

The Organic Church

Biblical Discernment Ministries - 1/2011

by John Beardsley

- [1.](http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/organic.htm) The Organic Church together with the Emergent Church Movement Part One:
<http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/organic.htm>
- [2.](http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/organicp2.htm) The Way of The Organic Church Part 2: <http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/organicp2.htm>
The Way of The Organic Church Part 2 - Appendix:
<http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/organicp3birds.htm>
- [3.](http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/organicp3.htm) The Organic Church – Doctrines of Demons and of Men Part 3:
<http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/organicp3.htm>
- [4.](http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/organicepic.htm) In Typical Christian Na’vi Blue - The message comes forth!:
<http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/organicepic.htm>
- [5.](http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/organich2h.htm) The Organic Church House2House and the NAR & Contemplative Way:
<http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/organich2h.htm>

1. The Organic Church together with the Emergent Church Movement: Part One

Matthew 12:33 Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by [his] fruit.

I come to you motivated as never before in my walk of 30 years with Jesus Christ my Lord and Saviour to warn fellow believers and anyone who will hear! I am witnessing dangerous precedents set with people close to me deceived by the teachings of the “Organic Church” that is a part of the growing Emergent Church Movement. Before I go further I wish to share a word of testimony from the past about a confrontation of some drunks with the Gospel years ago. Normally, any Christian has better sense than to confront a drunk but this young man did, urged on by fellow Christians to follow the prompting in his heart to confront the sins taking place near his home. As he was about to speak he was threatened by one of the drunks. Already fearful and trembling the young Christian man spoke out anyway and to his surprise the drunk did not strike him with his bottle but quietly listened. The point in spite of threats, in spite of whatever fear he felt at that moment, he put his foot one step forward to be counted as obedient to his Lord.

1 Cor 2:1-5 “And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God”.

I feel like that young man today with what I am going to present in the hopes that it will steer some errant brothers and sisters into sound Bible believing churches. One article will be insufficient to show everything I am researching so the following article is the first in a series. To fellow-believers working as true Bereans, I welcome your insights into this as well.

Now one step forward I go!

Are Paradigms Changing or Are We?

Today we are hearing about new and old paradigms (simply put accepted practices of what the old church is according to scriptures to the new practices of the contemporary church often called “emergent or organic”). Here is a very quick overview of these practices:

The Old Paradigm

The practices of the “old” church are of a Biblicist (of the Bible) position to the extent possible leaning 100% on scriptures for definition – often referred to as ‘Sola Scriptura.’ The old practices are based on what the Bible teaches for what a church should be today. Please note in what follows when those of the Organic Church say we are a part of the “Institutional Church” (IC) it is not meant as an endearing term but a negative connotation to replace the “organized local church” as taught in scriptures. The person(s) within the Organic Church who coined this is not known but is a negative label for churches across denominations.

The New Paradigm

The “new” practices for church rely on a variety of sources Biblical and extra-Biblical, crossing denominational lines and even to other religions or cults (Mormons, Jehovah Witnesses and others). The idea is that everyone has something to bring to the table in the way of truth. – I would call this the ultimate goal of pragmatism (the ends justify the means) claiming that if something is “true” it is God’s truth we have seen it before.

The New Paradigm as stated by Frank Viola

Frank Viola said in *Rethinking The Wineskin* (1998) and later revised in *Reimagining Church* quoted here:

“To borrow a term from scientific philosopher Thomas Kuhn, we need a “paradigm shift” regarding the church before we can properly rebuild it. That is, we need a new worldview regarding the meaning of the body of Christ. A new model for understanding the *ekklesia*. A new framework for thinking about the church. Of course, the “new paradigm” that I’m speaking of is not new at all. It’s the paradigm that undergirds the entire New Testament”. (Reimagining Church p272, 2008) Emphasis bold and underlined mine.

Let’s see who has their paradigm right, I believe Viola said what he is doing accurately the first time and is presenting another way to bridge the chasm without a Biblical foundation. I will let the evidence speak for itself throughout the series to address this foundational issue. In the article, on Herescope, Shifting the Emergent Paradigm¹ paints the picture I am seeing used of Frank Viola and those of the Leadership Network:

Shifting the Emergent Paradigm

Continuing from yesterday’s post, this is part two of a critique of selected excerpts from a 2001 era report by Brad Smith, President of Leadership Network entitled “What’s Next with Terra Nova Project: The Emergence of Terra Nova”. The next section of the Smith report is subtitled, “Three Types of Innovators and Paradigm Changes”. This section represents a classic example of psycho-social and marketing methodologies. Smith begins by describing a “whole scale change in paradigms” and the “three types of innovators” that will help to shift a paradigm (worldview). In the case of Leadership Network, as Herescope reported yesterday, the paradigm that had to be shifted was theological, moving evangelicalism into post-modernism. Smith lists 3 type of paradigm-shifters, or “innovators” --

ADAPTERS: “The Adapters...who **innovate** by adjusting and honing what exists while taking into account **new realities**”.

