people, including Smith Wigglesworth falsely prophesied the imminent arrival of the Second Coming and expected to be raptured. More still prophesied the healing of someone, only for the person to die. For instance, UK Pentecostal leader Mrs Boddy claimed a neighbour's sick child would recover. Rev J.M. Pollock then had a tongue confirming this declaration as he went to give the mother the news. When he arrived, he found the boy dead.

Many have claimed that people were healed by their ministry but they subsequently died. UK national television recently (2001) exposed such a case with Benny Hinn, but it has happened frequently. A medical examination of Oral Roberts' meetings revealed no healings that were more than psychological or hysteric shock, and at least one died. Other claims were false: Roberts printed photographs of three doctors congratulating him on his healings in 1952. Pastor Donald Barnhouse checked this and found that none of these men were licensed doctors. Pastor Carroll Stegall, Jnr. stated, after a full inquiry, that *'Far from curing, they [healing evangelists inc. Roberts] often kill. Far from blessing, their arrival in a city is rather a curse, a misery, a racket, a destruction of faith in simple people'*.⁶⁸

Women leaders have fared no better. Maria B. Woodworth-Etter was arrested for obtaining money under false pretences and other offences, divorced first husband and went into trances resulting in her nickname of 'the Voodoo priestess'. Aimee Semple McPherson divorced her second husband, had an (alleged) highly publicised affair, was charged with perjury, had a disastrous third marriage, which lasted only two years, and had a film made of her extravagances. Kathryn Kuhlman was married, then left her husband, a man who divorced his wife to marry her, loved expensive luxuries like jewels and was charged with being either a hysteric or a fraud due to the repeated failure of her healings. Dr. William Nolan, a physician and surgeon, studied this subject for two years, including several months investigating Kuhlman's claims. At first sympathetic, he states that he became revolted at the deception, abuse, false claims, repeated innocent errors, crass over-enthusiasm, and *'flagrant nonsense'*. He saw no organic healings at all. Of Kuhlman he said, *'Kathryn Kuhlman would have had to be either blind or incredibly stupid, and she was obviously neither. Was she, then, a hypocrite or a hysteric? I didn't know, but I had begun to seriously question her credibility ... I wondered if she really knew what damage she was doing'*.⁶⁹

This sort of evidence could, literally, be continued ad nauseam, there is simply so much documented history of gross sin in the Charismatic and Pentecostal Movements. This is not to say that there are not godly men and women leaders amongst them, or that other denominations don't have failing leaders, but the CM seems to have a disproportionate high number of gross public failures.

⁶⁸ Dr. William Nolan, *Healing: A Doctor in Search of a Miracle*, quoted from *O Timothy*, Special Issue, *Charismatic Confusion in Indianapolis*, p50.

⁶⁹ Dr. William Nolan, *Healing: A Doctor in Search of a Miracle*, quoted from *O Timothy*, Special Issue, *Charismatic Confusion in Indianapolis*, p48-49.

Church Issues

The Degradation of Worship

The Biblical emphasis on worship is personal. We see, in both testaments, that worship has much more to do with submission, obeisance and yielding than postures and actions in rituals. In fact continual worship is enjoined upon believers, it is something they should continue in during everyday life, just as Joseph worshipped while leaning on his staff at home. An ordinary Israelite worshipped when he took an unblemished (and expensive) lamb or goat, laid his hands on its head and watched as the priest cut its throat, praising God that the animal had just died in his place and for his sins. He did not even realise that this symbolised Jesus' death on the cross; his worship was an act of obedience to God's instruction; hardly a wonderful emotional, exuberant experience.

Now it is true that traditional church worship services are full of contradictions. If there is one thing which denominations need to reconsider it is how the church gathers and what it does when it gathers. How controlling scriptures like 1 Corinthians 11-14 are continually ignored is beyond me; however, the CM's contribution to church meetings has done much more serious damage. The CM is not an alternative to conservative rigid formality, it is a corruption of truth.

In the early days of the British CM there was hope that it was a positive contribution to church life as many assemblies emerged and met in homes to avoid dead formalism. In the 1970's independent house churches broke bread and practised mutual encouragement, often because there was no suitable gifted teacher present. Here was an opportunity for believers to learn how to edify one another in a scriptural fashion. Moving amongst these groups were some gifted, and not a few, sound teachers. It led some like Martyn Lloyd-Jones to have high hopes for the movement. Instead, as the decade closed, most of these home gatherings had coalesced into one ministry stream or another and had become part of much larger church settings. Gone was the practice of encouraging one another to be replaced by strong personalities leading from the front of large congregations, many of which became more and more unsound and almost all were Arminian.

Celebrations also became the order of the day where towns had united meetings with a dramatic type of emotional worship led by a worship leader in front of a strong band of musicians. People from smaller churches were impressed by the intensity of emotional feelings, generated in such an atmosphere, where there was absolutely no individual participation. Over time, people began to think that all services should follow this form. In the better celebrations, the songs (nearly always choruses) would be attached to a prayer, an exhortation, a short word or a testimony and thus had some point. In other settings, the song choices were fairly mindless and had to do with what whipped up the crowd's feelings. Music was beginning to dominate the song choices. Certain songs (like 'I exalt thee') were guaranteed to raise the level of 'spirituality' and intensity of emotion in any audience.

Into this mix, in the mid 1980's, entered John Wimber with his Californian folk-rock musicians and laid back attitude. On the good side he encouraged people to interact with God and have a healthy respect for adoring God for himself. Although he was often criticised for their vapid, trivial songs (some of which he wrote himself), we are commanded to come to God in a child-like fashion and there is nothing wrong with singing our worship to God in humble simplicity and adoration. What we must avoid is worship

that is dumbed-down into total irrationality, superficial emotion, or unbiblical statements. A simple song is not a bad thing if it teaches truth and evokes adoration; the Psalms make this clear. The weighty Psalm 119 could not be sung often, excellent as it is, while some Psalms are only a few verses long and are very subjective.

We cannot blame Wimber that many churches chose to sing almost nothing but trivial, superficial songs. The real problem with Wimber's contribution to worship services was the flowing together of several songs, the song structure and the subjective/passive foundation of worship.

We must remember that God's intention is for people to share in worship services. *Koinonia* means that people 'give a share and take a share'. There is interaction, community, mutuality: 'each one has ...'. Songs must be meaningful and be directly related to people. Although the one-man ministry of most churches is unbiblical, at least the choice of hymns is connected to the rest of the service (usually) and has a purpose. When Wimber brought his healing conferences to the UK, his biggest contribution was the importation of his Californian worship style. There were two problems.

Firstly, his West Coast, folk-rock musicians brought songs that were steeped in youth pop culture whereas most UK Charismatic song-writers were still mainly influenced by hymns, Salvation Army songs and Elim choruses. The structure of these was melodic, the chord progressions traditional. Church songs were, usually, still separate from the idioms of popular music. Wimber's musicians, like Carl Tuttle, started to bring songs which were based in American pop culture and which used rock progressions. Young audiences began to sing along in celebrations just as they did to the radio. Chord progressions like G F C G or Am G F Am began to dominate songs and had not been formerly used much in church music. Part of the attraction was that such progressions could be repeated, with a suitable lyrical 'hook', ad infinitum and this generated emotional feelings of bliss and, eventually, passivity in the audience. The congregation, thus suitably prepared, would be amenable to the ministry that followed.

Now there is nothing wrong with one chord progression over another, music is mostly neutral (not always). But it's the use which was made of this. It also led song writing and worship leading into certain paths which were not suitable. (More later.) It should also be realised that such types of repeated chord progressions feature in occult religions aimed at producing passivity and suggestibility in people.

The second problem was the flowing together of several songs into a sort of spiritual concerto lasting up to an hour. Many problems arise from this, especially if the worship leader is a musician.

- One problem is that songs can be chosen on the basis of the music, or even the key of the music, rather than the lyrical content. This is the very reverse of what should happen. If a person is trying to meld the songs together, he will be seeking to link the end of one song with the beginning of another. If the two are in the same key this becomes easier, especially if the leader is a guitarist with limited musical ability who cannot link the two with a suitable phrase or chord sequence.
- The structure of all the songs taken as a unit becomes the dominant feature. Individual songs can sometimes just be a means of getting from one place to another. The experience is based upon the feelings generated by stringing all the songs together and ceasing to have any meaningful contributions. The raising of the 'spiritual' atmosphere becomes the motivation for song choices. This is pagan.

- Many of the songs began to be very simple in order to fit into this ‘worship’ system, especially as guitarists became the mainstay of Charismatic worship leading (by the way, I speak as a professional level guitarist). It is quite difficult for mediocre guitar players to play complex songs; it is even more difficult if they are leading the worship and singing as well. This led to a dumbing-down of song structures. [There’s nothing wrong with simple songs in their place, but using several together and repeating them at length results in superficiality.]
- As songs began to be written by musicians with little spiritual experience and often virtually zero theology, the songs became focused on subjective matters and very poor. Very often the focus of a new chorus was the individual rather than God. A song which was unsound, or very weak in content, could be extremely popular if it had the right type of musical content and raised people’s emotional response. [There were some exceptions to this in the early days, some writers had better theology and scriptural content, but in general today these are few and far between.] We will never know how much of the false theology present in the CM was mainly transmitted through songs, but I suspect CM choruses have been a key factor.
- As audiences became enraptured with the atmosphere created by the song cycle, they could be taken wherever the worship leader wanted to go. If he was responsible and wise he would direct them to Christ, but many congregations were taken into the realms of cultic activity. A passive, blissful audience is a yielded audience in the hands of the worship leader – a very dangerous situation.

Two serious repercussions resulted from this revolution of worship. The first was that the Biblical purpose of gathering together was totally overturned – people became non-contributors in the very church system that was originally founded on congregational contributions. The second was that musicians dominated the meetings. Today most Charismatic churches have a large band with drums and a professional PA system. The sheer volume of this racket is enough to destroy a worshipful attitude yet no one seems to care about this. Neither do they care that they alienate the old and infirm who simply cannot stand the noise levels. I have heard of many people who take earplugs to their worship services.

The net effect of this musical domination is that church meetings have become both worldly and pagan. Many so called ‘worship’ sessions in the CM bear little resemblance to historic church worship but are very similar to worldly rock / pop concerts. It is clear that some of the new breed of musician / worship leader have aspirations to be rock stars. They write a series of songs, practise them on congregations then record a new ‘worship’ album. This is hyped up with adverts in Christian publications, particularly Christian music and book journals. To promote the album, ‘worship’ concerts and events are staged where the worship is based on the songs from the latest album. The audiences gasp at their ‘worship’ leader icons just like pop fans, while the worship leaders use all the tricks of the rock musician with exactly the same back up band format and entourage. Often live recordings are made of such concerts, a cheap source of revenue. Such people should try to repeat this success in the real world where secular tastes may not be so accommodating.

All this is helpful to the ‘apostolic’ ministry team which the musician is connected to. Sometimes the ‘apostle’ or ‘prophet’ of this group writes lyrics occasionally for the choruses (e.g. Gerald Coates). It helps the ministry leader to get his ideas across if they can be put into music. It is also valuable to have a popular worship leader as part of the team. The worship will attract the audiences then the ‘apostle’ can give his message to a captivated and softened up, passive congregation. In a state of emotional exuberance and hypnotised delirium it is relatively easy to get folks to do what you want and respond to ministry. Even

temporary healing is common at such times as endorphins race through people's systems, though it rarely lasts till the next day. All this is typical paganism.

The CM meetings are also dominated by pagan ideas, even though the participants have little idea that this is so. This can be easily demonstrated by watching a video of a typical Charismatic worship time and then watching occultic sessions in almost any branch of cultic activity, whether it be Wicca, Islamic whirling Dervishes, New Age chanting or Hinduistic sanyassin, the ingredients are the same. That is: a heavy reliance upon rhythm pulsated by loud drums, loud repetitive music, repeated chanted lines, the suggestions of a prominent worship leader, a giving over to passivity, the dominance of emotions over volition and rationality etc. Needless to say that the extreme results of this as seen in the Toronto Experience are repeated exactly in cultic groups world-wide: screaming, crowing, shaking, dancing, falling as if dead etc. etc.

A further side effect of the musical take over of worship is the concept of worshipping by proxy. The popularity of songs and performing worship leaders soon gave rise to the promotion of CD sales of both. Before long, a whole new industry had developed making Christian music the new untapped vein of music promoters. Indeed, the biggest new market in USA music sales is 'Contemporary Christian Music' (CCM). The financial success of CCM in the 90's was phenomenal, rising from US sales of \$538 million (or 33 million units) in 1996 to 44 million units in 1997. That year Christian singer Bob Carlisle had the top-selling CD while Amy Grant, dc Talk, Jars of Clay and Kirk Franklin, amongst others, became very successful in the secular marketplace as well as with evangelicals.

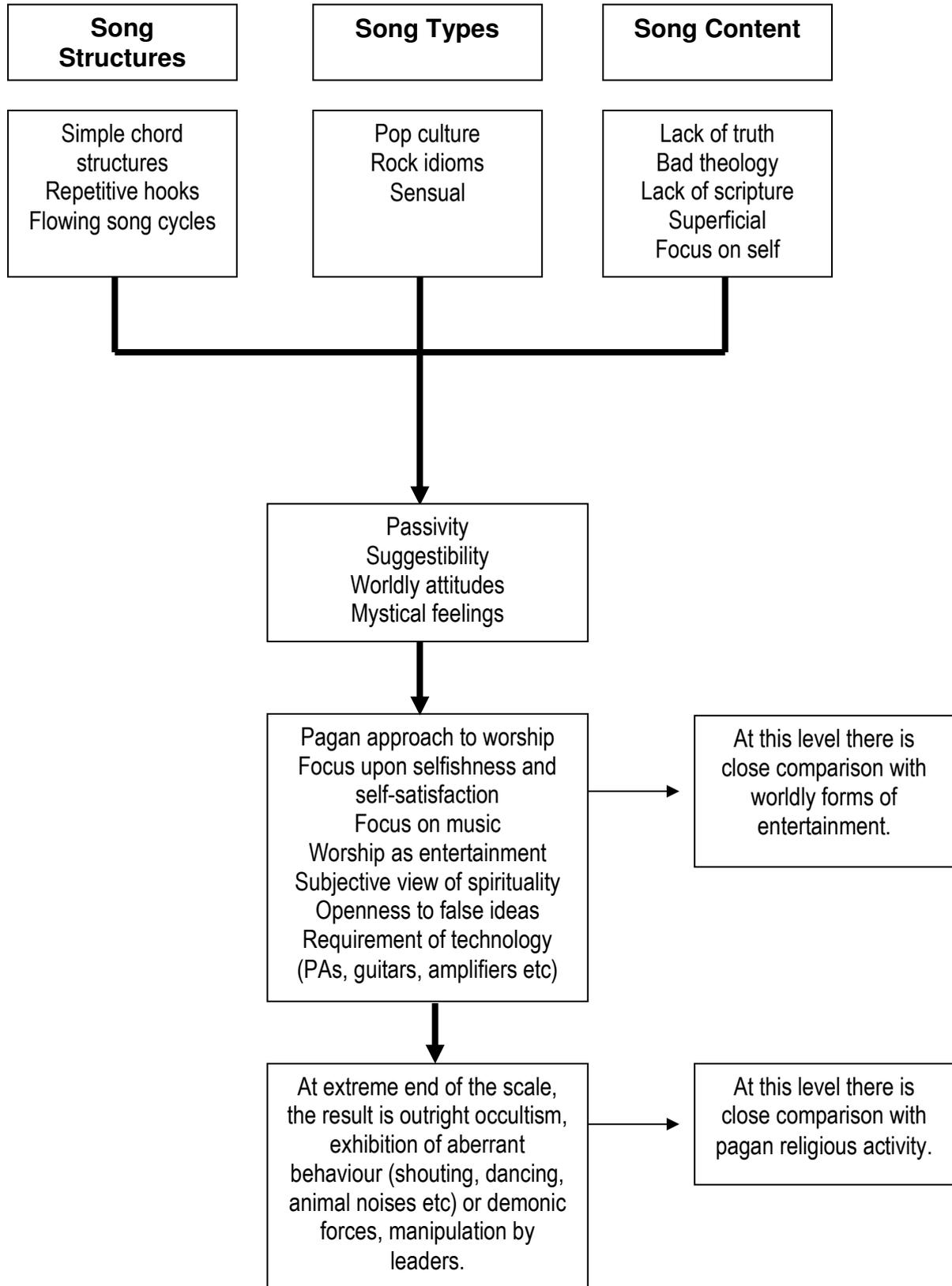
The real problem with this is that many modern Christians think that they are worshipping if they play these records and feel good. A surge in emotions in response to a Christian song has replaced true Biblical, intelligent, submissive worship - where a believer kisses the hand of the God he follows, adores and obeys. Biblical worship involves the mind and will; it includes a determination to obey the God who is worshipped and can have little to do with the emotions. Worship begins with '*a bowing of the heart before our God*';⁷⁰ instead worship today is seen as raised emotional levels in response to certain types of music; post-Wimber, Charismatic worship is sensual. Worship ceased to be honouring God and became satisfying self. True worship is blessing God, not being blessed.

The CM has thus totally perverted and corrupted the whole practice of Christian worship and reduced it to the same footing as ancient occultic religions. The dancing, shouting, loud music, loud drums, outward expression and inward passivity of Baalism was once the very opposite of true worship and was confronted as such by Elijah. Today it has become the basis of modern church worship.

That most modern Christians consider church worship to be the mere emotional singing of a bunch of strung together choruses with the occasional prayer or word, is a tragic loss.

⁷⁰ Ron Owens, 'Return To Worship: A God-Centred Approach', quoted in *Reformation & Revival*, Vol 9, No. 3, p204. It seems that a number of modern singers, songwriters and 'worship-leaders' are now questioning this whole ethos in a number of published works. Not before time.

The Impact of Charismatic Worship



The Degradation of Meetings

A corollary of the impact upon worship was the whole concept of how meetings were structured. What is strange is that the CM originally developed as a counter to traditional churches where the gifts and callings of members were ignored while the pastor did everything alone. After less than two decades, the result was that CM meetings were even less dependent upon *koinonia* than before. At least traditional meetings were usually small and there was some contact and a sense of involvement, even if very little. CM meetings, on the other hand, were usually: large, imposing, impersonal, totally platform led, professional, reliant upon sound systems and bands and using no individual participation at all. A visitor could attend such a meeting, be lost in the crowd, be completely detached from the proceedings and leave without anyone even noticing him or greeting him. This happened often.

How did the CM get this so wrong? The real problem was the way that meetings were modelled. Following historic examples, CM leaders established a series of shop windows to attract new members. These sported powerful speakers (usually well-known and imported), a good master of ceremonies, a well-known worship leader and a proficient band. The local gatherings were called ‘celebrations’, which gave the idea of a party atmosphere – come to this to be blessed, encouraged and meet nice people. Such meetings have no Biblical precedent and pose a number of problems.

Entertainment

The first is that the ministry and worship becomes a form of entertainment. Thousands (or at least hundreds) of people sit in lines in a concert hall or cinema and watch the ministry which is being performed from the front. There is no involvement, other than corporate singing, and the whole point is to raise the emotional levels of the audience by softening them up with chorus after chorus (I am not suggesting that this was done deliberately, but it is what resulted).

Just like a pop concert, a well-known worship leader would attract far more people than a lesser-known one. When Graham Kendrick led a celebration for Terry Virgo in the mid 80s, the Brighton Dome (2,000 plus seats) was needed instead of the Hove Town Hall (1,400) as so many people wanted to come. His trio played pure rock with loud pounding bass lines that would have made any Cream or Hendrix fan proud. As a guitarist from the 60s, familiar with such noise in secular situations, this was nothing new to me. As a Christian seeking to worship, this was a disgrace.

We have established that worship is involvement and submission to God; this focus upon detached, passive entertainment was a travesty and a dangerous precedent. Local churches could not hope to compare well with the high-powered named speakers, the music, the atmosphere and the ‘worship’. The more people attended these celebrations, the more they become dissatisfied with their own local meetings. The original Hove Town Hall celebrations, which kick-started Terry Virgo’s *New Frontiers International* ministry in the late 70s and early 80s, used to attract people from a 50 mile area. These folk used the monthly celebration as a palliative to help them cope with their traditional meetings. The sad fact is that their own churches were more Biblical but less exciting. Their aspirations were being raised for something that was not scriptural and which fed the flesh.

Propaganda

Another problem was that the celebrations were deliberately used to feed the gathered, disparate audience the key messages that formed the foundation of the ministries sponsoring the events. The speakers would almost always be 'in-house' representatives of the stream which staged the shows. Virgo's late 70s celebrations hosted names like David Mansell, Hugh Thomson, Arthur Wallis, Ern Baxter, Bryn Jones etc. and never people from the stream that is now *Pioneer People*: Gerald Coates, Graham Perrins, John Noble or Peter Lyne. Even Virgo's local evangelist friend Phil Vogel (who later joined Pioneer's national consultation body) never spoke at these united meetings. It was usually the same story in all of the branches of Restorationism. Only a very few national leaders, like David Pawson and Campbell MacAlpine seemed able to span the various groups.

The meetings were never evangelistic, despite the opportunity for evangelising in a large, powerful meeting staged in a neutral hall. The job was to spread the distinctive message of the stream. Although the streams denied that they encouraged sheep stealing, the fact is that the celebrations offered candy to people who had been fed for years on dry crusts. It was obvious that there would be large-scale defections to the stream's local churches – and there were. When Virgo established a church in Brighton-Hove, it grew to over 200 in a matter of weeks. Three local leaders took most or all of their flocks into it. Over the next couple of years, hundreds left local churches to make Clarendon Church the largest in Brighton. By the late 90s it was over 700 strong and met in the Odeon cinema.

Bible Weeks

A bigger version of the celebration was the large conferences, and especially the Bible Conventions. These were deliberately, or accidentally, based upon the Methodist / Holiness Camp meetings which had been so successful in the 19th century USA. The desire to emulate and benefit from the success of the Dales, Downs and other Bible Weeks eventually led to the formation of Spring Harvest.

Essentially, the conventions enabled more of everything. They were like weeklong celebrations with seminars attached and a holiday thrown in (although it wasn't always relaxing to be camped with thousands on a racetrack). More people could attend, whole churches could be represented and gradually weaned into the fold, no restrictions were placed on the meetings other than tiredness. They could be as loud and as long as they liked and preaching could go on for an hour or more. Some of these meetings were truly wild as radical speakers encouraged folk to do strange things – like scream at the top of their voice in unison.

Like the American camp meetings, such gatherings have their share of problems when you gather such numbers of people together in unsupervised surroundings. Sexual promiscuity and even teenage pregnancy arose from time to time just as it did for the Methodist groups. Wild actions like leaping, jumping, screaming, prostration, frenetic dancing and so on occurred in England just as it had done in the States. The flesh is always the same.

Celebration churches

With such typical large numbers, Charismatic churches could change their meeting style to mimic the now familiar celebration format. What had been originally modelled to new audiences by local celebrations and Bible conventions became the desirable norm for Sunday mornings. Charismatic churches began to slowly develop weekly celebrations and abandon any pretence of following the Biblical mandate for gathering together – mutual encouragement and individual edification under the sovereignty of God. The key focus of a

Charismatic meeting became the worship time, a corporate jamboree where no one's contribution was necessary or even desired, a concept unheard of in the Bible.

As CM churches grew, the worldly format became ever more enticing to young Christians; or worse, young, unconverted, professing 'Christians' - hence the influx of many unsaved people with spiritual problems. Before long even the mainline denominations felt the need to change their style of meeting to include the salient features of Charismatic worship – even if they could not perform them as professionally. Churches that did not offer an entertaining, front-led musical extravaganza became labelled as fuddy-duddy, boring, dead and numbers diminished.

House-groups and Cell-groups

As the inevitable backlash occurred in CM churches, people complained of meetings failing to cater for individuality. The individual worshipper was lost and ignored in the pursuit of an overall presentation. Since the CM could not abandon its most distinctive feature another way had to be found to make people feel a part of the gathered church.

The first answer was to re-brand house-groups. To make them work people tried various strategies:

- **HOMOGENOUS GROUPS:** these gathered people of similar tastes, backgrounds and social status and were particularly successful in Korea in Yonggi Cho's church where the herd mentality is stronger than in England. There were groups for professionals, for arty types, for housewives, for students, for older people and so on. Some UK churches under Cho's influence tried to make this work.
- **GEOGRAPHIC GROUPS:** this format was (and is) the most common. People from the church would be gathered together from a specific area.
- **ACTIVITY LED GROUPS:** these were motivated by certain tasks, especially evangelism. The house-group became a working machine for this or that task.

There were various other strategies but these were probably the main ones. The problem was that they all usually failed in one or another direction. Many gradually just became micro versions of the main meeting: a worship time followed by a message or study. With gifted leaders, these types could be reasonably effective, but sadly, very many did not have gifted leaders and the meetings became poor versions of Sunday with a chat and coffee thrown in.

Often the meetings simply developed into a social event. There was no direction, no strategy, no study, no worship, no real *koinonia* – just chit-chat and coffee. I have heard of cases where people just sat and played games.

Sometimes a group was an unintended gift to some arrogant, self-seeking, would-be leader who soon dominated it. Unresponsive, 'rebellious' people would go elsewhere leaving the remaining poor folk to become this despot's little flock. Many of the tales of spiritual abuse arise from such cases.

As these often did not work, some streams kept changing the types of groups within the church. Terry Virgo's flagship base in Brighton was perhaps one of the worst of these. Over the years the people have been broken up first into one thing then another, nothing lasting more than a few years. Of course this resulted in confusion and the inability to develop anything properly, especially relationships.

Gradually the feeling emerged, in all the streams, that even house-groups were not sufficient for real character development, the growth of friendship, the stimulation of prayer and the practice of fellowship. This is not surprising as none of them were practising church in a Biblical fashion. Thus was born the small cell group with various spin-offs.

At its basic level, this was an attempt to get people to properly interact with each other. Usually there was no formal leader, the home-owner being the main authority. In the best situations a light control was placed upon them and they were left to develop in a natural way. As they stand, this was not such a bad thing, but it is not church and shouldn't be considered as such.

The problem was that the cell-group concept was usually part of a larger agenda, propagated by people like Ralph Neighbour, for geographic units to be part of a functioning spiritual warfare strategy. The cells became constituent parts of a spiritual mapping concept, which identified the dominant territorial demons and placed spiritual lights (cells) in the centre of their territory to overcome their influence. As such, this was a gross misuse of fellowship, a totally unbiblical method of confronting the enemy and a cynical use of people.

The real difficulty with all these ideas, and the many more which will arise in the future, is that none of them are the slightest bit Biblical. If God has told us how to meet, what to do when we gather and how best to structure our churches (within fairly wide parameters), how can any man deem that he has the wisdom to ignore the scriptural data and build completely differently?

The purpose of gathering

Churches are based upon *koinonia* and devoted to mutual edification – not worship performances, not warfare, not entertainment, not evangelism, not leadership, not authenticating some apostolic ministry and certainly not to have a visible presence in the town. [Most historic churches were at their most effective when the authorities couldn't find them.] Now good churches will be evangelistic, will worship, will have good leaders and so on, but they are structured in order to equip the saints and for every member to participate in some meaningful way. This means that churches are not huge, are not front led, are encouraging places to be, have no imposing liturgical practices (like a dominant band on a stage), are informal, organic and family based places where people submit to one another in love. They are places where people get to know each other and build trusting relationships; where visitors can feel welcome and accepted, where Biblical norms (like breaking bread) are always practised. Indeed, the Lord's Supper is the principal reason given in the NT for gathering together. This is a Biblical church.

Instead, Charismatic gatherings are usually for a strategic purpose or to endorse the prime leader. Some 'apostles' have even stated this publicly. They have had the temerity to say that the purpose of 'their' flagship church was to authenticate their apostleship and must demonstrate it. This is close to blasphemy.

We have seen that Charismatic churches are focused on two key events. First, a prolonged worship service based upon music led by a worship leader/musician. This will entail repetitive, often trite, choruses and serves as an emotional softening up for the preacher. In some instances this can be prolonged further and become a hotbed of emotional extravagance. This occurred regularly during the Toronto Experience in the early 90s.

Secondly, preaching by a confirmed representative of the specific system. This will often be based upon a specific purpose (such as generating money) and will be mostly the various thoughts of the preacher. There is very little expositional, doctrinal or exegetical teaching; indeed some Charismatic streams hardly refer to the Bible at all.

Biblical churches concentrate upon Christ and the prime fashion in which a church gathers is by the edification of the members. This is done by mutual encouragement and teaching [Rm 14:19, 15:2; 1 Cor 14:12, 26; Eph 4:29]. Thus the local church gathers for two reasons:

1. THE KEY PURPOSE FOR GATHERING IS TO CELEBRATE THE LORD'S SUPPER - A FOCUS UPON CHRIST'S PERSON. This is done in the setting of informal, corporate fellowship and is preferably placed in the context of a fellowship meal called the *agape* (love) feast. Being placed in this meal context is one way that scripture seeks to bring the importance of *koinonia* to bear on the local church.
2. THE WAY THAT THE CHURCH MEETS IS THROUGH EDIFICATION, MUTUAL ENCOURAGEMENT, BUILDING ONE ANOTHER UP, BODY MINISTRY - A FOCUS ON CHRIST'S TRUTH, THE WORD OF GOD. Thus there will; be a concentration upon truth in expositional and doctrinal ministry in various forms. There is absolutely no model in the apostolic writings for a subdued, passive audience listening to the words of one man doing all the teaching, all the praying, all the exhorting, and giving all the directions. The Charismatic Movement developed in the UK on the back of a national move to establish such *koinonia* principles in house churches, but swiftly took them over and perverted their purpose to being man-focused assemblies.

So the focus of a Biblical church is Christ first and the members second. Church is the place where ordinary folk are built up, encouraged, equipped to serve and where each week there is a complete focus upon the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour through the breaking of bread. The emphasis upon members is not even a focus upon self, but a focus upon serving others.

What the CM did was to reverse both of these foci.

Most Charismatic churches don't even break bread at all; or if they do they do it very rarely. It is just not seen as a ritual that is important, despite the words of Christ, **This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me** (1 Cor 11:25). The very purpose of our gathering together is thrown out the window completely.

Secondly, the entire focus in Charismatic churches is upon man. It is mostly upon personalities in the Restoration or New Churches, the apostles or leader; but in other streams the focus becomes self. Everything is about 'me'. The worship time is about how I feel, my emotions, my subjective feelings; the teaching is often based upon self-esteem, pandering to the flesh, no condemnation of sin, no challenges, no admonition. Everything is done to make me feel triumphant and satisfied.

The CM is a man-based, fleshly caricature of true Biblical meetings. It is a false work, a dead work, a work of the antichristian system in the world, something to be utterly condemned.

Worldly systems

In recent years this corruption has become worse since now there is a commitment to worldly marketing techniques, modernism, and humanistic methods in order to generate numbers. I won't say to make new converts as the system, employed is unlikely to produce genuine converts, but will generate superficial 'Christians'. We will look at this in more

detail under 'evangelism', but it needs to be said here that meetings have been taken over by a completely fleshly and worldly methodology.

Called by various names (such as 'Seeker Sensitive' meetings and the recent 'Emerging Church') and prompted by supposed successes in American churches like Willow Creek in Chicago, the whole reason for gathering have been twisted to be the opposite of the Biblical function. We should also note two other key issues here: one is that a supposed success story makes an idea worthwhile, no matter what its provenance is (management techniques, occult background, Romanism, rationalism, humanism etc). This is the error of pragmatism; 'what works there will work here and I will ignore the Bible and copy it'. The other issue is adoption of American ideas without question. Nearly all (a few ideas are Eastern) the innovations brought in by the CM have been American in origin, with no thought as to English or local culture. We could say much more on this.

The Seeker-Sensitive model is centred upon the needs of the sinner. Instead of being founded on Christ and God's word, everything is based around the perceptions and feelings of the sinner. Thus nothing is done to offend him, such as mentioning his sin. Any technique that makes a gathering attractive in the world is utilised to serve to poor sinner who will be brought by other members. Thus there is the necessary rock band, a worship leader to whip up emotion, light shows, multimedia presentations, dancers, drama, short unthreatening soundbite talks etc. The church attempts to be as entertaining as going to the shopping precinct, a rock concert or a sports game.

There is no time to investigate this further here, suffice to say that it reverses divine principles. The church is focused upon Christ, evidenced in the Lord's Supper. It is a place where sin is clearly denounced and godliness commended. It conducts its meeting by mutual encouragement where everyone can participate. The concept of believers being an audience to some entertainment is the very opposite of all the God's church stands for.

We must draw this section to a close, though there is much more we could add. The CM essentially establishes meetings upon worldly principles, fleshly techniques and a focus on man. It denigrates Christ by ignoring his word and not breaking bread; indeed many practices are close to blasphemy in some quarters. It does not function according to Biblical principles, especially by not edifying believers and encouraging ministry. It is a emotional festival of self and is thus following a satanic plan by definition.

The Degradation of Leadership

Biblical leadership

Leadership is service. Teaching on church leadership is given extensive treatment in the New Testament, particularly in the pastoral letters of Paul. There is no excuse for getting leadership wrong as the matter is crystal clear.

The first point is that the church knows only one governmental office – that of elders. These lead the church (they have no authority outside it, by the way) in a team – there must always be more than one elder. There is no scriptural sanction for one man ruling the body alone and still less for him ‘lording it over the flock’. Indeed Peter condemns such behaviour. Authoritarianism is thus condemned in the Bible.

There are other serving offices in the church but these have no authority above that of the elders. God gives men to the church who teach and who shepherd (pastors), who are gifted in evangelism, who can establish and found new churches (apostles) and who speak for God (prophets⁷¹). Though honoured as gifted, they have spheres of influence under elders. An apostle is sent out by one church to pioneer another (i.e. is a missionary). In his mission field he will have significant authority until the church is established with its own elders and then the apostle must back off. His counsel will be appreciated but he has no authority over the local leadership.

Elders should express several of the gifts mentioned – that is why they are elders: they will shepherd the flock, they should be able to teach sound doctrine, they will speak for God, they will lead the people into works of evangelism etc. Only elders lead churches.

Having emphasised the leadership of elders alone, it must be stated at once that leadership decisions are based on consensus in the body. There is no authoritarianism. Strategic decisions are made in consultation with all coming to a common decision (Acts 15). This is one reason why Biblical churches are small and meet in homes.

A second point is that Biblical leadership is entirely devoted to equipping the saints [Eph 4:11-13]. Elders are given by God to encourage people to find their gifting and ministry [Eph 4:7], and then develop that so that they can minister to others. The key problem with Charismatic leaders is that they are self-serving. They emphasise an unbiblical clergy/laity split and rest on the supposed laurels of their own authority. The authority for them is based in the office of various job titles; but in the Bible authority is based on God’s gift. An officer with no gift from God has no spiritual authority, but an ordinary member with a genuine gift does have emerging spiritual authority, even if not yet appointed as an elder (this is how elders grow as teaching ministry is exhibited). It is the church’s job to identify true ministry and release it by formally recognising emerging teachers, evangelists etc.

Charismatic leadership is formal and institutional; the very thing Charismatic churches set out to destroy in the early 70s. CM churches are being widely exposed for fleecing the flock instead of nurturing it. At the worst, leaders are abusing people in various ways; at the least, CM leaders exercise benign but false authority over people.⁷²

⁷¹ I am not talking about Charismatic authoritative prophets here, but prophetic ministry as understood by the Puritans for instance. This is the art of speaking for God in exhortation and preaching to encourage a flock as opposed to straightforward teaching ministry.

⁷² Financially, psychologically, sexually, socially; for examples see Roland Howard, *Charismania* by Roland Howard or *The Drift into Deception* by Agnes & John Lawless. Many families are being damaged by unacceptable demands even in the more sober CM churches.

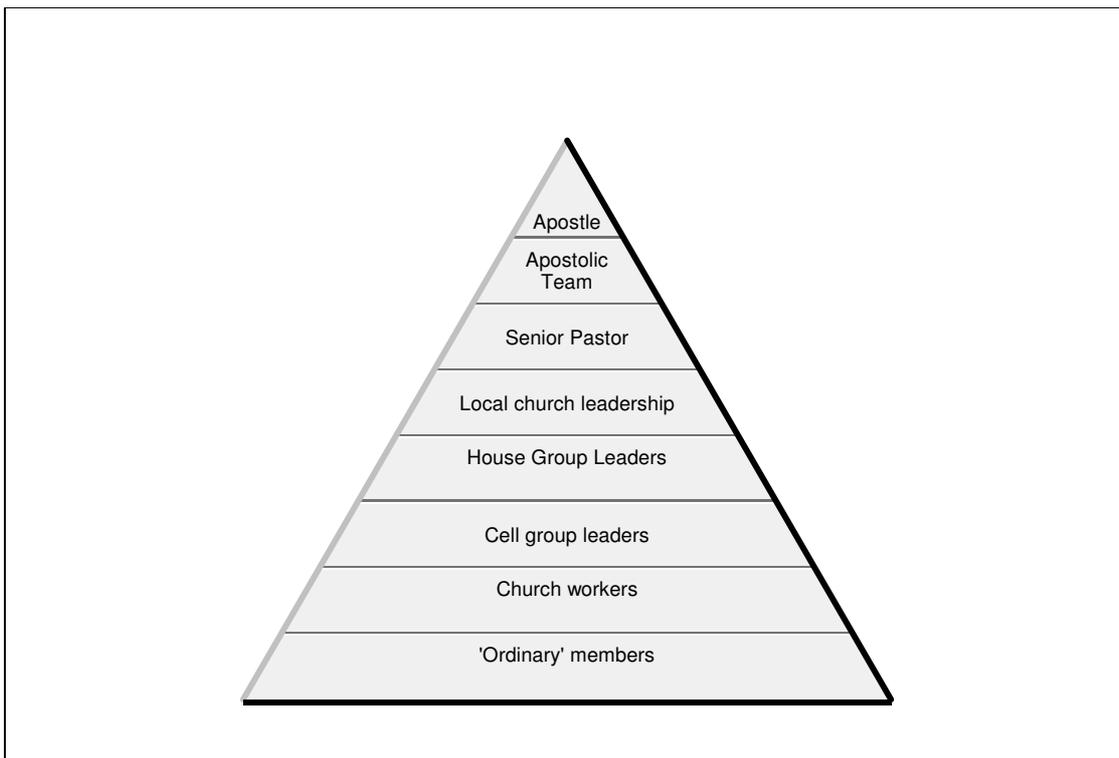
A typical Charismatic church structure

One of the tragedies of the CM is that it has imposed a whole series of other offices upon the church, men who frequently have a greater authority than elders. In large churches this authority system becomes complex and hierarchical (often pyramidal), usually ending up in the domination of the church by one man – the very thing scripture is at pains to prevent.

Let's take a typical Restorationist church:

- At the bottom level there are various workers, some of whom will be full-time. The fact that they are church servants gives them an implied authority even if this is not officially sanctioned. Such would include: full-time church office workers, children's workers, local church administrators, youth leaders and worship leaders.
- Above this level is the local delegated shepherding role. This is most often a house-group leader (but some churches have cell-group leaders below the level of house-groups). This is rarely a full-time job and yet these people often do huge amounts of work in the church community. Some of these have extended roles if they occasionally preach or lead worship. Church members are expected to submit to these folk even though the role does not exist in the Bible.
- Sometimes there is a level above this which amounts to a congregational shepherding role. If the church is very large, area leaders are required to hold together bands of house-group leaders. Again they are rarely paid for this but have considerable delegated authority from the eldership.
- Above this is usually the eldership proper, though this team is often broken up into paid ones and working ones. Full-time elders often have additional jobs and travel with the ministry leadership, or run the worship and preaching. Frequently unpaid, secular working elders are treated as having less authority (though often they are more respected).
- Above this is the senior pastor, another role which is not found in the New Testament. Sometimes this man will function on the ministry team of the man he submits to.
- Above him is the apostolic team. If this team is based in the local church the authority hierarchy becomes even more complex. All teams have an administrator to organise the work of the ministry team. This is different to the local church administrator and frequently in competition with him. Inevitably there is conflict between local initiatives in the church and global strategies imposed by the apostle. Some teams have learned to divorce the team from the church base and have a distant office. All members of the apostolic team have an implied senior authority so that even the administrator (who has no sanctioned NT spiritual authority) will be considered more important than the local elders. Members of the apostolic team will have varying gifts. The most prominent will be any prophet on the team and he will have authority above everyone except the apostle.
- Above the team is the apostle himself. He is the apex of the pyramid and the buck stops with him. He has total authority over everyone beneath him, though there will often be confrontations and disagreements.

Such a system is clearly episcopal and unbiblical; the apostle being equivalent to an archbishop. It has no support whatsoever from scripture and yet it is the most prominent system in the modern Evangelical church in the UK. The New (Restorationist) Churches have the largest numbers (although they too are now in decline).



Heavy shepherding

Even though many Charismatic churches will not have such a complicated leadership system as this example, there are dangers which are not usually found in traditional churches. In the 1970s and 80s many stories emerged which pointed out the dangers of authoritarianism in the CM. Some of these were amusing and some were clearly exaggerated and probably anecdotal. However as time went on documented reports, and sometimes criminal cases, revealed that there were indeed serious problems in Charismatic leadership roles.

The much repeated story of a young married couple being told what wallpaper to use in their new home was long dismissed by Charismatic leaders; yet several cases have arisen where similar counsel was actually given. I have personally witnessed a national leader tell a house-group leader that certain sweet fragrances were not spiritually commensurate with the ensuing meeting. Demons could latch onto that particular smell according to this well-known name. The home-owner was told not to use that type of home fragrance again in his own home at house-group times (the perfume was used to cover the smells of a fish supper). Many times people were encouraged to change jobs or move home. I know one man who told two people that they were to get married, spoken in front of a large congregation (they were not engaged or dating). Many have been persuaded to part with money or goods to support a work.

Documented stories of control, manipulations and abuse are now so rife that I don't intend to cover this ground here.⁷³ Suffice to say that even on the basis of secular media attention alone the CM has much to answer for in connection with abusive practices and wrongful exploitation of church members.

⁷³ For those interested, some examples can be found in the book: Roland Howard, *Charismania*.

Authoritarianism

This is an endemic problem in the CM, especially where leaders are designated as prophets and apostles (which is almost any leader of a large church). Like some of the early independent Pentecostal leaders, they are treated as if they are infallible and must always be obeyed; questioning these folk is taboo. They hear from God for the rest, all must follow. These are classic signs of a cult, and this is what many CM churches have become. A real problem is the public mistakes made by many CM leaders, from gloriously failed prophecies to supporting people and movements later proved to be false. Hardly ever does one hear of repentance from men who are historically recorded as having failed. An apostle or prophet cannot be seen to make a mistake and errors are swept under the carpet. This means that such men, as well as being in sin, can never be trusted for sound counsel again. Yet they are still in place, many of them in an international capacity.

Money

The importance of sacrificial giving is a key emphasis in these ministries. Members are taught to tithe at least 10% of their gross earnings, plus more for special gift days, and give it only to the church leaders – not Christian charities. Many folk give when they cannot afford it and are struggling to bring up a family on a low wage. Despite this, the leaders almost always live in comparative luxury. Even modest churches provide new cars and plane travel for their leaders; many help them purchase a house or give them one. In the worst cases, leaders live in palatial mansions, Coates lives in the listed house once owned by Clive of India. This is entirely contrary to the spirit and specific texts of the NT.⁷⁴

One example of the money that can be made is of a Kansas City conference in 1977 organised by the Fort Lauderdale Five. Minutes of their council meeting show that the profit made over the budget cost was \$250,000, divided amongst various groups.⁷⁵ Note that this is in the early days of the CM before the super-organisations and bigger conferences that now exist. Offerings totalled £166,000 while combined book sales were \$252,000.

False status - some ranks of CM officers

APOSTLES

- *Vertical apostles*: [giving covering] ecclesiastical apostles (authority over churches); functional apostles (authority over ministers); congregational apostles (senior pastors over churches over 700+ people).
- *Horizontal apostles*: convening apostles (authority to call together peer ministers); ambassadorial apostles (itinerant apostles nurturing apostolic movements); mobilising apostles (authority to gather leaders for a specific cause); territorial apostles (authority for leading in a certain territory).
- *Marketplace apostles*: vertical and horizontal apostles with an unspecified ministry.

KEY ERROR: the belief that apostles carry personal authority over others in various ways. Biblical teaching is that apostles are authorised as representatives of a sending church to pioneer the foundations of a new church (i.e. missionaries). They have no authority in their home church as apostles. When the new church's eldership is formed, they have no authority in the new church. The Greek word 'apostle' is *avpo, stoloj apostolos*, Strong's 652. It means a delegate or messenger, one sent forth with orders. The prime apostles were the 12 sent by Christ. Other apostles were sent from various churches in the NT (Barnabus, Paul, Silvanus etc).

⁷⁴ Acts 20:34-35; 1 Cor 4:12; 2 Thess 3:7-12.

⁷⁵ GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING, August 8-10, 1977, Ann Arbor, MI.

AUTHORITATIVE PROPHETS

The prophet, when ministering with his or her gifted office and prophetic anointing, has supposed authority for reproof, correcting, directing and instructing in the *rhema* word [that is an immediate word from God more important than scripture]. Some of the main prophets in the prophetic movement include: Paul Cain (now under discipline but soon to return), Mike Bickle, Bob Jones (now in disgrace but still held in high esteem), Rick Joyner, John Paul Jackson, Bill Hamon, Cindy Jacobs, John Bevere, Jim Goll, Alice Smith, Barbara Yoder, Mahesh Chavda, Kim Clement, Jill Austin, Randy Clark and Francis Frangipane.

The CM gives a prophet authority for commanding people to do whatever he subjectively thinks is an impression from God. Books by supposed prophets sell in millions. The opportunity for serious damage is evident, and examples of abuse are legion (many books have examined this). Notice also that many women are prophets thus having spiritual authority. This contradicts the very clear apostolic teaching of 1 Tim 2:12 where women are not to teach nor have authority over men. Rev 2:20 warns about the results of such ministry.

Worldly management

All the apostolic works have their own management system; indeed many boast of maintaining an effective organisation; while Gerald Coates says that as the effective CEO of a big corporation, he is worth the comparative worldly salary he gets from the church.

Some apostles have tried to defend their system of management from the Bible, saying that apostles need administrators and use the word *kubernesis* (in 1 Cor 12, translated as administrations or governments) to support this. In fact this word means the skill of leadership, as in steering a ship; it is used of elders as the steersmen or pilot of the local church. Since the Biblical church meets in a house and functions as a family there is no need whatsoever for any complex administration and there is no such gift in the NT.

CM churches and denominations function as quite large corporations with annual turnovers of over a million pounds in some cases, even in the UK. New Frontiers International was achieving this in the 1990s. There are numerous salaried jobs and officers from administrator to youth workers, from prophet to conference secretary, from tape ministry to worship ministry. It is not only the structure of the church that is pyramidal, but the management system behind the apostolic work is also stratified under the apostle, usually centred in a general manager who is a personal friend of the apostle.

Many of the office functions generate money, to say nothing of the thousands of pounds given as tithes. Tapes, books, conferences, CDs, DVDs, hiring speakers, worship CDs, Bible Weeks etc. all generate large sums of money and are significant business enterprises in their own right. There are many stories of fraudulent practice and in some cases investigation by revenue officers.

Needless to say, none of this is in the slightest bit Biblical; indeed profiting from the activity of the church is deplored. The greatest apostle who ever lived, and who did more to establish the early church, boasted in two things - 1] his afflictions (2 Cor 11:30, 12:5, 9); 2] and that he did not ask for money but supported himself as well as his ministry (1 Cor 9:6-18). Most modern day CM leaders wouldn't accept any speaking invitation unless there was a fee of several thousand pounds.

Preferential treatment

Ezekiel 34 adds further terrible judgment against shepherds who concentrate on their own quality of life at the expense of their flocks. God will not spare leaders who put themselves first and their people last, who feed off the flock but do not feed them; who fail to strengthen the weak yet rule the membership without care; who cause people to leave the church and wander away yet do not search for them. Such shepherds are common in these days; indeed some are so abusive, scandalous or fraudulent that even so called evangelical preachers are regularly exposed on national television.

Examples of error and deception

RAMBLINGS OF ACCREDITED PROPHETS

The presence of the Lord smells like a woman wearing too much perfume. ... When BJ is filled with the Spirit, he can see and taste spiritual states and sins in others with all his five senses. ... New Testament prophets are often wrong. They may be 90% wrong; 60% accuracy is about the best they can expect. ... God's "logos" [i.e. the Bible] is merely the 'dry word' compared with their "rhema." ... This new generation will 'put death under their feet and they'll bring forth the glorious church and reveal the malechild of Revelation 12.' ... BJ has seen God 'face to face.' ... 1000 religious leaders will die in 1990 for misusing 'the anointing.' ... He feels a tingling in his fingers to tell who is a prophet, an evangelist, or pastor. ... BJ's hands turn purple when he gets his best revelations.

Bob Jones [Taped interview between Bob Jones and Mike Bickle. *The Shield* newsletter 1992 R. K. McGregor Wright, Th.M., Ph.D. <http://www.dtl.org/shield/latter-rain-1.htm>]

"I want you to do stupid things" thus says the lord.'

Kim Clement Prophet [Renee Rodriguez; *Just Give Me The Facts*; www.AgeTwoAge.org]

FALSE PROPHECIES

- Paul Cain declared that revival would break out in London in October 1990, timed with a Wimber conference in Docklands. Result; nothing happened. In fact the spiritual condition of the UK worsened significantly and numbers dropped over the decade.
- John Hinkle proclaimed on TBN that on 9 June 1994 God would '*rip all evil off the face of the earth*'. This was 'verified' by '*two men with reliable ministries*'. A defensive article supporting Hinkle was written by Karen Howe and printed in *Charisma* magazine in December 1994.
- Gerald Coates: '*Dr. Kendall - in 18 months from this month (April 1995) your church, Westminster Chapel, will be unrecognisable ... the Holy Spirit will increase in power (!). In 18 months (i.e. October 1996) the Spirit of God - not just upon Westminster Chapel, but upon Westminster itself, upon the high of the land, upon many who live in that area, is going to come on that place ... the Spirit of God is so strong in that place.* etc etc. i.e. revival. Prophecy given at Spring Harvest, 20 April, 1995 and circulated by Kendall at Westminster Chapel in December 1995. Result: By the date specified, over 100 people left the church amidst much division and despondency. The church dwindled and had less impact on the surrounding area than ever before. If anything, the 'high of the land' in Parliament became more ungodly with reports of sleaze and deceit. (See Alan Howe, *Evangelicals Now*, Feb 1997). One former member stated that the church was '*a shell of its former glory*'. (Neil Richardson, Vanguard article and App 3 in *Beware the New Prophets*).

- In 1991 Gerald Coates visited New Zealand where he told church leaders that an earthquake would devastate Lake Taupo in April 1991. Local Elim pastors instigated a national media campaign to warn the nation. 44 Elim churches went on survival courses. Result: nothing happened except that the church became a national laughing stock. [Widely reported in the Christian press, see also Bill Randles, *Beware the New Prophets*, St Matthew Pub. Ltd, p118-119.]

SUPER LEADERS AND TRIUMPHALISM

There is an emerging Apostolic Movement that will revolutionise the 21st Century Church.
 Bill Hamon, *National Symposium on the Post-Denominational Church*, (C. Peter Wagner) 21-23 May, 1996.

What is about to come upon the earth is not just a revival, or another awakening; it is a veritable revolution. The vision was given in order to begin to awaken those who are destined to radically change the course, and even the very definition of Christianity.

Rick Joyner, *The Harvest*, 'Joel's Army'.

[End-time prophets] 'Possess the Spirit without measure. For they are the best of all the generations that have ever been on the face of the earth. ... They will move into things of the supernatural that no one has ever moved in before ... They'll move in the power that Christ did... They themselves will be the generation that's raised to put death itself underneath their feet.

Bob Jones, tape: *Visions & Revelations* (1988) quoted in David Cloud, *The New Prophets*, Way of Life Literature, Oak Harbour, Washington, p10.

The Degradation of Conversion

One reason why the exuberant practices of Charismatic churches are attractive is because many converts want more than they received when they professed conversion. Large numbers within the CM have massive needs; require constant counselling; feel unfulfilled, ineffective, unspiritual and powerless. This creates a desire for new experiences, a subjective baptism in the Spirit, the expression of spiritual gifts, the excitement of front led worship, stimulating speakers, mystical experiences and so on. True spirituality becomes judged by emotional experiences.

The real reason for this need is that conversions within the CM are frequently spurious. Many times I have counselled needy folk from CM churches when it gradually became clear that they were not really saved people. Their problems arose because they were trying to live the Christian life without ever having known the Lord or his Spirit.

This is hardly surprising in a movement which counts people as converted merely because they raised their hand at a Gospel meeting, or stood up and someone at the front prayed over them; or worse still, when all they did was fall over when someone touched them. In these cases the leaders can have no idea what sort of mental apprehension these people have of the facts of Gospel truth, and even less evidence of a response to these facts. This is the fruit of practical Arminianism.

The CM is woefully lacking in a sense of mourning for sin at any time, especially amongst those responding to the Gospel. [This is part and parcel of the mentality of the CM where even necessary apologies for blatant and public leadership errors are rare.] Following in the footsteps of psychological counselling, evangelism courses, Seeker-Sensitive methods and so on, sin is downplayed in this movement and self-esteem is upgraded. Whenever sins become gross and apparent, the blame is put on demons to be expelled.

Yet sorrow for sin is a crucial Biblical response to the activity of the Holy Spirit. Saints are those who deplore their sin and seek to grow in holiness as a result. Yet modern converts show little sign of any conviction of sin at all. The testimonies published as the fruit of the Alpha Course (which developed in a Charismatic church) are frightening in their lack of Gospel depth. Often people state that they responded to the course in order to experience the power of the Spirit or because they wanted to feel good, or some such other fleshly reason. One Charismatic ministry in Hong Kong offers the baptism of the Spirit to unbelieving drug addicts as a means to kick the habit. The boost of spiritual experience is supposed to be a replacement for heroin. What kind of gospel is this?

The lack of repentance amongst Charismatics is truly worrying. Repentance is a life which is turned around as a result of a dramatic change of thinking. The truth of the Gospel grips the mind and the will determines to follow Christ in obedience. This means that old questionable habits or sinful traits are denied while grace is sought to live right. Though there are many failures, there is a constant desire to repent, to follow Christ and his righteousness. Yet many young people in the CM feel entirely at ease in continuing with their old lifestyle. I have watched people not only sin without fear but justify it as acceptable in today's world.

Recent surveys conducted by the Evangelical Alliance bear this out statistically. On the day I write this the news media reports on the 'born-again Christian', Penny Ellis, who is a contestant in the TV programme *Big Brother*. It is a 'Christian' who has the dubious honour of being the first person to deliberately appear naked in this 'reality-tv'

programme. But further, she has stated that she is prepared to have sex on air if it will help her win the prize. Such behaviour is impossible for a truly converted person. It is clear from the lack of holiness that true repentance is often absent in the CM.

The sheer numbers of people who are members of CM churches but are unregenerate cannot be finally ascertained but some of us think that the figure is very high. If people are to be judged by their spiritual fruit, there has to be fear that even many leaders lead lives which do not demonstrate a true knowledge of God and his righteousness.

The real reason for all this is an appalling lack of clarity in modern churches as to what the Gospel actually is. Biblical evangelistic preaching, as evidenced by historic men of God, is disparaged and ridiculed. People have little idea about the need of heart-work, dealing with God, mourning for sin, godly sorrow, necessary restitution and true Holy Spirit conviction. People leave no time for the truth to sink in to sinner after being told what the Gospel is, and rush to get some kind of response; usually repeating some prayer parrot-fashion that does not represent the heart of the sinner being engaged and exercised. People witness with no reference to scripture, basing their presentation on the need of the sinner that can be met in Christ and the abundant life to be enjoyed afterwards. This ignores the Lord himself who warned people to count the cost before beginning, or his words that 'through many tribulations we enter the kingdom'.

The worst problem is the fallacious basis of presenting it as God's love for everyone without question. Apart from being completely unbiblical, and apart from, ignoring clear texts which state that God hates sinners,⁷⁶ it leads to presumption on the part of the sinner. If God loves him, then it doesn't really matter what he does. [For more information see my booklet, *Does God Love Everyone? Or my paper The Presentation of the Gospel.*]

The Biblical Gospel is focused on the demands of a holy God and creator, a God who demands repentance,⁷⁷ a God who is patient with sinners⁷⁸ but who will judge all for their sins if they don't repent.⁷⁹ It teaches that there is no escape from the judgment of God⁸⁰ and that all will give an account for their life.⁸¹

But it also explains that there is mercy and grace in this God,⁸² who has sent his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to pay the ransom for those who believe in him.⁸³ Only these will be saved and there is only one salvation.⁸⁴ This salvation is only given to those who receive Christ (believe in him);⁸⁵ that is those who are drawn by God to Christ,⁸⁶ and are given faith and true repentance.⁸⁷ This repentance comes after there has been work of God

⁷⁶ Ps 5:5; You hate all workers of iniquity. Rm 9:13; Esau I have hated.

⁷⁷ Acts 17:30; these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent.

⁷⁸ Ex 34:6; The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth

⁷⁹ Ex 34:7; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing *the guilty*. Rm 2:4; the goodness of God leads you to repentance?

⁸⁰ Rm 2:3; And do you think this, O man ... that you will escape the judgment of God?

⁸¹ Matt 12:36; every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. Rm 14:12; each of us shall give account of himself to God.

⁸² Micah 7:18; Who *is* a God like You, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights *in* mercy. Rm 5:15; For if by the one man's offence many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.

⁸³ Rm 3:24; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Gal 3:13; Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us.

⁸⁴ Acts 4:12; Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name ... given among men by which we must be saved.

⁸⁵ Jn 1:12; as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.

⁸⁶ Jn 6:44; No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him.

⁸⁷ Eph 2:8-9; For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. Acts 5:31, 11:18, 14:27, 18:27; 2 Tim 2:25-26; Rm 2:4; Phil 1:29; Jn 6:29.

in the heart⁸⁸ and a spiritual conviction of sin,⁸⁹ a revelation of the truth in Christ⁹⁰ and dealing with God face to face, calling on his name.⁹¹ Sometimes those who have committed specific sins need to give restitution or specific apologies to those they have damaged.⁹²

The Gospel is not something to be rushed or treated superficially. It isn't a form of entertainment conducted from a platform. Conversion doesn't arise from something done for you by a surrogate (as when someone mimics a prayer or repeats a formula of confession). It isn't a promissory note for a life of ease. You cannot be converted by merely giving assent to someone's demand, such as by raising your hand, standing up or going to the front at a meeting.

Crucial elements are:

- REVELATION - truth explained from the Bible.
- REGENERATION - true conviction of sin by the Spirit (seeing my desperate need); conviction of judgment to come (wanting salvation from sin); conviction of Christ as the only Saviour (fleeing to Christ for righteousness and eternal life).
- SUBMISSION - yielding everything to God as my Lord.
- CONVERSION - genuine faith and true repentance for sin, received by grace, determination to follow Christ not the world or the flesh.
- CONFESSION - publicly owning Christ as Lord.

Yet most of these are often absent from conversions under CM ministries. Furthermore, these should be followed by: love for God, growing holiness of life, baptism in water, self-denial, ardent prayer and love for the brethren. Again many of these features are absent from supposed converts in the CM.

There can be no doubt that many members of Charismatic churches are not truly converted, and this accounts for many of the excesses and extravagances that are both believed to be necessary and are tolerated without question. It also accounts for the need of multiple (unbiblical) counselling techniques to deal with personal problems that never get solved. Where there is no true preaching of the Gospel, there will be no God-honouring work. If there is no foundation of Gospel truth, the resultant building will fall.

Examples of error and deception

Unbelievers are being converted just through going out under the power of the Spirit.

John Arnott, Leader of Toronto Airport Church; [*Sword & Trowel*, 1997 - 1, p31.]

I didn't believe in God, but ... out of desperation ... I said, "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus." I just began to say that name, and a power came through my body.

Steve Hill; Evangelist at Brownsville AOG Church, Pensacola. [Interview on TV's *20/20*, quoted in *The Berean Call*, May 1998.] No mention of conviction of sin, repentance, faith in God, following Christ etc.

If you want forgiveness of sins, if you want the blessing of God in your life - come and touch Jesus. ... You will feel him. ... it depends on you ... how determined are you?

David Hathaway; *Prophetic Vision*, Issue 37, p7.

⁸⁸ Jn3:3; unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

⁸⁹ Jn 16:8; when He [the Spirit] has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.

⁹⁰ Jn 8:32; You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

⁹¹ Rm 10:13; For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."

⁹² Lk 19:8-9.

The Degradation of Spiritual Warfare

Spiritual warfare is a big subject for the CM; masses of sermons, seminars and books are on this subject. John Wimber dedicated week-long conferences to the matter, and things have moved on much further since then.

Biblical spiritual warfare is clear and straightforward. Specific passages deal with the matter in a way that everyone can understand. In the most well-known, Ephesians 6:10-18, we see that warfare is a reliance upon gifts from God, trust in God's sovereignty and remaining steadfast. Here the constituents of warfare are:

1. Being strong in the Lord and his power (v10).
2. Putting on God's armour, not our abilities or knowledge, and then standing against evil which is mainly expressed in deception ('wiles', v11, 13).
3. The foundation is truth and righteousness - both sovereign gifts from God (v14).
4. Other essential features are the Gospel in our walk (v15); the shield of faith (another gift from God, v16) which helps protect us from temptation - this is believing God's word, God's truth; and the helmet of salvation - protecting our own minds from temptation by understanding what our salvation is and how it operates in us (v17).
5. Finally, two offensive weapons are the word of God which cuts through all deception, lies, and temptation (note how it was used by Jesus in his temptations; v17) and the importance of prayer in the Spirit - i.e. powerful intercession not formal superficial prayer. This must be coupled with perseverance individually and praying for our brethren corporately (v18).

Now all this is easy to understand and not hard to apply if we mean business. The emphasis is upon what God has supplied to us. There is no direction on rituals, exercises, strategies, confronting demonic powers; no requirement for secret knowledge, special techniques or special professional ministries. The wrestling against spiritual powers is mainly focused on bringing God's word to bear against deception. This usually means bringing truth to impact people's minds, which are the playground of satanic temptation. Warfare is mainly about changing people's wrong thinking.

Instead, the CM (and historic Pentecostalism) focuses spiritual warfare on what men do instead of what God has done. It requires special techniques, special ministries (usually deliverance ministry). There are hosts of practices and variations of disciplines all designed to make the believer more powerful by understanding this or that method (modern Gnosticism). Even death is said to be conquerable if one knows the right technique (i.e. rebuking the 'spirit of death') - a technique never seen in scripture. Thus CM warfare, like everything else in its theology and practice - is man-centred.

Key principles of CM spiritual warfare⁹³

- The ability of all disciples to perform signs and wonders.
- The ability to heal the sick.
- The ability to raise the dead.
- The ability to cast out demons.
- The ability to overcome all the powers of the enemy.
- The ability to bind and loose.

⁹³ These headings are taken from conference lecture notes, *Spiritual Warfare*, John Wimber, Brighton, 18-21 April, 1988; p19.

- All these arise from delegated authority given to all disciples. The exercise of this authority depends on the individual's obedient faith.

Apart from the erroneous supernatural points, two things stand out. The first is the proud claim that we can overcome all the powers of the enemy. This puts us in the place of God. Paul was hindered by Satan and prevented from going to Thessalonika (1 Thess 2:18) and even the Lord himself used scripture to defeat Satan in the wilderness, not some command. Jude 8-9 warns about such pride in spiritual warfare and mentions that even the archangel Michael did not use a reviling accusation against Satan, something that is the privilege of God alone. We resist Satan but do not have an innate ability to overcome all his powers. If this were true, no martyr need ever have died - the powers to stir up persecution and to kill the saints is not something we can overcome; it is something God allows for his glory and testimony.

The second is the theology behind binding and loosing. Biblically, this is simply the power of the Gospel in releasing those who submit to God through our preaching the truth.⁹⁴ Charismatics and Pentecostals, however, make this an ability to bind or restrain Satan and demons; but the binding of Satan is something done by God for a specific time until he is released to bring about world empire and manifest antichrist (Rev 20:1-4). Believers have no such power, delegated or otherwise. There are no instructions for believers to bind spirits before they venture on some enterprise.

The whole Charismatic concept of spiritual warfare is a sort of entering into the spiritual dimension and manipulating it by means of certain things we do ourselves (e.g. bind spirits, restrain powers, or remove the hold demons have on a person or a situation). Again it is hubris and man-centred religion. In fact, it is very close to magic and animism - the manipulation and control of spirits through certain rituals in order to change things on earth. (See 'Syncretism Issues' later.)

The CM brought about a pagan way of viewing spiritual warfare through this theology.

Confrontation

The CM is also confrontational in its warfare; it has a high opinion of itself, as do the individuals in it. Leaders claim to be able to defeat illness, apathy, poverty and confront death itself (though I have never seen any objective evidence of the many claims of resurrection). The CM deals with many issues by confrontation and this often includes some kind of informal ritual. Thus individual sin is often confronted and personalised, in counselling, by exorcism (as we have noted elsewhere). Sickness is personalised and rebuked, thus claiming healing. Critics are confronted with curses, being identified with Satan, no matter how godly they may be. In at least one case that I know of, a CM leader

⁹⁴ Matthew 16:19 speaks of the keys of the kingdom and the binding and loosing of sins. Matthew 18:18 speaks of the binding and loosing of sins. John 20:23 speaks of the remitting and the retaining of sins. Thus we see that through the keys (Matt. 16:19) sins are bound and loosed (Matt. 16:19; 18:18), that is, remitted and retained (John 20:23). Roman Catholic, Lutheran and Reformed churches all agree that these three texts are speaking of the same subject. ... The keys are church discipline (Matt. 18:18) and the preaching of the gospel (Matt. 16:19; John 20:23). By these means, sins are retained and bound on the impenitent or loosed and remitted from the penitent. To express it differently, through the faithful preaching of God's Word and biblical church discipline, the kingdom of heaven is opened to believers and shut to unbelievers. The Holy Spirit uses faithful preaching and discipline to seal on the consciousness of the believer his inclusion in the kingdom of God. Likewise, by the proper use of the keys, unbelievers hear the gate of the city of God shut against them. ... The church forgives sins *declaratively*, when it proclaims the *basis* for the forgiveness of sins (the death of Christ for all the iniquities of His people) and the *way of receiving* the forgiveness of sins (faith alone in Christ), and *promises* forgiveness of sins to all believers and their (elect) children (Acts 2:38-39; 16:31). Angus Stewart, 'The Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven', *Protestant Reformed News Bulletin*.

cursed a Christian critic but was himself injured soon afterwards while the critic remained healthy.

Evangelism and political control of nations is also viewed as confrontational spiritual warfare. Various means have been introduced to combat supposed demonic forces in certain rituals or staged events in order to release people from Satanic control and gradually effect a change in political authority towards Christians. We can only identify some of the major methods here, but there are large numbers of practices in individual churches.

Local Church Techniques

Within CM churches and conferences there have been many attempts to unseat perceived satanic authority by this or that technique. These varied according to whomever was the visiting speaker. I have personally witnessed the following:

- GETTING THE ENTIRE CONGREGATION TO GET OUT OF THEIR SEAT AND MARCH AROUND THE ROOM, usually singing or shouting with the musicians often playing in 'march' time.
- GETTING THE ENTIRE CONGREGATION OR CONFERENCE AUDIENCE TO SHOUT A GIVEN WORD OR phrase on command. Often they were told that the louder they shouted, the more effective the authority would be. [This is reminiscent of the criticism of Elijah to the prophets of Baal who's shouting was completely ineffective.]
- COMMANDING THE CONGREGATION TO SHOUT OUT PRAYER, ALL AT THE SAME TIME, producing a veritable babble.
- GETTING THE AUDIENCE TO MAKE AS MUCH NOISE AS POSSIBLE BY VARIOUS MEANS. This included getting all the musicians to create a cacophony with their instruments and amplifiers.

Needless to say that as well as being utterly foolish, pagan and unbiblical, these actions come under the prohibition of being indecent and conspiring to disorder (1 Cor 14:40).

Another practice, which is quite common in Pentecostal circles, is praying to bind the spirits before a meeting begins. Instead of simply believing that where two or three are gathered Jesus is in the midst, such folk believe that wherever two or three are gathered Satan is in the midst and needs to be restrained from damaging them. Even if this were true, why not just expel him from the building completely rather than just binding him?

National and International Initiatives

Territorial Spirits / Strategic Level Spiritual Warfare

What began as a curious and localised theology that certain demons inhabited and controlled certain towns, was turned into a complex and widespread theology by the books and conferences of C Peter Wagner, the academic colleague of John Wimber at Fuller Seminary.

We cannot spend time analysing the details of this, and have mentioned some aspects already. The essential premise is that in order for the Gospel to succeed evangelistically, and for works of power to be unrestrained in the church, there has to be an unseating of the demonic strongholds in a given area; whether it be locally, regionally or nationally, or even throughout a social structure. To do this believers need to identify the type of demon in control and expel it through corporate prayer, and perhaps other methods (such as prayer walking, confrontation or repentance (see later)). One method was to develop a

catalogue of 'known' demonic activity in the nation ('spiritual mapping') and then plant cell groups in each area to bring a rising tide of prayer against that particular demon.

Apart from there being absolutely no scripture to support any of this, it repudiates the doctrine that God is in control of the earth (Ex 9:29; Ps 24:1; 1 Cor 10:26-28) and that he directs the ways of his saints to do his will (Ps 119:133; Prov 3:6; 1 Thess 3:11). Paul never needed to unseat demons before his travels.

This paganised strategy (it is the foundation of most false religion - placate the main gods of an area and dismiss the bad gods in order for fertility and prosperity) has also been subsumed in principle in other Charismatic events, such as praise marching or corporate prayer vigils for revival.

Global March For Jesus

Everyone is familiar with the March For Jesus (MFJ) and large numbers of evangelicals joined in, innocently believing it to be a basic form a celebratory witness to outsiders, a show of strength and the appearance of a united Christian front. I doubt that many of the millions of participants realised the true objectives of the founders (Gerald Coates, Graham Kendrick and Roger Forster). It was a con in order to implement the principle of territorial spirit warfare.

Gerald Coates states that *'Marching for Jesus is a prophetic action [which claims] ... God's world: we're claiming it for God ... we don't inherit the earth by inheriting it from people... but by shifting the spiritual powers that have been allocated in the structure of the nations'*.⁹⁵ Forster's son, Chris Forster, runs Operation A-Z which is connected to the *Global March for Jesus*, and plans to cover every street in Britain to defeat demonic forces through declaring Jesus' name. The basic idea of this, as with *Prayer Walking* also promoted by Kendrick, is that spiritually walking over land changes the spiritual authority of a location. It fails to understand that the earth is the Lord's and dishonours the sovereignty of God over all things.

The reason is that the promoters are fierce Arminians, especially in the case of Roger Forster who has written earnest denunciations of Calvinism (such as *God's Strategy*). Failing to trust God's control of human affairs and the church, they believe that believers have to implement spiritual victory by faith through certain objective human acts such as marching, prayer walking, claiming the ground in praise, exorcism, repenting for past national sins etc. They believe that demons control geographic areas and have to be wrested from this control by certain Charismatic events. This is a complete denial of God's authority and a failure to see that there is no Biblical precedent for this. Paul never did any prayer walking or marching before evangelising a new area.

Another objective of the MFJ is to break down denominational barriers; this unashamedly includes formal identification with Roman Catholicism: *'Protestants and Catholics ... will join together and declare that they are "One in Christ" with Global March for Jesus on 30 May'* (1998).⁹⁶ This is further syncretism and damaging believers by association with apostate works, something scripture specifically warns us about.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ *March For Jesus*, p131.

⁹⁶ Neil Richardson, 'Brother Andrew's Open Doors & March for Jesus'; *Vanguard Magazine*, Vol 4.2; June/July/Aug 1998.

⁹⁷ 2 Cor 6:15-17; Eph 5:11; 1 Tim 5:22; 2 Jn 1:9-11; Rev 18:4.

Identificational repentance and Reconciliation walks

The purpose of this is to purge the sin committed by the church in past history, such as by the Medieval Crusaders. These have been conducted by C Peter Wagner of Fuller Seminary USA and Lynn Green of YWAM. The objective is to unite religions (itself a sinful act of syncretism), Green says, *'It is my hope and prayer that this proposed project will result in substantial reconciliation between the major monotheistic faiths'*.⁹⁸ The objective is to get large numbers of believers to repent by proxy for nations, organisations, and historic events believing that it will instigate change in relations. Needless to say there is not a shred of Biblical evidence for this ecumenical strategy.⁹⁹

Conclusion

What is clear is that these things are blatantly wrong and damaging. They are:

- Pagan in origin; or at least they have pagan similarities.
- They are humanistic, in that they are the ideas of foolish men.
- They are unbiblical and thus stand condemned.
- They lead to disorder.
- They clearly do not do what they are supposed to do and so are completely pointless. Very often these actions lead to the very opposite of what was intended (such as British society degenerating and church numbers declining after the MFJ).

Why do we never see CM leaders taking an audit of what they do? Surely there is no point in pursuing activities which, even by their standards, do not come up with the goods. The reason is that many of these activities are self-fulfilling. The participants enjoy them and feel that the act of doing them fulfils a certain spiritual obligation (even though it is ineffective). Thus they pander to the flesh, making fools of the participants.

Examples of error and deception

Pastors and congregations who have put down roots in a city or region have a 'legal right' under God to claim their cities for the King by 'staking' out the territory ... we are literally expanding the 'walls' of our spiritual churches when we stake out our cities. It forces us to see ourselves as 'the Church' in the city.

Tommy Tenney; [*The God Chasers*, p103]

Marching for Jesus is a prophetic act which demonstrates that the meek shall inherit the earth. Each footstep on the march is an action which claims the ground ... we are claiming it ... by shifting the spiritual powers that have been allocated in the nations.

Gerald Coates; [*March For Jesus*, p131.]

The main reason for it's [MFJ] existence is to engage participants in "spiritual warfare" ... the chief stated objective of the March For Jesus is to change the spiritual atmosphere of the marched areas by claiming victory over the demons/evil spirits in that area.

Graham Kendrick; [*March For Jesus: Why?*, CRN Magazine]

The structures of the satanic strongholds will be refurbished with a whole new personnel. I believe with all my heart that the rediscovery of territorial spirits is part of God's desire and design to get his people into the full knowledge of the sons of God so we can grow in

⁹⁸ Neil Richardson, 'Brother Andrew's Open Doors & March for Jesus'; *Vanguard Magazine*, Vol 4.2; June/July/Aug 1998.

⁹⁹ When OT saints interceded and asked for forgiveness of national sins, it was the unplanned expression of an extremity of an individual's passionate prayer in seeking God. It was also in direct connection with the nation that had committed the sin. For example, Daniel was part of the nation that was taken into captivity for deserting God, even though he himself was a godly man. He was directly related to the people who sinned.

stature geographically and territorially as well as powerfully that this will enable us to fulfil the world mission of the church. (That is for the world to be under Christian leadership.)

Roger Forster, *Territorial Spirits*; Introduction.

Peter Wreford, editor of JOY, the official Assemblies of God magazine in the UK, reported that Wesley Campbell of the Toronto Airport Church, dressed in full Celtic war costume, painted his face with blue woad and imitated the speech of Mel Gibson in the film 'Braveheart' in order to rouse Christians to spiritual warfare.

Vanguard, No. 8, p9.

Church leader James Ryle instead once seized a sword with which he proceeded to 'knight' the members of the congregation for effective spiritual warfare. Another leader hearing about this but not having a sword knighted his flock with a music stand.

Adullam News, No. 11, June 1998, p11. Ryle is a noted Charismatic leader and 'new prophet' who is also the pastor of Bill McCartney - founder of *Promise Keepers*.

Many congregations are encouraged to either march around the room like soldiers or run screaming around the room like deranged pagans in order to ward off Satanic attack. Others are told to don party hats, blow whistles and hoop and holler as at a party.

Seen personally by the writer at *New Frontiers International* (led by Terry Virgo) meetings, also visible on *The False Anointing* video (Paw Creek Ministries). Party hats - instruction by Rod Parsley, *The End Times*, Vol 12. No.6, p1.

How can we direct this great flow of life into a closed mind? By repenting not only of our own sins but of the sins of the world. By doing penance for the sins of the world, or for the sins of that particular world-leader for whom we would pray.

Agnes Sanford, *The Healing Light*, Macalester Park Pub. Co. (1948) p167.

The Degradation of Inter-Church Relationships

Closer ties to Rome

Pentecostal churches have long had local close ties with the Roman Catholic church, the most formal official connection being that of David du Plessis. No less than three popes received him as a supporter of worldwide ecumenism, although many Pentecostals were initially angered by his presumption of being their spokesman. Eventually he engineered the development of a Pentecostal-Roman Catholic dialogue subsequent to his invitation to Vatican II. This significant Vatican Council (1962-5) was the springboard for Catholics to get involved with Charismatics as it accepted the importance of the gifts of the Spirit, after a defence by Cardinal Suenens. The accepted landmark of the beginning of the Catholic renewal is the formation of a prayer group at Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, in 1967; however, many individual Catholics had been baptised in the Spirit much earlier. By the 1970s Roman Catholics were closely connected with various streams of the CM in the Americas and Britain.

We also need to understand the impact of a group of American teachers on the growing CM in the late 1970s-early 80s - the Fort Lauderdale Five.¹⁰⁰ In particular one of these men (Derek Prince) was to have an enormous influence on all diverse aspects of the CM. It is considered that their main influence was on the matter of discipling, which became a controversial issue in the early part of the decade in the UK ('heavy shepherding'), and led to the discipling movement in the States. However, what is less well known is a formal strategy (kept secret but now revealed in published minutes) to bring evangelical Charismatics into relationship with Rome.

It was considered at the time that Catholics were more advanced in renewal than evangelicals (especially in deliverance ministry, which was a key feature of the Ft Lauderdale men), and that it would be advantageous for there to be a crossover by developing informal ties with Spirit-filled Roman Catholics. A hidden policy of easing in Romanist influences was agreed; kept secret since many Charismatic leaders in the UK were ardent anti-Romanists; indeed anti-denominational full-stop. It should be no surprise, therefore, that a gradual result of the developing CM was closer links to Rome. Even cardinal Suenens sought advice from the Ft Lauderdale brothers on ecumenical matters and then joined them in a committed relationship in 1977, before they had significant impact in the UK.¹⁰¹ Derek Prince is on record as saying, 'Ecumenical gatherings bless all who participate'.¹⁰² Suenens even got the group to consider a joint project with the purpose of training men to be ordained into the Roman Catholic priesthood and diakonate.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ Bob Mumford; Derek Prince; Charles Simpson, Don Basham, Ern Baxter - officially, *Christian Growth Ministries*. While all of these men influenced the UK CM, some had more influence than others. Prince is esteemed by both the early Restorationists and the anti-Restorationists (due to his teaching on Israel). Mumford had a big influence at the beginning of the Restoration movement, particularly in the north of England, but a rift occurred and his influence more or less ceased. Baxter also had a big influence in the late 70s on the emerging Restoration work and was appreciated as an elder statesman into the late 80s. Simpson had less influence but was highly esteemed by a number of groups and spoke at an NFI Bible Week. Basham is probably best well known indirectly through his book, *Deliver Us From Evil*.

¹⁰¹ *Meeting of The Council*, [minutes] January 3-7, 1977, Ft. Lauderdale, FL Regarding Suenens, the minutes show a formal link - 'We wish to establish a committed relationship with the Cardinal for certain specific functions to be determined mutually ... We, as a Council, are committing ourselves to work together with the Cardinal ... in projects to be mutually agreed upon.' [*Minutes/Council/May-June, 1977* page 3]

¹⁰² *General Council Meeting -3-* Aug. 8-10, 1977; III. A. 4.

¹⁰³ *General Council Meeting -5-* Aug. 8-10, 1977; III.A.2.

It was the close connection of the early UK Charismatic renewal pioneers (like Michael Harper) with Anglo-Catholics which had troubled Martyn Lloyd-Jones. If the developing movement in Britain in the early 1960s was a genuine move of God's Spirit (as he was hoping to believe), why were Catholics and Anglo-Catholics getting involved but never repudiating their heretical doctrines? As time went on it became clear that they didn't have to, in fact it was Evangelicals who moved their own goal posts to accommodate Roman Catholics. It became common to hear Catholics state that the baptism in the Spirit had helped them pray to Mary, or helped them attend Mass with more sincerity. Both concepts are blasphemous to God. It later became common to see nuns and priests join Graham Kendrick's 'March For Jesus' outings, carrying statues of Mary and chanting her praises alongside Evangelicals.

Charismatic leaders gradually turned to Catholics for help with Charismatic ideas. Some priests excelled at healing or demonic deliverance and this encouraged figureheads like John Wimber to learn from them. As they testified to the help they received, thousands of ordinary believers began to lean upon them too. Catholic books, like those of the Dominican Francis MacNutt, were recommended and sold at Wimber's conferences. Often unsuspecting Christians, who would never have entertained Roman dogma, bought these without realising that they were written by Catholics.

The support of Wimber for Catholicism is well documented. In short,

- He once publicly apologised to the Roman Catholic Church on behalf of all Protestants.
- He stated that the Pope is a born again evangelical who preaches the Gospel clearly.
- He accepted Catholic miracles, like those at Lourdes attributed to Mary.
- He was also re-married in a Catholic church, as a believer, after a period of separation from his wife.
- He wrote for Roman Catholic magazines, one article was called '*Why I Love Mary*, (New Covenant Magazine, June 1988).
- Wimber also accepted the use of Catholic relics (human remains and other objects) to bring healing (Wimber, *Church Planting Seminar*, Tapes 1,2,3,4,5. March 1981).

Even long term Calvinists became drawn by Wimber into close liaisons with Rome. Terry Virgo organised the Brighton 91 Conference for his friend Wimber, although Wimber never actually attended due to illness. It was also sponsored by the International Charismatic Consultation on World Evangelism and was titled, *That the World May Believe*. Most delegates were Roman Catholics but other denominations were represented. Senior Papal ministers shared platforms alongside Archbishop George Carey, Graham Kendrick, Terry Virgo, Michael Green, Michael Harper, Larry Christenson, Vinson Synan, Jack Hayford and Kriengsak Chareonwongsak. Peripheral meetings included a celebration of mass by monks and other Catholic propaganda. A remarkable fact is that a Christian observer and reporter noted that at only one meeting he attended were the scriptures read.

Interviews with key leaders revealed that they equated the Roman Catholic Gospel with Evangelical teaching. Pentecostal Vinson Synan considered Catholics to be regenerate Christians. Michael Harper was happy for converts to be sent to Catholic churches and called himself, '*a Catholic, Evangelical Charismatic*'. David Watson called the Reformation a mistake while Michael Green considered the most reverent aspect of the conference to be a Catholic Mass. Unity with Catholics was stated to be on the level of identical experiences, mainly baptism in the Spirit, healing or miracles.¹⁰⁴ Some Charismatic church leaders even consider that it is the Catholic church that is at the cutting

¹⁰⁴ *The Brighton 91 Interviews*, WPU (Inc), Peacehaven (1991), in. loc.

edge of spiritual innovation.

Only a few years later, Cardinal Basil Hume was called to address the Baptist Assembly. David Coffey publicly recognised the 'deep spirituality' which undergirded Hume's ministry. The cardinal had been invited as a result of the Union's president's (Douglas McBain) close friendship with Hume. Yet despite his outward piety, Hume was a strict, dyed-in-the-wool Catholic who declared that only Rome had the truth of God. How can any believer have public fellowship with a man who believes and teaches that the Pope is infallible, that Mary is to be worshipped as a mediator to God, that purgatory exists, that Christ must be re-sacrificed at every mass, that penance deals with sin and much more.

The *Evangelicals and Catholics Together* (ECT) statement has received widespread condemnation in the Evangelical press and needs no further rehearsal here. The point is that the Evangelical signatories were Charismatics or Charismatic supporters. This document, and others that followed, promoted active unity and a ceasing of proselytising each others flocks. Following this many conferences have been set up to work out the ECT implications, such as the *Ecumenical Conference of Traditional Christians* in Carolina, 1995. Here prominent leaders of the Roman Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox Church and North American Evangelicals all gathered to work out how they may be one, especially in evangelism. IVP published the findings in the book *Reclaiming the Great Tradition: Evangelicals, Catholics and Orthodox in Dialogue*. Regrettably, Jim Packer was fully involved in both these initiatives.

The idea that all these bodies have a common basic tradition is false. The official statements of Rome and Eastern Orthodoxy deny critical Gospel truths, especially salvation by grace alone;¹⁰⁵ while the official confessions of Protestantism state that both have corrupted the Gospel. In the conference, the Eastern Orthodox representatives boldly stated that the Orthodox Church is the one true church so that authentic Christian unity requires ecclesiastical and sacramental oneness with her. For Evangelicals to unite they must use icons (images) of God, Christ and Mary, practice mysticism, monasticism, asceticism and accept human deification.

Rome has not changed its anti-Reformation teachings for which it used to kill evangelical men, women and children. In fact, recent Roman council formulations undergird those of the Counter Reformation Council of Trent. The modern church is a far cry from the faith of previous generations when even children preferred to die by fire rather than willingly celebrate a mass.

None of this ground could have been lost without the development and success of the CM.

Cult connections

In the wake of the widespread acceptance of the Charismatic Movement's many erroneous doctrines and experiences, cults and sects - which had always previously kept clear of true Christianity - began to draw alongside church and ministry functions which coincided with their vision. Thus many aberrant groups were able to walk with Evangelicals in the March For Jesus events.

When the Promise Keepers ministry was at its height in America, Mormons found that the flesh centred emphasis was compatible with their programmes of discipleship. As a result, Mormons gathered in Promise Keeper meetings with Evangelicals, sometimes in force at

¹⁰⁵ Both Rome and Eastern Orthodoxy teach: free will in salvation; justification by faith and works; universal, ineffectual atonement; general, resistible grace and conditional predestination.

stadium events. Promise Keepers literature became the only evangelical books ever to be displayed in Mormon bookshops and tabernacle bookstalls.

Some UK Anglican churches have devoted themselves to the Interfaith movement which enables church platforms to be shared with leaders of other faiths. Charismatic vicars have conducted joint meetings with representatives of Hinduism, Islam and others. The praises of Krishna have been sung within ancient Christian church walls. This is idolatry of the first order.

All this follows earlier patterns. When the baptism in the Spirit first became a major live issue with the manifestations at Azusa Street in Los Angeles at the turn of the century, spiritualists and mediums were quickly drawn to the wild meetings. Although William Seymour was troubled by this, the spiritualists were not ejected and continued to come to meetings, despite the protestations of his former mentor Charles Parham.

This sort of problem exposes the danger when experience rather than truth is placed at the centre of the call for unity. Although some try to dress this up with high sounding words like: 'Unity is based on life not doctrine', the reality is that lifestyles are accepted without discernment. If someone manifests what is considered to be the gifts of the Spirit, they can be accepted even if they hold heretical notions. The hazards of this are obvious. Some occult groups manifest all the ingredients of Charismatic behaviour, including speaking in tongues. Tongues have long been a feature of some oriental occultic religions like variants of Hinduism. Unity can never be based upon experiences or a subjective assessment of character; unity must be based upon objective truth. Without the touchstone of something absolute (i.e. the Word of God), then anything can be accepted. At the end of the day, the Bible commands us not to formally associate with people who do not hold sound doctrine or who conduct themselves in gross sin. To unite in church with other religions and cults is a serious error.

False organic visible unity

Unity amongst the Lord's people is an existing fact. It exists in the heavenlies – all the Lord's people are one because Jesus prayed that they should be. The genuine Biblical baptism in the Holy Spirit established all believers into union with Christ and with each other in Christ. We do not need to struggle for this unity or build artificial structures to set it up – it is there. We just need to live in the good of it in the way we conduct ourselves, not biting and devouring one another but serving one another. Yet this has never been good enough for people who want to build empires instead of churches.

The new basis of unity

When the Pentecostals made overtures to other denominations through the ministry of David du Plessis, it soon became clear that doctrinal purity was the first thing to be expendable. It was worrying that du Plessis courted the most doctrinally unsound churches and was impressed by the Gospel's worst enemies. Du Plessis derided the Evangelicals who did not respond to the Charismatic Revival as much as liberals, modernists and Catholics. The Protestant Fundamentalists were scorned most of all, while the ecumenical World Council of churches was praised by du Plessis for having '*the most powerful manifestations of the Spirit*'.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶ David du Plessis, *The Spirit Bade Me Go*, p28.

As the Charismatic renewal movement pressed on, it became clear that the only common factor really needed was an experience of the baptism in the spirit. Church denominations that had kept aloof from one another for decades began to meet together on the basis of a shared experience. The legacy of du Plessis continued far beyond the borders of the Pentecostal churches as ‘Spirit-filled’ leaders embraced Roman Catholics and unorthodox groups, as long as they had been baptised in the Spirit. ‘Unity is based upon life’ was the cry as truth faded away from anyone’s agenda. In fact, the Bible shows that without a foundation of truth, there can be no real relationship. From just one short NT letter alone note that: we are fellow workers – for the truth (3 Jn 1:8); we walk together - in truth (3 Jn 1:3-4); we love each other – in the truth (3 Jn 1:1).

Doctrinal ambivalence

Crusade evangelists, like Billy Graham, had already set the scene for shared mission activities by having the leaders of various denominations on arena platforms. Many evangelicals were startled when outright liberals were endorsed by Graham and shocked when converts were pushed into modernist, unorthodox churches – simply because local, non-evangelical leaders had sponsored the crusade. [Evangelicals would have been less supportive of Graham had they known then that the fall out rate of his crusade converts was around 95%.] By the 1970’s the UK church was used to such ambivalence about diverse doctrinal stances.

Although the Pentecostal churches had made formal attempts to open themselves to external contacts, in reality there had been little real, lasting relationship development with outsiders in the UK. The CM changed all that. Charismatic churches were bent on growth, but evangelistic attempts (of myriad sorts) always proved less effective than hoped. Even leaders who had known great numerical success in Africa, Asia and other places seemed unable to chalk up the figures in England. One Elim Pentecostal pastor had supposedly led a revival in New Zealand, but on his return to the UK, despite great expectations, he actually destroyed two local Brighton Elim churches within two years and disappeared from the local scene. No group seemed to have any lasting major evangelistic success.

What was effective, however, was the poaching of existing sheep. Charismatics tended to put on large united meetings at strategic town centre venues to create a shop window where their style of worship and powerful messages were displayed (see ‘Degradation of Meetings’). Folk from all sorts of church backgrounds came to these services and many gradually drifted into the movement, creating fairly large churches. CM churches gathered people from: Brethren, Baptist, Pentecostal, Anglican, Independent Free and Methodist churches with all their doctrinal variations. To hold such a variety of people together, strict doctrinal lines were obscured under the higher priority of ‘spiritual’ teachings. There would be many seminars about: family, faith, leadership, money, miracles, healing, worship, the kingdom, counselling and music. Far fewer (if any) were centred on: eschatology, the decrees and attributes of God, the sovereignty of God, election, irresistible grace, total depravity, truth, union with Christ, the resurrection and ascension, the Lord’s Supper, mutual edification in meetings and so on.

The CM is not a homogenous group. As it holds representatives of many types of Christian background in tension, it became increasingly inept doctrinally, and weak Biblically, as it pandered to a superficial interest in the latest wind of doctrine - at the expense of a foundation of solid instruction – which could have split the flock. Although the Pentecostals were not known for doctrinal purity, many classic Pentecostal churches had a

far sounder Biblical foundation than most Charismatic groups which grasped at every freak idea going.

Fads

As each move within the CM died down, a search began for a new shot in the arm. After the consolidation of the house churches into hardened 'apostolic' streams by 1982, the CM was looking for a fresh fix. In walks Wimber in the mid 80's, taking the British church by storm; revitalising Charismatic worship, encouraging hopes of church growth and promising to bring individuals into being able to move in power. Wimber straddled many denominations and seemed to be able to hold good relationships with Restorationist leaders like Terry Virgo, Roman Catholics and Anglicans like David Watson. In fact, Wimber was very ecumenical in his approach. With Wimber, a real unity of diverse types was beginning to emerge.

But the effervescence lasted less than a decade, a new fix was needed. Help was on the way; as a small experiment, which began in 1985, was gathering force. By 1988, 55,000 people took part in the UK *March For Jesus*. In 1989 it comprised 200,000 and then went global by 1995 20 million people marched world-wide. Again a Charismatic initiative had crossed the party lines and, like Wimber's conferences, had brought a variety of Christians into a visible, public unity.

As the 1990's turned a new move was required, although the *March For Jesus* was spreading, this was an irregular event and Charismatics were tiring of it as the historic denominations got on board. Enter the Kansas City prophets (KCP). Building on the platform established by Wimber, Mike Bickle and his disparate team of 'prophets' took the CM by storm. All the key CM leaders lined up to endorse them in writing (a matter never repented of by the way) while they and their teams submitted to having hands laid on them and personal prophecies to impart the 'prophetic' anointing by men like Bob Jones.¹⁰⁷ The furore of the KCP lasted a couple of years but gradually died down when they resigned from the Vineyard. In 1995 Wimber had admitted that the KCP had deceived him and that at the time he introduced the prophets to Britain, he was under this deception and his *'brain was switched off'*.

Despite the scandal, despite the discrediting, the CM in the UK was being united into a movement under submission to the modern prophetic impetus. After the KCP were a forgotten fad, one of the inspirers of them was very active in Britain. Paul Cain, a Latter Rain minister who had travelled with the arch-heretic William Branham in the 40's, was speaking at packed meetings in Virgo's churches and sharing ministry with R.T. Kendall in Westminster Chapel.

There was not peace for long. After the ground had been prepared by the prophetic impetus, Toronto burst on the scene. The travesty of this movement needs no explanation here as many books have dealt with the aberration in detail. The point is that yet again

¹⁰⁷ At Holy Trinity KCP leadership conference in 1990, a statement was issued by a number of national leaders stating that the KCP ministry was of God; despite the fact that one month earlier the KCP had confessed to 15 areas of error in their teaching and practice. This endorsement was signed by: Gerald Coates (Pioneer), Graham Cray (St Michael-le-Belfrey), Roger Forster (Ichthus), Lynn Green (YWAM), David McInnes (St. Aldates, Oxford), Sandy Millar (Holy Trinity), John Mumford (Vineyard, London), David Pytches, Brian Skinner, Teddy Saunders, Barry Kissel (St. Andrew's Chorleywood), Terry Virgo (NFI), Ann Watson (widow of David Watson) Rick Williams (Vineyard, Teddington) and others. All these people have received 'ministry' from Kansas City prophets. Many Christians consider that this period is a watershed in the establishment of deception in the British churches.

there was a common experience which united very disparate groups,¹⁰⁸ including those not fully signed up to Charismatic streams. Although the Toronto experience split individual churches, it united the radical groups around the country.

After this came Promise Keepers, which not only united Charismatic groups but for the first time, since the *March For Jesus*, Mormons became fully involved. After this we had the gold teeth nonsense, then gold oil on the palms, Pensacola, then New Celts, then the Alpha course and so on. The point is that one movement after another had progressively brought about a closer dialogue between opposing Charismatic leaders while establishing an increasing public unity at the grass roots level of CM churches. Who could have predicted, for instance, that committed anti-establishment Restorationist Terry Virgo would have direct links with Anglicans at Holy Trinity Brompton. Without Toronto and Alpha that would never have happened.

But the fads failed to be effective in gaining new converts. As one then another passed, cracks began to appear in the structures. Big campaigns, of all sorts, failed - even when thousands of pounds were spent on developing them, as the early 90s JIM campaign and the Reinhard Bonké book to every household proved. No one fix was sufficient to maintain interest. As the Charismatic large churches began to decline in the mid 90's CM units needed to unite in order to sustain excitement, enthusiasm and bring in an old vision: city-wide churches.

City churches

City-churches had long been discussed; indeed it is clear that the early church only knew of city-churches. But this had been a green pioneering context. As an apostle entered a new field, he planted a church in the strategic towns. There were no others. He then wrote letters to the believers in Colosse or Corinth, not in the suburbs. The Corinthian church was actually based in a suburb called Cenchræ, but it was the single Corinthian church. This is not, however, the case today. The ideal of city-wide churches is impossible to establish in our multi-church cities without either man-made superficial unification, or an act of God in revival or judgment.

Despite this obvious drawback, attempts are regularly made to achieve it. As we see elsewhere, it is a key Latter Rain objective and will remain an active aspiration in the radical wing of the CM. Despite past failures, there is a current move in the CM to establish city-churches which have a single leadership, despite the existence of many congregations. It is considered that God cannot fully work out his plan unless this takes place.

In the 1980's Mike Bickle attempted to establish an artificial city-church concept in Kansas, largely through the authoritarian basis of prophetic leadership. Certain geographic areas were considered to be under the authority of his prophets by an arbitrary act. A similar idea arose in the late 1970's in England when certain apostles were considered to be the spiritual authority over certain parts of England. Widespread condemnation and ridicule soon squashed this. After Bickle caused a major controversy with all the other historic churches in his area (especially other Charismatic churches like that of Ernie Gruen) Bickle backed off; initially helped to see sense by Wimber. Bickle remains focused on this idea but now seeks to achieve it through friendship rather than an arbitrary church government structure. He admits that *'the way we used terminology created fear, division and suspicion'*.¹⁰⁹ The Kansas experiment shows all the dangers inherent in this concept.

¹⁰⁸ Including non-believers by the way.

¹⁰⁹ Lee Grady, *Ministries Today*, Sept/Oct 1990.

Another example is Colorado Springs where Ted Haggard supposedly rid the sky of all its demons! As a result 70 major parachurch organisations moved there; including James Dobson's *Focus on the Family* and the Navigators. As the evangelicals began to witness to Catholics and Jews, complaints arose and a city-wide eldership was formed who signed a 'Covenant of Mutual Respect'. All the groups came together and developed relationships: Rabbinic Jews, Presbyterians, parachurch groups, Catholics and Charismatics. The supposed basis of unity was that each group worshipped the God of Israel so they should be united and not proselytise other's flocks; just like the *Evangelical and Catholics Together* dialogue. Such unity joins true worshippers to people who worship a different Christ and prevents believers from proper evangelism. This unity is deadly.

The Evangelical Alliance and churches together

While most churches realise the dangers and difficulties of setting up such city-wide unity, the CM is urging all churches to be part of a superficial show of unity as a precursor to fulfilling the greater objective. The hijacking of the Evangelical Alliance by Charismatic ideas and consultants has led to the establishment of a 'churches together' movement. This would be less worrying if it was simply an occasional common gathering for edification and testimony but the EA made it more serious.

At initial gatherings, leaders from all the represented churches are called to the platform to agree to always do each other good and enter into a kind of covenantal agreement. The fact that, in practice, this is largely unworkable seems not to bother anyone. Yet a public agreement to support and succour is an agreement made before God, like marriage, and failure to implement this is a great sin. Most leaders who do this only ever see each other at these occasional meetings and can never fulfil the covenant. Moreover, all the members present are called to pray a united prayer making much the same commitment, another commitment unlikely to be performed.

All this is superficial unity dressed up in spiritual terms. Many of the folk committed to these meetings never even fulfil this sort of commitment within their own churches on a Sunday, let alone with people they don't even know in distant churches. For most people the meetings are just a chance for a jolly jamboree and a distinctive exhortation. For the planning team leaders it is more clout for their agendas. All this is meaningless to God who is more concerned that the leaders establish proper Biblical practices within their own churches rather than establishing artificial arbitrary shop windows in this fashion. Leaders will be judged on whether they edified their own saints, not whether they set up a meeting that served little purpose other than making a big noise once in a while.

The real worry is where all this is going. The CM is infatuated with unity at any cost. It matters little whether their own churches are developing Biblically or not if the leaders are part of the unified strategy for the town. It doesn't matter if members of that unity hold unorthodox or even heretical ideas, as long as they follow the Charismatic game plan and meetings are well attended.

As Latter Rain ideas gain more popularity and as Latter Rain teachers push for a growing visible unity of churches submitted to the new revelation of prophets and apostles, the current push for unified town meetings is a sitting-duck for a Latter Rain take-over. It is at united meetings that seminal, radical ideas can be put over to large numbers in just one night. Unsuspecting orthodox churches can have their whole congregations corrupted with dangerous ideas and subjected to unbiblical practices in just two hours of exposure at a united meeting. This is how UK Restoration took over unsuspecting renewal churches in the 70's. It is how Wimber grew the American Vineyard churches in the 70's and 80's. In

fact, Wimber had a drawn up strategy to steal sheep by setting up united meetings in key town, exposing them to his variety of worship and the miraculous 'stuff' thus enticing aspiring believers into his meetings after the conferences ended. It worked as the Vineyards grew rapidly.¹¹⁰

The Biblical basis of gathering

The key matter is - why do believers come together? The Biblical answer is that they meet in order to practice mutual edification and to break bread in unity. Christians gather to build each other up and celebrate the atonement of Christ. Even worship is not mentioned as the reason for gathering (because worship is something to be done all the time). This means that big gatherings cannot be Biblical since there is no *koinonia*, no one can share with brethren at them; neither can such large number celebrate the Lord's Supper. This is also why there are no NT precedents for large churches and no models for large united gatherings. All NT church assemblies are small and set up in homes. This city-wide united meeting strategy is unbiblical. Its purpose is propaganda for the greater CM agenda, an agenda which is gradually being more and more corrupted. It also serves to heighten the importance of key leaders who claim to be apostles and prophets.

Conclusion

The CM is inherently ecumenical. This is due to placing greater importance on an experience than truth. Charismatics really do see Spirit-baptised people as part of their family, no matter what such people believe; those who are not baptised in the Spirit are considered outsiders, even though they may be Biblically sound. Thus a Charismatic Christian from a Baptist background will happily fellowship with a Roman Catholic, Methodist, Pentecostalist, Mormon or Eastern Orthodox person if they claim to be Spirit-baptised. Indeed they will feel at home. Yet this person may well find fellowship with a Presbyterian, Strict Baptist or other evangelical who opposes the idea of Spirit baptism impossible, even if they were the most godly and orthodox believer.

The CM has been a means whereby disparate groups have been able to formally unite; and there is no doubt that this unification of evangelicals with unorthodox groups can only be a strategy of the enemy.

Examples of error and deception

The reformation quarrel with Roman Catholics is no longer relevant.

Gerald Coates ['Coates in Westminster,' *Adullam Register*, pamphlet, July 1997.]

Gerald Coates is 'quite happy to see a world-wide revival led by the Pope' as long as it was similar to Toronto and Pensacola.

[*Contending Earnestly For the Faith*, 4.2, p9.]

Preach the gospel, but don't be so negative as to refuse to endorse or work with those who belong to a group that proclaims a different gospel.

Leighton Ford, Billy Graham Organisation. [*The Berean Call*, May 1998.]

BILLY GRAHAM

I admire Pope John tremendously ... I felt he brought a new era to the world.

[*Chicago Tribune*, 8.6.63.]

¹¹⁰ Al Dager gives an example of this in British Columbia in *Vengeance is Ours*, Sword Pub. Redmond (1990), p154.

The Gospel that founded this (Roman Catholic) school, that Gospel that has brought me here tonight, is still the way of salvation.

[*Gastonian Gazette*, 22/11/67; *Evangelical Action*, 1/2/68.]

The American people are looking for a ... moral and spiritual leader that believes something. And the Pope does ... thank God, I've got somebody to quote now with some real authority.

[Interview on the *Phil Donahue Show*, 10.11.79.]

Pope John Paul II is one of the greatest moral and spiritual leaders of this century. He is an evangelist.

[*Saturday Evening Post* article by Graham, Jan/Feb 1980.]

Graham: People ... whether they come from the Muslim world, or the Buddhist world, or the Christian world, or the non-believing world ... may not even know the name of Jesus but they know in their heart that they need something that they don't have and they turn to the only light that they have and I think that they're saved.

Schuller: What I hear you saying[is] that it's possible for Jesus Christ to come into a human heart and soul even if they've been born in darkness and have never had exposure to the Bible. Is that a correct interpretation of what you're saying?

Graham: Yes it is ... I've met people in various parts of the world ... that have never seen a Bible ... and never heard of Jesus, but they believed in their heart that there was a God and they tried to live a life that was quite apart from the surrounding community. ... The message is that God loves you whoever you are, wherever you are, whatever your religious background. ... He wants to come into your heart ... and give you a peace and joy ... and he will ... if you will make that commitment to him.

Billy Graham; [Interview with Robert Schuller *Evangelical Times*, Feb 1998; *Standard Bearer*, 15.12.97.]

It is my hope that this proposed project will result in substantial reconciliation between the major monotheistic faiths.

Lyn Green, Head of YWAM (UK); referring to the 'Reconciliation Walks around the Middle East engaging in 'identificational repentance to purge the sin of Christians during the Crusades. [*Contending Earnestly For the Faith*, 4.2, p9.]

Roman Catholics into the charismatic renewal ... are way ahead of many Protestants in this regard; we Protestants are learning much from them.

Derek Prince; [*Sword & Trowel*, 1997.2.]

The Catholic tradition tends to produce a few spiritual giants [by which he means the mystics], whereas the evangelical tradition produces a lot of spiritual babies.'

Charles Simpson; [*Sword & Trowel*, 1997.2.]

The reason why I ... related to the Roman Catholics was because I saw that they had the same experience that I had, of the baptism of the Spirit ... the basis of fellowship is not primarily doctrine, it is those who God has drawn into his fellowship.

Michael Harper; [*The Brighton 91 Interviews*, WPU (Inc), Peacehaven (1991), p15.]

The Reformation was a mistake.

David Watson; [*The Brighton 91 Interviews*, WPU (Inc), p15.]

I wanted to observe a modern Charismatic Catholic Mass and it was the most reverent

thing I have seen in the whole Conference. Quite astonishing. ... When you've got a Roman Catholic (who is) really accepting Jesus Christ as his saviour ... I want to put my arm round my brother and say look we are regiments in the same army.

Michael Green; [*The Brighton 91 Interviews*, WPU (Inc), p19-21.]

The Degradation of Evangelism

The downward slide during the 20th Century

The quality of church mission strategy has been going downhill at breakneck speed for about 100 years. Even some successful evangelical preachers introduced new ideas and practices that served the Lord's people badly in the long term. D. L. Moody is considered as one of the greatest crusade evangelists, but many contemporaries were appalled at his Arminianism and loose theology. His greatest damaging contribution to church history, however, was his introduction of Sankey's singing which set up a suitable emotional atmosphere to soften the hearts of the audience. Indeed, Sankey's published hymn music was so popular that it rivalled the sales of Music Hall songs. This was an unbiblical and dangerous precedent which set Christian meetings on the course towards popular entertainment.

Over the years the quality of preaching fell even further, both in churches generally and especially in large-scale mission events. By the time of the CM, a variety of strategies were in widespread use – often enlisting the platform support of some 'Christian' celebrity to draw in the crowds. In this atmosphere, Charismatics could easily drift into even greater novelties.

After initial growth from people changing congregations, the CM needed to bolster its numbers or be doomed as simply another temporary bubble about to burst. So it developed all sorts of evangelism events, both for personal and church evangelism. Over the years, and throughout the various churches, hundreds of ideas must have been tried – too many to list and evaluate. These included: 'praise' marches, healing meetings, celebrations, Bible Weeks, seminars, personal tracts, fasting, 24-hour prayer chains, Gospel meetings, importing well-known speakers, specially printed newspapers to every local household, public preaching in shopping centres, free NTs with a tract printed in them, media advertised campaigns, Gospel parties, public 'worship' celebrations in town squares or sea-fronts, attacking territorial spirits over towns, dramas, 'professional' mission teams, young-people's evangelistic teams, media adverts, musical concerts, social welfare strategies (e.g. free meals), old people's events and so on.

After over thirty years of Charismatic inventions, the net result is that the UK church is in its worst state in history and appears to be in near terminal decline. The Methodist church expects to vanish altogether within 10-20 years if it declines at the present rate. Even the powerful expectations generated by the Toronto blessing for global revival have resulted in a 16% drop in church attendance. Some studies say that evangelicalism will be dead in the UK within 50 years!

The poor, Arminian, watered down, Gospel presentations developed by certain para-church organisations from the 1950's onwards led to an 'easy-believism' which overtook most denominations. Anyone who prayed a certain prayer, or repeated it after someone recited it, was declared to be saved. People, who walked to the front of a meeting after a call for a decision for Christ, were considered as born-again since they had made a public stand for the Lord. Yet this weakened and unbiblical form of evangelism, devoid of visible repentance, conviction of sin or the effects of grace in the heart, degenerated even further in Charismatic circles.

Sinners were told that they were believers simply because they raised a hand in a Gospel meeting. Worse still, after the introduction of the Pentecostal (but occult/pagan) practice of getting people to fall over (being 'slain in the Spirit'), sinners who responded to a preacher's touch by keeling over were told that they had become Christians when they woke up. Sometimes whole rows of such people would fall down and then be considered as Christians. The fact that there was no fruit in their lives meant nothing, as no one wanted to speak against such a 'powerful work of God'. 'If they fell over, something must have happened from the Spirit, therefore we must leave it to God', seemed to be the argument.

We could spend much time going over technique after technique, method after method, innovation after innovation, but in the end – time has shown that they were all useless. Worse still the Charismatic church is filled with people who think they are converted but wonder why nothing really changed and why they have so many problems. Into this desperate situation, as the millennium approached, came two movements, Signs and Wonders and the Alpha Course. In the usual pragmatic fashion, everyone pinned their hopes on these.

Signs and wonders Methodology

It should be remembered that one of the prime motivations in John Wimber's apologetic for healing was to create effective evangelists; in fact he was originally professor of church growth at Fuller Seminary. He called his system, 'Power Evangelism' and this was later developed alongside an apologetic for attacking demons in Spiritual Warfare. It was considered that every believer should strive to be able to serve God in the way that Jesus himself did - that is by healing people, casting out demons and effecting miracles. He believed that the church had failed to grasp the strategic importance of this and that Eastern religions had never lost it; thus he tried to restore the balance by importing Eastern mysticism into Christianity.

Wimber failed to understand that Christ's ministry was unique, and that even the apostolic ministry was unusual in its power. This ministry was to testify to the world the power and authenticity of Christ's Messiahship. The apostles were delegated to continue this task and were granted power to perform miracles and healing to break open the nations for the Gospel. It is noteworthy that even this can be seen to diminish as time went on and few of the apostles, or their delegates, are recorded as performing miracles. As miracles decrease in Acts, we see a greater emphasis being given to the power of the word (Acts 8:4, 14, 10:44, 11:1, 19, 12:24 etc.). However, even from the start, it was the word preached that had power to convert, not the signs (Rm 1:16; Acts 2:41, 4:4). Miracles mainly demonstrated the authenticity of the apostles as men from God. It was the power of their preached word that led to conversions under God's sovereignty; as the word spread, so the number of converts increased (Acts 6:7).

Wimber's argument for healing led to a re-orientation in certain Charismatic churches. Evangelism was now seen to be requiring a work of power, rather than just preaching. This was adopted due to the poor record of evangelistic endeavours. Anything was worth trying. I remember people, who were intelligent and sincere, praying for people in shops to be healed and even laying hands on them in chemists. Instead of seeing an opportunity for the Gospel, a chance meeting was an opportunity for prayer for healing. Although this eccentricity has died down somewhat, it is still common in certain Pentecostal churches.

This in itself is evidence of a clear lack of understanding about Biblical doctrine, particularly regarding God's grace and sovereignty. We have no Biblical sanction to pray

for spiritual blessings upon unbelievers who may never respond to the Gospel. God's grace is not poured out on the wicked. Grace comes from the cross and is toward the elect; only those chosen in Christ have every spiritual blessing. Our responsibility to the unsaved is to share the Gospel and pray that God may have mercy upon them, that their eyes may be opened to the glories of Christ as Saviour. It is also noteworthy that not a single believer is mentioned in scripture as having been healed supernaturally, while many were left in medical afflictions (e.g. Timothy, Trophimus). How much less expectation could there be for unbelievers?

In any case, the proof of the pudding was in the eating and as the numbers of failed cases piled up, gradually this method of expecting evangelistic success diminished through the 90s. The CM needed another shot in the arm to generate converts as it was demonstrably failing in this area. This came in the form of the Alpha Course; a dumbed-down, welcoming, needs-based method of attracting disciples.

The Alpha Course

The course was originally designed by Charles Marnham in 1979 as part of the training for new members at Holy Trinity Church Brompton, West London; later a key centre for the Toronto Experience. Over the years the course was re-written by curate Nicky Gumbel, who provided different versions for differing people. Its popularity is due to the laid back approach, friendly atmosphere, fun, open discussion and a communal meal. In fact fun is a major feature: *'Laughter and fun are a key part of the course ... enabling everyone to relax'*.¹¹¹ The videos contain many jokes and amusing stories to the detriment of the message, cramping the time for serious topics and intruding upon the solemn nature of the teaching. There is nothing wrong with fun to relax a gathering, but humour should not encroach upon the talks which discuss the essentials of salvation and God.

Now we cannot go into great detail about the problems with the course content and others have ably done this,¹¹² all we can do is draw out salient points which support our contention that Biblical evangelism was being further downgraded by Charismatics through this course.

The crucial matters, which we must take issue with, are these:

- The attraction to outsiders is in the presentation and convivial, fun atmosphere of the meetings. Only one fifth is devoted to real evangelistic teaching. After three sessions there is a presumption of faith and the course then moves on to dealing with issues for new believers. This is very dangerous as there is no test for faith in lesson four and non-Christian participants risk being confused and led astray. What happens when people are later told that: *'God wants to fill every one of us with his Spirit ... God takes us as we are'*, if several present are not saved? ¹¹³
- The Alpha Course focuses upon the individual at his point of need, instead of concentrating upon the demands of a holy God. *'Alpha is about listening to people where they are and showing them they are ... accepted.'* ¹¹⁴ [Actually, the Gospel shows them that they are lost in sin and enemies of God unless they repent.]

¹¹¹ *Alpha News*, Feb, 1997, p12.

¹¹² For instance: Chris Hand, *Falling Short: The Alpha Course Examined*, Day One Pub. (1998); and Elizabeth McDonald, *Alpha: the unofficial guide*, St Mathew Pub. Ltd. (2001).

¹¹³ Gumbel, *Questions of Life*, Kingsway, p152. This book is the basic text-book of the course and the basis of the video messages.

¹¹⁴ Taken from *Alpha News*, quoted by McDonald, p48.

- Frequently there is an emphasis that man is special to God and loved. All this deals with sin superficially and wrongly affirms the sinner. It ignores the Biblical fact that sinners are enemies of God and that wrath for sin hangs over the sinner (Jn 3:36). There is only 'no condemnation' for those who are 'in Christ Jesus'. Mercy and grace are offered to sinners who come to Christ for salvation.
- God is presented as someone who is there to help man, not as the creator and Lord.
- The course builds up people's self esteem, a modern but unbiblical pre-occupation. *'Don't ever ... attack their self respect. ... Do affirm and encourage them.'*¹¹⁵
- The course is extremely ecumenical and strongly supports Roman Catholicism, referring to the Roman Catholic Church more frequently and more positively than any other religious body. Roman churches now use the course. One Catholic bishop said, *'Alpha doesn't contain anything that is contrary to Catholic teaching'*.¹¹⁶
- There is little emphasis upon sin as offence, judgment on that sin, repentance, conviction of sin and sacrificially following Christ. There is no understanding about man being dead in trespasses and sins; indeed, the word 'sin' is usually avoided; 'failings' or 'wrong-doings' are substituted. When it mentions 'sin', it focuses upon the sad consequences for man, not that we have rebelled against God's law. There is no explanation as to why sin is serious and why it results in death.
- There is virtually no mention of God's wrath (anger) against sinners, punishment, damnation, judgment and hardly any real mention of hell. Yet this is the basis for a proper Gospel presentation. Without knowing that we have offended God and are doomed sinners, we have no need to receive his salvation and forgiveness.
- There is little emphasis upon the Lordship of Christ, his demands of separation, his holy requirements. The Lord Jesus is presented as someone who can satisfy people.
- The course says virtually nothing about: the knowledge of God (apart from an over-emphasis upon his love), justification by faith, election, the law, depravity, the new birth or sanctification. In contradiction of Jn 16:13-14, more is spoken about the Holy Spirit than about the Father or the Son.
- Salvation is achieved by simply saying 'the sinner's prayer'. This is Arminian 'free-willism' (emphasis upon man) and contradicts Eph 2:1-10 which states that faith can only arise when God graciously gives it. People cannot believe from their own strength whenever they choose to by grabbing some vague universal, non-existent grace.
- The course quotes approvingly of very dubious writers like: Paul Tillich and Jürgen Moltmann (non-evangelical, liberal authors) or Roman Catholic teachers, like Tom Forrest and Mother Teresa. To mention such people to young converts without any warning is, at the very least, poor shepherding of souls.
- Nicky Gumbel insists that the course is used in its entirety without significant adaptation and warns that to do otherwise is to break the Data Copyright law (Copyright Designs & Patent Act 1988). The point is that the course is designed to lead towards the Holy Spirit weekend when a special mystical experience can be passed on. This section is particularly singled out as not to be tampered with.¹¹⁷ Gumbel has admitted that the course is oriented towards a Toronto type experience. Churches which avoid this section are thus breaking the law. If you take up an Alpha Course, the choice is: follow Gumbel into Toronto or break the law.

Since the course comprises 15 talks over 10-12 weeks, plus a week-end away, there is every reason for criticism. A single presentation could not hope to mention everything about the Gospel, but even that should mention God, sin, inability, judgment, the cross of Christ, the

¹¹⁵ Alpha Youth Manual, Quoted in McDonald, p48.

¹¹⁶ Ambrose Griffiths, RC Bishop of Hexham & Newcastle, *Alpha News*, No. 14, p9.

¹¹⁷ *Christian Herald*, Dec 1995, p9. *Alpha News*, Nov 1996, p24.

resurrection, faith, grace, righteousness and a future hope. In a course which has been fine tuned over years and which lasts so long there should be no significant gaps and no unnecessary wrong emphasis. The reverse is the case.

Questionable fruit

The results of this poor teaching are seen in the testimonies which Alpha publishes. Since these are obviously the better ones, being selected for publication, we can only despair for weaker ones.

- 'I thought, "if there is a God, then why wait?" So I thought I would pray the prayer.' [This person did not even know if there was a God, let alone realised any Gospel basics!]¹¹⁸
- [Alpha] 'redirected my train of thought.'¹¹⁹
- 'On the Holy Spirit week-end, I had an amazing encounter with the Spirit, but being a bit of a sceptic, I went away without giving my life to Jesus.'¹²⁰ [This was not the Holy Spirit if the person was never saved. What Spirit is being passed on in these meetings?]
- 'Since I said the prayer of commitment something has changed. I don't know what.'¹²¹
- [Alpha] 'was like a free weekly therapy session with a huge helping of Tender Loving Care.'¹²²
- 'I prayed a prayer of Christian commitment ... I didn't feel anything. It was no big deal and I went back to work.'¹²³

A further worry is that people give glory and thanks to Alpha rather than the Lord for their experiences. This is bad enough but the Alpha team feels no compunction in revelling in these and publishing them. For example:

- 'We feel really blessed by Alpha.'
- 'Alpha totally changed the life which I had before.'
- 'Thanks to Alpha.'
- 'I don't know how I would have survived without Alpha.'¹²⁴

Often the course becomes a surrogate family for people who have lots of personal, relational or social problems. As the course comes to an end, these people develop withdrawal symptoms,¹²⁵ showing that they were hooked on the social dynamics of the course rather than Christ.

One pastor counted 500+ references to 'Alpha' in one of their newsletters, but noted only 8 mentions of Christ, and those were in passing. This is an extremely worrying tendency and one which Nicky Gumbel should be actively repenting of and correcting. This leads us to worry about what happens in many weekend retreats where alpha course members concentrate upon being filled with the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit weekend

The Alpha organisation explains that the course does not work without the Holy Spirit weekend, so great is the focus upon a subjective experience of the Holy Spirit rather than understanding the cross of Christ. *'For many, the decisive moment is the Saturday*

¹¹⁸ Taken from Elsdon-Dew, *The God Who Changes Lives*, (Alpha Testimonies) quoted by McDonald, p51.

¹¹⁹ Taken from *Alpha News*, quoted by McDonald, p49.

¹²⁰ Taken from *Alpha News*, quoted by McDonald, p46.

¹²¹ Taken from *Alpha News*, quoted by McDonald, p46.

¹²² Taken from *UK Focus*, quoted in McDonald, p45.

¹²³ Elsdon-Dew p52, quoted in *Falling Short*, Chris Hand p71.

¹²⁴ Taken from *Alpha News*, quoted by McDonald, p54.

¹²⁵ *Alpha News*, July 1996, p13.

evening of the weekend,¹²⁶ states Gumbel; i.e. when he invites the Holy Spirit to touch the participants. Gumbel even states that the Spirit is *'the most wonderful and exciting subject'*, a description the Holy Spirit would certainly object to.¹²⁷ The Holy Spirit's mission is to bring the things of Jesus to us and to glorify him. He does not focus attention upon himself, although the church must never diminish his ministry. It is the Spirit who sanctifies us and leads us forward and without him we are nothing. So, here is a paradox: we desperately need the ministry of the Holy Spirit or we gain nothing of Christ; yet he never forces us to concentrate upon him, always directing us to Christ. It is through Christ that we worship the Father. The Spirit directs us to Christ, but Alpha directs us to the Spirit.

The testimonies of the Holy Spirit weekend always centre upon the Spirit and rarely upon Christ. It is, *'I was powerfully touched by the Spirit'*. Worse still, the testimonies sometimes sound very similar to occult type experiences where passivity or compulsion are characteristic: *'I couldn't move from the chair ... I felt this amazing pull'; 'I couldn't stop it'; 'I began to laugh uncontrollably'*. Gumbel even calls the Holy Spirit *'a compelling Spirit'*.¹²⁸

Further comparisons with occult experiences appear in connection with the overt Toronto type manifestations. The first edition Alpha videos referred to Toronto favourably, but the newer editions removed these references after Toronto became widely discredited. Gumbel has stated that the explosion of the Alpha courses and the Toronto Experience go together.¹²⁹ It should also be noted that Steve Hill, who took the Toronto experiences to Pensacola, did so as a result of the 'impartation' he received at Holy Trinity Brompton, home of Alpha. Also Benjamin Crème, the occult mystic and founding father of New Age religion, fully endorsed the Toronto Experience, saying it was a good thing which was being used by the spiritual masters (demons) to soften up Christian fundamentalists.¹³⁰

One reason for these manifestations occurring in Alpha courses is that the audience is geared up to it by suggestibility and expectation. Repeatedly their attention has been drawn to the notion that being filled with the Spirit results in physical phenomena and on the relevant video, Gumbel harps on this, despite having no Biblical basis for his claims. *'Sometimes, when people are filled, they shake like a leaf in the wind ... Physical heat sometimes accompanies the filling ... in their hands or some other part of their bodies One person described a feeling of ... "liquid heat"'*.¹³¹ He also gives forceful instructions on how to speak in tongues, virtually telling folk to open their mouth and say anything abnormal - trusting that it is from God, *'Don't let anyone tell you that you made it up'*.¹³² What if they did make it up under peer pressure? Examples of physical phenomena include:

LIGHT

- 'My head was full of brilliant light.'
- 'A bright light came.'
- 'My whole body ... was bathed with bright white light.'¹³³

¹²⁶ Nicky Gumbel, *Telling Others*, Kingsway, (1997), p120.

¹²⁷ McDonald, p109.

¹²⁸ McDonald, p91.

¹²⁹ Nicky Gumbel, 'The Spirit and Evangelism', *Renewal*, May 1995, p15.

¹³⁰ McDonald, p110.

¹³¹ Gumbel, *Questions of Life*, p156.

¹³² Gumbel, *Questions of Life*, p167.

¹³³ McDonald, p94.

- ‘I saw this incredible white light and my whole body ... was bathed with bright white light. Liquid love was flooding into me and I kept saying over and over again, “I’ve met Jesus, I’ve met Jesus”.’¹³⁴

This sort of experience is common in various forms of mysticism, occult religions and some New Age techniques. Historically some sound believers have had experiences of light coming upon them, but always in connection with a deepening of relationship with Christ, and usually for a specific purpose; but it is not common. What is worrying is that it frequently happens in Toronto type meetings and Alpha courses but with no reference to communion with the Lord Jesus – just vague feelings about God or ‘the Spirit’. Without a sound Biblical context and being received in an altered state of consciousness, such experiences are very dubious and more akin to ancient mysticism.

WARMTH

- ‘I felt this enormous warmth ... It was so warm it was almost uncomfortable.’
- ‘As the prayer over me continued, I became hotter and hotter ... My thoughts were, “Please hurry up and finish. I cannot take any more.”’
- ‘I just felt this huge heat coming out from the centre of my chest.’¹³⁵

The Bible never records such experiences but oriental religions and primitive pagan therapies are familiar with it, such as: shamanism, mesmerism, Reiki, Kundalini chakras, and certain other types of yoga. New Age writers actually recommended the Toronto Experience and described it as a coming into contact with Kundalini energy.¹³⁶ Chris Hand gives several examples of non-Christian faith healing testimonies, like Reiki and hypnotism, which are very similar to the testimonies arising out of Alpha.¹³⁷

PHYSICAL PHENOMENA

- ‘On the Saturday of the Holy Spirit retreat weekend ...It started like a tingle, and then I felt waves of power.’
- ‘My left hand started tingling ... It got more and more painful. It was absolute agony.’
- ‘I began to feel tingling in my left hand. It was like little electric shocks ... then suddenly I got all hot.’¹³⁸
- ‘I started praying that the Holy Spirit would come to me ... I felt tears.’
- ‘I wanted a positive sign ... Then on the Holy Spirit day we were talking in our discussion group and I suddenly started to cry. I kept on crying and the group prayed for me.’¹³⁹
- ‘Others were being powerfully touched by the Spirit and I began to feel angry. Then suddenly a feeling of joy came over me and i began to laugh uncontrollably. At that point I knew I had become a Christian.’¹⁴⁰

During the height of the Toronto Experience, there were reports of many people who received all the manifestations despite not being Christians. In one case it related to a reporter who wrote up the facts in an evening newspaper. In Alpha the same thing occurs, and amazingly, Alpha publications even celebrate them. *UK Focus* relates the experience of a person who was waiting for Christians to prove that their beliefs had meaning, when tingling sensations began on the back of their neck during an invocation of the Spirit (an unbiblical action by the way). They considered this to be a conversion, despite knowing

¹³⁴ *Alpha News*, March 1998, p13.

¹³⁵ McDonald, p93.

¹³⁶ McDonald, p108.

¹³⁷ *Falling Short*, p80-82.

¹³⁸ McDonald p95.

¹³⁹ McDonald, p97.

¹⁴⁰ McDonald, p99.

nothing of sin and the need for repentance.¹⁴¹ Elsdon-Drew reported the story of someone who cried whenever Jesus' name was mentioned and supposed that this was her conversion.¹⁴²

Repeatedly, testimonies are as shallow as this one: *'I just said ... I would like to be able to get to know you if you are there. When I said that prayer I felt a really funny feeling within me. ... It gave me a buzz – like Ecstasy.'* Or this one: *'On the weekend away, the Holy Spirit came and I felt moved [by a] ... physical sensation ... I wanted to become a Christian [but hadn't]. You cannot buy the buzz you get from knowing the Holy Spirit is with you... I couldn't wipe the smile off my face that weekend.'*¹⁴³

At the very least such phenomena need to be judged right and questioned as to their source. It may be the result of mere emotionalism or may emanate from psychological problems. The source may be spiritual but may not be the Holy Spirit. To merely accept every unusual phenomena as being from God is irresponsible. What is worse is the active encouragement of these phenomena for their own sake which accompany the course.

The leanings of Nicky Gumbel

People should be aware that the theological position of Gumbel, undergirding the whole course, is as follows:

- His Gospel stance is Arminian – an unbiblical system which developed around 1600 which posits that man co-operates with God in salvation. [Man is not dead in sins, but can accept or reject God and can grasp God by his faith. God is not sovereign over salvation but merely sets it up in a vague, general way. See appendices.]
- His church stance is also ecumenical and welcoming towards all denominations and cults, especially Roman Catholicism: *'it doesn't matter whether you are a Roman Catholic or a Protestant ... the Spirit of God unites us with ... every denomination'*. Gumbel frequently quotes Roman Catholic Raniero Cantalamessa, who was described by the Catholic Alpha Office as being: *'very enthusiastic about Alpha, especially for its ecumenical potential'*. Vatican II defined ecumenism as submission to Rome. Vatican II also reaffirmed The Council of Trent (set up to counter the Reformation and which encourages the physical persecution of those who believe in justification by faith alone) yet Gumbel stated that he could find nothing wrong in Vatican II. Ecumenism is gathering under Rome, as ARCIC II agreed. Basil Hume could say that: *'the Catholic Church possesses the whole of the wealth of God's revealed truth and all the means of grace'*.¹⁴⁴ Rome also tolerates occult religions and gathered many to pray for peace in Assisi 1986. Those gathered included: snake worshippers, fire worshippers, spiritualists, animists, witch doctors, Buddhists, Muslims and Hindus. Pope John Paul II declared that all were *'praying to the same God'*, even letting his friend the Dalai Lama to replace the cross on the altar of St Peter's Church with a Buddha statue. There can be no union with people who formally deny the fundamentals of the Gospel. Yet the Alpha News carried adverts for a Catholic follow up set of 15 videos which specifically teach against the importance of a personal commitment to Christ as Lord. Gumbel has opened a dangerous floodgate.
- As well as relating to false religions like Roman Catholicism, Gumbel endorses 'Christian' sects like Seventh Day Adventists.¹⁴⁵ Gumbel teaches that Christians should never criticise other churches and leaders and thus happily opens the door to

¹⁴¹ Referred to by McDonald on p95.

¹⁴² McDonald, p97.

¹⁴³ McDonald, p101-102.

¹⁴⁴ McDonald, p41.

¹⁴⁵ See *Alpha News*, July 1998 and McDonald, p76.

partnerships with error.¹⁴⁶ The Bible, however, commands that we withdraw from unrepentant erring brothers (Eph 5:6-7, 11; 2 Jn 1:10-11), reject heretics (Titus 3:10-11) and admonish (in love) those close to us who go astray (Rm 15:14; 1 Tim 5:20). Teachers must rebuke error (1 Tim 1:3; 2 Tim 4:2; Titus 1:9-11).

- His church orientation is extreme Charismatic. His church was the key centre in the UK for the Toronto experience. The course is specifically designed to lead towards having an experience of a powerful reception of the Holy Spirit in the manner of Toronto.
- He endorses the extreme errors of the Word Faith movement.¹⁴⁷
- His eschatology is triumphal postmillennialism. Gumbel believes that *'the church will be unstoppable. The mopping up operations are underway ... May the kingdom come in this land'*.¹⁴⁸ In contrast, the Bible states that the nations are being made ready for judgment prior to the revelation of a new earth. Nations do not get healed or converted, people do when they are called out of them to redemption in Christ. In the end the church suffers a tremendous apostasy from sound teaching and true faith. What is unstoppable (until Christ returns) is the false religious kingdom of the antichrist.

Conclusion

Despite all the hype and expensive publicity, the hard facts are that Alpha courses don't make a huge difference to evangelistic success. We have already mentioned that in the years since Alpha started the UK church numbers have rapidly dwindled; even since the outbreak of Toronto experiences it has declined by 16%. Further, in 2001 an independent report was published on church growth in the UK. This showed that, of the churches which grew between 1989 and 1998, those promoting Alpha only grew by 5% more than those which did not [21% of 6815 non Alpha churches grew, 26% of 1264 churches doing Alpha for three years or more. The performance is less for churches doing Alpha for two years or less.] Fewer than half of the churches which use Alpha grew; 54% actually declined. Surprisingly, *Alpha News* commented that the report revealed that *'Alpha is having a profound effect on church growth'*.¹⁴⁹ If we add to this our concerns that many of the Alpha 'converts' are not truly saved people, the real situation becomes alarming.

Given the features of the course and the doctrinal stance of Nicky Gumbel, given the nature of the groups which sponsor it, given the mystical results which accompany it, there is every reason to reject it categorically. The unmistakable conclusion, even after this brief scan of the course, is that it is unbiblical in its emphasis, doctrinally uncertain in its foundation, flawed in its presentation objectives and dangerous in what it can lead to. Christian churches should avoid it at all costs.

The whole family of problems stem from the fact that Alpha has not presented a Biblical portrait of God or man. It fails to offer a meaningful gospel but has simply set forth a loving God whom we are invited to believe in without any proper explanation of what he is like or what he requires of man. The testimonies of people doing the course bear this out. The very success claimed for Alpha as a great evangelistic tool proves in the end to be hollow.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶ *'I make it a rule ... never to criticise another Christian ... We are not to criticise on another.'* McDonald, p63.

¹⁴⁷ See McDonald, p65-73.

¹⁴⁸ Nicky Gumbel, quoted in McDonald, p87.

¹⁴⁹ *Alpha News*, No24, March-June 2001, p4.

¹⁵⁰ Chris Hand, *Falling Short*, p90.

Syncretism Issues

Syncretism is the uniting of two or more religions in a common faith & practice or merging them into an alliance. It is the great sin of historic Israel, continually denounced by God's prophets as spiritual adultery. When Israel followed Baal or Ashtoreth (the sun/storm-god and moon-goddess) of their Phoenician neighbours, it was a blasphemous denial of God's supremacy and ownership of the people; but it was also an adulterous dishonouring of God as it treated him with contempt. It presumed that God would be unaffected by sharing their affections with other gods. They didn't abandon worship of God, but added the idolatrous worship of the demonic entities behind the false gods. Just as an adulterer pretends to honour his spouse but unites with another woman, so Israel pretended to serve God but also worshipped demons.

The Charismatic evangelical church today commits a similar adultery in that it has taken teachings, practices, therapies and methods from occult religions and added them on to Christian practice, pretending they are new revelations. To identify all the forms of this would take a book on its own.¹⁵¹ However, we will briefly examine two key generic areas: mysticism and occult practices.

The Degradation Caused by Pagan & Mystical Intrusions

And the person who turns to mediums and familiar spirits, to prostitute himself with them, I will set my face against that person and cut him off from his people. (Leviticus 20:6)

Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons. (1 Tim 4:1)

Is it possible for a member of God's community fall so far as to follow after deceiving spirits? Sadly, the answer is 'Yes'. The Bible frequently warns of the danger from being seduced by the enemy¹⁵² and thus demands that we carefully watch over our souls, pray for wisdom and follow God's word attentively. A survey of Charismatic practices reveals many instances of apostasy so serious that they can only be described as occult activity.

Mysticism

The term 'mysticism' covers a very wide area and range of subjects. However, for our purposes we can define mysticism as, 'attaining knowledge of God by an immediate experience' (that is without indirect means, such as scripture). From a Christian perspective we can say it is 'the use of various practices designed to release the pretended "divine" from the old nature'. In secular religion mysticism is a subjective matter whereby various disciplines are followed to find the god within you. The most common form is to do this by engendering passivity in the disciple. As the person becomes passive, 'lost in God-consciousness' then various hyper-emotional feelings begin to be felt, persuading people that this is God. It may involve rapture, quietness, enlightenment, visions, prophecy, tongues, prolonged singing, moans, sighs, noises and so on. In extreme cases it can defy logic and human frailty, such as when devotees walk on hot coals, pierce their bodies,

¹⁵¹ For an introduction see my book, *The Origins of Pentecostalism*.

¹⁵² 1 Jn 4:1; Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2 Peter 2:1 But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction.

become immune to cold or sustain burning. In Christian circles the disciple already claims to know God, so the mystical experience is generated to heighten this knowledge, particularly with a view to intensify subjective feelings of God, rather than by objective knowledge. Sometimes, the experience is designed to produce physical, mental or emotional healing; at other times the objective is to gain knowledge that is beyond normal comprehension.

The danger of passivity

It needs to be firmly stated that the inducement of passivity carries great danger, as well as being disobedient to God. We are told that self-control is a gift of the Spirit, and we are repeatedly commanded to practise self-denial and self-control. Any teaching that encourages abandonment of either is wrong, especially that which heightens focus on the self. Mystical passivity is just another form of extreme self-focus, seeking that which pleases me above all else; though it may masquerade as self-denial in the use of certain ascetic methods.

But the greatest danger of abandoned self-control is that it opens up the person to temptation by demonic forces, or at least gives massive expression to deep-seated areas of the old nature. Why is drunkenness a sin? Because it relinquishes self-control, and the person then expresses deep-seated character flaws without restraint (e.g. some people get violent while others just become silly). Religious passivity is as bad, or actually worse than this. Masquerading as holiness, it leads victims to be dominated by a manipulative leader, a deep-seated whim or a temptation of the enemy because all decent self-restraint has been lost. It is for this reason that gross behaviour arises where mystical passivity is encouraged. Passivity leads to suggestibility, manipulation and control, either by men or Satan. It is extremely dangerous and always to be avoided.

The CM actively encourages, or even demands passivity at certain times. This is seen when leaders tell people to 'drink not think', 'let go', 'get lost in God', 'release their mind', 'don't hold back' or calls people to 'do stupid things'. Passivity is encouraged by repetitious song-singing, particularly certain types of superficial idiomatic songs that have multiple repeated hooks based on emotional chord progressions.¹⁵³ This is the forte of CM worship and so emotional is it that evangelical churches with no love of the CM are no copying their songs and worship style. The stated point of this singing is, 'to get lost in God'.

Now being 'lost in God' in the sense of meditating upon His word, praying and sitting quietly worshipping God at home is one thing; but being bereft of self-control, brainwashed and suggestible in a crowded meeting is quite another. In this suggestible state one is at the mercy of whatever the leader demands, to say nothing of peer pressure.

Hypnotic trances

Some CM teachers have actually defended induced passivity producing an altered state of consciousness (ASC);¹⁵⁴ which in the past was called a 'trance'. ASCs are nothing new. In the 19th century, Holiness preacher and faith-healer Maria Woodworth-Etter was called 'the Voodoo Priestess' since she would often go into trances, standing motionless for over an hour on stage. She was also accused of hypnotising the audience at services. Indeed, two doctors in St Louis tried to have her committed as insane during a meeting. However, she was highly esteemed by Holiness groups and closely associated with the beginnings of the Pentecostal Movement, later in life, through FF Bosworth. Her meetings had the same excesses (people slain in the Spirit, general pandemonium) as early Pentecostalism and

¹⁵³ For instance, repeated progressions like: Am/G/F/Am or A/G/D/A or A/ E7/D/A.

¹⁵⁴ Such as Patrick Dixon.

later CM extravagances. [She also exhibited the same sort of bad press: being arrested for obtaining money under false pretences and practising medicine without a licence.]

It is amazing to me that even Charismatics would condemn people being stoned through drugs in a meeting, or spaced out through alcohol; yet have no qualms at all when exactly the same condition is produced by the social engineering of the meeting. Indeed, there were reports at the height of the Toronto Experience that some people driving from meetings were arrested for being too incapacitated to control a car.

An ASC is a state of consciousness other than the normal waking or sleeping state we are used to. This can be brought on by drugs, drink, music, ascetic discipline, food deprivation, meditation, hypnosis or illness (such as resulting in a coma). An ASC affects our thinking processes and perception of reality (hallucinations can occur). Time can seem to stand still. Release of inhibition is typical and self-control can vanish altogether. Emotions are heightened, sometimes intensifying sensations of the environment. Usually the physical body is affected to some degree by dizziness, heavy or lightened limbs and tingly sensations are common. The imagination is usually intensified and is easily convinced that God or some other 'higher power' is at work. To this is added the danger of being more than usually open to suggestion and losing one's identity. Sometimes unusual physical conditions apply.

This sort of condition is very common in false religions and occult practices; indeed, many rituals are designed to produce this state by which shamans (witch-doctors) believe they can communicate with the spirit world and gain power - e.g. to heal, bless an enterprise or have special knowledge. Different cultures have developed differing disciplines to produce this state: yoga, mantras, mandalas, tantra, chanting, drugs, fasting, intense concentration, rolling the eyes back, whirling dances, repetitious music etc.

The CM has led people to seek the same experience and believes that it automatically ensures a work of God. However, all over the world the seeking of this experience is stimulated by the devil and is used in the promotion of demonic control. The sin and the danger in this is the seeking of the experience as an experience apart from God and thus leading one into a state of passivity where one can be manipulated by the enemy. We are never told to let go of our self-control and to deliberately do so places one in great danger. Seeking God is a rational activity involving the will (Rm 12:1-2; 'reasonable' service/worship, is *logikos* - 'rational', 'logical').

What is worse is the control and manipulation of an audience by stage management and a powerful leader. There is no doubt that the CM (and especially the Word Faith variety) does exactly this in large healing meetings. The ambient music, repetitious songs, mood control, excitement, and the hypnotic manipulation of the leader all work together to produce an ASC in weaker members. In this condition of suggestibility, people can be led to do anything. For a time, sick people will also feel better with the rush of endorphins and adrenaline, but it all dissipates within a few hours and the conditions return. The Toronto Experience was an extreme case of this. Throughout history such events have occurred at various times (e.g. the French Convulsionaires in the 1700s, the Methodist Jumpers in Cornwall in 1760, the Medieval St Vitus' Dance, the Shakers and the US Methodist Camp Meetings).

In this ecstatic condition religious people can be just as 'powerful' as occult yogis walking on hot coals. Historic cases are legion; we will just take the case of the Convulsionaires in Paris. Amazing feats then included levitation, becoming so rigid that they could be hit with sledgehammers or used to hammer nails into wood. A famous example is that of a woman

bent backwards over the sharp point of a peg. A fifty-pound stone was dropped from a great height on to her over and over again. Just the falling stone would have usually crushed a person, but she left without a mark on her! These events were seen by thousands of witnesses. Today similar feats can be observed in hypnotist shows. Indeed, stage hypnotists visited church meetings at the time of the Toronto Experience and stated that what they saw was exactly the same as what they practised, but without the important debriefing afterwards to shut down the unusual mental state. These sorts of physical phenomena are a combination of powerful mental control and demonic intervention; they are ungodly and dangerous. There is no difference between this sort of event and the unusual physical actions seen in paganism.

Revived Gnosticism

Gnosticism is the name given to a variety of cults, mystery religions, clubs and pagan groups that troubled the early church. The Church Fathers gave these people the derisive name *gnostikoi*, 'those who know', i.e. those who claim to have special wisdom, who know something unique. The main common factors of these groups were the emphasis upon secret knowledge (Greek, *gnosis*) only available to the initiated, and a cosmological dualism (matter evil; spirit good) that resulted in eternal warfare between a good god and a bad one. Creation is by the evil god, called the 'demiurge' and often associated with the Biblical God of the Old Testament. Since the material world is evil, only some special people have been given a spark of divinity, which must be awakened by learning the secret knowledge. On death their soul is reunited with God. Since salvation is by knowledge alone, behaviour was seen by some as unimportant, so many became reckless hedonists; however, other Gnostics were ascetic and celibate. The movement consisted of sects that were perversions of Christianity, as well as separate pagan religious cults.

Already we can see facets that are evidenced in extreme CM groups. If we isolate specific teachings/practices of the Gnostics we note the following comparisons:

- **SYNCRETISM:** nebulous theology that results in inclusive associations of diverse movements. Tolerance of almost anything that does not demand dogmatic exclusivity (such as the Bible only).
- **ELITISM:** only the adherents of their creed are saved; only their teachers should be heard; everyone else is affected by demonic forces.
- **MYSTICISM:** A deep focus upon the inner self. The priority of experience rather than truth. Knowledge is felt rather than being objective. Man is a god within, a christ. God is male and female. Inculcation of trance states.
- **PRIVATE REVELATION:** dependence upon subjective feelings to authenticate illumination from God. Man's problem isn't sin but ignorance.

When leaders demand that a certain experience is necessary for a believer to advance in the Christian life, this is Gnosticism. When leaders mix pagan ideas with Biblical truth, this is Gnosticism. When leaders act in an elitist way, insisting that only they know what God is currently saying, they act like Gnostic adepts. When leaders teach people to adopt mystical practices they are acting like Gnostics. When teachers emphasise subjective feelings over objective truth they are being Gnostic. When teachers prioritise their subjective revelation above God's word, they are being Gnostic.

All these features are being evidenced in Charismatic circles and we can safely state that much of the CM is Gnosticism revived. It should also be noted that the teachings of the New Age are essentially Gnostic, mixed in with some Hinduism and magic. At the same time that the New Age developed into a worldwide movement, the CM became more and

more Gnostic. Both were spawned by the deceits of the enemy; one aspect to attract unbelievers, the other to delude Christians.

Leaders that have adopted Gnostic ideas include: Kenneth Copeland, John Wimber, Francis Frangipane, Rick Joyner, Earl Paulk, Paul Crouch, Mike Bickle, Paul Cain, Rodney Howard-Browne, James Ryle (Promise Keepers) and Pat Robertson.

THE INFLUENCE OF CARL JUNG

Jung was directly influenced by the occult and his teaching is based upon occult principles; in fact he had his first psychic vision at the age of three. However, Jung went to great pains to hide the occult root of his theories while introducing spiritualist and mystical principles under cover of academic titles. We need to understand that not only are many Christian psychologists influenced by him (along with Freud and Adler) in their counselling techniques, but Jung's influence on charismatics brought them into Gnostic territory.

Teachers like Morton Kelsey, John & Paula Sanford studied at the CG Jung institute in Zurich and are committed Jungians and these have had a widespread influence on the modern healing movement in the CM, particularly inner healing.

Jung's mystical Gnosticism is evidenced in his belief that a person becomes one with God by discovering God within; wholeness arises from self-deification. Instead of traditional mystical techniques, he used the newly developing psychoanalysis as the means of personal rebirth. However, psychoanalysis is itself based upon the occult ideas and techniques of Franz Mesmer.

Jung was also directly influenced by the occult movement Theosophy, especially by writer GRS Mead. Through Mead, Jung learned of Gnosticism, Hermetism¹⁵⁵ and Mithraic liturgy,¹⁵⁶ which all helped develop his occult ideas of the collective human unconscious world and archetypes.¹⁵⁷ Furthermore, Jung attended seances and occult meetings, practised divination and had a spirit guide (demon) called Philemon who taught him.¹⁵⁸ He had an occult initiation in a rite where he considered himself to be in 'the land of the dead' which was mixed with pagan overtones based on Mithraic gods. He believed he became one with God through this process which he called 'active imagination', but which is a mixture of visualisation and channelling borrowed from the Theosophists and dressed up as scientific.¹⁵⁹ The idea that the past can be contacted directly through the imagination is the basis of Inner Healing teaching and is found in Agnes Sanford's writings.

This process of 'active imagination', an occult technique, was taught to his patients after 1916 and it is of note that Charismatics influenced (mainly indirectly) by Jung have developed similar forms.

¹⁵⁵ An Egyptian form of alchemy involving the Greek god Hermes and the Egyptian god of wisdom, Thoth. A combination of Eastern religion and Greek philosophy. Theosophy is based upon its teachings.

¹⁵⁶ Mithras was a Persian god much beloved of Roman soldiers; the god of light, purity and war.

¹⁵⁷ Jung tried to explain his powerful and frightening experiences of spirits as merely expressions of a collective human consciousness where certain features had a symbolic archetype value; physical effects, such as poltergeist activity, were explained as parapsychology. At the end of his life he began to admit that he could not explain the psyche at all and that the spirits were external personalities he didn't understand.

¹⁵⁸ 'Philemon represented a force which was not myself ... it was he who taught me psychic objectivity, the reality of the psyche ... he was a mysterious figure to me ... as if he were a living personality ... what Indians call a guru.' CG Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Pantheon Books (1963), p183.

¹⁵⁹ Richard Noll, *The Jung Cult: Origins of a Charismatic Movement*, Princeton Univ. Press, (1994); p214-215.

So powerful and constant was Jung's experiences of spirits pretending to be the dead that he described himself as their 'parson'. He felt that his house was filled with spirits who inspired his writings. He wrote his *Seven Sermons to the Dead* in three evenings under the control of these spirits. There were times when his involvement with spirits (demons) would haunt him, frighten him and once led him to the brink of suicide and psychotic collapse.

But worse still, Jung actually determined to develop a new religion to combat Christianity, based on occult and Gnostic concepts.

It is arguable that Jung set out to design a cult of redemption or renewal in the period beginning as early as 1912. This was a mystery cult that promised the initiate revitalisation through contact with a pagan, pre-Christian layer of the unconscious mind. [This is blatant Gnosticism.]¹⁶⁰

Jung's rite, now called 'individuation', functions mainly to separate followers from their Christian background, to which Jung was opposed; but also to break ties with family, society and God. Self-sacrifice necessitated where '*one must give up one's former image of god ... smashing the Judeo-Christian idol with the hammer of questions that is analysis*'.¹⁶¹ Submission to Jung's modernised occult system meant severing oneself from all the security foundations of life - thus making one vulnerable and open to demonic control. It is a truly horrific and dangerous process.

Jung's teaching urged complete self-abandonment in his ideas about the autonomy of the unconscious, especially in regard to dreams. Jung did not simply analyse dreams but encouraged deeply hidden features of the unconscious, including fantasies, to emerge. Self-control and rational thought have to be jettisoned to achieve this. There is a curious parallel here with the development of Surrealist Art, which occurred at the same time, which taught the same concepts - abandonment to fantasies and dreams expressed in automatic writing (channelling) and irrational images. Like much in occultism, mysticism and Charismatic practice, the removal of self-control and rationality is fundamental to experiencing supposed power from 'God'.

Throughout his life Jung differed from the Theosophists (such as Alice Bailey) in believing that the entities communed with in channelling were archetypes of the human imagination the collective unconsciousness; while Theosophists understood them to be distinct spiritual ascended personalities. This caused a separation. However, late in life and troubled by his deepening occult experiences, Jung became ready to admit these imagined archetypal entities were real forces outside human personality - demons. Sadly, too late to alter the influence of his teachings.

How could Christians entertain such pagan ideas for a nanosecond, let alone promote it avidly? Yet huge numbers are doing exactly this, being heavily influenced by Jung through his followers, without realising the occult concepts involved behind Jungian thought.

Personal Prophesying

The occasions when a Biblical prophet spoke a word of God to an individual are rare, and in the NT it only occurred when Agabus warned Paul of future persecution (Acts 21:10ff). Furthermore, though the prophecy was accurate, Paul decided that God's will was best served by ignoring the danger. The prophecy was not to warn Paul to avoid Jerusalem but to strengthen his resolve, understanding that God was in control. This alone should give us pause. Agabus was a recognised prophet to the churches whose previous warnings had

¹⁶⁰ Noll, op.cit. p141.

¹⁶¹ Noll, op. cit. p257.

proved true and had saved lives (Acts 11:28). There is no indication that church members, who do not hold recognised church office, can willy-nilly go and prophesy over other people. Much worse is the idea that leaders can gain money from giving personal prophecies (as in the CM). But even genuine prophetic warnings are not determinative over human resolution under God.

Interestingly, some classic Pentecostals, like Joseph Chambers of Paw Creek, USA have vigorously condemned this practice which has grown up in the last 20 years or more:

Men like Pat Robertson and Paul Crouch, have amassed a fortune and changed the face of the church with this spirit of fortune-telling. Probably the greatest force to thrust their television networks into the limelight has been this false hold on others with personal fortune-telling, while calling it the gift of prophecy or word of knowledge. It is as false as Lucifer himself and has no value but to deceive.¹⁶²

Just as believer needs no guardian angels, as they are indwelt by God, neither do they need a personal prophet giving them words 'from heaven' to direct their lives. Furthermore, the whole point of the Spirit's ministry is to apply God's word to us so that we learn to hold it in our hearts and obey it implicitly, and God's word is enough for godliness. Sadly, we know of many cases where lives were ruined by a gullible believer accepting and holding on to a word of prophecy from a respected leader. Chambers even mentions a church leader who fell for this and ruined his ministry.

Feminism

A key part of modern witchcraft is the devotion to a mother goddess, frequently this is now allied to the modern eco-concept of Earth as Gaia. While the original basis of magic and false religion was the personification of Nimrod as the Babylonian sun god, a large part of heathen religion was also devoted to Nimrod's consort, Semiramis, later personified as the moon goddess. Thence, goddess worship became a key part of all pagan religions that had a pantheon. As the population expanded westwards, Nimrod became Baal, Marduk, Tammuz, Moloch, Osiris or Adonis etc.; while Semiramis became Isis in Egypt, Cybele in Asia, Ceres in Greece, Sisa in Scandinavia, Shakti (also called Kali) in India and so on.

In its final expression, the concept of religious feminism is associated with that of goddess worship. Indeed there is already clear link in the US where many 'Christian' feminists have become witches and there is a widespread revival of goddess worship following the adoption of feminist principles 40 years ago. There are existing American Presbyterian churches that pray to the goddess Gaia, or 'the great Green One'. Christian liturgies are mingled with Hindu chants to beg Gaia's forgiveness and channel her energy. Others worship Christ 're-imagined' as the goddess Sophia (wisdom), taking milk and honey instead of bread and wine.¹⁶³ One Anglican leader fears that feminism may lead to the '*Substantial reconstruction of the Christian religion itself*'.¹⁶⁴

More radical religious feminism goes straight to witchcraft to promote goddess nature worship. New Age leaders seek the restoration of goddess spirituality to avoid the

¹⁶² Paw Creek Ministries, Web Page

¹⁶³ Peter Jones, 'The New Christ of Paganism' in *The Conspiracy to Silence the Son of God*, Tal Brooke (Ed.) Harvest House (1998); p84

¹⁶⁴ William Oddie, *What Will Happen to God? Feminism and the Reconstruction of Christian Belief*; Ignatius Press (1988); p11.

destruction they claim will result from following the Christian male God. Some¹⁶⁵ rewrite history claiming that ancient matriarchal, goddess-worshipping civilisations were peaceful and harmonious, where women were superior to, or at least equal with, men until overcome by patriarchal warlike tribes. Even the New York Times promoted this myth.

Hand in hand with the promotion of a feminist goddess is the worship of the serpent. [This is not just Gnostic but a straight adoption of Babylonian Nimrod religion.¹⁶⁶] It is not only Theosophy and New Age that worships Satan as serpent, the one who offered Adam truth; but an esteemed Lutheran printing house has published a reworking of Genesis by an 'eco-feminist' to rehabilitate Satan as the wisdom giving serpent and show Eve's temptation as the maturing of the human race. As with the Gnostics, the Christian God as sovereign creator must be eradicated - *'The feminist movement in Western Culture is engaged in the slow execution of Christ and Yahweh'*.¹⁶⁷ A recent 'Christian' systematic theology even said, *'The Ultimate is responsible for the evil in nature as well as the good ... The independence of creatures places some limitations on her style of action.'*¹⁶⁸ So God is responsible for sin and is female!!! The editor of a leading Christian academic journal also stated that the serpent must now be seen as a liberator, Eve as a heroine in her quest for wisdom and God as a tyrant.¹⁶⁹ Another theologian stated that Jesus was, *'Very Goddess and Very Man'* seeing the Lord as the incarnation of the feminine Wisdom figure which will bring in a new lease of life for Christianity today.¹⁷⁰

This is all clear Gnosticism and paganism; feminism leads to blatant heresy on so many occasions. You can find web sites such as 'Goddess Aware Christian Women'¹⁷¹ where 'Charismatic Christians' share pages with avowed pagans - feminism being the common ground. On the home page the assistant manager says, *'May the Holy Spirit shine Her light upon you'*. Associated topics include: magic, Gnosticism, Christian mysticism, a mystic rosary, witchcraft, healing spells and Masonry.

The CM is the main cause of the rise of feminism amongst modern evangelicals. Before the CM, it was the Pentecostal and Holiness movements that featured many famous women leaders, from the Holiness voodoo priestess Maria Woodworth-Etter, to Pentecostal Kathryn Kuhlman.¹⁷² Throughout history it was the Charismatic, aberrant sects that gave women leadership roles, such as Montanism (Priscilla and Maximilla - who left their husbands to follow Montanus), the Quakers (Margaret Fell) or the Shakers (Mother Anne Lee). Some evangelical revivals which fell into excesses of emotionalism also gave rise to women leaders; such as the Welsh Revival of 1904-5, which even featured a prophetess called Sarah Jones of Carmel. She spoke in tongues and would give messages after the preaching whilst in a trance; she also cast out evil spirits.

¹⁶⁵ E.g. Monica Sjoo & Barbara Mor, *The Great Cosmic Mother*; Rosalind Miles, *The Women's History of the World*; Riane Eisler, *The Chalice and the Blade*.

¹⁶⁶ Another aspect of Nimrod manifestation was as the serpent, distributing serpent power, such as in the form of Shiva in India, husband of Kali (Shakti). As the original pagan deity he gradually assumed different forms, beginning with sun god, then storm god (Baal), the serpent power etc. Eventually the aspects led to a pantheon of gods responsible for different cosmic forces: sun, storm, wisdom, seas, hell, sky, rain, fire etc.

¹⁶⁷ Oddie, op. cit. p4.

¹⁶⁸ Ninian Smart & Steven Konstantine; *Christian Systematic Theology in a World Context*; Fortress (1991), p143.

¹⁶⁹ Francis Watson, 'Strategies of Recovery and Resistance: Hermeneutical Reflections on Genesis 1-3 and Its Pauline Reception'; *Journal for the Study of the NT*; 45 (March 1992); p79-103.

¹⁷⁰ James M Robinson; *Images of the Feminine in Gnosticism*, ed. Karen L King, Fortress (1988); p113-127.

¹⁷¹ <http://groups.msn.com/GoddessAwareChristianWomen>

¹⁷² The Methodists had a few women leaders, but not many.

In 19th century America, Pelagian Charles Finney sponsored women leaders; his Oberlin College in Ohio being the first Christian seminary to admit women. Lucy Stone and Antoinette Brown were early graduates with Brown becoming the first ordained woman in the US. Following this other revivalist and Holiness groups took on women preachers; the Salvation Army being perhaps the most visible. By the late 19th century the Salvation Army had 100 women officers, the Church of God 88 women evangelists, the Congregational Church had 49 women ministers, and 8% of the Nazarene church ministers were women.

In the 20th century Pentecostalism followed this trend having many influential women leaders, and the very first tongue speaker was a woman (Agnes Ozman). [The first tongue-speakers in Irving's London Apostolic Church were women - the Cardale sisters.] Key Pentecostal women leaders include: Kathryn Kuhlman, Aimee Semple McPherson (founder of the Intl. Church of the Foursquare Gospel), Florence Crawford (founder of the Apostolic Faith Mvt.), Marie Burgess Brown (founder of Glad Tiding Tabernacle in New York). Early evangelists include: Rosa Cadwalder, Mabel Smith, Ivy Campbell, Florence L Crawford, Millicent McClendon, Sarah Bradbury, and Cora Lane.

When William Seymour requested help from Charles Parham (to bring about the baptism in the Spirit) prior to Azusa St, Parham sent two women (Lucy Farrow & JA Warren). Seymour could make people fall over but not speak in tongues; Lucy Farrow laid hands on people and they spoke in tongues. She became a key figure in the outpouring at Azusa Street. Other important leaders include: Maud Williams, Carrie Judd Montgomery, Ethel Abercrombie, Grace Agar and Blanche Appleby.

Key early Charismatic women leaders were: Jean Darnall, Rita Bennett, Eleanor and Roberta Armstrong, Edith Blumhofer, Hazel Bonawitz, Roxanne Brant, Mary Ann Brown and Sue Malachuck. Many current leaders and writers in the CM are women, indeed there are some that are proclaimed to be apostles and prophetesses, let alone local leaders. For instance: the CM London church Ichthus comprises three circles of leaders overseen by Roger Forster as apostle but with his wife, Faith, leading the component team of Prayer Elders. Here is a woman not only having authority over men, forbidden by the NT, but being a leader over elders.

Female authority figures in the CM are rife; CM prophetesses include: Cindy Jacobs, Juanita Bynum, Kathie Walters, Alice Smith, Jill Austin; female apostle/prophets include: Barbara Wentroble and Barbara J Yoder. Robert Tilton's wife, Marte, claims to be a pastor with him. The daughter of Charles Capps, Annette, claims to be an ordained minister who began her ministry aged 14. Gloria Copeland is esteemed as a writer and leader almost as much as her husband Kenneth.

Radical Christian feminism has a severe agenda. Feminist theologian Naomi Goldenberg writes,

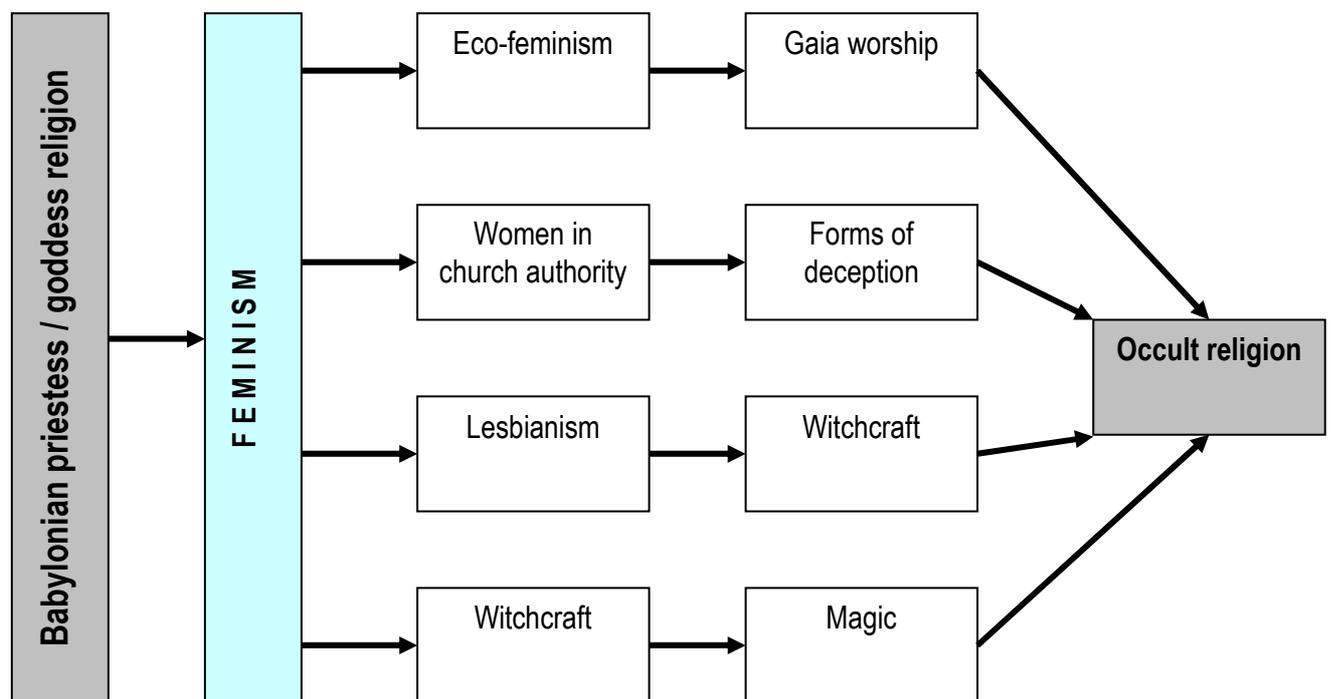
God is going to change...We women are going to bring an end to God. As we take positions in government, in medicine, in law, in business, in the arts and, finally, in religion, we will be the end of Him. We will change the world so much that He won't fit in anymore. ... Every woman working to improve her own position in society or that of women in general is bringing about the end of God. All feminists are making the world less and less like the one described in the Bible and are thus helping to lessen the influence of Christ and [Jehovah] on humanity.¹⁷³

¹⁷³Naomi R. Goldenberg; *Changing of the Gods: Feminism and The End of Traditional Religions*; (1979).

We must understand the close connection between feminist political activism, eco-feminism, lesbianism, goddess worship, Wicca (witchcraft) and radical Charismatic feminism. This shouldn't surprise us as the feminist agenda is sheer paganism reborn; which is why so many feminists become goddess-worshippers, Gaia worshippers and witches. As long ago as 1978 when the University of California offered a course on 'The Great Goddess Re-emerges' so many came to enrol that women had to be turned away. The underlying paganism of the CM allies with the paganism of secular feminism and easily leads Christian feminists straight into more overt occult practices. Miriam Simos (known as Starhawk) openly stated as long ago as 1979 that, *'The feminist movement is a magico-spiritual movement as well as a political movement ... it changes consciousness ... It is also magic by another definition: the art of causing change in accordance with the will.'*¹⁷⁴ This witch has been a speaker in St James' church, Piccadilly.

Peter Jones, professor of NT at Westminster Theological Seminary, asks, *'One must seriously ask, therefore, to what extent the present evangelical landslide capitulation to various forms of contemporary feminism is the result of new Spirit-inspired insight into the deep meaning of scripture'*.¹⁷⁵ In other words, the Charismatic re-interpretation of scripture, and the pre-eminence of the thoughts of leaders, has led to the current advance of feminism in the evangelical church. Any student of recent history can see that this is true.

The Roots and Fruit of Feminism



NOTES:

- The key folly of feminism is idolatry - placing something as a higher priority than God in one's life. This is why it leads to further idolatry.

¹⁷⁴ Miriam Simos, (Starhawk), *The Spiral Dance,; The Rebirth of the Ancient Goddess*, Harper & Row (1979), p196.

¹⁷⁵ *The Gnostic Empire Strikes back*; P&R; (1992), p63.

- One repercussion of feminism on the church has been the gender-inclusive Bible translations of recent years. Some rogue versions now use female pronouns for God.
- The rise in lesbianism is in direct correlation to the impact of feminism. This also impacts the church. I have even known two wives of church leaders run off with a woman and desert their husbands and family.
- There has always been a direct link between lesbianism and occult religion. The word derives from the Island of Lesbos, in the eastern Aegean Sea, where a female cult worshipped Aphrodite (Venus) and Artemis (Diana). Artemis was later known as the 'queen of the witches' while Aphrodite equates to the Babylonian Ishtar, the goddess of sex-magic. There is no surprise that modern feminism/lesbianism had led women into becoming witches in large numbers.
- It should be remembered that Adam's sin was rebellion, but Eve's sin was disobedience after deception. Paul draws attention to this in 1 Timothy 2:14 and 2 Corinthians 11:3. There is a close connection between women in leadership, female teachers and deception. This is why women teachers are forbidden by God (1 Tim 2:12).
- Though feminists look to a mythology of female deities and an imaginary past history to support their desire for dominance, the source of goddess religion is male not female. Priestesses were mainly part of pornographic fertility cults and temple prostitution. Goddesses and priestesses were not about feminine liberation, but satisfying male lusts.

Examples of error and deception

HINDUISTIC KARMA

The universe will assure that you get just what you deserve.

Prophet/Bishop Bernard Jordan, head of *Zoe; Countdown to Prophetic Congress Calendar*, 20 Feb 1998.

FEMINIST THEOLOGIANS

I don't think we need a theory of atonement at all.

Dolores Williams, Professor at Union Theological Seminary, *Presbyterian Layman*, 27:1; Jan-Feb 1994; p3

The Antichrist and the Second Coming of Women are synonymous.

Mary Daly, Professor of theology at Boston College (Jesuit); *Beyond God the Father; Towards a Philosophy of Women's Liberation*; Beacon Press (1995). Quoted in *The Conspiracy to Silence the Son of God*, Tal Brooke (Ed.) Harvest House (1998); p86.

PASSIVITY

Do not think about what you are doing ... just give yourselves completely to the Spirit ... let yourselves go, don't even think about what you are doing ... release your mind, release your spirit, and let the mighty river of the Holy Ghost take you.

Leader at a meeting in Brownsville Church, Pensacola. Quoted in Robert S Liichow, *The Two Roots of Today's Revival*, Truth Matters Pub. p153-4.

MYSTICISM

God's healing power is available through your own mind. ... You could command any disease to be healed in a flash ... Sounds like Mind Science? I admit that. It's true that the cults have discovered certain of God's healing laws.

CS Lovett, 'The Medicine of Your Mind', *Personal Christianity* newsletter; Aug 1979. Quoted in Hunt/McMahon, *The Seduction of Christianity*, p115.

Man still does not realise the spiritual power that [God has] given to him ... to rule his environment.

Paul Yonggi Cho, *The Fourth Dimension*, Vol 2; Bridge Pub. (1983); p38.

Did you know that your words were creative? They are either creative in a positive or negative way. They can produce life or death.

Paul Yonggi Cho, *The Fourth Dimension*, Vol 2; Bridge Pub. (1983); p119.

[We are to be tuned] to the inner voice of faith, not the outer voice of human reasoning. ... We don't understand the Bible with our mind.

Kenneth E Hagin, *Faith Edition Bible*, plxxxiv; pxxxiv.

A promise from God's Word must be confessed as a reality before it ever becomes so.

Kenneth E Hagin, *Right and Wrong Thinking*, Faith Library Pub. (1989); p13.

Communicating your ways unto the Lord ... means, of course, to follow intuition, for intuition is the magic path, the beeline to your demonstration [bringing to pass what you want]. Intuition is a Spiritual faculty above the intellect.

Florence Scovel Shinn, *The Power of the Spoken Word*, (Marina del Rey, DeVorss & Co. (1945); p10.

There have been many big misunderstandings and divisions caused when only the written word, the Bible, is believed to be self-revelational.

Oral Roberts, *11 Major Prophecies*, p44-45; quoted in Curtis I Crenshaw, *Man as God; The Word of Faith Mvt.* Footstool Pub. (1994); p216.

The Degradation Caused by Occult Practices

Visualisation [or guided imagery]

This is an occult activity which has been around since the time of Nimrod and is a vital component of all forms of witchcraft and shamanism.¹⁷⁶ It is the activity of picturing an image in the mind and concentrating upon it until it becomes a reality, whether it is a physical object, a desired state or a change of circumstances. This is magic - the attempt to manipulate nature by occult means - in this case controlled imagination. The use of guided imagery is now a widespread tool of US health care practitioners, mainly to relive stress levels through visualising peaceful scenes in conjunction with ambient music. In Christian circles it goes by many names: 'Visualising', 'Possibility Thinking', 'Incubating Prayer', 'praying with the imagination', 'Mind Power', 'New Thought', 'Mental Healing' and so on.

Two people, above others, are responsible for bringing this occult form into the Christian church; the first is David (formerly Paul) Yonggi Cho. By leading the largest church in the world, many people credit him with significant authority; but numbers mean nothing – only God's word counts. His two books on the 'Fourth Dimension' were supposed to exhort believers to be more faithful, but they teach a technique which is pure oriental mysticism – visualisation. Cho even admits that he learned it when he was frustrated that Buddhist monks and Hindu gurus could perform miracles when Christians seemed powerless. This was until he received revelation from, supposedly, the Holy Spirit.

This spirit explained that the monks used access to the 'fourth dimension', the realm of the spirit, which is available to everyone of any religion. Christians had to learn to use this realm of visions, dreams and imagination to incubate ideas to form in the third dimension – the material world. Only by using this faith realm could the real world be changed. Christians must thus realise the potential in their spirit being to change the world. Thus when Cho held a picture of a specific bicycle or a desk in his mind, believing it was his and holding on to it in faith – it eventually turned up. Simple prayer had failed but incubated faith through visualised pictures worked. Word Faith preachers soon lapped this up and promoted the notion of visualisation across the world.

This practice is not only common in various pagan religions, but is a foundational plank in magic and occult groups like Theosophy. Alice Bailey wrote, *'the clue to all this esoteric work ... is to be found in the development of the Art of Visualisation.'*¹⁷⁷

What we see here is the abandonment of

- Praying for something according to God's will, a practice demanded by Jesus and endorsed by the apostles (Lk 22:42; 1 Cor 4:19, 12:11; Jm 4:15).
- Having quiet faith in God's provision (Ps 132:15).
- Learning to be content in all circumstances.
- Avoiding materialism.
- Avoiding worldly desires.

Instead this idea promotes faith in your own faith and desire for wealth. Gone is the understanding about making humble requests to God, who is our loving heavenly Father who cares for us (Phil 4:6); gone is claiming the promises of God that we will be given all

¹⁷⁶ For instance it is a distinctive part of Tantric Buddhism, various Hindu yogas, Hermetism (which taught that everything is in the mind as did Christian Science), Navajo American Indians, the Swiss alchemist Paracelsus and many others.

¹⁷⁷ Sir John Sclair, *The Alice Bailey Inheritance*, Turnstone Press (1984), p154.

that we need to do his work (2 Cor 9:8). Instead, a pagan, mystical, occult technique was foisted upon a gullible church. This then led to desires for prosperity, bolstered by teachers telling people that they should have the best cars, health and houses and it was available for them if they had faith.

The second person is Agnes Sanford. Her writings and healing ministry have influenced thousands, directing them into adopting visualising techniques that are straight out of shamanism (witchcraft). Her outright paganism is astonishing; for instance:

- She taught pantheism and monism, God is in everything, everything is God, everything is connected. Jesus is identified with nature or as ‘primal energy’.
- She taught that people can create virtue in others by mental power alone.
- She taught that we can project the power of God into another person.
- She taught that we can heal at a distance.
- She taught that we can forgive the sins of others.
- People’s minds are connected and can travel back and forth through time touching minds from history or even angelic minds.
- She supported the animistic faith of aboriginal tribesmen.
- She supported mind sciences and Christian Science.¹⁷⁸

All these features are pagan and occult and the churches that grew out of the mind sciences (mental healing) movement are syncretistic combinations of Christianity and the occult, such as PP Quimby’s New Thought, Mary Baker Eddy’s Christian Science and Charles Fillmore’s Unity School.

Leaders directly influenced by Sanford include: Francis MacNutt, Leanne Payne, John & Paula Sandford, Richard Foster, Morton Kelsey and John Wimber. Wimber’s conferences in the UK had books by all these people on its book-stalls; indeed many non-Charismatic UK church-goers heard of these people for the first time at a Wimber healing conference. Before Wimber, no Charismatic church dreamed of distributing healing books by Catholic MacNutt or liberal Episcopalian Kelsey; both were rehabilitated into Protestantism by Wimber.

Visualisation, as guided imagery, is closely connected to both inner healing and channelling. Through this process of a mental/emotional inner journey, the imagination is stimulated to change the consciousness. Practitioners seem to forget that God commands us not to walk by sight, whether real or imaginary, but by faith (Rm 8:24; 2 Cor 4:18, 5:7). Spiritual religion relies solely on the Lord, not the senses; in fact, sensual religion is condemned (Jm 3:15; Jude 19). Therefore, it is a lie to teach that imagined visual scenes aid faith. Even the use of visualisation to stimulate meditation is dangerous, such as when teachers encourage one to truly enter in to the stories of the Bible. It is actually suggested that a person can be an ‘*active participant*’.¹⁷⁹ Encounters with a visualised Christ may easily become encounters with an evil spirit, rather than heightened imagination (see Channelling).

Morton Kelsey admits that imagined images can bring ‘*contact with other realities of psychic power beyond oneself*’.¹⁸⁰ Kelsey’s training in this (which was passed directly on to Wimber) was derived from a mixture of Jungian psychology and Roberto Assagioli’s ideas, (a specialist in mediumship, telepathy and clairvoyance, a key influence on the New Age Movement and a contributor to Alice B Bailey’s occultist Eranos conferences). Kelsey even

¹⁷⁸ See Sanford’s *The Healing Light*, pp10, 28, 30-37, 60, 63-68, 74, 94-95, 112, 125-126, 137-147, 146, 165; *The Healing Gifts of the Spirit*, pp48, 140-141, 152.

¹⁷⁹ Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, Hodder (1980), p26.

¹⁸⁰ Morton Kelsey, *The Other Side of Silence: A Guide to Christian Meditation*, SPCK, (1977), p232.

trumpeted the role of the shaman (witch-doctor). Kelsey goes beyond even Sanford and Yonggi Cho, being an outright occultist. Though many Charismatics are not familiar with the name, his ideas permeate the Signs and Wonders Movement and Wimber referred to him emphatically in his healing conferences. He was also a key influence on Richard Foster.

The key error in all this is focusing a person's attention inward rather than outward to Christ. We are to seek the things above (Col 3:1-3) not the imagined things within. When a person moves from mystical inward looking to communication with demons (even if by accident) the discipline has become outright occultism. Furthermore, any communion with a visualised Christ is certainly not the Christ of the Bible. In this life our relationship with the Lord is not by sight but by faith; is spiritual and not sensual. The visible form of the Lord Jesus is not known to us now; we are absent (lit 'emigrated') from him (2 Cor 5:6) and only see him at the Second Coming (1 Cor 13:12; Heb 9:28; 1 Jn 3:2).

Inner Healing [or 'healing of the memories']

Inner healing is completely based on occult mystical principles; it has no Biblical basis but is found in false (Jungian) psychoanalytical procedures, hypnotism, witchcraft and paganism. It is a technique, based upon visualisation, that is supposed to help people with emotional problems that are not being resolved and seeks to take the patient, through 'imagineering' (engineering the imagination, i.e. visualisation), into their past to change what happened in their mind. Some teach that this process actually changes what happened in history since God transcends time, while others merely claim that it changes the historical effect on the patient.

Usually, the Christianised process involves the patient becoming submissive and passive, remembering the deep-rooted traumatic cause of a character problem and focusing on what happened to cause this problem. Sometimes the cause of the problem is diagnosed as being damage done in previous generations by ancestors. The counsellor then directs them to imagine Christ entering into this scene and changing it or bringing forgiveness.¹⁸¹ This is supposed to break the hold that the trauma caused. Sessions can closely resemble a patient being hypnotised; indeed some secular versions do exactly that. Needless to say there is not a shred of Biblical data to support this practice, but there is a long tradition of such methods in Buddhism (particularly Tibetan Buddhism) and Hindu sects.

As well as its source in paganism, inner healing had been seen in the mind science cults such as the Unity school. However, it appears that the major published springboard for this practice was Agnes Sanford's *The Healing Gifts of the Spirit*, where a chapter was devoted to, 'The Healing of the Memories'. Some suggest that Sanford actually learned the technique from a Unity teacher. From this small beginning a whole raft of books, pamphlets and Charismatic ministries developed, mainly by Sanford's disciples such as the Sandfords, Carter-Stapleton and MacNutt. Many UK Charismatics were first introduced to this notion via the ministry of Ian Andrews in the late 70s early 80s, an itinerant healer/preacher from the Chard fellowship (Devon).

It is noteworthy that some CM leaders who were wary of the inner healing teachings in the early 1980s (such as Terry Virgo & Henry Tyler) let the notions run amuck in their congregations when the practice was introduced by Wimber via his healing conferences. As the Wimber team members modelled the practice, in the first Brighton healing conference

¹⁸¹ The idea behind inner healing is simply that we can ask Jesus Christ to walk back to the time we were hurt and to free us from the effects of that wound in the present.' Francis MacNutt, *Healing*, Ave Maria Press, (1980), p183.

in 1985, Virgo's people were swamped with pagan concepts and many began to minister in the same way. Some of his leaders subsequently believed this type of ministry was their prime focus. Despite Virgo and Tyler opposing generational sin, demonisation and inner healing, Wimber's lecturers taught it to their people present at the conference.¹⁸²

Wimber also introduced new terms to UK believers that were initially hard to understand, such as 'dial-down' or 'dial-up'. But these terms have a pedigree in the occult and mystical writings; for instance, 'dial-down' (or 'centring-down') refers to entering into a trance like, passive, state in preparation for deeper inroads into the 'spiritual' through meditation. To receive healing a person first needed to 'dial-down' - i.e. become passive and suggestible.

Alongside this malpractice, British Charismatics were exposed to other pagan concepts modelled by Wimber's team. These include: coloured auras round a person which identify spiritual status, shaking hands to increase the power of healing prayer, getting others to point their hands to the person being prayed for, seeing the presence of God on a person, spiritually observing the place of emotional damage on a patient, sensing heat on hands when praying for healing, releasing rage by screaming, being slain in the Spirit etc. It is interesting, however, that some of the British leaders, who simply ministered to the sick by prayer alone, got better results than Wimber's team using all these new concepts. It was significant enough for Wimber to mention this from the platform.

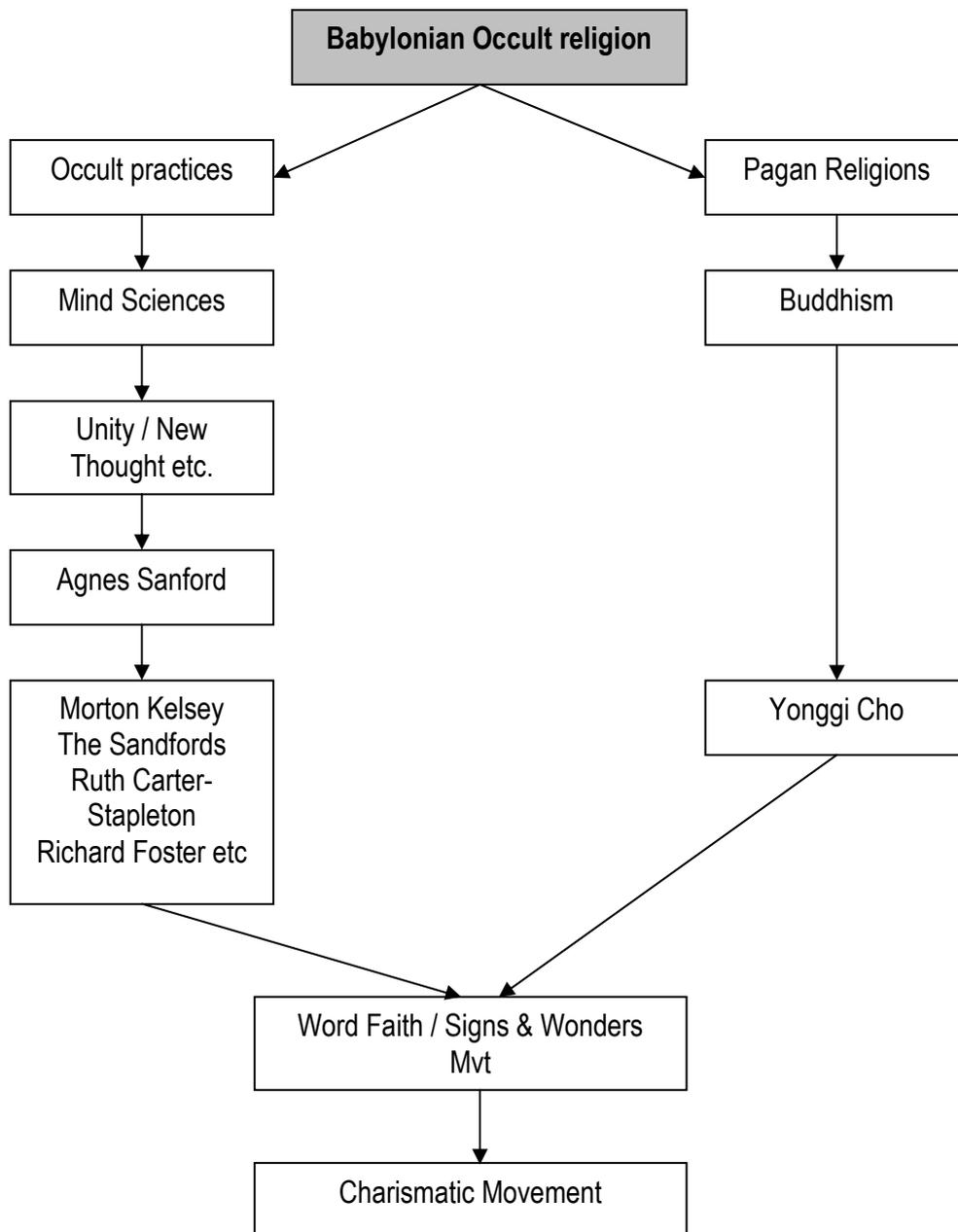
Some best known practitioners are: Agnes Sanford, John & Paula Sandford (*Elijah House*), Ruth Carter Stapleton, Ed Smith (*Theophostic Counselling*), Neil Anderson, Francis MacNutt, Ellel Ministries, Richard Foster, Robert McGee (*Rapha*), Leanne Payne, David Seamands, Dennis and Rita Bennet, William Vaswig (*Renovaré*), John Wimber, David Yonggi Cho, Robert Schuller, Norman Vincent Peale, James G. Friesen, Robert Longman Jr.

The shocking foolishness of all that we have seen so far is that believers automatically presume that the imagined guides or christs that they meet are genuine. No one seeks to question the veracity of these experiences. Oddly enough, even occultists who teach such practices often issue warnings about the dangers involved. This is because mental breakdown and even suicides, are very common amongst seekers of the occult. Doors that are opened by visualisation may not get closed. Stories of character collapse amongst occult practitioners are legion. Yet Christians engaging in identical practices just presume they are meeting the Lord, even as they engage in disciplines forbidden by his word and never encouraged by the Bible.

Methods and disciplines of ancient occultists and witches are now becoming common in mainstream churches, these include: hypnosis, coloured auras, astral projection, mysticism, guided imagery and visualisation, psychotherapy, group psychotherapeutic dynamics, interpretation of dreams, crystal gazing, and inner healing. But there's more.

¹⁸² See *Healing in the Church* Conference, Brighton, 14-17 October, 1985; Workshop 2, *Healing of the Memories*, Ed & Jan Piorek. In this seminar damage caused by previous generations was taught as the notes on p1 make clear. Visualisation was also taught.

A simplified source diagram of visualisation and inner healing



Channelling

This is really just another word for spiritualism, communing with demons for help and guidance; often under the guise of an angel, sometimes pretending to be dead people. Technically, in the secular world, the word means accessing information from the psychic realm above normality. Before the New Age Movement gained ground, this was called 'clairvoyance' and usually involved a medium or a Ouija board to channel the spirits. In Victorian times, and in the Spiritualist churches, this practice was mainly focused on seeking to resume contact with deceased relatives [a hopeless task as there is no contact between the dead and the living: Heb 9:27; Eccles 9:10, 12:7; Lk 16:23ff.]. However, after

the development of Theosophy and later the New Age Mvt. channelling 'higher' entities¹⁸³ was seen as a means of revelation for spiritual advancement.

That such a practice could ever exist in the church is beyond belief, and yet this is the case. It is repeatedly forbidden as an abomination and idolatry since it is seeking help from demons in another guise (Lev 19:31, 20:27; Deut 18:10-12; 1 Chron 10:13; Isa 8:19). Visualisation blends into channelling when, in the process of guided imagery, submission and passivity leads beyond imagined guides to help the inner journey, to demonic spirits pretending to be angels of light.

Some Charismatic leaders have taken this even further by openly admitting to necromancy, which is communing with the deceased for knowledge of the future (which is actually contact with demons pretending to be dead people). For instance, Benny Hinn claims to commune with Kathryn Kuhlman, *'I heard Kathryn's voice and suddenly there she was ... she said "Ask! We're waiting for you to ask! We're praying with you to ask." ... A week later the anointing hit my life.'*¹⁸⁴ Rick Joyner claims to regularly see William Branham in heaven. Morton Kelsey communes with the dead.¹⁸⁵

Channelling is a foundational plank underlying many errors, both in the CM and secular groups such as Jungian psychoanalysis. But it is heavily featured in Inner Healing techniques and is particularly taught by Wimber's favourite, Morton Kelsey. In channelling, the person must first create a vacuum in the consciousness, by becoming passive, to open up communication with a spirit guide. Literally, one loses one's self in this process and it is incredibly dangerous, being the basis of spiritualism. One then communicates with, and receives instructions from, this spirit guide (demon), which often pretends to be a dead shaman; Native American witch doctors are common.

Examples of channelling would be Jung's Philemon or the 'angel' that Branham needed by his side to work healing. In the Bible these demons are called 'familiar spirits'. This is blasphemy of the first order and is expressly forbidden.

Occult initiation rites

We have already noted the initiation rite experienced by Carl Jung, and this is a typical example of an occult ritual designed to unleash some sort of enlightenment or god-consciousness. Astonishing as it may seem, there are examples of this sort of initiation or ritual being used in CM groups and churches.

For instance, the men's movement¹⁸⁶ and the ecumenical Promise Keepers were heavily influenced by Robert Hicks' book, *The Masculine Journey*, published by Navpress. Indeed Promise Keeper encounter groups consisted of eight sessions based on Hicks' central thesis - *Understanding the Six Stages of Manhood*. Some of this study is sinful. The second stage is called 'Phallic' and Hicks states that men have, *'a deep compulsion to worship with our*

¹⁸³ Helena Blavatsky called these spiritual forces 'ascended masters' and believed they had secret information regarding the future of the earth. After Theosophy influenced rogue elements in the church, Latter Rain advocates like William Branham had identical beliefs about spiritual entities (called 'angels') who gave him hidden knowledge to be used in healing ('the word of knowledge').

¹⁸⁴ Sermon preached at Blaisdale Arena, Honolulu, 28.2.97 quoted in R Liichow, *The Two Roots of Today's Revival*, p193.

¹⁸⁵ Morton Kelsey, *Christo*, p39, 148-149; *Afterlife: The Other Side of Dying*.

¹⁸⁶ The men's movement was a reaction to the rising tide of feminism in the 1980s that began in America and is best known in Christian circles by its expression as the Promise Keepers movement that flourished in the early-mid 90s.

phallus'.¹⁸⁷ Men were exhorted by their 'point man' (group leader) to open up about their most intimate sexual experiences and fantasies. Much of the encounter group sessions had links to pagan rites, metaphorically focusing upon being a warrior, winning battles, being wounded etc. There is even a tacit acceptance of practising homosexuality.¹⁸⁸

Evangelical men's movements have also been heavily influenced by secular, pagan and mystical writings to support their position. Hicks refers approvingly to the founder of the secular men's movement, the pantheist poet Robert Bly, who is a noted speaker on the New Age circuit and promotes mythology and occult initiation ceremonies to instigate character development. The secular men's movement is very closely connected to occult groups and promotes pagan practices, especially Native American Indian rituals; inevitably evangelicals were influenced by this nonsense.

Viewing male character development in mystical terms as an initiation followed by an ascending journey, Promise Keepers and others formulated their own initiation rites on vaguely pagan principles. This isn't surprising as Promise Keepers grew out of a Vineyard Church and was influenced by Bly's paganism, as seen in his book *Iron John*. Hicks also refers to Jungian teachers Robert Moore and Douglas Gillette who teach being transformed from a lower to a higher consciousness through pagan rites in their book, *King, Warrior, Magician, Lover*. In these ideas, adopted by some Charismatics in the various men's movements, the definition of maleness or manhood is founded in initiation ceremonies and active imagination resulting in a changed consciousness. Hicks even refers to shedding blood by cutting the body.¹⁸⁹ This is all outright paganism.

Churches also got in on the act, notably that of James Ryle of Boulder Valley Vineyard, the pastor of Bill McCartney (founder of Promise Keepers), and former Promise Keepers Board Member. A conference brochure he sponsored talks of 'rites of passage', 'initiation ceremony', 'defining manhood', and 'orders' of manhood.

All these are further examples of Charismatics descending into ways of thinking that are clearly pagan and unbiblical. After succumbing to one lie, it becomes easier and easier to succumb to further lies; thus new aberrant practices continue to arise in certain circles already given over to deceit - such as Wimber's Vineyard churches or Word Faith groups.

Extreme physical manifestations and Occult phenomena

Subsequent to the mystical and occult explosion of the Toronto Experience, a number of exotic phenomena began to occur in radical congregations. These included 'gold' fillings appearing in teeth or 'gold' dust and olive oil appearing on the skin. Needless to say these phenomena were usually discredited or had rational explanations; however, it is significant that there was an aspiration for such experiences in the wake of widespread mysticism.

We need to be aware that occult practitioners have been able to display similar phenomena for millennia and Charismatic leaders often feel under pressure that pagans can '*do the stuff*' (as John Wimber was fond of referring to miracles) but they can't. When a man arrives who seems to be able to produce powerful divination, prophecy or miracles, Charismatics give him great credibility even when his teaching is shockingly heretical; Such a man is Paul Cain. Despite his terrible fall into gross sin he is still held in huge esteem and is about to be re-launched on the Christian world after a period of protected rehabilitation. Cain, like his mentor William Branham, could know people's thoughts and

¹⁸⁷ Robert Hicks, *The Masculine Journey*; p29.

¹⁸⁸ Robert Hicks, *The Masculine Journey*; p133-134.

¹⁸⁹ *The Masculine Journey*, p92.

have very accurate words of knowledge without prior information. But all this, even if genuine, is mere occultism.

For instance, Sai Baba¹⁹⁰ performed genuine miracles. He could enable ‘sacred ash’ (‘vedhuti’) appear out of thin air or materialise gold rings and jewels. Sometimes this is explained away as sleight-of-hand, but the effect, when seen, is shocking and does not appear to be prestidigitation. However his ability to know people’s thoughts and healing the sick have no rational explanation. Neither is there an explanation of his power to appear in the dreams of his followers and reveal their dreams the next day. Like many gurus he gave his followers visions and enlightenment through the laying on of hands, some heard his voice in their minds. This is demonic power and it is not uncommon in false religions and occult groups, especially primitive aboriginal groups.

In certain Hindu sects such power is explained as the rise of kundalini. Kundalini (meaning ‘serpent power’) is one of the five Hindu yoga pathways to union with God¹⁹¹ and is the Hindu version of the Taoist ch’i, or the vital energy in the body that is normally dormant (see appendices). When this kundalini is aroused from the base of the spine (such as by a guru laying hands) it emanates from the body’s energy centres (‘chakras’) causing various effects and physical manifestations (called ‘kriyas’). It can be so powerful as to have very damaging effects on people who do not know how to control it.¹⁹² This is because it is not a normal feature of the body at all but opening the door to demonic activity. When a guru distributes this energy or grace, usually by laying on of hands, it is called ‘shaktipat’ (lit. ‘the touch of energy’), the descent of power and grace of the goddess Shakti (i.e. feminine energy). In other words, a communication of demonic ‘serpent’ power. The goal is to ultimately lead the devotee to believe that they are God.

Some physical effects of the manifestation of kundalini include:

- WRITHING AND TWISTING LIKE A SNAKE. I have witnessed a girl who had hands laid on her in a Charismatic meeting and then slithered, quite quickly and very fluidly, along the floor like a snake without moving her arms or using her feet. What she did was virtually physically impossible for someone untrained in gymnastics. Sometimes those infected produce hissing sounds; this is common in occult groups and is a manifestation of the satanic serpent origin of the activity. Note that this energy is also called ‘serpent power’ and is frequently connected to serpent worship. Idols of serpents are often associated with kundalini gurus.
- PHYSICAL DISTORTIONS. Swami Muktananda (also known as Gurudev), while under the power of kundalini, would twist so violently that his head would roll and bend below his shoulders that he could see his back.¹⁹³
- ROARING LIKE A LION. Muktananda would roar so loud that nearby cows nearly broke their ropes and dogs barked loudly.¹⁹⁴ Other animal noises are common.
- HOPPING AND JUMPING LIKE A FROG. Other similar physical manifestations are common, such as running on the spot, leaping, dancing or even feigned birthing.

¹⁹⁰ Sai Baba, like Muktananda, was a famous Sat-Guru (light-giver) in a branch of Hinduism. ‘Sat’ means ‘real experience’; a guru is a divine guide or spiritual teacher. Sat-Gurus are special teachers able to impart power.

¹⁹¹ It developed in Kashmir during the millennium before Christ; is connected to the worship of Shiva. Yoga means ‘yoke’ or ‘union’ and is a discipline to give divine knowledge.

¹⁹² Experts warn disciples that it can result in untreatable illnesses, debilitation of the body in a variety of ways and psychological disorders as well as the hoped for ecstasy and enlightenment. Twenty-seven groups of conditions are listed as possible and many features are identical with the phenomena manifested in the Toronto Experience. See: *Shared Transformation* web site. Some practitioners have died as a result, especially those under the control of Bhagwan Shri Rajneesh.

¹⁹³ Tal Brooke; *Riders of the Cosmic Circuit*, Lion (1986), p44.

¹⁹⁴ Tal Brook, op. cit. p45.

- LAUGHING UNCONTROLLABLY.
- FALLING TO THE FLOOR. Equates to the Pentecostal 'slain in the Spirit'.
- THE ABILITY TO THROW POWER INTO THE AUDIENCE. Muktananda was able to throw waves of power to people like thunderbolts and powerful gazes. Radical leaders of the CM also do this when they blow the 'Spirit' upon people (like Benny Hinn) and they fall over, or throw the 'Spirit' with a gesture of the arm. I have seen people slammed against a wall by a gesture from a Charismatic leader 30 feet away.
- THE ABILITY TO IMPART ENLIGHTENMENT. It is common amongst Hindu sects that devotees, being initiated by the laying on of hands, experience a powerful vision and deep subjective emotions. For instance this was a feature of Guru Maharaj Ji (Divine Light Mission) and Shri Bhagwan Rajneesh. The experience, while ecstatic, always led to immediate character changes, and then severe personality problems in time, as it was demonic. Something very similar can happen with the laying on of hands in Charismatic meetings. Powerful CM leaders can transmit similar experiences in this way; it has also been a characteristic of Pentecostal ministry for 100 years.

Note that all these phenomena featured very heavily in the Toronto Experience, which can be seen as a breakout of pagan, kundalini (demonic) power in the church mingled with fleshly, religious excitement (which was historically called 'enthusiasm').

Occult fetishes, charms and talismans

These terms refer to objects which are supposed by pagans to be inhabited by spirits and which have supernatural power to bless people or ward off demons; some Charismatics have adopted idea this saying that the power of the charm is from God. That any Christian could seriously consider that a physical object can have spiritual power is too fantastic to believe. Sacramentalism is bad enough, where objects are used as an *aid* to belief and receiving grace, but to give an object the specific *power* of God is a heresy too far. Yet this is what Charismatics are frequently doing, a few examples include:

- At the sacramental level many Christians have now succumbed to using physical objects to aid prayer or healing. These include crystals, candles or other objects. Rome has long used sacramental objects, such as relics of saints - something accepted by Charismatics like Wimber.
- At the April 96 Minister Conference in Pensacola, the Brownsville Assembly of God church erected a replica of the OT golden incense altar. Dick Reuben (a Messianic Jew who regularly ministered at Brownsville) dressed in a full replica of the Jewish High Priestly garments requesting that leaders and wives cast all their problems and wounds on Jesus by symbolically casting incense upon the altar. Hundreds of visiting international leaders and wives (including Gerald Coates) queued up to do so, filling the hall with smoke and claimed that the Holy Spirit was active within this ceremony.
- According to ex-Kansas City Prophet and Vineyard leader Francis Frangipane, the image of Jesus appeared on a burrito (pancake) in Mexico. Consequently it was enshrined and now is giving grace to worshippers.
- *Charisma* magazine reported that a statue of Jesus represented the presence of God and blessed the people that came to see it.
- People in the Jesus Army make wooden crosses and pray over them, believing that special grace is imparted to the wearer.

Mesmerising music to induce ASC experiences

Pagans have long utilised drums / percussion and/or ambient music, to develop passivity and inculcate an alternate state or trance. There are many forms of discipline that will produce an ASC, even intense pain, but music is the quickest route (apart from drugs). This is so obvious and well-known that it needs no further explanation. However, that

evangelicals now boast about doing the same thing is a measure of how pagan the church has become.

SWITCHING OFF

We have already mentioned the use of music in meetings as a prelude to a sermon, which breaks down rational control through over-stimulating subjective feelings. The excuse is that this is worship, but very often it is merely self-satisfaction. When music is coupled with repetitive songs, especially songs of a certain type, the congregation can be smothered into complete subjectivity, closely related to a state of hypnotism. Worship leaders that are tuned in to observing emotional responses can control them by the choice of songs, the type of music and directive exhortations. All this leads to suggestibility in the audience that can then be manipulated by the speaker. It is well known that many supposedly powerful Charismatic preachers always use certain emotionally powerful songs as their lead-in to being introduced on stage and speaking - they need to get the audience switched-off and passive ('dialled-down') before they can achieve any results. The reason is that the effects of their ministry (e.g. falling down) are due to emotional control and not the power of God.

AMBIENT MUSICAL BACKGROUND TO SPEECH

Frequently Charismatic preachers will copy an old technique, often used by entertainers, pagan groups and even the movies, whereby lilting music is played in the background to someone speaking. It heightens an emotional response to what is said. This is usually done after the main message where the preacher is applying his speech and seeks a response from the audience. The music is used to continue the tingly emotional feelings that applied in the pre-speech worship time and the audience usually has eyes closed. All this is softening up methods to make audiences compliant and suggestible. In Word Faith crusades it is done prior to calling out words of knowledge or healing.

It is noteworthy that true miracle workers, especially the Lord himself but also his disciples, never did any of this. There was no need to hypnotise an audience; indeed, healings regularly occurred in crowds and noisy streets.

DRUM CIRCLES

The CM has been using various forms of music and rhythm for many years, but it has taken some time to get to the point where inner peace is being sought just by drum beats. The new idea is called 'drum circles' and the intention is to induce 'meditative tranquillity'. Unashamedly, leaders like Cory Blake declare that they are following 'a contemplative tradition' (i.e. paganism) and that these drum circles 'speak directly to the intelligence of the body'. In other words, they stimulate subjective mystical feelings through bypassing the rational mind, something the Bible forbids.

NO MUSIC IN THE NT CHURCH

It is worth noting that music is never mentioned in connection with the NT church - not ever. There is no suggestion that instrumental music is used to enhance Christian worship, indeed there was no instrumental music in church services for several hundred years, apart from some isolated sects. Gradually the Roman church formally introduced choirs, and then instruments; but music was not widespread until as late as the 12th century. Early attempts of some churches to use musical instruments were condemned by church fathers, such as Chrysostom, as being pagan and unnecessary. The beauty of worship is the harmony of individual voices singing praise to God in unison with everyone else.

The use of instruments in the Jewish temple must be understood as Old Covenant forms that were made obsolete by the New Covenant. Just as the priesthood, temple, sacrifices and feasts were cancelled, so was the music system that was connected to them. To use

temple forms today is to deny the cross. Just as we would never think of using priestly garments, or sacrificing a goat for sin, neither should we develop choirs and bands in church worship; but to simply mesmerise people into a meditative trance by drums alone is sheer heathenism.

Power religion

These occult features were imported into the UK church largely through the Signs and Wonders movement introduced by Wimber, but also assisted by the occasional ministry of Pentecostals from abroad (like Australian Steve Rider and African Benson Idahosa). The ministry of Colin Urquhart and his team sought to move in this direction as well and Urquhart had occasional contacts with several Charismatic streams. Word Faith notions impacted in the UK afterwards.

We have mentioned Wimber's movement several times in the course of this book and need not develop it here. The point is that church leaders gullibly took pagan ideas on board in an effort to minister in power. No one checked the credentials of the practices Wimber introduced. Pragmatically, it had an effect in that people fell over, screamed, shook or whatever and this was accepted as divine - even though genuine healings of clinical ailments were virtually never evidenced; at least no more than under normal respite or therapy. (The emotionalism raised endorphin levels to give palliative respite or temporary relief from pain.)

What is worth understanding here is why the UK 'apostles' got so involved when their earlier theology was opposed to radical Pentecostal extremism.

In the late 70s the UK was beginning to call the leaders of certain streams 'apostles' but I am not aware of this being widespread in the US; however in Pentecostalism (and some revivalist movements) powerful men were often called 'apostles'. But UK Restorationism developed a methodical apologetic for a new form of formal apostleship and apostolic teams. This was not a temporary gimmick, but was seen as a vital feature of a restored, end-time church; the ministry of apostles was crucial to God's plan for the end. This is restated Latter Rain teaching, but Latter Rain theology was never mentioned (and possibly not clearly understood). Many Restorationist leaders were actually opposed to the extremes seen in Pentecostalism and their apologetic for apostleship was based on their Biblical understanding rather than Latter Rain books. People like Henry Tyler, Harold Owen or Terry Virgo were not influenced directly by Oral Roberts, William Branham or George Warnock, but were affected by similar ideas indirectly through Bryn Jones and concepts picked up by Arthur Wallis (who was probably influenced by Cecil Cousin who had Latter Rain contacts). It was after the Signs and Wonders Mvt. impacted them that people in these streams began to find Latter Rain works.

The UK 'apostles' (Virgo, Jones, Coates, Tony Morton - Southampton, Peter Lyne - Bristol and others) developed their networks successfully in the 80s; eventually Virgo's and Coates' groups prevailing, while earlier Charismatic groups, e.g. Chard under Sid Purse or the groups under GW North, began to decline. Oddly Chard had more Pentecostal influences while North was a Holiness teacher - but it was the Baptist and Brethren rooted networks (Virgo, Coates) which grew into the full-on Signs and Wonders Movement in the 90s. Why?

The key reason is that the UK apostles had a key flaw in their teaching. Instead of understanding Biblical apostleship as a function whereby a sending church plants a new church using an apostle/missionary, the UK Charismatics developed their apostleship on

the basis of personal authority. These apostles were actually archbishops in all but name. They never planted churches (the task of an apostle) but dominated a number of formerly independent churches and drew them into a denomination. But their authority was hindered because they did not show the signs of an apostle. They craved to be able to heal and perform miracles. As this never materialised naturally, by the mid 1980s they were desperate for help to move in power.

At this time various ministries were visiting the UK, men who could get people to fall over by a touch, and sometimes by a gesture. Seeing this, these 'apostles' (particularly Virgo and Coates) leapt at the chance of ministering in this way. But despite hands being laid on them by all and sundry, all they did was fall down themselves but were not able to get others to fall down. Then along came Wimber. Wimber came with a methodology, a teaching system, several new practices (e.g. inner healing, shaking hands, spiritual warfare) but he was also affable and articulate. He was acceptable to various streams and worked with his teams who were very organised and marketing savvy.

Wimber also appealed to people like Virgo because of his academic background at Fuller Seminary. He was no Pentecostal fly-by-night or Elmer Gantry, but a well-read thinker and a church growth professor. These 'apostles' could pick up on all this, additionally the approach seemed new and attractive. Wimber is a classic example of how someone who was genuinely humble could infiltrate a church system with error more effectively than by a more powerful and imposing figure. By developing loyalty, friendship, and inter church organisation systems, Wimber created an effective conduit for all sorts of pagan, occult and heretical notions into English churches.

It was the false notions of apostleship, the pride of key 'apostolic' leaders and the need to have self-authentication that led to the inrush of pagan notions via the Signs and Wonders Movement. Instead of evaluating what was happening and protecting their sheep, they led them down a slippery slope in order to elevate their personal authority and status.

It is interesting that men who in the 70s had genuine integrity, humility, vision and a keen Biblical eye have since lost all their Biblical credibility and now fall victim to the most foolish propositions and practices. They have squandered any gift they may have had. This is the result of accepting all the nonsense that is pressed in the service of 'power religion'.

Interim conclusion

Babylonian occultism

When someone in the CM is confronted by the accusation that certain cherished methods and practices are occult in origin, the shock is only secondary to the anger at such an 'unjustified' statement. However, I am not suggesting that all evangelical CM leaders noticed certain benefits of occult religions and deliberately developed a sinful, syncretistic approach. However, it is clear that some did exactly this; such as Paul Yonggi Cho with Soka Gakkai Buddhism, Branham channelling a spirit or John Wimber with his Eastern Paradigm concept. Most practitioners of Charismatic extremes adopted teachings and aberrant practices slowly without realising their sources. Probably most English leaders knew little or nothing about even Latter Rain in the 1980s, let alone the mystical and occult nature of the principles behind it.

It is also useless trying to defend CM radical ideas as being the original, and the occult practices as being a wicked counterfeit. Not only do many of the specific ideas involved

have an older provenance in occultism and mysticism, but the root of all these pagan practices and teaching is in the Nimrod paganism established at Babel. The origin of all the variety of mystical and occult disciplines is the rebellious Babylonian religion forged by the wicked despot Nimrod. While some occult concepts formally began after Christianity arose, it is clear that the root of these ideas is in ancient Babylonian cults and magic. For instance, Wicca is a modern invention, a renaissance of witchcraft in a more civilised guise by Gerald Gardner. But the root of historic witchcraft, religious shamanism, fertility rites and all modern magic is in Babylon and the religious system founded by Nimrod. Charismatics may not worship the sun god like Babylonians, but the principles they follow were first developed in the Babylonian priestly system.

When Christians adopt pagan practices dressed up in acceptable Charismatic clothes, such as visualisation, drum circles, prayer sticks or mysticism they are simply behaving just as Babylonian heathens invoking demonic gods. Now these people may have never heard of either the root in Babylon or the modern form (such as kundalini); neither have they copied gurus, witches or mystics directly, but what they are doing is following the same satanic lie and are deluded into practising pagan techniques.

These satanic principles are the foundation of all the various false religions and occult groups. In one system a certain discipline is followed, in another group a different technique is the focus, but all arise from the original pagan root. The CM, by a mixture of deliberate false teaching, accidental stumbling, pandering to base aspects of human nature (e.g. manipulating weakened believers) and slow acceptance of temptation, has gradually built up a wide platform of evil pagan teachings and practices.

It is not an extreme statement to say that much within the CM is both pagan and occultic; indeed, many books have now documented various aspects of it.

The spirit of Antichrist

Now this is a big subject on its own, and a full exposition can be found in my paper, *The Antichrist*. However, we need to isolate some important features of antichristian power that affect the CM today.

Without getting into controversial interpretation, it is fairly safe to say that virtually all sound Biblical scholars accept that at the end there will be a global expression of antichristian power set in opposition to God and persecuting his church. Exactly what form this takes is debatable but essentially this power will set itself up as God, claiming to be God (2 Thess 2:4). It arises through deception (2 Thess 2:9-10; Matt 24:11) and particularly targets the church. The political power of Antichrist is symbolised by the first beast from the sea, the spiritual deception of Antichrist is symbolised by the second beast, the false prophet, from the earth (Rev 13, 19:20).

The visible church is finally defined in two sections:

- those who succumb to this deception and become deluded, serving the Antichrist (2 Thess 2:11-12);
- those who resist this deception and suffer persecution, the genuine people of God (Rev 13:7, 10).

There can be no doubt that this process of deception has been in operation for some years; the multiplicity of heresies and aberrant practices in the church, plus the rapid spread of paganism and mysticism in the world are evidences of this. If we are in the beginnings of antichristian deception, where is the CM in this?

We have said that the prime historical precursor to Antichrist is Nimrod (see appendices), but there is another forerunner that looms large in the Jewish mind - that is Antiochus Epiphanes. He was a Syrian king who conquered Jerusalem in about 170 BC and desecrated the temple by setting up a pagan altar to Zeus in the place of God's altar, and sacrificing a pig. The subsequent freeing of Jerusalem from Syrian power occurred in the Maccabean Revolt of 166-242 BC, which was subsequently celebrated by the Jewish Feast 'Hanukkah', the Feast of Dedication (Jn 10:22) or Lights.

This abomination was predicted by Daniel (Dan 8:9, 11:31, 12:11) in the context of other prophecies about the final expression of antichristian world power, and was referred to by Jesus as a warning that the Romans would do something similar in the siege of Jerusalem (Matt 24:15). This occurred when the Romans set up their ensigns in the temple and made sacrifices before burning it down, during the fall Jerusalem in 70 AD.

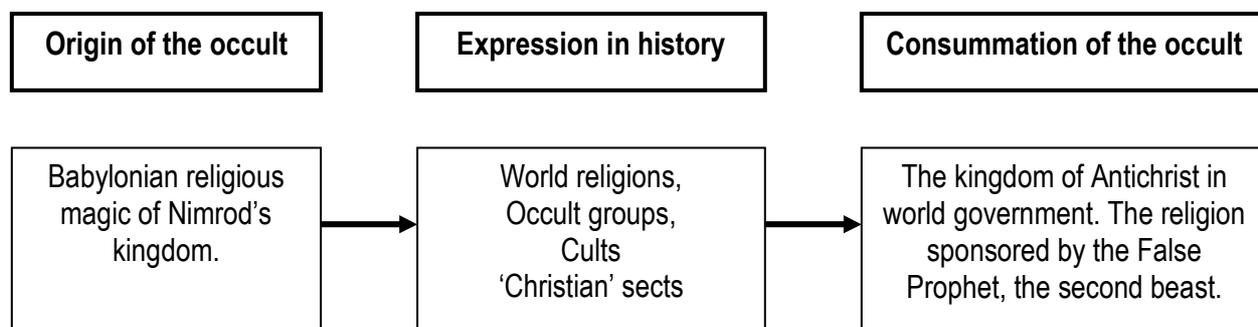
WHAT IS THE KEY POINT?

The symbolism of this antecedent of Antichrist, like Nimrod, is the perversion of true religion. Alongside a lust for the power of empire, there is the rebellious institution of occult religion. In Nimrod's day it was the erection of a pagan ziggurat for rebellious religious purposes (the Tower of Babel). With Antiochus it was the abomination of corrupting God's temple with paganism; while Paul's prediction for the end is that Antichrist (the man of sin) will occupy the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God.

What is God's temple now? It is his people, the church (1 Cor 3:16; 1 Pt 2:5). A key part of the end-time deception to further the global purposes of Antichrist is the corruption of the visible church. The Lord's true elect people will be preserved by God's grace to the end, but the final deception is so powerful that it seems even to threaten them (Matt 24:24); professing members of the church are entirely swept away in satanic delusion.

So, the end-time pervasion of deceit through demonic doctrines and occult practices is a key part of the development of antichristian world power. With many in the church supporting the actual plans of the enemy, opposition to Satan's purposes is almost unhindered. Are we seeing this now? Absolutely. Where are we seeing this? In the Charismatic Movement! The multitude of delusions and errors that the CM has spawned, which we have noted elsewhere in this work, are a foundational plank of antichristian strategy to dominate mankind and rule the world in sin.

The seriousness of this is shocking. Involvement in the occultic and pagan deceptions being spread within the CM is fellowship with the development of Antichrist's kingdom.



Examples of error and deception

MAGIC, SORCERY

By the spoken word we create our universe ... you create the presence of Jesus with your mouth ...through visualisation and dreaming you can incubate your future and hatch the results.

Paul (now David) Yonggi Cho; [*Berean Call*, June 1993.]

Your mind possesses the power to move things without the assistance of your physical hands ... Your mind can start fires ... the mind is capable of bending spoons. [Telekinesis]

Prophet/Bishop Bernard Jordan, head of *Zoe*; *Countdown to Prophetic Congress Calendar*, 10, 12, 16 March 1998.

PRACTICAL SHAMANISM - CF. NATIVE AMERICAN MEDICINE MAN RITUALS

A church in Wales performed a rain dance in the town centre complete with feather head-dresses and pagan percussion instruments.¹⁹⁵

MYSTICAL TEACHING ON THE ATONEMENT

[Jesus] cleansed the thought vibrations that surround this globe ... [he became a very part of the collective consciousness of the race (this section is removed in editions after 1947)] ... [Jesus'] blood remains upon this earth, in plasma form, blown by the winds of heaven to every land beneath the sun, exploding in a chain reaction of spiritual power.

Agnes Sanford, *The Healing Light*, Macalester Park Pub. Co. (1948) p127.

NECROMANCY AND CHANNELLING

His angels ... are also working through us ... The spirits of those for whom we have prayed on earth [i.e. the dead] are working through us ... we know that there is no death.... As we pray for His indwelling and for the co-operation of His [dead] saints, we become aware of an inrush of power.

Agnes Sanford, *The Healing Light*, Macalester Park Pub. Co. (1948) p143-144.

A CLEAR DESCRIPTION OF KUNDALINI ENERGY.

We feel an actual current of life entering into the centre of the body and rising through the spine. So forceful is this vibration or stream of life that we are forced to keep the spine erect and the breathing light and even. For a little time we cannot speak.

Agnes Sanford, *The Healing Light*, Macalester Park Pub. Co. (1948) p144.

SHAMANISM

When people have deep ... experiences of God, ESP experiences often occur. Clairvoyance, telepathy, precognition, psychokinesis, and healing have been observed.

Morton Kelsey, *The Christian and the Supernatural*, Augsburg (1976); p113. Kelsey says that Jesus' power was the same as that exhibited by shamans (p93), and that God works through shamans (*Dreams: A Way to Listen to God*, Paulist Press, 1978, p29).

ASTRAL TRAVELLING

In your imagination allow your spiritual body, shining with light, to rise out of your physical body. Look back so that you can see yourself ... Imagine your spiritual self ... rising up through the clouds and into the stratosphere. Observe your physical body ... as you leave the earth. Go deeper and deeper into outer space ... Note carefully any instruction given.

¹⁹⁵ Reported to the writer by a witness. The group belonged to Gerald Coates' *Pioneer* churches.

Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, Hodder & Stoughton (1982), p27.

VISUALISATION

Your thoughts can establish whatever form you desire ... Stop looking for power outside of yourself ... Your mind has unlimited power.

Prophet/Bishop Bernard Jordan, head of *Zoe; Countdown to Prophetic Congress Calendar*, 27, 30 January, 3 March 1998.

Religious experience is found by turning inward and using one's imagination as a tool with which to contact the reality of the spiritual world.

Morton Kelsey, *The Other Side of Silence: A Guide to Christian Meditation*, SPCK, (1977), p136.

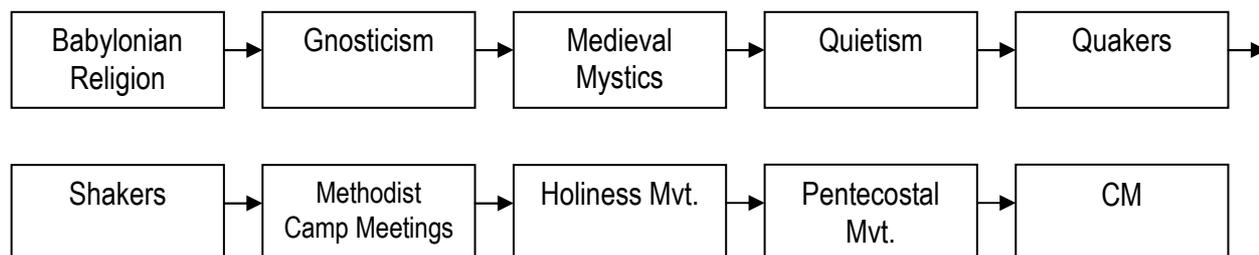
FRAUDULENT SPIRITUALISM

Send in your Miracle Seed of \$98.00, your date of birth and your most pressing question! I will prophesy your answer on cassette tape.

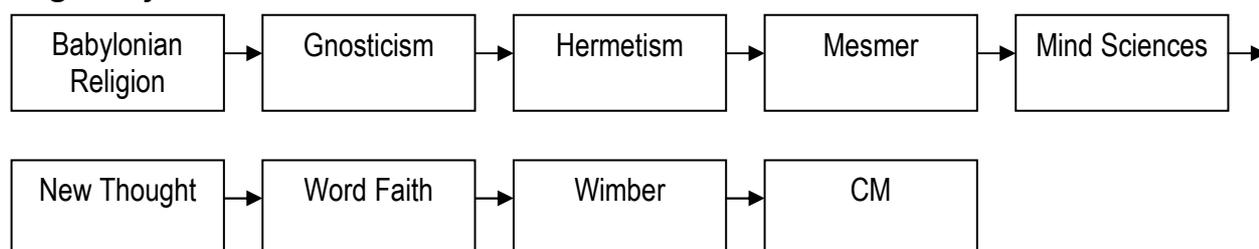
Prophet/Bishop Bernard Jordan, head of *Zoe; Countdown to Prophetic Congress Calendar*, 'Special Offer'.

Pagan Roots

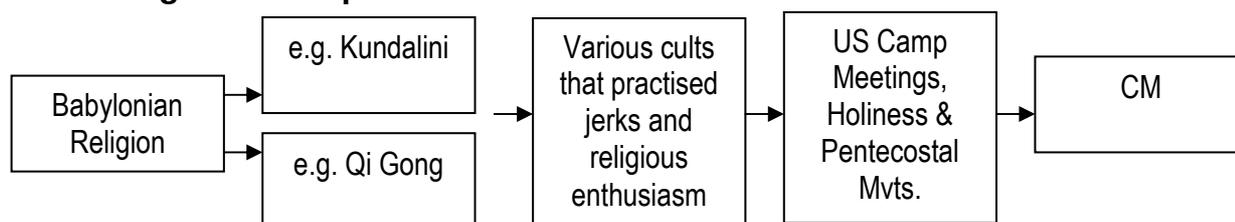
Christian Mystics



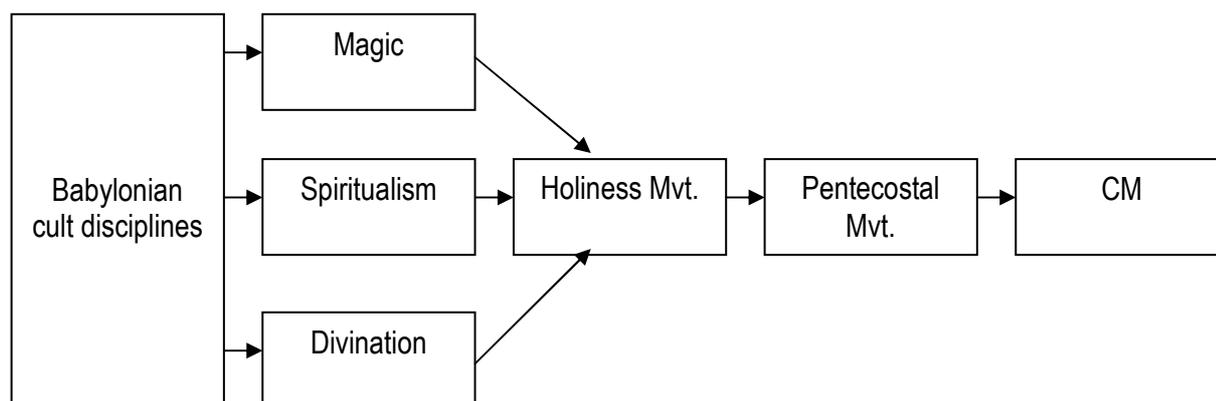
Pagan Mystics



False Religion techniques



Occult practices



Note that many of the occult excesses in the US Holiness Mvt. occurred at exactly the same time that the fascination with clairvoyancy and spiritualism spread in America. It began in 1843 when Andrew Jackson claimed to be a medium, then in 1848 Kate Fox and her sisters gained notoriety in connection with a haunted house and the revival of spiritualism was in full swing by 1852, spreading to Europe. Conferences and books were everywhere. Soon there were experiences of levitation (Daniel D Home) telekinesis (Eusapia Palladino) and the formation of spiritualist churches.

A short list of features in occult religion

Feature	Cult, Sect, Religion, Group
Ecstatic tongues	CM; Pentecostalism; Gnosticism; Mystery religions; occult groups; shamanism; animism; Voodoo; Wicca; Dionysian cults; Shakers.
Unbiblical prophecy	CM; Pentecostalism; Mormons; Gnosticism; Mystery religions; occult groups; Islam; shamanism; animism; Satanism; Voodoo; Wicca; Shakers.
Slaying in the Spirit	CM; Pentecostalism; Holiness Mvt; Gnosticism; Mystery religions; occult groups; shamanism; animism; Hindu sects; Islamic mystical sects; kundalini; Satanism; Voodoo; Wicca; Shakers.
Dancing, marching	CM; Pentecostalism; Holiness Mvt; occult groups; shamanism; animism; Islamic mystical sects; Satanism; Voodoo; Wicca; Shakers; Santeria.
Healing	CM; Pentecostalism; Holiness Mvt; Shakers; occult groups; shamanism; animism; kundalini; Satanism; Voodoo; Wicca; New Thought, Unity.
Screams, shouts animal noises	CM; Pentecostalism; Gnosticism; Mystery religions; occult groups; shamanism; animism; Hindu sects; Islamic mystical sects; kundalini; Satanism; Voodoo; Wicca; Green Man rites; Dionysian cults; Druidism.
Visualisation	CM; Pentecostalism; occult groups; shamanism; animism; Hindu sects; kundalini; Buddhist sects; magic; Wicca; New Thought; Unity.
Channelling	CM; Pentecostalism; occult groups; shamanism; animism; Hindu sects; kundalini; Buddhist sects; magic; spiritualism; Voodoo; Wicca; Shakers; Santeria.
Fetishes, talismans, sacramentalism	CM; Pentecostalism; Romanism; occult groups; shamanism; animism; Hindu sects; Buddhist sects; magic; Satanism; Voodoo; Wicca; Santeria.
Hypnotism	CM; Pentecostalism; Holiness Mvt; occult groups; shamanism; animism; kundalini; Buddhist sects; magic; Satanism; Voodoo; Wicca; Shakers; New Thought; Unity.
Mysticism	CM; Pentecostalism; Holiness Mvt; Quietism; Romanism; occult groups; shamanism; animism; Hindu sects; kundalini; Buddhist sects; magic; Wicca; Dionysian cults, Qigong; Shakers; Rosicrucianism; Quakers; Lutheran mystics; Sufism; Druidism; Theosophy; New Thought; Unity.
Extreme physical manifestations	CM; Pentecostalism; occult groups; shamanism; animism; Hindu sects; kundalini; Buddhist sects; magic; Satanism; Voodoo; Wicca; Shakers; Santeria.
Trance inducing music & drums	CM; Pentecostalism; occult groups; shamanism; animism; Hindu sects; Buddhist sects; Islamic sects (e.g. whirling dervishes); magic; Satanism; Wicca; Druidism; Santeria.
Vibrating hands (often to effect healing)	CM; Signs & Wonders Mvt.; Kundalini yoga; occult groups; shamanism, magic, Shakers.
Trances	CM; Pentecostalism; occult groups; shamanism; animism; Hindu sects; Buddhist sects; Islamic sects; magic; Satanism; Wicca; Shakers; New Thought; Unity.
Visions	CM; Pentecostalism; occult groups; shamanism; animism; Hindu sects; Buddhist sects; Islamic sects; magic; Satanism; Wicca; Shakers.
Shaking	CM; Pentecostalism; occult groups; shamanism; animism; Hindu sects; Buddhist sects; Islamic sects; magic; Satanism; Wicca; Shakers; Santeria.

It should be noted that these features predate Christianity, surfacing in pagan religions and occult disciplines hundreds of years before. In some cases (such as features emanating from Hinduism or Taoism) predating it by 1500 years. The root of occult practices is found in the Babylonian religion established by Nimrod at the time of the Babel Tower. Paganism

did not copy the salient features of Christianity and pervert them, in these cases, it established them; then aberrant sects, Pentecostalism and the CM copied them.

Glossary to table

Animism

Simple occultism based on the fear of demons and spirits inhabiting nature. Spirits placated by sacrifices and other means.

Buddhist sects

Mahayana; Theravada; Nichiren Shoshu; Soka-Gakkai; Zen.

Dionysian Cults

A group of mystery religions dedicated to hedonism, hence worship of Dionysus.

Druidism

Religion of the Druids; Celtic but may be older. Druids were the mystical and intellectual leaders of the Celts along with noblemen.

Gnosticism

A cultic, mystical, dualistic movement which plagued the early Church. Many aspects were similar to practices now found in the CM and New Age.

Green Man

Is related to various fertility cults; often seen as a decorative image - a green face surrounded by leaves. Connected to the Celtic god Viridios and Mediterranean gods (e.g. Khidr of Sufism). Father Christmas was originally Green until made red by Americans. Has become popular in England since the 19th c. and connected with the harvest. Green man ceremonies are similar to some Wiccan rites.

Hermetism

Gnostic, mystical teachings embedded in alchemist writings; mainly based in Egypt and featuring the Egyptian god Thoth and the Greek god Hermes. 1st-3rd centuries. It fused Greek philosophy with Eastern religions.

Holiness Mvt.

Grew out of American Methodism and revivalism in the mid 19th c. It was perfectionist and Charismatic; frequently exhibiting religious hysteria. It became the platform for Pentecostalism.

Hindu sects

Numerous sub groups exist. E.g. Vedanta, Iskcon, Transcendental Meditation, Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, Sri Chinmoy, Hare Krishna, Divine Light Mission etc. These encompass 145 million people in 88 countries. There are c. 690 million Hindus worldwide (79% are Vaishnavites, worshipping Vishnu). New Age is heavily

Hinduistic. Hinduism is a complex mix of monotheism, polytheism, monism and pantheism.

Islamic sects

Shi'ites; Sunnis; Sufis; Sikhism (= Islam + Hinduism). Sufism is the mystical variant.

Kundalini

A form of yoga (a religious discipline to awaken divine knowledge) connected with the worship of Shiva. *Kundalini* is the Hindu form of the Taoist *chi* or the mystical energy within the body. The centres of this energy are called *chakras*. This energy also is called 'serpent power'. The discipline (yoga) releases this energy and is supposed to make a person god-like. These actions result in extreme physical manifestations and are often avoided by devotees as the results are dangerous. These manifestations are identical to those seen in the Toronto Experience.

Magic

Manipulation of nature by spells, and other means. One of the three branches of occultism.

Mind Science (Religious Science)

Based on the principles of mesmerism and monism ('all is one'; like pantheism, 'all is god'), it refers to religious groups that place Christian virtues (love, grace, power etc) in mental capacity empowered through mystical disciplines based on the latent divinity in every man. The main starting point was New Thought. The chief focus is upon healing by the mind.

The Mind Sciences are the disciplines of psychotherapy, psychoanalysis etc.

Mormonism

Or *Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*. Founded by Joseph Smith in 1830 as a heretical Christian sect. Teachings based on Smith's visions - Book of Mormon. Centred in Salt Lake City.

Mystery Religions

Pagan cults, mostly from the Middle East, which spread through the Greco-Roman world before the birth of Christ and continued afterwards. Their rites were accessible only to initiates. Many were originally fertility religions that became syncretistic. Some were later linked to Gnosticism; others worshipped Cybele, Ma, Atargatis, Baal, Mithras, Greek Gods etc.

New Thought

Developed by PP Quimby, based on Mesmerism (hypnotism). A syncretism of Christianity,

paganism and occultism to produce healing and mind over matter. Christian Science and Unity arose out of this. Disease is caused by negative thoughts, while a Gnostic type of 'revealed knowledge' dispels sickness and brings prosperity when believed. This is the root of Word Faith ideas, transmitted by EW Kenyon to Ken Hagin etc.

Occult Groups

Occult means 'hidden', referring to secret, supernatural knowledge. Three branches: *divination* - foretelling the future; *Magic* - manipulation of nature; witchcraft, sorcery; *Spiritualism* - communing with demons. There are many occult groups.

Qigong

Offshoot discipline of Taoism; exercises to harness the body's *chi* (or *qi*, energy). Different to another offshoot, *Tai Chi* (which seeks to release *chi* to prolong health). Mainly exercises to control *chi* for medical reasons. *Kung Fu* is another offshoot (martial arts) as is acupuncture which seeks to adjust *chi* by inserting brass needles in the body.

Quakers

Mystical 'Christian' sect founded by George Fox. Focus on the inner light and tarrying.

Quietism

17th century mystical movement, following Medieval Catholic mystics. Involves intense passivity, contemplation of God, surrender, extreme self-denial, anti-intellectualism.

Rosicrucianism

Fraternity of the 'Rose Cross' founded by Christian Rosenkreutz in 1408. Mystical and occult teachings mixed with syncretism of various religions. There are several offshoots and connections with the Anthroposophical Society, Rudolf Steiner, and Theosophy.

Santeria

Similar to Voodoo; a syncretistic mixture of Catholicism and African (Nigerian) paganism but based in Cuba.

Satanism

Religion based on devil worship and magic. Separate to Witchcraft but both are occult. The main modern influence was the perverted

hedonist Aleister Crowley. Links with Rosicrucianism, Theosophy and Kaballah.

Shakers

Grew out of the Radical Quakers; the followers of Ann Lee (a messiah figure). Emphasised the restoration of end time spiritual gifts, praise marches; tongues, healing; celibacy, perfectionism, good works for salvation, dietary controls and communism; rejected the inspiration of the Bible. The wild worship included the shaking off of sin (hence the name), visions, tongues, prophecies and vigorous dancing, often encompassing the whole congregation dancing around the room.

Shamanism

Practitioners of sorcery – the ability to manipulate or control the spirit world through Magic. Other names include: magician, wizard, witch, witch-doctor, warlock (male witch), sorcerer.

Sufism

A sect of Islam. Includes 'whirling dervishes' - spinning for hours to get mystical experience.

Theosophy

Occult movement founded in 1875 by Helena Blavatsky; continued by Annie Besant. It's teachings are: the essential unity of all religions, the brotherhood of man, Hindu pantheism, a Gnostic view of knowledge and deity, Platonism and oriental mysticism. Many of its teachings emerged in the New Age Mvt.

Unity School

Arose out of New Thought. A blend of Christianity with Gnosticism, pantheism, Hinduism and occultism.

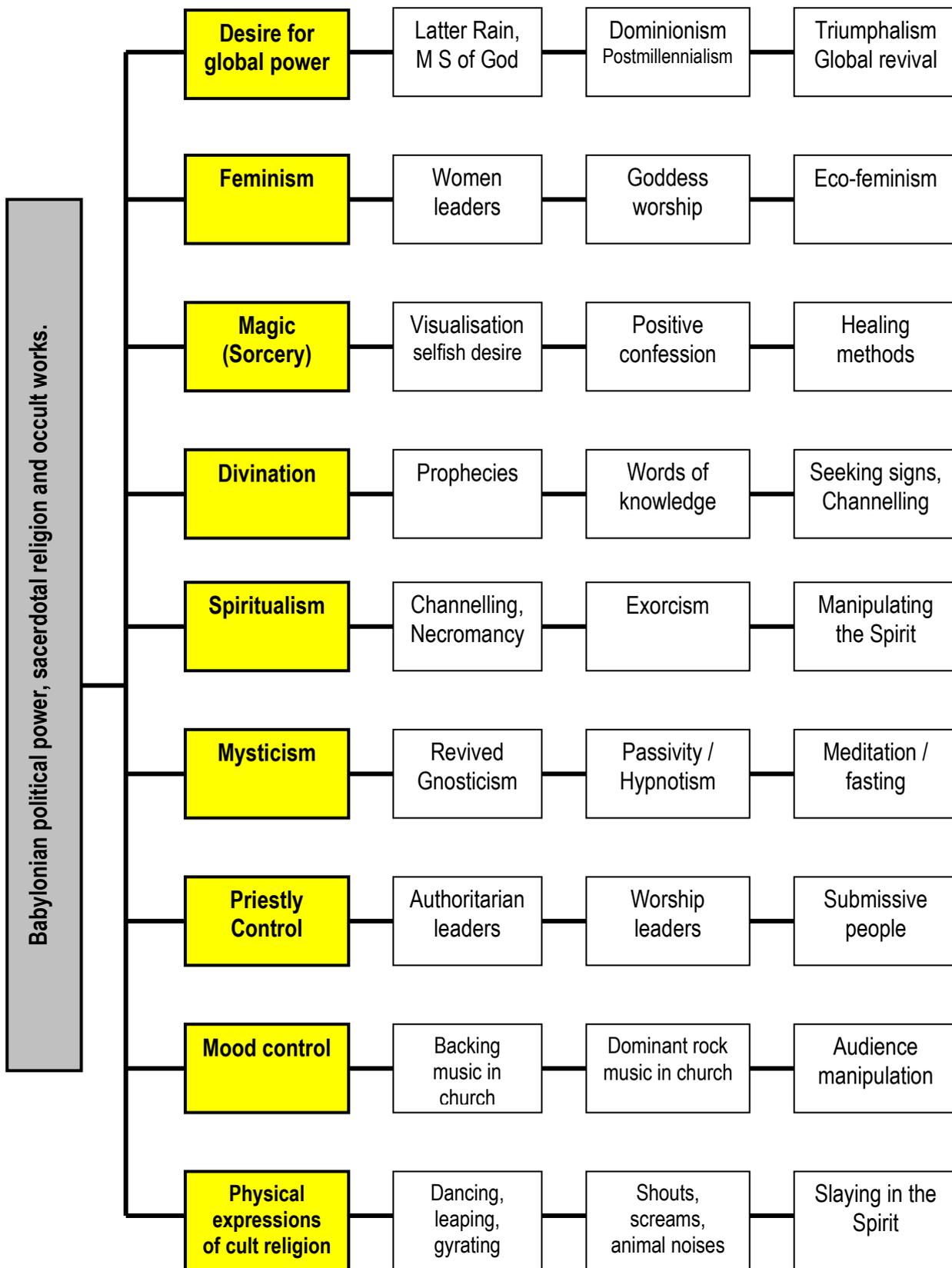
Voodoo

Or Vodun. Religious cults of Dahomey (Benin, W. Africa). Via slavery, these cults flourished in the West Indies, particularly in Haiti. Through Catholic influences, but absence of missionaries, the slaves formed a syncretistic religion of African magic, polytheism and Roman Catholicism.

Wicca

An occult group that is now widespread in the UK; = 'white witchcraft'. Various forms and groups.

The expression of Babylonian characteristics in the CM



The Degradation of True Hope

A system that is based on heresy and lies can only lead to false ideals and vain hopes, and this is the case with the CM. Over and over again followers are led up the garden path; and yet even when a scheme is exposed as a fraud, these followers continue to tag along like lemmings off a cliff. The multitude of false prophecies; the exposure of the errors and character of the Kansas City Prophets; the exposé of scandalous practices on national TV; the failure to see genuine evangelistic growth; financial fraud; the decline in national morality after spiritual warfare; the downfall of respected leaders into gross sin and so on - have all failed to steer people away from the CM. This proves that there is a great delusion, as well as many deceptions, involved in the heart of this movement.

Some of the false hopes have coalesced into a major strategy and apologetic; we will briefly look at two.

Global revival (Postmillennialism)

The CM believes it has been called to change the world, and sings songs that say so. One of Terry Virgo's NFI Bible Weeks even had 'World Changers' as its theme song. This is part of the restoration notion that a triumphal, postmillennial, global revival is about to occur. With this hope, many are able to keep staggering on from one disaster to the next.

The ground of the restoration hope is a false interpretation of Acts 3:21, **whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.** This clearly refers to the restoration of the earth to perfection, as in Eden, in the plan of God. This happens after the Final judgment and the creation of a new earth and new heavens where God dwells with man - the consummation of all God's purpose in salvation. No sound commentator has ever said anything different, and yet *Restoration Magazine* had this as its banner message for nearly twenty years; and it clearly is the heart of the New Church message that the restoration refers to the gifts of the spirit in a restored church applying God's power to control the world.

This is just one variant of Postmillennialism, the idea that the church becomes more and more powerful, that evangelism becomes more and more successful, so that the world is gradually Christianised and enters a golden age before Christ returns. This form of eschatology was never mainstream, being held by a minority of Puritans and a few others; but it is now the dominant belief in the CM (and a certain section of the Reformed church in the US). While some Puritan and Reformed folk traditionally had more sober aspirations,¹⁹⁶ the CM view is one of triumphalism and conquest.

We have mentioned this in passing and develop this in the appendix on Latter Rain and the item on eschatological hope, suffice to say here that this expectation of revival leading to world government is the very opposite of what the Bible teaches. There indeed is world government to come, but it is in the hands of God's enemy under the Antichrist, while the church is warned to expect persecution and tribulation [Matt 24:8ff; 2 Thess 2; Rev 7:14, 13, 17].

Health & Wealth (Word of Faith)

¹⁹⁶ We have no time to look into Reconstructionism and Theonomy, which is a more strident form of Reformed Postmillennialism that proposes the re-institution of Mosaic Law over human affairs under a governing church.

Whole books have been written on this subject, so we will not go deeply into the teachings here. The idea of health and prosperity is central to the Word Faith (or Word of Faith) Movement, which arose as a blend of New Thought and Pentecostalism, particularly the Healing Movement which arose out of Latter Rain. Its central teachings have been denigrated as, '*Name it and claim it*', '*blab it and grab it*' and suchlike, which refer to the central dogma of positive confession - you only get from God what you claim by faith and positive words [i.e. God cannot work until man gets the right focus].

This movement sort of paralleled the Signs & Wonders Mvt. in its development in the UK, but originally had less direct influence. The first major Kenneth Copeland conference in Brighton took place the following week after the first Wimber Healing conference in the same venue. However, since the 80s, the presuppositions of the Word Faith Mvt. have been insinuated into the thinking of many Charismatics. This is due to the promotion of these ideas by famous leaders, conferences, tapes and videos and the abundant promotion of this teaching on Christian television channels.

Key doctrines	Source of the original error
Healing is in the atonement; believers should never be sick.	Latter Rain, some Pentecostals.
Healing is mainly applied by the power of the tongue (i.e. verbal confession).	Occultism, Latter Rain, New Thought.
Severe problems in believers can be eradicated by demonic exorcism.	Latter Rain, some Pentecostals.
Believers should be prosperous and affluent. Focus upon self.	Hedonism, paganism.
The universe works upon certain laws. Understanding these laws enables believers to exercise authority over physical things.	Occultism, paganism, Latter Rain.
Man is sovereign (a little god) - God's power is dependent upon man's correct actions (such as positive confession), which God must then comply with. God is not sovereign.	Pantheism, Occultism, Latter Rain.
Personal applied knowledge of God's truth [revelation] is more important than the revealed word.	Gnosticism, mysticism, Latter Rain.
The spoken <i>rhema</i> word of men (a sort of prophetic word) is more powerful than the written word of the Bible.	Latter Rain, magic spells.
Faith is a force, or natural law, that determines our success. It can be applied by believers and non-believers.	Latter Rain, New Thought, Occultism (mind over matter).
Elitism and isolationism.	Latter Rain, cults.
Individualism - the emphasis is upon the individual getting power, or attending healing crusades and conventions. No focus on the local church.	Mystics.
The world is a fight between God and Satan, good and evil. Believers succeed as they use faith to gain power. The outcome is not certain.	Gnostic dualism.
Visualisation as a means of generating faith.	Paganism, occultism.

Key players in this movement are mostly Americans:

- EW Kenyon. (The chief source. Basis - pagan religious practices and occult ideas.)
- Kenneth Hagin (The main populariser - plagiarised Kenyon, and others, extensively).
- Gloria & Kenneth Copeland.
- Charles Capps. (Also stole from Kenyon.)

- Robert Tilton.
- Frederick KC Price.
- Bill Hamon.
- Paul and Jan Crouch of TBN (Trinity Broadcasting Network).
- Paul (David) Yonggi Cho (South Korea).
- Oral Roberts.
- Pat Robertson.
- Jerry Savelle.
- Norvel Hayes.
- Benny Hinn.
- Rodney Howard-Browne (South Africa)
- David Hathaway (UK).

Note that there is not a clearly defined or formal union between most participants; though many share venues, such as guesting on TBN.

Essek William Kenyon (1867-1948)

Since the root ideas of Word Faith emanate from this man, we should itemise a few of his ideas and where he received them.

- He attended a college that promoted 19th century transcendentalism (pantheistic mysticism - 'God is all', 'God is in me'; an anti-rationalist movement) and metaphysics (abstract philosophy) in Boston.
- The root of his ideas is a mixture of Gnosticism, modern mysticism, metaphysics and 19th century transcendentalism.
- Transcendentalists sought healing as physical proof that their mystical ideas were correct, that mind could control matter by obeying spiritual laws - faith healing. The metaphysical cults in the 19th century developed on this basis alongside a parallel growth of spiritualism, Mesmerism (hypnotism) and New Thought (religious Mind Sciences).
- Kenyon was not a Pentecostal and did not promote tongues or the baptism in the Spirit. What Word Faith did was to popularise the mystical, Gnostic ideas of the 19th century, codified by Kenyon, and blend them with the essentials of Pentecostalism and Latter Rain, and package them in powerful emotional meetings in the format of the CM.

KEY ERRORS¹⁹⁷

- Denies that Jesus ever claimed to be divine (repeated by Copeland).
- Distinction between *zoe* life and other kinds of life (also claimed by Hagin).
- Denied that OT saints were saved (also maintained by Capps and Hagin).
- Claims that Christians are in the same class as God (standard Word Faith idea).
- Positive confession (standard Word Faith idea).
- Claims that Christians are incarnations of God (as Hagin).
- Claims that Jesus died twice; once physically, the other spiritually in hell (standard Word Faith idea).
- God is accountable to man and Satan.¹⁹⁸
- God was lonely before man was created.
- God is limited in power.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁷ See for instance: E W Kenyon, *What Happened from the Cross to the Throne*, p11, 15, 19, 25, 42, 51, 75, 146;

¹⁹⁸ E W Kenyon, *The Father and His Family*, p139, 143-145, 147.

¹⁹⁹ E W Kenyon, *The Father and His Family*, p28-33.

- Jesus was born again having received Satan's nature in hell. This occurred when he was resurrected needing to be made righteous (standard Word Faith idea).²⁰⁰
- Jesus was taken out of the Godhead.²⁰¹
- Redemption wasn't finished on the cross.²⁰²
- Man can have dominion over the laws of nature and rule even the stars.²⁰³

This kind of nonsense is the most serious form of error and delusion. It is shocking that anyone could entertain such drivel for a minute; and yet many popular writers in the CM have taken up strands of these ideas and put them into new forms of words. All these teachings are found in the Word Faith Movement.

But the practices of Word Faith meetings came from a different source.

Revivalism

Word Faith is also influenced by the revivalist methods of CG Finney and the wild Camp Meetings of the 19th century Methodists, blended with the extravagances of the Holiness groups. All these were focused on generating human responses to evangelistic messages by encouraging emotionalism. Finney's new methods included the anxious bench - getting people to come forward during an emotional meeting in a suggestible frame of mind, and then working on them to make a profession of faith. This was the basis of decisionism - fomenting a wilful decision to be saved through emotional pressure. This led to the extravagances of campaign evangelism generated by many others (DL Moody, Billy Sunday, RA Torrey, Billy Graham etc.). Even the father of them all (Finney) admitted later in life that most of his converts never stood. Such has been the case ever since. The Billy Graham organisation accepted that up to 95% of respondents coming forward fell away. All these are Arminian, but some are radically so. Finney's ideas were virtually Pelagian. He claimed that man regenerates his own heart, that salvation is a human work based on persuasion, man justifies himself by his obedience; he even denied the substitutionary death of Christ on the cross. Word Faith has been influenced by all these things (as have many Pentecostals).

Finney, Moody and Torrey, many in the Welsh Revival, as well as many Holiness teachers, taught a second work of grace under the title of the 'baptism in the Holy Ghost'. What they meant by this varied from person to person. Holiness groups and 19th century proto-Pentecostals tended to see it as a source of power. Methodists saw it as a means of sanctification and/or a baptism of love. Keswick teachers understood it as consecration and a means of living a deeper spiritual life. It took the early Pentecostals to develop this into the modern Charismatic idea that it is a work of grace producing a higher spiritual life that is evidenced in tongues. In fact the early Pentecostals were originally called, 'The Tongues Movement'. Following the line of US Pentecostalism, Word Faith embraced this fully.

A Pentecostal / Methodist leader that also influenced Word Faith is Oral Roberts, who's theology is very woolly to say the least; though he teaches a form of prosperity teaching. His ministry of healing forms a model copied by many Word Faith preachers - mood music, building of emotionalism, claims about healing (not fulfilled according to his biographer, though people were 'helped'), and superficial but passionate preaching in the American style etc. His style of ministry was originally built on a strategy formed by a

²⁰⁰ E W Kenyon, *Two Kinds of Righteousness*, p23. *What Happened*, p63.

²⁰¹ E W Kenyon, *The Father and His Family*, p135.

²⁰² E W Kenyon, , *The Father and His Family*, p173-5.

²⁰³ E W Kenyon, *The Father and His Family*, p39-44.

marketing and communications guru in 1968. He also teaches the principle of 'seed-faith'; indeed this is preached far more than even the basic principles of the Gospel. This is giving money sacrificially to the minister on the basis of faith that his praying will lead to healing or spiritual help; *'Give God [i.e. give Roberts] a dollar and he'll bless you with two'*. It is very similar to the selling of indulgences by the pope, to forgive sins, which kick-started the Reformation. Word Faith leaders have become rich on this principle.

So the heresies of Kenyon arising from Gnostic mysticism and the occultic New Thought, added to the exuberance of US revivalism and Pentecostalism generated Word Faith; a seed bed of the most vile forms of false teaching and practical aberrations. It is no wonder that out of this mix further crazy ideas are being developed every year as leaders seek to outdo one another in new-fangled revelations. This is how the evils of the Toronto Experience were born.

False hopes

What this movement does is raise people's hopes for healing or prosperity based upon lies. Many documentaries have shown the terrible effect these failed hopes have on sick people who do not get healed. Some have even been prayed for by famous leaders on a stage and have then died. [This is common in Pentecostalism, even with its heroes such as Smith Wigglesworth.]

What is worse than the raised hopes is the fact that the leaders make money in the process; these leaders have amassed millions of dollars and fly around in personalised Lear Jets, but this money is often generated from people who are poor, desperate and trust in the false message. Such methods as 'seed-faith giving', i.e. in order to get rich you give a sacrificial gift to a minister who then prays for you to be prosperous, are a scandal.

True Hope

The hope of the Gospel is set in a completely opposite direction to the hopes of the CM. Biblical hope is spiritual and heavenly, set on the manifestation of Christ and fellowship with God in a new world, where heaven and earth are united forevermore. Charismatic hopes are all set on the earth. The radical new churches are focused on global revival under Charismatic leadership, while more moderate Dispensational Charismatics are focused upon a future Jewish millennium which is a golden age on earth. We will examine this in more detail in the next section.

Much as modern believers hate looking at this, our time on earth now is generally one of suffering. This is a doctrine that is so unpopular that it is almost unheard of in Charismatic circles, and yet it has been a key feature of sound preaching for 2,000 years.

We are only ever travellers and pilgrims in this world, having no foundations on earth - our kingdom is heavenly (2 Tim 4:18; Heb 12:28), spiritual (Jn 18:36) and is consummated in the future (1 Cor 15:24). There is no paradise in this life. Instead the Lord Jesus promised that we would have tribulation, *In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world* (Jn 16:33); what can be clearer than that? The apostles gave the same message, *We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God*, (Acts 14:22).

People who claim to be the modern counterpart of the apostle Paul, and boast of spiritual power, refrain from considering the massive amount of suffering he went through in his ministry. Far from enjoying success, prosperity, peace, quietness, wealth, a big house and

satisfaction like many modern leaders, Paul was thrust into deep anxiety and worry, especially daily concern for the churches (2 Cor 1:8, 11:28); indeed he could sometimes be at a complete loss (2 Cor 4:8). He knew 'trouble on every side' (2 Cor 7:5). He was whipped five times as well as being beaten three times with rods; once he was stoned. On top of this he was shipwrecked three times and continually subject to other dangers such as, mugging, religious persecution, exhaustion, toil, sleeplessness, hunger, thirst and exposure (2 Cor 11:24-29). To make things worse, some of the churches he planted were taken over by leaders who taught erroneous doctrine (Galatia), excused immorality (Corinth) or became authoritarian.

Yet Paul rejoiced in his sufferings, and like Martin Luther, considered that they were necessary for his ministry, *I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church* Col 1:24.

True hope is not earthbound; it is centred in Christ and is fixed in heaven. It is there we are directed to fix our attention, *If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God* (Col 3:1-3).

What can be clearer? We must set our minds above, we must expect suffering, we are promised tribulation by the Lord himself; why do believers, therefore, insist that their lives are to be full of joy, wealth, blessing, power, success, and freedom. Throughout church history believers have been persecuted. Young children chose to die by drowning rather than submit to a Roman mass - in England. Many church traditions knew constant abuse or persecution for hundreds of years. Numerous Christian heroes actually developed a ministry in prison, such as John Bunyan, while their families suffered. Key men, such as Bible translator William Tyndale, were constantly hounded until burned at the stake. Scores of missionaries gave their lives, and the lives of the families, in order to promote the Gospel, some being eaten by cannibals. Some did not suffer outright physical persecution, but their commitment to Christ led to an early death and a life of illness, such as David Brainerd who didn't reach 30. There was never an easy ride for believers. Even modern America began as a direct result of the attempt of the Pilgrim Fathers to avoid further persecution in Europe.

The hopes of the Charismatics for a triumphal, global domination of Christianity at the end is utterly false, as even a cursory reading of Mathew 24 makes plain. Neither is there any soundness in the lie that all believers can expect health, wealth and prosperity at the wave of their hand (or the declaration of their mouth).

The CM has promoted utterly false hopes, as a corollary of its focus upon lies and heresies.

Personal Issues

The Degradation of sanctification

I was originally intending to give a detailed analysis of how the fruit of the CM is worked out in individual lives. However, much of this has been covered, at least implicitly, in the various sections of this book already, while much else is obvious. I think that a general statement is all that is needed here.

That the behaviour of believers, especially young believers, who live and breathe the CM is worrying is an understatement. Personal experience, fellowship with others (especially worried parents), counselling people in trouble and reading various books exposing the CM makes this very clear. I have personally known the teenage children of very famous Charismatic leaders have an alcohol problem. I have witnessed many young Charismatics feel very free to swear and curse or sleep with girls. I have met folk who have no problem with committing fraud or cheating on deals.

Now problems afflict all sorts of people from all sorts of church backgrounds. Any of us could fall if we are not on guard. However, there is a general sense that the standards applying in Charismatic churches are extremely low. This is not just a subjective view but it is clear that sinful behaviour is not disciplined by church leaders. Rarely is there any form of discipline, but some churches have even sanctioned adulterous divorces of the guilty party. Many once famous Charismatic leaders have fallen into gross public sin, and only rarely is this made common knowledge such as the fall of Paul Cain. When leaders are known to err but do not repent, (and this has happened often) the ground is set for repentance to be ignored by everyone.

Often the way dissent is treated is absolutely shocking. The stories of authoritarian abuse are rife and deeply disturbing. Over and over again one hears of the terrible traumas suffered by families who dared to question the leadership (usually with genuine Biblical concerns) who had to eventually leave and then were subjected to lies, spin, and spurning. Once close friends would cross the street to avoid them because they were spiritually tainted, as they were no longer in submission to the church leader. The sacrificial work of many years was immediately ignored; some people had even changed jobs and relocated some distance and were then left high and dry in a new location without compassion. This is not the Spirit of Christ.

I know of cases where people opened their homes to church folk or leaders, while they were away on extended vacations or business, only to find them trashed when they returned. Famous evangelists were given hospitality, only for the owner to find horrendous telephone bills to foreign countries later. Cases of leadership adultery, even multiple adultery are too common.

In general it is common to see total worldliness amongst Charismatic youngsters and teenagers. There seems little difference between church folk and the secular world; indeed in some circles this is promoted as being valuable. Going out clubbing and all that it entails is seen as normal behaviour for Charismatic teenagers. Security firms patrolling some of the Charismatic camp conventions have reported that the problems with open fornication were just as rife as in rock music conventions. Indeed they felt comforted that these particular Christians were 'normal'.

The key to the poor ethics in Charismatic churches is that there is a doctrinal focus on the self and this naturally leads to self-centredness in people instead of a Biblical self-denial. Worship is entertainment; healing is automatic if claimed; prosperity is a right; self-esteem is promoted; sin is focused on demons to be expelled not personal guilt; and so on. Jesus explained that self-denial was a crucial foundation to Christian living, so if this component is wrong, much else will be wrong.

The CM also emphasises experiences over truth. It is the truth that sets us free and if we lose our focus on the truth our discipleship will suffer. The desire for experiences leads again to self-focus, seeking that which pleases me. The true Christian ethic is seeking that which pleases God.

I could go on, but I believe that my readership will have no problem understanding that a key fruit of the CM is a degraded sanctification. The multiple cases of public scandals at all levels are but one type of evidence of this.

The Degradation of an Eschatological Hope

One of the significant features of modern evangelicalism is that the longing for the return of the Lord, combined with the sacrificial setting of one's hopes on the coming world, is found so rarely in mainstream churches. True, this is more common amongst the Lord's suffering people and marginalised Biblical churches, but in most groups the Christian's hope in the Second Coming is almost entirely absent. This is a travesty. In the first century, despite massive success in evangelism and church planting, it is clear that a predominant feature of personal and corporate life was praying for the swift return of the Lord. The early church was so transfixed on this subject that they universally believed it would occur soon. There is a good reason for this.²⁰⁴

On the contrary, the main thrust of the CM has been resetting hope on a glorified church on Earth before the end; a time when the church is powerful and governs the world, ruling under apostles and prophets. Even churches that don't subscribe to this Latter Rain nonsense still have their attention fixed on Earth not heaven - despite God's command, '**Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth**' (Col 3:2). Some fanatics in the prophetic movement even believe that the Second Coming doesn't need to happen (see appendix on Latter rain). Though ridiculous and blasphemous, large numbers follow this.

We do not have to agree on the fine details of eschatology (the study of last things) in order to be united. We can fellowship together if we submit to Biblical essentials: the personal, visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory to take up living saints; the destruction and renewal of the earth; the final judgment of the living and the dead and the security of Christians in the judgment based upon the merits of Christ's righteousness. Historically there have been three variations:

- HISTORIC PREMILLENNIALISM teaches that Christ comes before a 1000-year reign on the existing earth.
- POSTMILLENNIALISM holds that the church progresses, succeeds and leads a 1000-year rule of righteousness before Christ returns.

²⁰⁴ See my paper, *Our Earnest Hope*.

- AMILLENNIALISM claims that the 1000 years of Rev 20 is a symbol for the Gospel age and that there is no 1000-year rule on the present earth. This is why there is no apostolic teaching on a millennium anywhere.

However, some popular notions are simply too erroneous to tolerate without expressing concern; both are strongly featured in the CM on opposing sides.

Dispensational Premillennialism

One the one side is the relatively modern teaching of Dispensationalism. Arising initially from Jesuit teachings (Manuel Lacunza) and then growing in Edward Irving's aberrational, proto-Charismatic church in London in 1830, Dispensational ideas gained widespread popularity through the teachings of Brethren leaders and the Scofield Bible. It primarily teaches

- An unbiblical separation in God's purposes between Israel and the church (which becomes a mere stop-gap, last-minute component of a Jewish salvation).
- A fleshly focus on Israel.
- A wrong understanding of God's law and covenant.
- False views about the Second Coming and judgment.
- A rigid literalism which leads to wrong understand of prophecy.
- A belief that God works salvation differently in different time periods.

To fully explain this would take too long here as there are various forms of Dispensationalism, some extreme, others more moderate, and I have evaluated them elsewhere.²⁰⁵ The basic component of most forms of Dispensationalism is the dichotomy between the church and Israel and it is this which has led to confrontations in the UK.

Some Dispensational Charismatic ministries are strongly opposed to Restorationism and the New churches; partly for their various errors but also since they are Postmillennial and downplay the importance of Israel. These Dispensational ministries would include: Prophetic Word Ministries (*Prophecy Today*), Moriel (Jacob Prash), Christian Witness Ministries (*Contending Earnestly for the Faith*, Philip Powell), Banner Ministries (Tricia Tillin), Prayer for Israel, Intercessors for Britain (Ray Borlaise/Stewart Dool), and *Vanguard* magazine (Siam Bhayro). Some (like Vanguard Magazine) are so serious about this that they make it an article of faith; i.e. if you are not Dispensational, you are a heretic. This makes everybody before 1830 doctrinally unsound! Most original Pentecostal churches were Dispensational, or were at least, Premillennial.

In America most attackers of extreme Charismatic teachings are Classical Pentecostals and moderate Charismatics who are Dispensational, such as Al Dager, Bill Randles, Paw Creek Ministries, Dave Hunt, TA McMahon. It is common to find their version of eschatology used as a prime apologetic for their position. In other words, a test of orthodoxy is belief in Dispensationalism.

Needless to say, virtually to a man these folk are Arminians, though some hold certain Calvinistic ideas and thus become inconsistent.

Christians need to bear all this in mind very carefully. In seeking to find information that criticises extreme Charismatic practices, they read books by these people and listen to their messages or go to their conferences. In doing so they then open themselves up to many other errors. In seeking help against Charismania, they are exposed to Dispensationalism, Arminianism, Classical Pentecostalism and moderate Charismatic notions. For instance

²⁰⁵ A 53-page pamphlet of notes is available.

David Pawson is considered a moderate Charismatic and a safe pair of hands, yet his support for Dispensational/Arminian ideas, and a focus on Zionism (which arises out of Dispensationalism) leads to significant doctrinal error. He has even published a book teaching that genuine believers can lose their salvation (a tenet of Arminianism).

Triumphal Postmillennialism

On the other side of the coin, most modern UK Charismatic churches and organisations are Postmillennial. While this is not especially bad in itself, indeed some Puritans were Postmillennialists, the variant practised by the New Churches is dangerous.

Charismatic Postmillennialism is triumphalist and this has been called Dominionism or 'Kingdom Now Theology' which helps to explain it. Restorationism teaches that the Kingdom is almost fully available now, with great supernatural power, and the church is called to rule in the global reign of Christ. Premillennialists and Amillennialists would prefer to explain the kingdom as the spiritual rule of Christ, of which some aspects are applicable now and many are not. The key element of true kingdom power to be used by the church is the preaching of the Gospel, where the word of Christ has power to deliver men from the kingdom of the enemy.

The effect of such triumphalism is that it focuses believers on the earth, whereas the Biblical focus is that we are pilgrims, travellers, on the earth whose real citizenship is in heaven. Word Faith teachers tell their audiences that they can have anything they want if they only visualise it and believe; 'You can write your own ticket', they claim. Pentecostals have long taught that it is the privilege of all believers to always be healed and well, with their doctrine of healing in the atonement.

Restoration apostles and prophets are also working towards a global revival that will result in the physical rule of the nations by the church, and especially by these super apostles and prophets (a Latter Rain agenda - see appendices). These will rule amidst miraculous events becoming so widespread that they become commonplace. Some extremists hold that faithful believers will even be able to fly (a la Manifest Sons of God teaching). Others have the blasphemous temerity to state that things will get so good on earth that the Lord will not need to return. They explain scriptures about the Second Coming as referring to the corporate body of Christ being raised up on the earth and a visible return of the Lord being unnecessary.

Doctrines like these are far removed from the Postmillennialism of the Puritans or sound Reformed commentators. However, a large group of reformed theologians have proposed something similar, minus the miraculous. This is known as Theonomy or Reconstructionism, a different form of Dominionism that has been defended by people like Rousas Rushdoony. They believe that the Gospel will result in great success and that the Mosaic law will be the standard of judgment for the nations, ruled by Christians. Bad news for people who gather sticks on the Sabbath. This underlying Dominionism has resulted in strange bedfellows where some American Reconstructionists have made alliances with some Charismatic Restorationists.

False hopes

The problem with both groups of Charismatics, whether Dominionists or Dispensationalists, is that they demean the true Biblical hope. The former have avoided 'pie in the sky when you die' superficialities by encouraging an earthly, even worldly, eschatological perspective. The latter expect nothing but doom and gloom, tribulation and the hope of sharing a false Jewish kingdom when Jesus returns to rule the earth for 1000

years before sin breaks out all over again (where from we might ask?). The negativity of many Charismatic Dispensationalists is truly sad, creating a bunker mentality out of all proportion to common sense. For instance: the editor of Vanguard refused to give out his name, for some years, for fear of aiding the establishment find him when the crisis of tribulation came. The truth is that they already knew it. How long did he think it would take a totalitarian police state to get the Post Office to divulge his name on the PO Box application form? That such public tomfoolery can occur is a reflection of how fearful this extreme form of Premillennialism makes people. I defy anyone to read Hal Lindsey's truly awful book *The Late Great Planet Earth* and not be discouraged.

The Biblical hope for the end

There are two aspects to this, our personal hope of salvation and our corporate hope of a final church testimony.

We have to face the facts. We do not avoid tribulation at the end by the world becoming Christianised (Dominionism) or by being secretly raptured before it breaks (Pre-Tribulation Dispensationalism); the world gets worse and Christians suffer in it, just as they have always done in history. This is so clearly taught that it beggars belief that anyone teaches otherwise.²⁰⁶ God promises to give us grace to persevere in this life but not to take us out of difficulties. This makes the promise of Christ's return so important and so sweet in the hope of the believer. He should be patiently and expectantly waiting for the return of his Lord all the time, focused on the consummation of his salvation and the end of all things. For this reason he is a pilgrim in this life, waiting for a city that has true foundations, like Abraham. Being satisfied and comfortable in this life, surrounded by luxury and pleasure is a great evil. Our hope is in Christ's return, not anything else.

God will complete his purposes for the earth. History is the story of God reaching out and gathering the elect that he chose in eternity. Throughout time he has been rescuing those he loved before they were born (Eph 1:4-5). The end is not a time of collapse, but completion of God's plan. There are also indications that the end will be a time of great contrasts. The world will worsen in every imaginable way (as it is quickly doing today), but the church will come to fulness and will express the manifold character of God in a testimony of grace. This is at least intimated by the parable of the wheat and tares. The poisonous tares come to fulness, but so must the wheat, and then both are harvested and separated.²⁰⁷ This fulness in the church speaks first of the completion of the elect being converted, but also speaks of a visible testimony of fulness. This fulness is not supernatural power, but grace in witnessing to Christ and God's truth; pre-eminently through long-suffering.

Note Paul's words in Colossians:

For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. Col 1:9-12

Here we see the fulness of God in the believer - a filling of the knowledge of God, wisdom, spiritual understanding, strengthened with all might and power; coupled with the power to walk worthily and please God - but to what end? Not to work miracles or raise the dead,

²⁰⁶ See Matt 24, Lk 21, Mk 13, 2 Thess 2, 1 Tim 4 etc.

²⁰⁷ Matt 13:25-43.

not to rule the world, but to be patient, to be long-suffering with joy. This is a true testimony and it has been evidenced in martyrs down the centuries. The end will be a time when this is commonplace; a manifestation of true godliness in suffering:

They will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake ... But he who endures to the end shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come. Matt 24:9-14

The Christian's hope is that God will be with us to the end, will give us grace to help in time of need and is in sovereign control over every aspect of our life, directing it to the completion of his purposes for us. This world, even now, is a place of suffering for which we long to escape into the arms of our loving heavenly Father and see him face-to-face. The return of the Lord Jesus is when we are transformed to be like him and we see him in all his glory, being caught up with him in the air and then brought into fellowship with God. After the judgment when rewards are given to believers for faithful service (though the strength to do them was God's grace), the earth is restored then heaven and earth are united for the first time since Eden. God fellowships with man, the divine intention from the start and represented in the typology of the tabernacle and the temple. In this glory we have all the blessings outlined in Revelation, no more tears or sickness, heavenly joy, satisfaction and fellowship with God in Christ.

The believer's hope is heavenly, not earthly; spiritual not material; divine not fleshly. In their different ways Dispensationalism and Dominionism teach an earthly hope; the former is a Jewish, earthly kingdom lasting 1,000 years; the latter is a golden age run by super apostles and prophets. Neither has a scrap of clear Biblical evidence but is founded upon flawed interpretation of obscure texts. The Biblical hope is based upon simple and clear statements by the Lord himself and the teaching of his apostles.

Examples of error and deception

Christians will be a superhuman powerful force that will grind Satan into the ground (sic).

Kim Clement; quoted in Jewel van Der Merwe, *Discernment Magazine*, 'Prophets Etc.' Mar/Apr 1993.

[God] said, 'I'll cause 300,000 to bear a distinct anointing over the one billion [converts] ... there is one generation that will enter into that beyond all others. The chosen generation of history that will go beyond all others in power.'

Mike Bickle, 'The Bob Jones Tapes', quoted in Bill Randles, *Beware the New Prophets*, St Matthew Pub Ltd. (1999) p29.

The sons of God will be fully manifested on the earth. Widespread spiritual warfare will result ... the non-Christian nations ... will also be defeated. Once the earth has been subdued, Jesus will come back to earth and be given the kingdom that has been won for him by the 'manchild company' These sons will be equal to Jesus Christ: immortal, sinless, perfected sons who have partaken of the divine nature. They will have every right to be called gods.

Bill Hamon, *Prophets and the Prophetic Mvt.* quoted in Bill Randles, *Beware the New Prophets*, St Matthew Pub Ltd. (1999) p17.

Conclusion

There is so much more that could be said here and each section requires its own book, but there are many works available that cover the problems of the CM which can be examined by those interested. This paper is meant to be a summary, introduction and reasonably short explanation as to why the CM is dangerous. It has been a Trojan Horse in the church of Christ, being welcomed by the majority, only for a horde of evils to emerge out of it when it was too late. Those of us who have warned about it for years sometimes feel like Cassandra, who prophesied the truth but was never listened to. It gives us no pleasure to see the chickens come home to roost time after time.

The modern enemies of the church are heretical doctrines and paganism. One is the danger of corruption by those inside - false teachers, false apostles teaching errors; the other is the danger from outside - attaching pagan methods and practices to Christian behaviour. They all involve deception and the CM has welcomed them. It has spawned huge numbers of teachers that have perverted Biblical doctrines and twisted them into errors; but worse, it has taken the existing ideas and practices of occultism and paganism and rehabilitated them into fake Christian practice. Our spiritual ancestors would never have believed such a thing could be possible.

It is still shocking to see films of behaviour in CM churches. I will never forget seeing a long-haired, wild young man dancing and whooping in a 'worship' service on the South Coast, waving a staff decorated with feathers and paint (called a 'prayer stick'), leaping around like a Native American witch-doctor. When I confronted the leader of this church this man was held up as one of the most spiritual leaders in the group. There is no discernible difference between this action and almost any shamanistic occult ritual; whether Wiccan, Voodoo, green man ceremony, African paganism, aboriginal sun dance, Native American Ghost dance and so on. This is the direct incursion of paganism into the evangelical church, plain and simple; and it is the worst problem in the CM.

The point is proved: the CM has been the greatest success of the enemy in bringing deceit into the church in these days.

However, we must take care in how we deal with those inside the CM. It is just a plain fact that there are many Charismatics who are good people, who really love the Lord Jesus and seek to serve him. Many have been deceived but are sincere. While we have every right to contend with false teachers, we must be careful in dealing with individuals within this system.

In recent years many have left Charismatic churches, have had their eyes opened and have become good apologists for the truth. Part of the reason for this is that sensible pastors took them to one side and helped them to gently see the truth, precept by precept. Harsh confrontation would have done no good. Those who claim to know the truth need to ensure that they minister it in love; faith works through love (Gal 5:6).

Keep yourselves in the love of God ... on some have compassion, making a distinction; but others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh. (Jude 1:21-23)

Summary

The Charismatic Movement has caused massive damage to the UK church; in general we can summarise a few subjects to highlight this.

Humanism

The CM is humanistic in that it predominately focuses attention upon man in every possible way. It puts much prestige on men - in leaders who are treated almost like royalty in some quarters. Even in more sedate denominations leaders are treated with unquestionable loyalty and are never allowed to be wrong.

The CM is humanistic in that its doctrines and practices focus upon man. This begins with the Arminianism, even radical Arminianism in some quarters, that undergirds the theology of almost every CM church. [A few claim to be Calvinistic but are hopelessly compromised in practice or are clearly Amyraldian.] This theology places man at the centre of salvation; God's hands are tied, according to this, until man decides to be saved and exercises faith.

However, many other doctrines also centre upon the self instead of directing people to God. Worship has become fleshly entertainment, that is, emotional selfishness. Ministry is focused upon man and not directing people to God. Promises of security, health, prosperity and so on are made to people that are unbiblical, while the doctrines of suffering, tribulation and hardship are never preached. Growth in the Christian life is all based upon what a person must do rather than self-denial and trusting God more. Charismatic practices all lead to an emphasis upon man and not God: subjective revelation, passivity, and the general desire for experiences, however zany. It caused Christians to focus upon themselves, their needs, desires and abilities rather than a Biblical focus upon sacrificial service to others.

Ecumenism

The CM has led to a growing ecumenism in its desire for a visible unity of disparate bodies and close liaisons with Rome. The rapprochement with Rome began as a result of the growing closeness of Rome with Pentecostals through du Plessis and the determination of certain Charismatic groups, like the Fort Lauderdale Five. The foundational point of unity is not truth but the human experience of the baptism in the Spirit and the use of sign gifts. It is now a small step to find unity with pagan groups who evidence the same outward signs (tongues, healing, exuberant worship, words of knowledge, prophecy etc). More and more Charismatic teachings are finding a close relationship with modern New Age writings, and this is being noted by pagan cults who see it as part of the signs of the dawning of a new golden (Aquarian) age.

Authoritarianism

It has established powerful leadership figures who exercise authoritarian power over people and churches, demanding unquestioning submission of their people.

Subjectivism

It has led to the acceptance of subjective impressions and the words of men above the authority of the Bible. Many meetings engender passivity and suggestibility.

Denominationalism

Though the UK movement began in an anti-denominational atmosphere, and though the early Restoration Movement arose from the proliferation of house churches, before too long the flesh took over. Influential men gathered the independent groups into new denominations that were just as inflexible and authoritarian as those they originally criticised. With the idea of apostolic teams, the larger CM denominations are a clear reflection of institutional churches where the apostle is equivalent to an archbishop, apostolic team leaders to bishops, individual church leaders to vicars and so on.

Materialism

It has led to a focus upon money and material things.

It has led to the construction, or refitting, of many dedicated large buildings for meetings, such as warehouses or cinemas.

It has introduced a dependence upon worldly management systems.

Gullibility

The shocking acceptance of pagan teachings and occult practices reveals a serious gullibility amongst Charismatics. That some intelligent leaders can espouse the most ridiculous ideas shows the prevalence of delusion and deceit.

Worship as entertainment

It has changed the perception of corporate worship from being spiritual service to being sensual hedonism.

It has changed church services into passive, submissive entertainment.

It has dumbed-down spiritual concepts to superficial and trivial emotions.

Triumphalism

It has caused many to forsake the true Biblical hope and expect a triumphalist, postmillennial, worldwide church victory on the earth. In connection with this many build their lives upon the time now on earth rather than the new world.

Paganism

It has promoted ancient pagan, occult and idolatrous incursions into church practices.

Heresy

It has adopted many heretical teachings and taught them as truth.

Abuse

It has caused the disruption of many lives with its false counsels, doctrines, abuses, demands, lies, false prophecies and heavy shepherding; to say nothing of financial malpractice, psychological mistreatment, manipulation, damage to families and sexual abuse.

The CM is a catastrophe!

Appendix One

Historical Charts and The Connection to Classical Pentecostalism²⁰⁸

The origins of the CM

There is no doubt, despite Pentecostal statements otherwise, that the CM and the Pentecostal churches are fruit on the same vine. The extremes found in the CM, though deplored by Classical Pentecostals, were all found in the origins and early pioneers of Pentecostalism; thus lines of communication can be traced from Azusa Street right up to Restorationism. Early Pentecostal theology had all the seeds of CM heresy and aberrant practices within it. The main root of both is the belief in a second work of grace called the baptism of (or *in* or *with*) the Holy Spirit. Since this experience is unbiblical, it leads directly to a trust in potentially occult experiences as people have an initiation via the laying on of hands from someone already affected. This practice has led to the initiation of everyone in the CM from sources in Pentecostalism.

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

Thus the early development of the CM came directly from Pentecostal influences. People from mainline churches had hands laid on them by Pentecostal leaders and began to exhibit Pentecostal symptoms. There is a direct causal link between existing Pentecostal churches and the newly birthed CM.

From this point the renewal in mainline churches spread to Canada and overseas and also began to affect the Roman Catholic Church. In 1950s England people with a previous experience of the baptism in the Spirit, but with only secondary US contacts, (e.g. Arthur Wallis, Edgar Trout, David Lillie) began to link up with those who caught it via the CM in the 60s, such as Michael Harper who established *The Fountain Trust*. Harper set up

²⁰⁸ I have taken freely from my paper *A Synopsis of the Theological Systems Behind Current UK Church Streams* in this section.

conferences with respected men like Cecil Cousen and Campbell McAlpine as speakers, and also started a magazine, *Renewal*. In the 60s through the 70s there was very little input from pure Pentecostal sources; indeed many within the CM were wary of the extremes of Pentecostalism [this was largely due to the discredited sensationalism of healing and evangelistic campaign ministries]. Where this caution was expressed, folk from traditional denominations felt safe and gradually embraced the CM. Calvinists like Terry Virgo and Henry Tyler (friend of Martyn Lloyd-Jones), plus respected Baptists like Harold Owen, David Pawson and Doug McBain could become popular leaders in the growing work.

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

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

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

From here the full gamut of Latter Rain ideas flooded into the CM while hard line Manifest Sons of God teaching emerged in the ministry of people like Paul Cain, with whom Wimber

was later enamoured. Cain even teamed up with Westminster Chapel's RT Kendall. It was not long that The Kansas City Prophets were foisted upon the UK CM in various conferences with all their aberrant teaching. From here it was a small step to the full flowering in the Toronto Experience of 1994, thence a myriad of lesser items.

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

There are simply hundreds, even thousands of spin-offs from the Charismatic Movement, many of which are denied as valid by mainstream Classical Pentecostals. We cannot list all the aberrations, organisations, theories, ministries and heresies in this paper. However, the key matter for us here is that the CM arose directly from Pentecostal sources and has manifested the same aberrations.

The origins of Pentecostalism

Pentecostalism arose directly from the Holiness Movement in the US and was sparked into worldwide growth by the emotionalism and conversions of the Welsh Revival (1904-6).²⁰⁹ Other influences were the subjective methods of CG Finney in frontier revivals [altar calls, anxious benches etc.]; the memory of the excesses at the Cane Ridge revival and Methodist Camp Meetings; and the rise of new restorationist movements in 19th c. US [some of which expected a Latter Rain outpouring of the Spirit].

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

Note this, early features of the CM (global revival, apostles, power ministry) were present at the very start of the Pentecostal Movement.

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

²⁰⁹ It should be noted that the Welsh revivalists criticised the growing 'tongues movement'. Jessie Penn-Lewis and Evan Roberts even wrote against it.

Services were long, unplanned and informal, consisting of testimonies, singing, prayer, altar calls, and unprepared preaching. Without discipline, there was shouting, 'howling', slaying in the Spirit, 'falling down under the power', singing in tongues and silences. When Parham was invited to speak, he was repelled by the confusion, aberrations and theological heresy. Even worse was the regular presence of witches and mediums who felt at home in the chaos of 'spiritual' manifestations. These people were allowed to participate in their own ways. The meetings were often so out of control that Seymour put his head in a box to pray.

Note again: the presence of symptoms typical of the CM: shouting, howling, falling down, singing in tongues, confusion, aberrations, heresy, extreme manifestations and occult influences. In meetings for many years it was necessary to have blankets available to cover the modesty of ladies falling over and exposing themselves.

Disgusted, Parham split from the movement. However, membership grew, publications were started and the church joined the Apostolic Faith Movement. Visitors were arriving from all over the world to get tongues and took the Pentecostal message back home so that missions spread everywhere; wild scenes ['revivals'] broke out in England, India, China, South America and elsewhere. Women's' ministries were also encouraged [this all has shades of Pensacola and Airport Church Toronto.] By 1908 the mission was fragmenting; one split led to the formation of the Assemblies of God in 1914. With the outbreak of World War I, it had all subsided in Azusa Street.

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

Conclusion

There can be no doubt. The roots of the CM lie in the origins of Pentecostalism. There is a direct link from the people who laid hands on key leaders and spread the same experience. There is the acceptance of most of the historic Pentecostal doctrines; including heretical ideas once thrown out by the Assemblies of God in 1948. There is the repetition of characteristics that are common in both streams (baptism in the Spirit leading to tongues, prophecy, singing in the Spirit, exorcism, healing etc). Therefore, it is of no surprise that various Pentecostal (and even Latter Rain) leaders have been invited on to platforms of even the most sober CM churches: Ern Baxter, Bob Mumford, Paul Cain, Steve Rider, Benson Idahosa and so on.

When modern critics of the extremes found in certain Charismatic churches deny that there is any connection with Classical Pentecostalism, they are wrong; and in their condemnation, they are chopping off branches of the same tree that they are sitting on.

Key Doctrinal Distinctives	
Note that there is wide diversity in both movements	
Pentecostalism	Charismatic Movement
Baptism in the Spirit is necessary for powerful ministry.	
The Baptism of the Spirit and spiritual gifts are imparted by the laying on of hands .	
All the NT gifts of the Spirit are available for Spirit baptised believers in the church.	
The church requires the fivefold ascension gifts (apostle, prophet, pastor, teacher, evangelist). However, traditional Pentecostals downplay the authority of some of these; the CM emphasises their authority.	
Ministry and leaders can (and should) be 'anointed' , in the sense of a special spiritual, imparting power causing subjective responses.	
Doctrinal emphases have led to fragmentation and division .	
Expectation of healing .	
The value of dedicated meetings/conferences - such as healing meetings, Gospel meetings, large celebrations, Bible weeks, camp meetings.	
Slaying in the Spirit is a valid response to ministry.	
Christians can be demonised requiring exorcism.	
This has eventually been adopted by most Pentecostal churches. Originally worship was more formal - hymns and simple choruses. Often featuring many testimonies.	Emotional praise focused in new idiom songs, worship leaders and folk-rock bands, later by flowing songs and emotional extravagances.
This was accepted but with in a different form. Today there is much similarity.	Since the 80s there has been an emphasis upon power in the meeting .
Though evidenced in Pentecostal history, most classic Pentecostal leaders now denounce this extreme behaviour.	Acceptance of extreme behaviour evidenced in the Toronto Experience.
In general, Pentecostal churches denounce Latter Rain, but some accept the CM version of it and unite with CM meetings.	Acceptance of many Latter Rain teachings in Restorations.
Tarrying meetings to receive the baptism in the Spirit.	Most CM leaders don't teach it but some do.
Tongues as evidence of Spirit baptism.	Few take this view.
Less common.	Focus on inner-healing techniques .
Healing is in the atonement (i.e. is automatically included in salvation, believers need not be sick if they have faith).	Some CM extremists teach this but most don't. Word Faith teaches this.
Pentecostal preaching is uniquely effective, having the same power as that of the apostles on the Day of Pentecost.	Most CM teachers wouldn't go this far. Word Faith teachers adopt this in practice.
Dispensational in eschatology.	Mainly Postmillennial.
Focus on missionary activity .	Mission has never been a strong feature in the CM. Much growth has been by sheep-stealing .
Early Pentecostals had a strong focus on holiness .	The CM has been characterised by a loose attitude to sanctification and an emphasis on liberty - in effect antinomianism.
One large branch (Oneness Pentecostalism) denies the Trinity and insists on re-baptism in the name of Jesus only.	The CM rejects this. A few extremists teach it.
Some extremists even went on to practice things like snake-handling, fire contact and strychnine drinking in meetings.	The CM rejects this.

Some key problems with Pentecostal/CM doctrines and practice

- The confusion of emotional excitement with spirituality.
- The doctrine of the baptism in the Spirit as a sought subjective experience is unbiblical. There is no second work of grace: **and you are complete in Him. [Col 2:10] Blessed be the God**

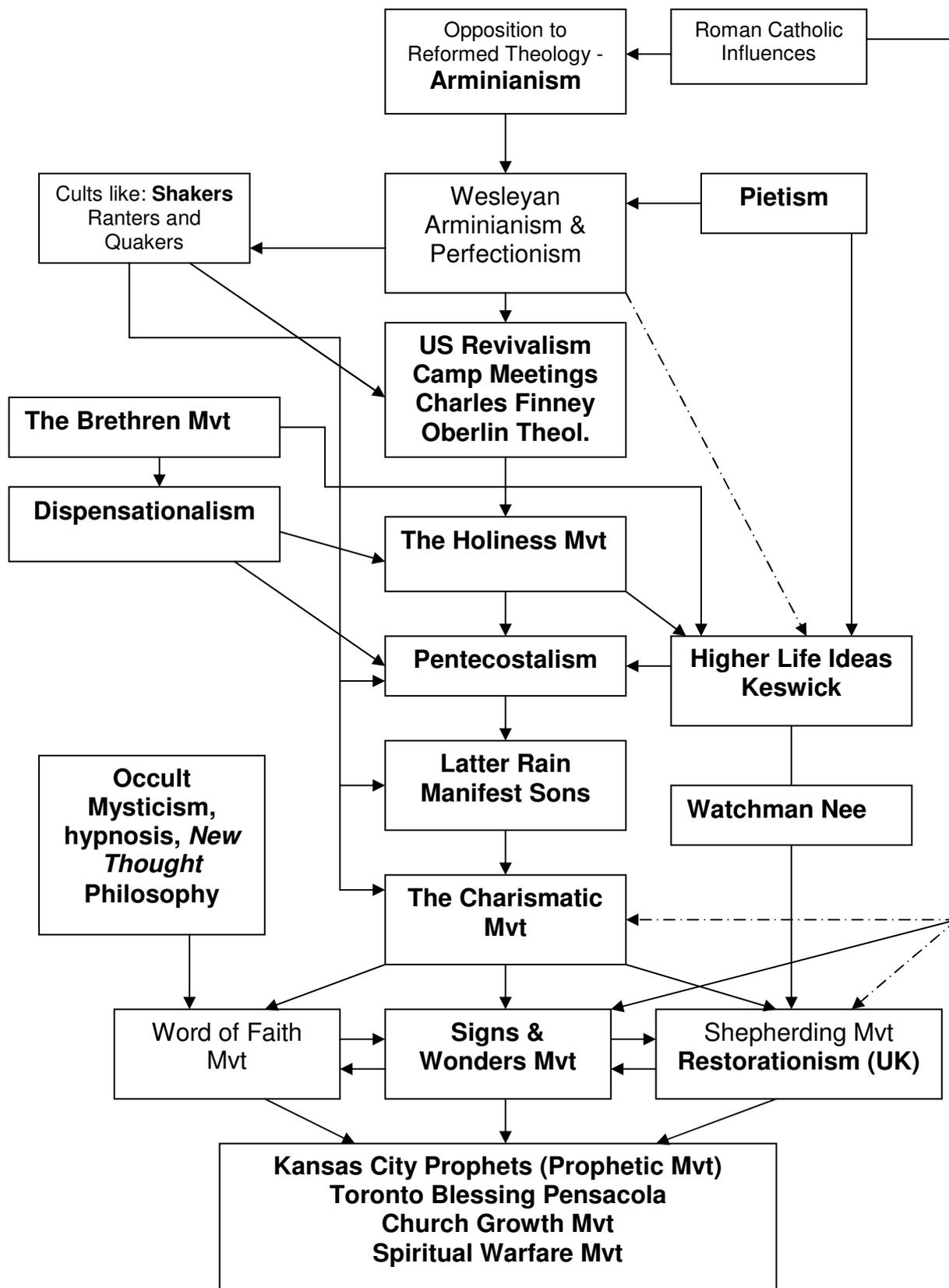
and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. [Eph 1:3]

- The doctrine of justification must not be separated from the doctrine of sanctification.
- Gullibility to accept many novel teachings.
- The CM concept of healing is unbiblical, especially healing in the atonement.
- There is no scriptural evidence for the impartation of power or gifts by the laying on of hands after the apostles.
- Elitism and authoritarianism of leaders.
- Unrighteous behaviour.

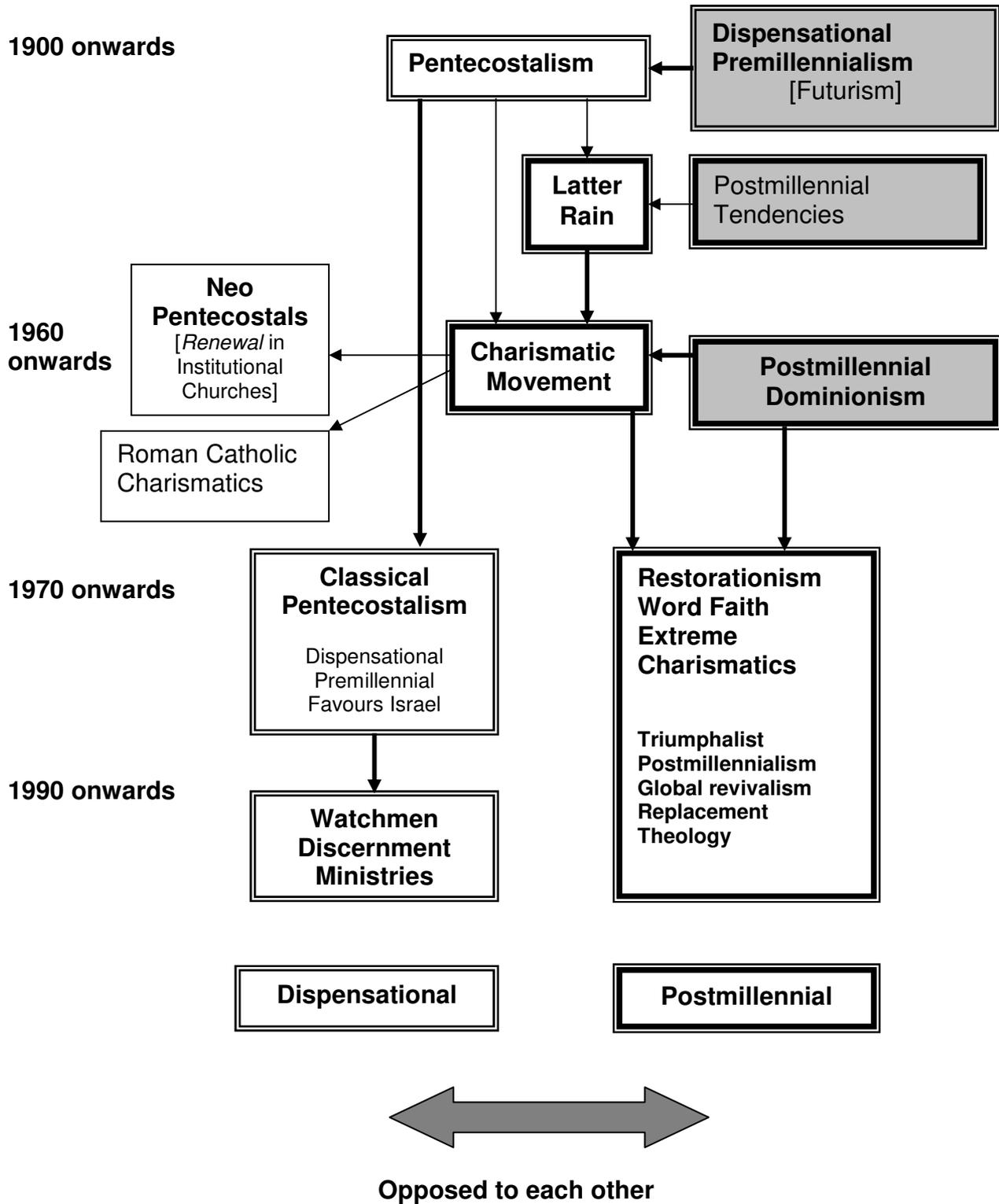
Key early Pentecostal proponents

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

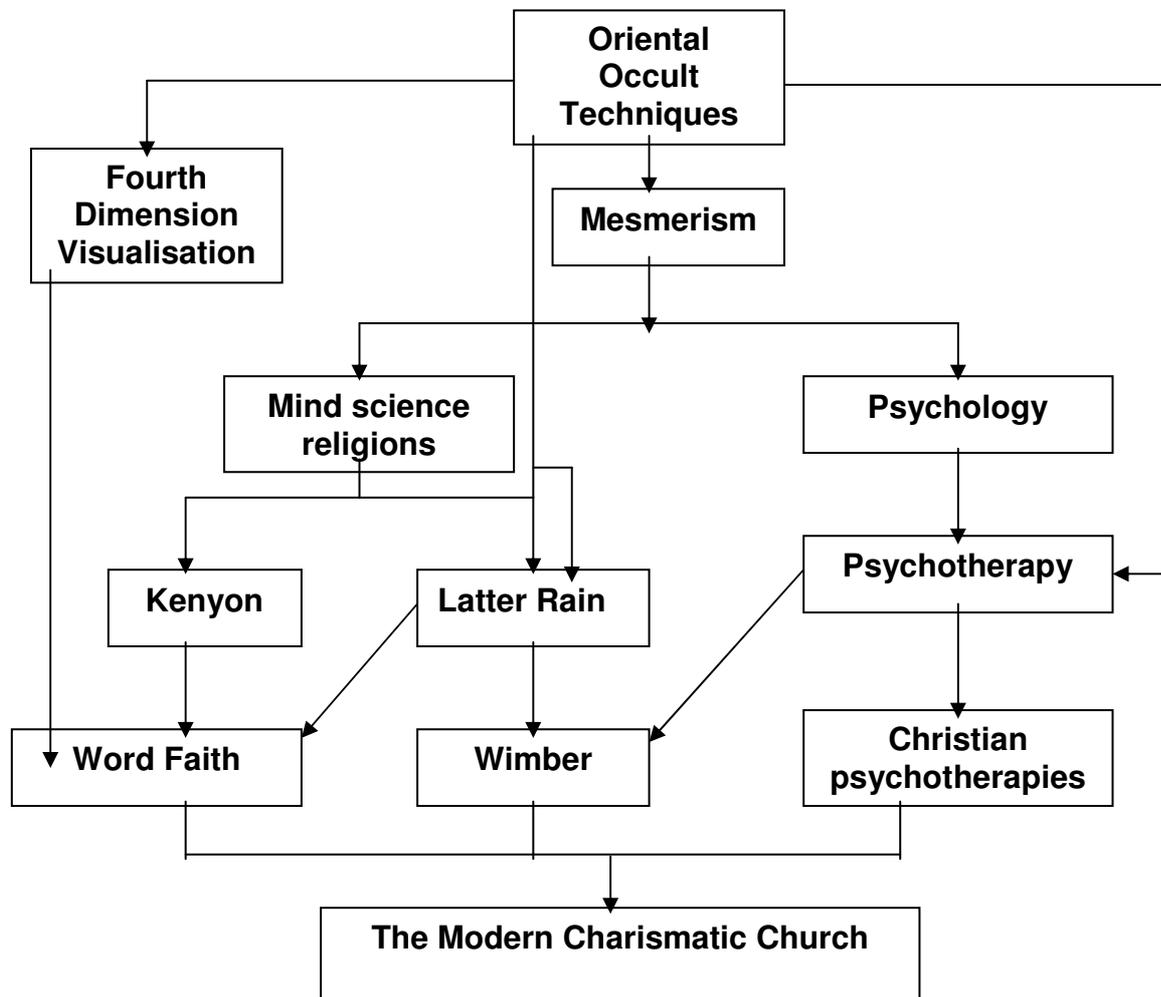
The Progress of Charismatic Error



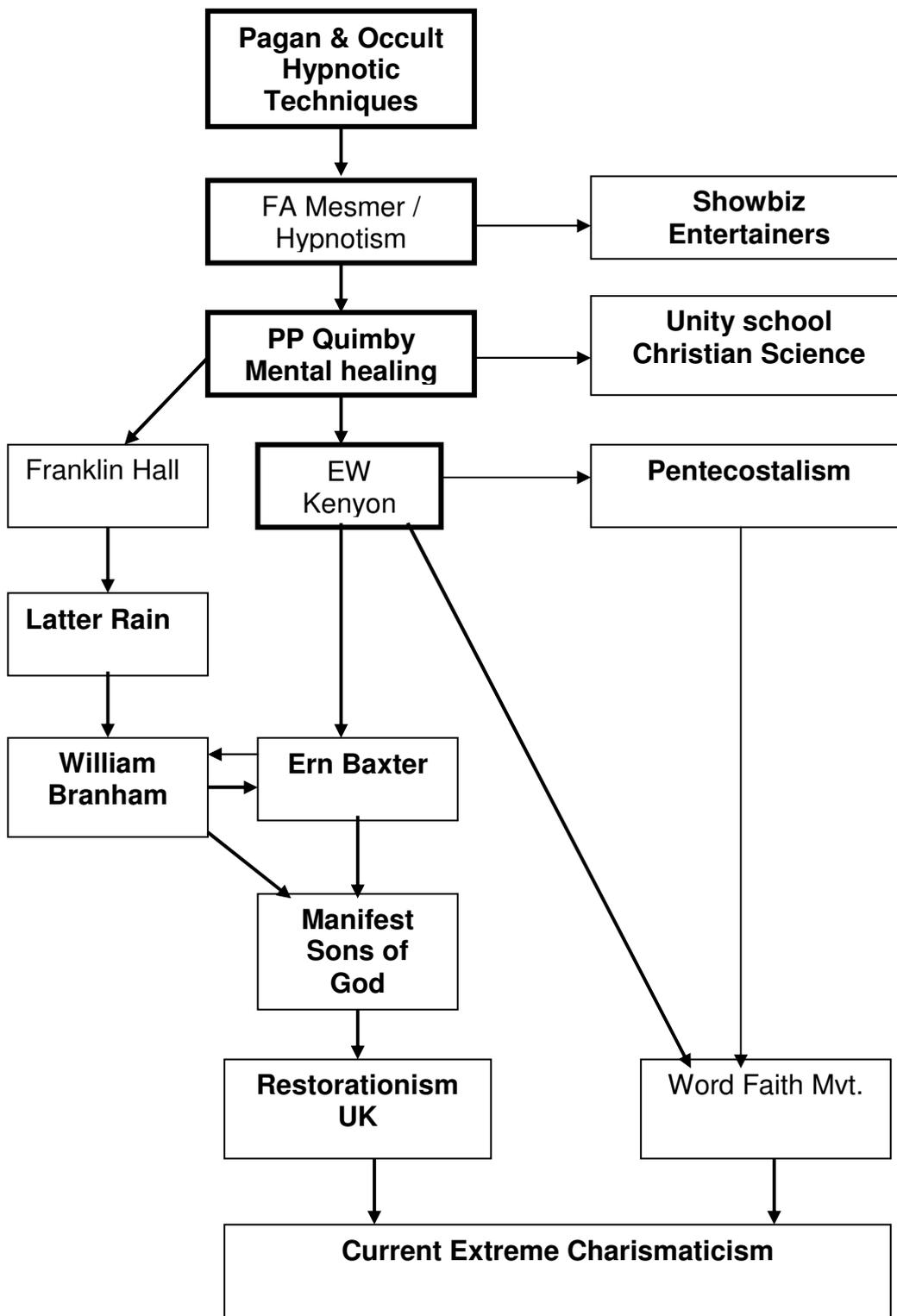
The Eschatological Key To Current Charismatic Factions



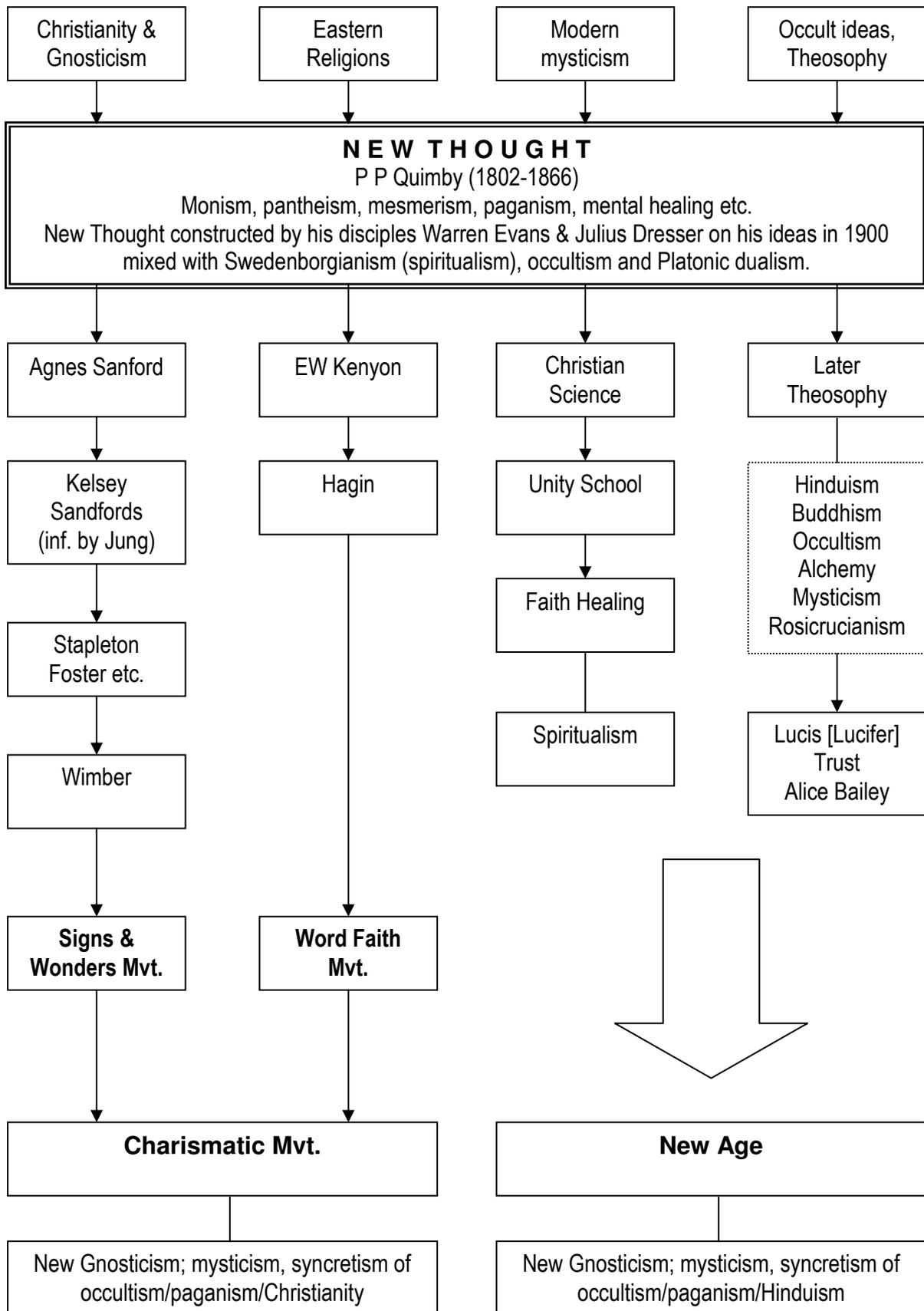
The Common Factor of the Occult



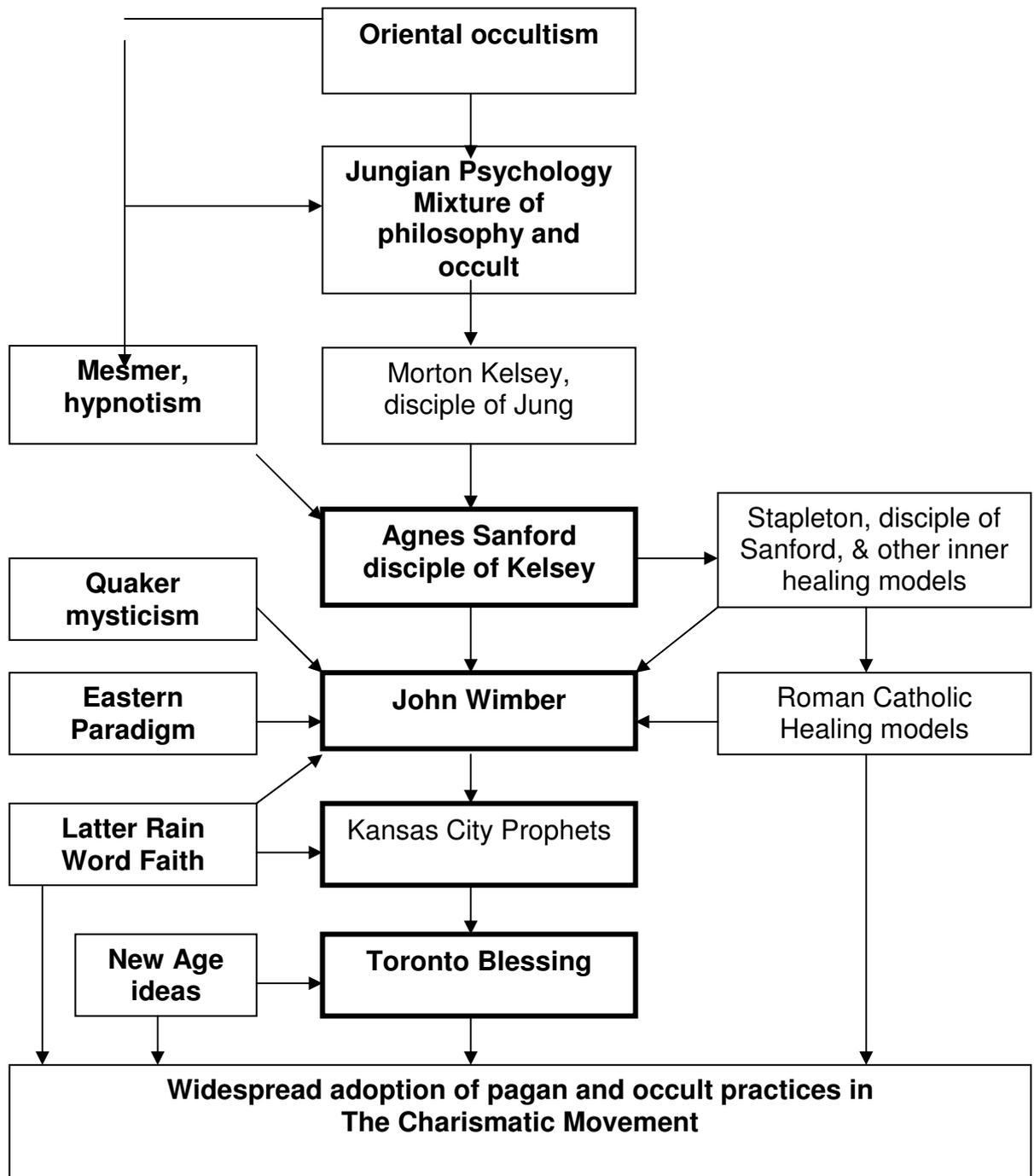
The Impact of the Mind Sciences



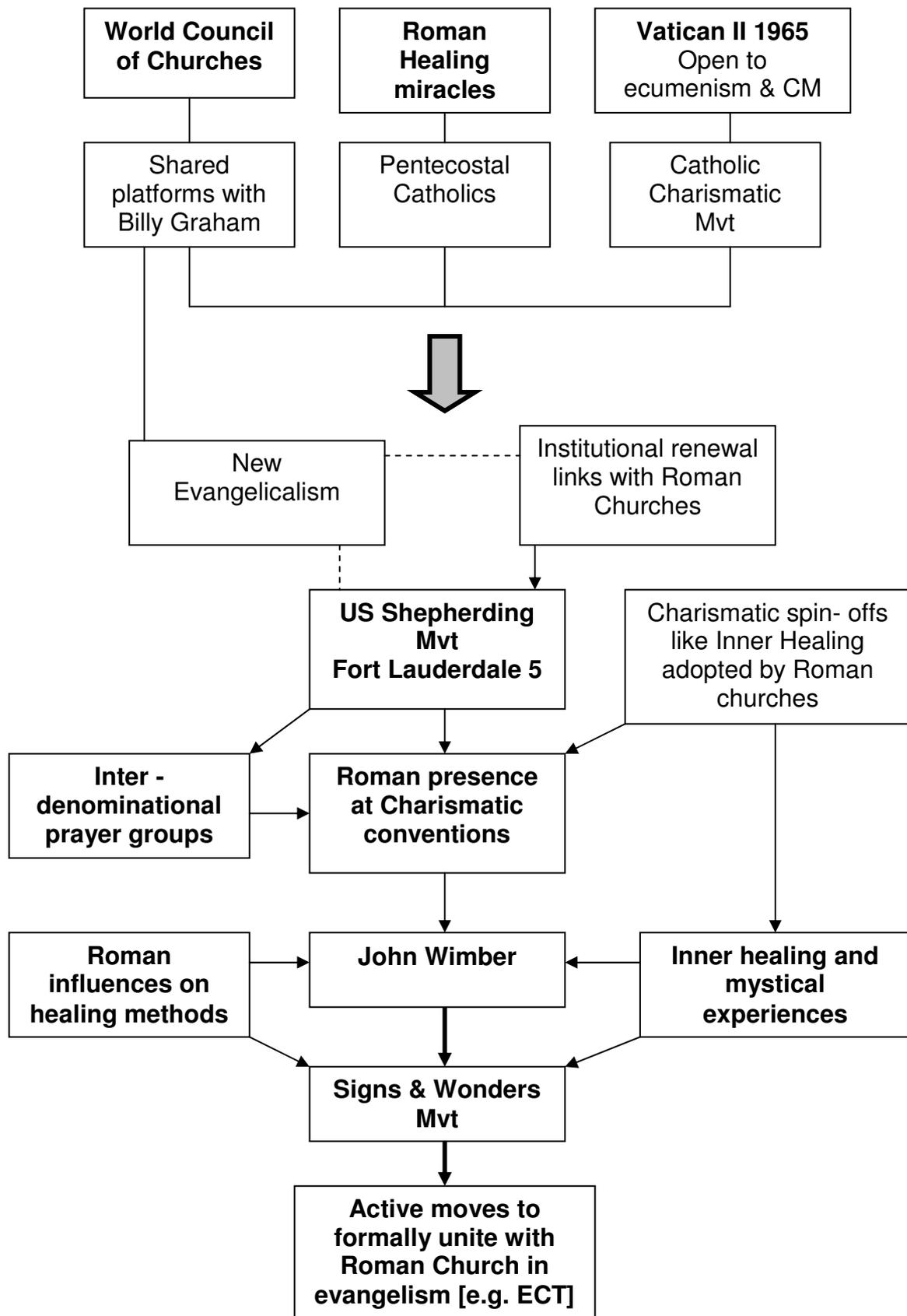
The Fruit of New Thought



The Rise of Paganism in the Church



The Rise of Closeness To Rome



Appendix Two

A Summary of Latter Rain Ideas

After the original Latter Rain movement was condemned as heretical in the late 1948 by the Assemblies of God, it went underground in America, but it never died out. Its teachings began to surface in various Pentecostal movements, like the Healing Movement which spanned Latter Rain and continued into the 50s. Some doctrines, like the laying on of hands to impart gifts and power from one person to another, became mainstream Pentecostal thought. But it was in the Charismatic Movement that the old heresy spawned its rotten fruit. Paul Cain admits this and gives thanks for it. He was an original latter rain preacher, brought back into the limelight by John Wimber and then the Kansas City Prophets. He says:

You know this message is 35 years old and I'm just preaching it again. Thank God I've found somebody to preach it to. I told you about the vision, what I've had. This recurring vision of standing at the crossroads of life and the angel of the Lord said, 'You are standing at the crossroads of life. What do you see?' And I saw a brilliantly lit billboard, which reads "JOEL'S ARMY NOW IN TRAINING" . . . See I've been wanting to share this for so long and find somebody. How would you like to have something on the back burner for 35 years ... this has been hot with me all these years, but everywhere I tried to preach it, they cooked my goose. Don't you boo me. This kind of fiery preaching is a lost art today except in a very mild degree.²¹⁰

They cooked his goose because he preached outright heresy. Today even this heresy is accepted in the CM without question. The Latter Rain advocates have a variety of extreme ideas, perhaps the most weird being those of Franklin Hall.²¹¹ But a baseline of teachings follows, and this can be seen to be the same root beliefs of Restorationism, sometimes called: Dominionism or Kingdom Theology. It is based upon an extreme, triumphal, post-millennialism.²¹²

1. God is restoring the church to its original power, perfection and glory.
2. The five-fold ascension ministries of Ephesians are crucial in this task. The offices of apostle and prophet are the most important. In this time a special group of hyper apostles and prophets will emerge to take the church forward. Under their ministry a spiritual elite will arise with supernatural gifts.
3. Believers must submit to these ministries, confess their sins to men, accept personal prophecies and leading.
4. A visible unity must be achieved throughout like-minded churches.
5. The use of the laying on of hands to impart the Spirit, healing and spiritual gifts. [This has been absorbed into normal practice in the CM.]
6. Restoration of the Tabernacle of David as powerful praise & worship, emotionalism, the felt presence of God, singing in the Spirit.
7. The use of personal directive prophecy.

²¹⁰ Paul Cain, *Joel's Army*, Taped message from Kansas City Prophets.

²¹¹ Some crazy notions include: believers who fast can teleport through space, their clothes never get dirty or wear out, they do not need to wash, they would not get ill, a golden divine substance would appear on their bodies from heaven etc. etc.

²¹² The belief that the Lord Jesus does not return until the church has reigned on earth for 1,000 years or more. Much of what follows is adapted from my book, *A Synopsis of the Theological Systems Behind Current UK Church Streams*

8. Tongues would become a language aid to missionary work. [Pentecostals originally believed this but then abandoned it when it failed.]
9. A big emphasis upon fasting for spiritual results [Common practice in the Pentecostalism].
10. Belief in the possible demonisation of believers. [This is now axiomatic in the CM.]
11. The church will experience a second Pentecost and will celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles when Christ will appear and be incarnated in the church and glorifying it before the Second Coming.

An offshoot of Latter Rain – *The Manifest Sons of God Movement* – developed a mystical approach to this concept, linking an immortal spiritual elite with a Corporate Christ (based on the Man-child of Rev 12) which will usher in the new age and rule the earth with a rod of iron.

- This corporate Christ will be perfect and empowered in the absolute fulness of the Spirit. Full redemption will mean the elimination of sickness and the reversing of the curse.
- There will be a purified elite group of overcomers (the man-child) who will manifest Christ and possess the Spirit without measure, who will purge earth of resistance.
- The leaders of the perfect church will judge the apostate Church.
- The church will reign over a purified earth where the glorious church has dethroned Satan, overcome secular evil and judged believers who failed to follow the vision.

Some extremists go further and add that:

- The elite saints will be invulnerable to bullets and able to walk through walls or even fly. [Compare the Joel's Vision teaching of Paul Cain and the 'Dread Army' of John Wimber.]
- They restore the earth and redeem creation according to Rm 8:22-23; and eventually overcome death itself.
- As a result, Christ does not need to return and the Church rules over the earth.

Main historical proponents

1. FRANKLIN HALL: Originally an independent evangelist from a Methodist background. In 1946 he published *Atomic Power with God Through Prayer and Fasting*. For him, fasting was the key to spiritual restoration, healing, and success; even pagans get answers to prayer if they fast, and if Christians don't fast, their prayers will not be answered. This makes fasting an occult work of man. Later works taught that men can become immortal by ascending mystical degrees of growth. This paved the way for yet more extreme perfectionist doctrines. He even claimed that people could hover in the air, be free from accidents and fly in space.²¹³ In 1965 he began a magazine *Miracle Word* which reached 24,000 people, but his extreme views were unacceptable to many; his ideas even distanced him from other healing evangelists. For instance, Hall taught what he called *body-felt salvation* (where the fire of the Holy Spirit would fall upon a person over 30 days, eliminating sickness, tiredness and even body odour); or that raising the left hand could enable believers to smell the fragrance of Jesus, causing insects to evacuate their houses due to this smell.
2. WILLIAM BRANHAM: *Manifest Sons of God theology* arose out of Latter Rain ideas. The main inspiration was William Branham²¹⁴ who held many serious heretical notions and

²¹³ Hall, *The Return of Immortality*, Hall Deliverance Foundation, (1976), p2-3.

²¹⁴ Others include Sam Fife, John Robert Stevens (of *The Walk*), George Warnock, Bill Britton, and later, Francis Frangipane, Royal Cronquist.

was clearly influenced by the occult.²¹⁵ He was the main proponent of healing and deliverance through laying on of hands and using the word of knowledge, he kick-starting the healing revival in 1947, being influenced by Hall. Many consider him to be the real founder of the CM. He was widely supported, for instance by The Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship (Demos Shakarian), Oral Roberts; Ern Baxter was once his associate. As an example of blasphemous arrogance and stupidity one of his followers, Sam Fife, believed he had already stopped ageing and when asked his age, would only say, '*I am*', explaining that he would not die but was being changed already into an incorruptible life. He is now dead.

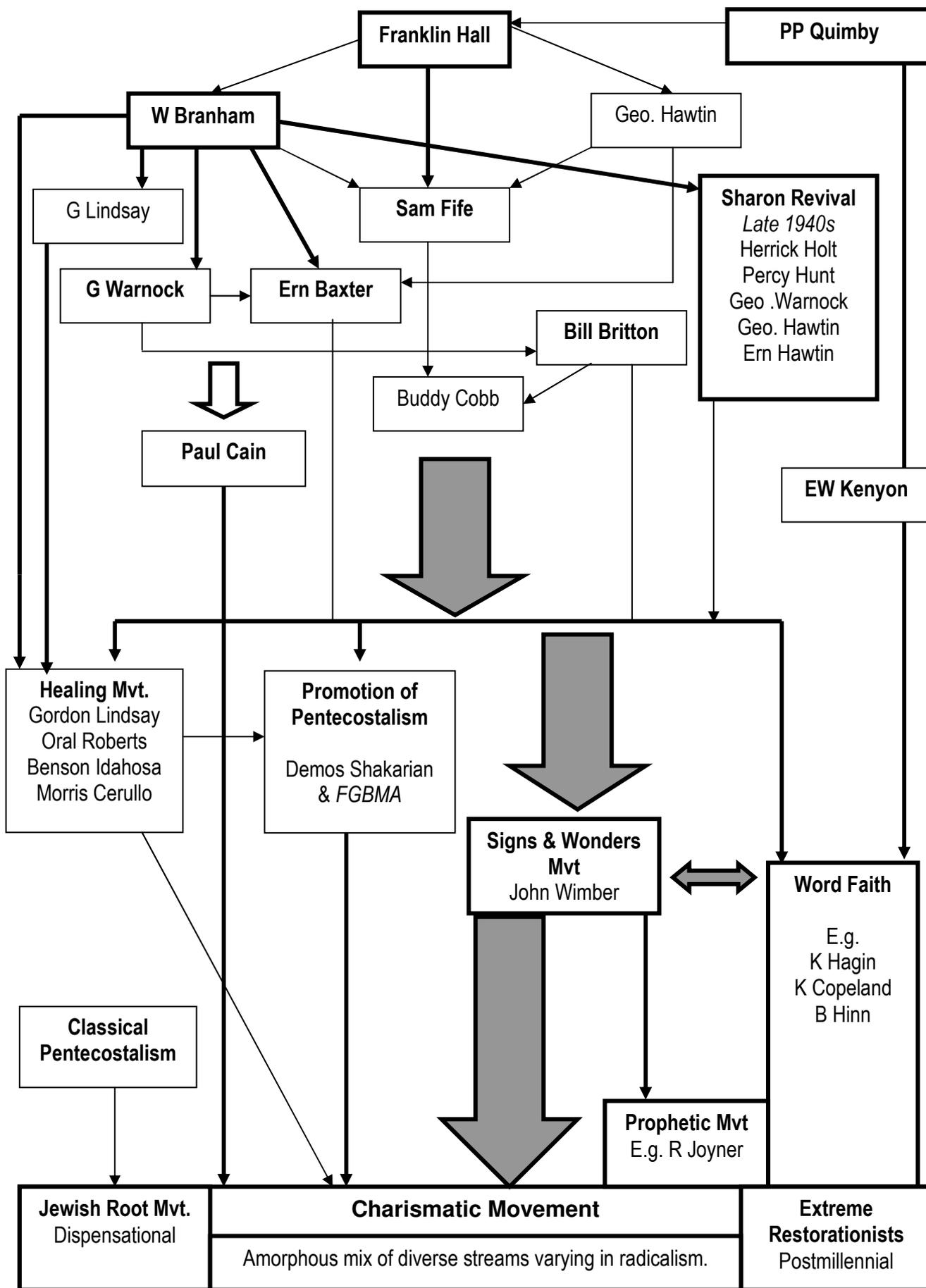
3. SHARON FELLOWSHIP – North Battleford, Saskatchewan (1947-8). George Hawtin, Percy Hunt, Herrick Holt applied the teachings of Hall and Branham and became the focal point of Latter Rain practices, experiencing a 'revival' with manifestations. It became sectarian and authoritarian. After being ousted by the AOG, Latter Rain went dormant.
4. THE WORD OF FAITH (POSITIVE CONFESSION) MOVEMENT: This movement was mainly influenced from a different source, i.e. the mystical shamanism of EW Kenyon, who received his ideas from Phineas P Quimby.²¹⁶ However, it follows in the Pentecostal tradition and holds many Latter Rain ideas. The emphasis of Kenyon (thence Hagin, Copeland etc) is that man is intended to be a god. This power comes from bold statements of faith – positive confession or declaration ('name it and claim it'; *Rhema* doctrine – what is spoken in faith is inspired and spiritually empowered).²¹⁷ Visualisation is also used to help this happen. From this follows prosperity teachings common in Word Faith preaching. All of this fits in with Dominionism or Latter Rain theology – man is master of the earth (and even the spiritual realm).
5. THE SIGNS & WONDERS MOVEMENT – JOHN WIMBER: in the US Wimber deliberately stole memberships from Calvary chapels and others through his healing conventions. His Vineyard churches grew rapidly as a result. Leaning heavily upon classic Pentecostal precedents, though not always their theology, Wimber initiated a new emphasis on power ministry and dominion. Teaming up with ex-Latter Rain Pentecostal Paul Cain in the late 80s, Wimber introduced these extreme Latter Rain ideas into mainstream renewal denominations and Restoration churches in the UK.
6. UK RESTORATIONISM, THE NEW CHURCHES: the biggest branch of the UK Charismatic Movement which developed in the 70s and hardened in the 80s into new denominations like: Harvestime (Bryn & Keri Jones), New Frontiers International (Terry Virgo), Pioneer People (Gerald Coates, John Noble), Ichthus (Roger & Faith Forster, Graham Kendrick). These had always adopted Kingdom Now ideas (i.e. the benefits, gifts and power of the heavenly kingdom are available today), but with little actual success. Criticised for adopting heavy shepherding techniques, and certainly authoritarian, they adopted the power evangelism theology, church growth ideas and flowing worship methods of Wimber in the late 80s and 90s, since they appeared to give pragmatic results (people fell over at least). Then the Latter Rain ideas began to filter in through Wimber, Paul Cain & the Kansas City Prophets. By the early 1990s, Cain preached his Joel's Army doctrine openly in NFI churches. Gradually, they became enthused by expected revivals (which never occurred) and Kingdom Now theology leading to Dominionist ideas. The essential foundation for much of this charismatic theology is Latter Rain and Manifest Sons of God doctrines.

²¹⁵ E.g. held a modalistic view of the Trinity, equated the Bible with the Pyramids and astrology, was a severe misogynist (women are 'not worth a good clean bullet'), claimed that Satan had sex with Eve making Cain the 'serpent's seed', and healed by clairvoyancy or channelling (via 'his angel' on whom, he depended).

²¹⁶ Quimby was the originator of New Thought Philosophy, who sought to make witchcraft credible by using scientific and Christian language. Mary Baker Eddy's Christian Science came directly from Quimby's ideas and Eddy was healed by Quimby himself in 1862.

²¹⁷ '*Power is released through our tongue and that every word that comes out of my mouth is either a blessing or a curse*' [Cleansing Stream manual]

Influence of Latter Rain



Teachings of modern CM, Latter Rain type, dominionism

It must be understood that the CM is exceptionally diverse. Many groups would not hold all these teachings and some try to distance themselves from them. However, the majority of the most well-known leaders have dominionist ideas which stem from Latter Rain teachings.

- Through the perfecting of the overcomers, by obedience to the latter day apostles and prophets, the Church will take dominion over the governments and social institutions of the world, in preparation for Christ's return. [Though some teach his return will be unnecessary, as the church is so perfect and powerful.] *'Today's praying church is rising up in militant force to possess the promised land of our nations.'* ²¹⁸ When Charismatics sing songs that talk about 'claiming the ground' or 'possessing the land' they are adopting Latter Rain theology. Graham Kendrick's songs illustrate this.
- Believers become overcomers through a special empowering experience called 'the anointing', a separate work of grace subsequent to the baptism in the Spirit.
- The overcomers of Latter Rain are now variously called: Joel's Army, the New Breed, the Dread Breed etc. The most extreme (ridiculous) teachings on the overcomers can be seen in Paul Cain's ministry on Joel's Army which mangles the text of Joel 2.²¹⁹
- It is the inheritance of the mature church to take control of all human governments.
- Christians bring in the fulness of the Kingdom of God, even politically.
- Jesus is the foundation of creation but not of the church; apostles and prophets are. This gives authority to the 'revelations' of modern, so called, 'apostles' and 'prophets'. Christians must submit to them as they would to Christ.
- The new revelation of leaders' truths will change people into becoming the substance of Christ [This is Gnosticism]! Man will thus become deified on earth, believers become little gods. Overcomers will become immortal, invulnerable, perfect, run up walls and even able to defy gravity (Joel's army).
- Those who oppose the apostles and prophets will be judged by God and plagued or struck dead. The church will also execute penalties on the opposition.
- Man is a little god.
- Prosperity and healing are the norm for the faithful believer, a divine right.
- Faith is to be visualised and declared.
- Establishment of spiritual techniques which work as a law for anyone. For example fasting: since this establishes prayer, it will work even if performed by pagans [Franklin Hall, *Atomic Power With God Through Fasting and Prayer*, p19].²²⁰ Word Faith positive confession / faith teachings claim that even Buddhists use faith visualisation techniques successfully [Yonggi Cho].

Practices

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

²¹⁸ Cindy Jacobs.

²¹⁹ This army refers to locusts (2:25) and is a judgment from God not a race of super-Christians at the end.

²²⁰ It has been pointed out before that, by Hall's law, those who pray to demons will have their prayers answered if they fast, but Christians will not have their prayers answered if they don't fast.

Dangers

- These ideas overlook clear scriptures which declare that the end is a time of apostasy and rebellion, not growing world domination by the church. In fact, the church is persecuted.
- They apply OT scriptures applicable to Israel, literally to the church. They apply scriptures applicable to the new age to the current church.
- They apply symbolical texts in Revelation literally to their movement.
- It promotes feelings of elitism and even authoritarianism amongst the chosen leaders – i.e. those teaching these ideas. Rick Joyner has even identified antichrist as the orthodox church.²²¹
- By elevating the words of leaders to scripture, the Word of God is dishonoured.
- It usurps the power and decree of God into human hands (e.g. the manifestation of the kingdom).
- Many specific teachings are plainly occultic and belong to paganism [see especially the extreme Pentecostal ideas of Franklin Hall and William Branham, but also of many modern teachers in the Word Faith Movement].²²²
- New Agers have recognised that extreme Pentecostal teachings and Latter Rain, on the exaltation of mankind and establishment of a new world order, are identical with Theosophical teachings (such as Alice Bailey), but with different terminology.²²³ Others have stated that *'Charismatic congregations in main-line churches are entry points into the Aquarian frontier.'*²²⁴ Some ideas, like the Feast of Tabernacles celebration, feature almost identically in New Age books.
- Prosperity and 'little god' doctrines are totally unbiblical. Visualisation techniques are of occult derivation.
- It has made charismatic leaders gullible and anxious to promote any latest fad which seems to comply with the seeds of revival or a growing powerful ministry within the church (e.g. the Toronto Experience, Kansas City Prophets, power healing, signs & wonders, gold fillings, Pensacola).
- They mistakenly see the Gospel mandate as a command to 'take the nations', to change the world into a Christian Utopia, failing to see that Christ's kingdom is spiritual in this age. Hence foolish charismatic songs like 'World Changers' which declares *'We've been called to change the world'* – entirely wrong: God will change the world in the future (2 Pt 31-13) and we are currently called to make disciples within a fallen world system, incurring its wrath.

Modern proponents

- Charismatics and Pentecostals who hold a triumphalist, postmillennial eschatology – this includes virtually all UK Restorationist / New Churches; Ken Gott, Gerald Coates, Terry Virgo, John Noble and their followers.
- Holy Trinity Church Brompton.
- Extreme Charismatic organisations like: Christian Outreach Centre and the New Jesus Army.

²²¹ *Weighed and Found Wanting*, Bill Randles, p64.

²²² E.g: Christians can become immortal through interaction with UFO's, levitation control. Believers can learn from the zodiac or the pyramids. Gold sheen on the skin is supposed to be a heavenly substance, overcomers become little gods.

²²³ See Constance Cumbey's book, *A Planned Deception, The Staging of a New Age Messiah*.

²²⁴ Theodore Rosak, *The Unfinished Animal: The Antiquarian Frontier & the Evolution of Consciousness*, quoted in *Strange Fire*, Travers van de Merwe, p32. Occultist Alice Bailey first proposed this strategy in 1957.

- All those teaching an imminent global revival.
- False prophets/teachers like: Bob Jones, Paul Cain, Rick Joyner, Mike Bickle, John Avanzini, Tommy Hicks, Rod Parsley, Benny Hinn, R.W. Shambach James Ryle, John Arnott, Sam Fife, Fred Price.
- Word Faith teachers such as: Kenneth Copeland, Kenneth Hagin, Morris Cerullo, Benny Hinn, David Yonggi Cho, Earl Paulk, Royal Cronquist, Benson Idahosa (deceased), Rick Godwin. Trinity Broadcasting Network (Paul Crouch). Rhema churches. Charismatic Bible Ministries, founded in 1986 by Oral Roberts (this organisation contains the top most visible charismatic leaders).
- Academic teachers supporting the apostolic and prophetic movement: Bill Hamon, C Peter Wagner, John Wimber (deceased) etc.

Appendix Three

An Overview of Arminianism

In case some readers are unfamiliar with this teaching, I will give a brief explanation of the history and tenets of Arminianism, an ‘evangelical’ heresy which has done more than anything else to sap the strength of the true Gospel of God.

Arminius ²²⁵

Arminianism did not begin with Jacob Arminius [1560-1609], but it did derive its name from him. He was a reformed professor in Holland who was anxious to soften what he saw as the hard edges of Reformation Calvinism, especially the doctrine of divine predestination. Arminius was keen to build bridges with dissenting groups and Roman Catholics. Before him, most of his propositions were familiar to people as Semi-Pelagianism,²²⁶ a heresy which had been around since 430 AD.

The Remonstrants

Arminius focused mainly upon the question of the sovereign grace of God in salvation, and taught that God decrees to save all who repent, believe and persevere, i.e. God does not choose anyone specifically, but foresees those who will choose him. In 1610 (one year after Arminius’ death) his followers took these issues further and set forth their views in a document called ‘*Remonstrance*’ (i. e. protest, this led to them being called *Remonstrants*). This contained five main points:

- God elects people on the basis of foreseen faith or unbelief.
- Christ died for all men, loves all men, but only believers are saved.
- Man is so depraved that grace is necessary for faith or good deeds.
- But this grace may be resisted.
- Whether all who believe persevere to the end is uncertain.

Later these doctrines were developed further to emphasise man’s role in salvation -

- The will is one of the causes of regeneration.
- Faith is a good work of man.
- Man can fall away from grace.
- Christ’s righteousness is not imputed to a believer.
- Men can become perfect.
- Adam’s guilt is not imputed to men.
- There is no assurance of salvation in this life.

The Remonstrants caused great trouble for the Dutch church and the nation while some of the Remonstrants were led further astray and denied the deity of Jesus and the Holy Spirit (e.g. Simon Episcopus). Others developed a governmental theory of the atonement (e.g. Hugo Grotius) which denies that Jesus’ death paid the penalty of sin. The reaction to their five points led to their denunciation by the international Synod of Dort (Dordrecht) in

²²⁵ Jacobus (or James) Arminius was his academic Latin name, his original Dutch name was Jacob Hermann.

²²⁶ Semi-Pelagianism avoids the extremes of Pelagianism (see below) and erroneously teaches that man co-operates with God in the work of salvation since God only establishes a potential atonement which man either grasps or rejects.

1619. It was here that the Calvinistic 'five points' were clearly spelled out in distinction to Arminian theology:

**Total Depravity,
Unconditional Election,
Limited Atonement,
Irresistible Grace and the
Perseverance of the Saints ('TULIP').**

This reformed view of the doctrines of grace was taken up by the Church of England (notably: Cranmer, Tyndale, Ridley and Latimer) and later was particularly championed by the Puritans, Presbyterians and many Baptists. In America it flowered with Jonathan Edwards and later Charles and Archibald Hodge, BB Warfield, RL Dabney etc. In Holland it spawned theologians like Bavinck and Kuyper (who became Prime Minister). Many famous preachers espoused this view, for instance: George Whitefield, Charles Spurgeon, Samuel Rutherford, John Newton, JC Ryle and Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones. It also prompted many missionaries beginning with William Carey. The vast majority of Christians throughout history who may be called 'evangelical' were reformed, as regards the doctrines of grace, whether it is known as Pauline theology, Augustinianism, Calvinism or Reformed theology.

Arminian doctrines

The following diagram encapsulates the teachings of Arminianism concerning salvation.

Calvinism	Arminianism
God controls salvation totally.	God initiates salvation only.
Man is spiritually dead.	Man is sick but can respond & believe.
Man is totally lost in sin.	Man's will is not lost.
Man cannot contribute without grace.	Man must help God, initiating conversion.
God is totally sovereign.	Man can resist God.
God predestines to salvation.	God picks those who will have faith.
Those called and saved will remain.	Salvation can be lost.

What does the Bible say:

THE AUTHOR OF SALVATION

Salvation belongs to the LORD. (Ps 3:8)

Salvation is of the LORD. (Jonah 2:9)

Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day. (1 Chron 16:23)

The LORD is my light and my salvation. (Ps 27:1)

The salvation of the righteous is from the LORD. (Ps 37:39)

Salvation is not initiated by a man co-operating with God. God is the sole initiator of salvation in man.

ADAM'S GUILT:

Therefore, as through one man's offence judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous. (Rm 5:18-19)

All men are sinners and have guilt emanating from the sin of Adam, in addition to their own personal sins. Man is a corrupt race.

MAN'S INABILITY

And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins. (Eph 2:1)

And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses. (Col 2:13)

Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." (Jn 3:5-6)

Man is spiritually dead and cannot contribute in any way towards his salvation. Only the Holy Spirit can sovereignly regenerate a man.

MAN'S WILL

The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. (Genesis 6:5)

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately corrupt; who can understand it (Jer 17:9) The heart is corrupt, and everything springs from the heart. (Prov 4:23)

So it depends not upon man's exertion [will], but upon God's mercy. (Rm 9:15)

So then he [God] has mercy upon whomever he wills, and he hardens the heart of whomever he wills. (Rm 9:18)

God made us alive ... by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God - not because of works [e.g. the will of man], lest any man should boast. (Eph 2:5-9)

What do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it? (1 Cor 4:7)

It is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. (Phil 2:12)

Man's will is corrupt and has no power to initiate spiritual good, such as believing in the Gospel. God supplies the will, as well as changing the heart and giving a new spiritual nature, when he converts a person. The human will has no power to spiritual good; God has to do this work sovereignly.

COMING TO CHRIST FOR SALVATION

No one can come to me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. (Jn 6:44)

Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father. (Jn 6:65)

God who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began. (2 Tim 1:9)

Men cannot come to Christ for life by their own power when they want. It is only when God draws them by his Spirit that they will listen to his Son. God calls according to his purpose, not according to man's works.

ELECTION

He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will. (Eph 1:4-5)

Blessed is the man You choose, And cause to approach You. (Ps 65:4)

... few are chosen. (Matt 22:14)

... as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed. (Acts 13:48)

"I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion." So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy. Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens. (Rm 9:15-18)
 Not all have faith. (2 Thess 3:2)

Election is clearly stated to be according to God's good pleasure, not according to foreseen faith in future works of the sinner. God chose us because he loves us, not because we have anything attractive in us. He loved us while we were sinners. God does not choose everyone, but only 'a few'. Only those who were chosen (appointed) for eternal life are able to believe. Those chosen for mercy will respond to the Gospel; hearing it will harden those not chosen. Man cannot will to be chosen and thus cannot will to be saved.

ATONEMENT

Whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. (Rm 8:30)

He will save His people from their sins. (Matt 1:21)

I lay down my life for the sheep. (Jn 10:15)

This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. (Jn 6:39)

Jesus only died for those God chose: his people, his sheep. To die for anyone else would mean that God failed in an endeavour and that those he died for went to hell. Those whom God chose are the ones who are justified, that is, the ones for whom Christ died to pay their sins. These people were given to Christ and he promised to raise them up. Those who were given to Christ in election are mentioned repeatedly in John 17. It is only these who are loved, who believe, who are one with Christ, prayed for by Christ and who are sanctified.

THE GIFTS OF FAITH AND REPENTANCE

This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent. (Jn 6:29)

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. (Eph 2:8-9)

God has exalted to His right hand to be Prince and Saviour, to give repentance. (Acts 5:31)

God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life. (Acts 11:18)

God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth. (2 Tim 2:25)

The Lord opened her [Lydia] heart to heed the things spoken by Paul. (Acts 16:14)

Both faith and repentance together constitute conversion, and both are stated to be a gift of grace. A man cannot believe or repent just because he chooses to, as Esau discovered. Sinners will not even listen properly to the Gospel unless God opens their hearts first.

PERSEVERANCE

He who believes in Him is not condemned. (Jn 3:18)

He who believes in the Son has everlasting life. (Jn 3:36)

Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life. (Jn 5:24)

And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. (Jn 10:28-29)

If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? (Rm 8:31-32)

Our Lord Jesus Christ, who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. (1 Cor 1:7-9)

Only those who are truly saved by God will be preserved by him unto the end. Those who are only superficially converted will not.

'FOREKNEW' MEANS 'LOVED' PERTAINING TO THE ELECT

For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son. (Rm 8:29)

Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived. (Gen 4:1)

She knew no man. (Jud 11:39)

God knows all things and foreknows the actions of all men – indeed he predestines them (Ps 139:16); so there is no point in mentioning that the elect were merely foreknown. In the Biblical context, what is special about these predestined people? It is that they are loved (Eph 1:4-5), and they are chosen for this reason; indeed 'to know' frequently means 'to love' in scripture. 'Those he foreknew', means 'those God loved'. Furthermore note that:

- Foreknowledge is not just observation but means 'planned before', foreordained, as indeed the word is translated in 1 Pt 1:20.
- The Granville Sharp rule of Greek grammar equates predestination and foreknowledge in Rm 8:29.
- In 1 Pt 1:2 'foreknowledge' is the same word (*proginosko*) as used later in 1:20 where it means 'foreordained', see also Acts 2:33.
- The notion that God merely chooses those whom he observes will repent in the future is foolishness as God states that he plans our days for us anyway (Ps 139:16). Even the hairs on our heads are numbered (predestined), how much more whether we will believe? In any case faith is stated to be a gift of God.

Arminianism in practice: easy believism, cheap grace

Without any long explanation, it is clear that Arminianism is completely unbiblical. Any Gospel preaching which tells man that he can: 'decide for Christ', 'invite Christ into his life', 'give his heart to God', 'raise his hand and be saved' or some such practice is not sound. Any preacher who states that Christ died for everyone without exception is going beyond Biblical revelation. Christ actually rejects some people who called him Lord and even worked miracles in his name (Matt 7:21-23). He never died for these.

Any preaching which claims that any sinner can simply choose or reject Christ at any time, without a prior work of God, is Arminianism. The Bible shows that some people can desperately seek repentance and still not find it (Heb 12:17) because it is a gift from God for the elect only. Jesus taught people to seek and search for the mercy of God (Matt 7:7-8), not superficially convert at the drop of a hat. This involves a period of soul searching, conviction of one's sins and repentance towards God as well as believing in Christ as Lord and saviour. Conversion can appear to outsiders to occur quickly, but only in those who have been prepared by God through an inward work of the Spirit.

Historic churches based upon Arminianism

Methodism is the main Arminian representative in UK church history (although even portions of that were Reformed like the Calvinistic Methodists of Wales²²⁷). From it stems the Holiness movement and the Revivalist²²⁸ movements, which were strongly Arminian, or even Pelagian²²⁹ in the case of Finney and his successors, and from these come the

²²⁷ The Welsh Calvinistic Methodists did start before Wesleyanism but are often viewed as stemming from it.

²²⁸ We should note a clear difference between the subject of Revival as opposed to man centred Revivalism.

²²⁹ Pelagianism derived from the heretical Celtic monk Pelagius. It proposes that man is not dead in sins but has the power to reach out a grab salvation by his own strength. Pelagius denied the effects of the fall and the need of special grace for faith.

modern crusade evangelistic movements and Pentecostalism. Roman Catholicism is also a semi-Pelagian, works based religion and history shows that Jesuits encouraged Arminianism within the UK to undermine Protestantism at the time of Archbishop Laud. Sound theologians like John Owen and Augustus Toplady wrote about the Jesuit connection with Arminianism.²³⁰

²³⁰ Owen, Display of Arminianism, Works Vol 10, Banner of Truth, p16. *'Arminianism came from Rome, and leads thither again.'*(Toplady).

Appendix Four

A brief Introduction to Nimrod

Nimrod - the key precursor of Antichrist²³¹

Antichrist is the culmination on earth of all those with a similar desire for rebellious power in world history. There were signs of this before the flood as sin dominated most people; but the first person to co-ordinate this desire for exaltation with a practical strategy to be exalted, combined with a plan for world domination, was Nimrod. In fact, understanding Nimrod is essential to understanding many elements of the flesh and the devices of Satan in these days.

Though he appears briefly in the Biblical record (Gen 10:8-12) it is clear that he is a very significant figure in the revolt against God after the flood. Though the derivation of his name is difficult, the most likely etymology is that it comes from the Hebrew word *nimrodh*, which means: 'let us revolt'. He is also called 'a mighty one' (*gibbor*), a phrase that derives from the word *gabar*, which means 'to be strong', 'to act insolently'; some say it derives from 'tyrant'. Then he was twice stated to be a 'mighty hunter', where the Hebrew suggests that it was men not animals that Nimrod hunted in defiance of God. So Nimrod was a tyrant, who hunted down men who opposed him and began a great rebellion against the Lord.

He established the first empire in Mesopotamia, conquering the city-states Babel, Erech, Accad and Calneh in Shinar (southern Mesopotamia). From there he built more city-states: Nineveh (later the seat of the Assyrian empire), Rehoboth Ir and Calah. For the first time a single man dominated a huge area comprising seven great cities, two of which would later become Empires themselves (Nineveh/Assyria and Babel/Babylon).

Not satisfied with great human power, Nimrod established the building of the tower of Babel to ascend unto God. In those days 'babel' meant 'gate of God' [after God's judgment it came to mean 'confusion']. Nimrod's seat of government was associated with idolatrous divinity. There are various theories about why he built it. Some suggest the tower was a proposed escape from any future world flood (note bitumen instead of normal mortar); others that it was merely a temple structure for sacrifices; others that it was a serious attempt to reach what was considered to be the realm of God, or it may simply have been hubris.²³² In any event it was an affront to God. Picturing the end time destruction of Antichrist, God *came down* to Babel in judgment (Gen 11:7).

Secular history tells us that Nimrod established pagan worship centred upon himself as the sun god, and his wife Semiramis as the moon goddess, who became the mother of the gods. After Nimrod's death, Semiramis had a child of adultery called Tammuz whom she claimed was Nimrod reborn. Thus was established the foundational principles of occult Babylonian religion: sun-god, mother/queen of the gods, the god-child - a satanic trinity. Thus Semiramis became Isis in Egypt, Cybele in Asia, Ceres in Greece, Sisa in Scandinavia and so on. All future occult mythological pantheons were based on this system. Nimrod himself underwent various changes in different languages - Baal, Bel, Marduk, Tammuz, Moloch, Chemosh, Osiris, Apollo etc.

²³¹ This appendix is partly adapted from my paper on *The Antichrist*.

²³² *Hubris* is from a Greek word for excessive pride particularly directed against God.

So, soon after the flood, instead of worshipping God, man fulfilled the evil nature of his sinful heart in two directions: establishing control over men through tyrannical empires and establishing false religion based on hubris.

The situation was so serious that God personally intervened to put a stop to the development of Nimrod's empire and status. This was done by the confusion of tongues. It became impossible for workers to understand each other and the Babel project collapsed. Instead of a unified empire, suddenly there was chaos. Thus began the spread of nations as groups that understood each other wandered off to found their own civilisations. Some groups retained certain skills that could be passed on in their common language, while others lost almost all skills. This explains why some stone-age people remain to this day. The process of dispersal led to the establishment of nations round the globe, each with their own tribal characteristics. The deathblow was given to world-empire, a deathblow not easy to overcome, as there was no longer common unity of language, and as time passed no common culture either. Harmonising disparate nations is far from easy and only Rome succeeded for any length of time due to a flair for simple administration coupled with brutal military efficiency.

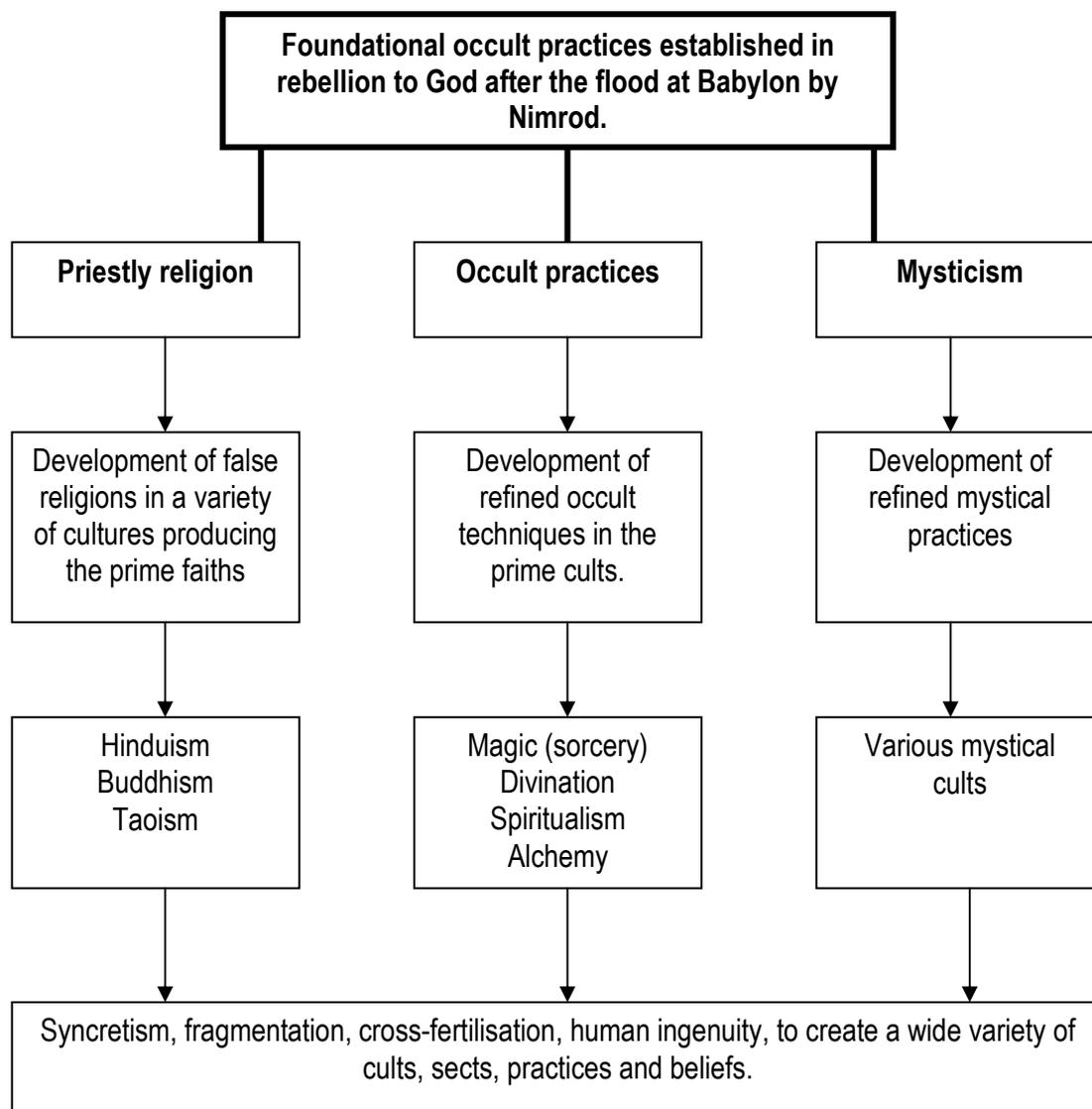
The history, kingdom and characteristics of Nimrod set the precedent and pattern for all antichristian activity in history and is the model for the final expression of Antichrist. Antichrist will be the fulfilment of a blasphemous, idolatrous kingdom dominating men through a despotic world empire set in opposition to God and claiming divinity.

Regarding our present subject, it is important to note the effect of Nimrod's priestly kingdom on religion. The birth of all occult and false religion was in the Babylonian priestly system. Not only are traces of Mesopotamian religious ritual seen in cultures world wide, even in the Americas (Ziggurat temples, plumed priestly head-dresses, sun worship, human sacrifice etc), but the foundational elements of all occult disciplines, practices and doctrines were established by Nimrod and his successors.

From the Babylonian root came all the variety of religious and occult concepts throughout the world. After the dispersal of the same-speaking tribes at Babel (Babylon), the nations were gradually formed as groups trekked and settled in new areas. Over time the influences of their character, climate, geography and history moulded the original ideas into new forms and created the prime religions and sects; but the root notions were all settled at Babylon. For this reason Babylon is the symbol in Revelation for all the God-opposing false religion in the world at the end.

When the CM picks up on this or that occult technique or mystical idea, it is harnessing the rebellious forces of God's ancient enemy and joining it to God's people. It is a blasphemy of the first order.

The Babylonian Root of False Religion



For example:

- *The New Age* is a mixture of mysticism, magic, Hinduism, Gnosticism and spiritualism.
- *Gnosticism* arose from mystical traditions mingled with Christianity.
- *Islam* arose from a mixture of Judaism, Christianity and eastern ideas.
- *Sikhism* is a syncretism of Hinduism and Islam.
- The Christian sect *Unity* is a syncretism of Hinduism, Judeo-Christian tradition and Gnosticism.
- *Scientology* is a mixture of Gnosticism and occult ideas.
- *The Anthroposophical Society* (Steiner) is a blend of spiritualism, Christianity and Eastern mysticism.
- Occult sects/groupings include Satanism, Witchcraft, New Thought (which influenced Word Faith), Theosophy, Rosicrucianism, The Forum (EST) etc.

Appendix Five

Kundalini Yoga

As with many false religions, the teaching on this subject is complex and very diverse. Even experts on yoga admit this. I will try to make a concise and simple overview.

What is kundalini?

- According to a branch of Hinduism (hatha yoga), kundalini is divine/cosmic energy inside man. It has three forms (symbolised by the three coils of the serpent): physical life energy, mental/emotional energy, spiritual energy.
- It is represented as a dormant, coiled serpent divinity in the chakra at the base of the spine.
- Kundalini energy is dormant until aroused. It can be worked out through energy centres in the body called 'chakras' as it rises up the spine. The goal is for it to reach the head called the sahasrara chakra. When it does the person received god-consciousness.

What is Shaktipat

- Shaktipat initiates the rising of the kundalini. It is kundalini transmitted.
- It is the descent of grace, or transmission of energy, by awakening kundalini. If kundalini is power, shaktipat is the switch to turn it on.
- Shaktipat is received from the teacher in four ways: look, touch, thought, and word.
- In the tantric tradition shaktipat is understood to be the highest form of spiritual initiation, providing the initiate with immediate access to the divine energy dwelling within them.

What is the difference between Siddha Mahayoga and Kundalini Yogas

- In Siddha Mahayoga the guru awakens the kundalini and after that the core of the practice is the inactive and non-wilful surrender to kundalini. So this approach requires initiation by a guru and relies upon a technique called shaktipat. It is variously called: Siddha Mahayoga, Kundalini Mahayoga or Sahaja Yoga (Spontaneous Yoga).
- In Kundalini Yogas the will is used to awaken the kundalini and to guide its progress. This approach uses intentional yogic techniques. The styles using intentional techniques include Mantra Yoga, Hatha Yoga, Laya Yoga or Kriya Yoga.

Nevertheless, elements of the each approach occur in the practices of the other.

What is Tantrism?

- Tantrism is a sect arising within Mahayana Buddhism based upon the teachings of the Hindu Tantras, or sacred writings of Vaishnava devotees.
- It is also a form of kundalini Yoga in which union takes place between the disciple and Shakti (feminine energy).

What is Qi Gong?

It is a medical discipline within Chinese Taoism that has many similarities to kundalini. In it the energy is called ch'i. Qi (or Ch'i) Gong is the manipulation of ch'i for medical reasons. [Ch'i is technically more closely related to the Indian concept of prana ('vital breath') but prana is considered by many to be either identical to kundalini or the first stage of a kundalini awakening.]

It is clear there are many qi gong practices that are identical to kundalini yoga practices. [Kundalini FAQ website]

What about other practices?

It is interesting that yoga experts agree that other techniques, such as Transcendental Meditation, which although Hinduistic in origin is not a form of kundalini yoga, can awaken kundalini, sometimes quite violently. Thus there is an acceptance that any form of discipline can be a shaktipat, including Charismatic practices.

Connections with extreme Charismatic practices

Since, strictly speaking, it is Siddha Mahayoga where a guru awakens the kundalini, this is more closely comparable to Charismatic initiation.

- The radical phenomena evidenced in the Toronto Experience features exactly the same type of phenomena in Siddha Mahayoga awakening kundalini.
- They are both brought on by the same means (often laying on of hands but also more indirect forms).
- Both are contagious in their effects.
- Both arise after passivity, suggestibility, manipulation by a leader (or someone who's kundalini is awakened) and loss of self-control (surrender).
- In both transfer of power is considered to be central.
- Both consider the experience to be vital for personal transformation into becoming more godly.
- The physical manifestations (kriyas) are said to be evidence of an internal work, mainly to remove blockages to god-consciousness.

Note the following from the kundalini FAQ website:

Christianity (especially Quakerism and Pentecostalism), Sufism, Qabalistic mysticism, alchemy and magick all have literature which demonstrates some awareness of the kundalini process ... the imagery is so unmistakable in these traditions that each must have, at least at one time, been conversant with the movement of kundalini.

Different cultures developed different way to harness and manipulate the supposed mystical energy dormant within the body after the separation of tribes at Babel. As time passed, each civilisation grew its own scriptures and techniques to aid health and stimulate spiritual activity. Kundalini and Qi Gong are just two sources; there are many more. Far from the techniques being innocent internal manipulation of a natural force, they are means of awakening demonic activity within passive supplicants. When Charismatics perform similar techniques, they unwittingly adopt pagan practices and open themselves up to the same spiritual manipulation and temptation of the enemy.

See:

- <http://www.sacredspaceyogasanctuary.com/kunda.html>
- *The Two Roots of Today's Revival*, Robert S Liichow; Morris Pub. (1997). Note that there are many minor mistakes and typos in this work which have been repeated on several websites that do not credit the source. Thus *Shaktipat* is found as *Shatkipat*.
- Kundalini FAQ. <http://www.eecs.berkeley.edu/~keutzer/kundalini/kundalini-faq.html#1b>
- Siddha Mahayoga FAQ. <http://www.eecs.berkeley.edu/~keutzer/kundalini/siddha-mahayoga.html>

The different aspects of the same ancient Babylonian occult experiences

Historic Perspective	Name of Experience/Group
Viewed from the perspective of Indian religion	Kundalini
Viewed from the perspective of Chinese religion	Qi Gong
Viewed from the perspective of mystical Christian sects	Shakers, Quakers
Viewed from the perspective of modern Christianity	Charismatic radicalism; Toronto experience
Viewed from the perspective of historic Christian enthusiast movements	St Vitus' Dance, Convulsionaires, Enthusiasts.
Viewed from the perspective of the occult	Magic, shamanism, witchcraft, various occult groups
Viewed from the perspective of Islam	Sufism
Viewed from the perspective of Judaism	Kabbalah
Viewed from the perspective of Caribbean religion	Santeria, Voodoo
Viewed from the perspective of primitive tribes	Animism, shamanism

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