REVOLUTIONARIES: “The Revolutionaries...who **innovate** by **critiquing the flaws of the old ways**. They **dismantle complacency** in the **old** and make people aware of **foolish assump-**

¹ <http://herescope.blogspot.com/2006/01/shifting-emergent-paradigm.html>

tions that have previously been taken for granted. Much of what Revolutionaries create is a **polar opposite** of what preceded them”.

GROUNDBREAKERS: “**The Groundbreakers**...who emerge after the **war** is underway between the old and the new. Often, they naively accept the new assumptions without understanding the necessity or background of the previous **war**. Utilizing forms from both the old and the new, **Groundbreakers** have the freedom to **create truly new things built on totally new assumptions**”.

How to Shift the Paradigm

The philosophy of the paradigm shift is quite significant. The concept originated with Thomas Kuhn in his 1962 book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (University of Chicago Press). Kuhn, a scientist in academia, broke ground by applying Hegelian dialectics and existential thought to the field of science. He proposed that science itself is evolving and has no absolutes. Kuhn described science as a series of rocky shifts throughout history, created by a crisis when the old scientific model encounters new information that doesn't fit. When enough new information is accumulated, a “revolution” would occur and a new scientific paradigm would emerge; e.g. Newtonian science gave way to Einstein's theories.

Kuhn paralleled scientific revolution to political revolution, and noted that in “both political and scientific development the sense of malfunction that can lead to crisis is a prerequisite to revolution” (p. 91). In other words, it is necessary to create a crisis *first* before the paradigm can be shifted. Kuhn then makes the remarkable statement that the use of force may be necessary to shift to the new paradigm: “. . . the parties to a revolutionary conflict must finally resort to the techniques of mass persuasion often including force” (p. 92) .

Kuhn speaks about this paradigm shift in terms of a religious conversion. First, he remarks that a “mental transformation” is insufficient. “Rather we must look for indirect and behavioral evidence that the scientist with a new paradigm sees differently from the way he had seen before” (p. 114) .This statement, emphasizing an actual behavioral shift, hearkens back to explanations given in yesterday's Herescope post concerning “authentic” behavioral change. Kuhn advised that before a group can communicate fully, they must “experience the conversion that we have been calling a paradigm” (p. 149). This conversion is seen as a “transfer of allegiance” from one paradigm to another (p. 150).

New Agers and socio-political transformers took Kuhn's ideas to heart and applied it to the planned emergence of a new global mystical and political structure. Marilyn Ferguson cited Kuhn's ideas as significant, for example, in her 1980 book *The Aquarian Conspiracy*, which launched the New Age movement into the popular culture. It is therefore, of relevance to note Brad Smith's choice of language to describe the purpose of creating this emergent youth culture -- to propel forward a paradigm shift in evangelicalism. ...

The 3 Innovators

Brad Smith of Leadership Network deviated from his discussion about the three types of paradigm-shifters for an historical interlude. His report expounds on the topic of “Understanding Tectonic Change from a Historical Example”. “Tectonic Change” is, of course, another term for ‘paradigm shift.’ Smith explained the philosophy undergirding this change:

“The German philosopher, **Hegel**, described this **adaptation-revolution-groundbreaking** model as a process of **thesis, anti-thesis**, and eventual **synthesis**. Many historians, sociologists and other ‘world-view’ experts are declaring that the Western world is currently experiencing a ‘postmodern’ anti-thesis to a two-century reign of the thesis of modernism. . .

Smith then explained more about these three “Innovators in the Church” and “Why all three types are important”. The following description is a peek into the inner world of Leadership Network and how it has positioned itself as a premier change agent organization. As you read the excerpts below, keep in mind that what was really being discussed was the abandonment of orthodox doctrine. We know this because it has been five years since Brad first issued this report.

The Emergent Church has now risen and provocatively positioned itself as THE NEW PARADIGM. The “old paradigm” is traditional orthodoxy. The “new paradigm” is post-modern mysticism:

ADAPTERS: “In the church world, the strength of the **Adapters** is that they continue to minister well to the people whom God has given them. They adapt and bring people along. They **innovate** well within the boundaries of **old assumptions** and eventually allow the **new realities** to bypass them. Adaptors do not abandon effective present ministry just because a new paradigm has emerged, but they will move toward it as quickly as they can without abandoning their people. A few may even know they are trading long-term effectiveness for faithfulness to a present calling”.

REVOLUTIONARIES: “The strength of the **Revolutionaries** is that they clearly see the **new reality** and send out a clarion call for **change**. They point out the dangers of **old wineskins** and do not shy away from the pain of a **tectonic shift**. While they critique the **old** with crystal clarity, they express the **vision** of the new with obscure idealism. To use a biblical metaphor, **Revolutionaries** are the **Davids**, the **career soldiers** who carve out the new land and gather the resources, **but may not be allowed to build the new temple**. Sometimes, they are so focused on what is wrong with the **old**, they do not have the freedom to create the **new**”.

GROUNDBREAKERS: “**Groundbreakers** emerge on the scene and see a **new**, clean canvas unencumbered by **old assumptions** or even **anti-assumptions**. They have the freedom to create **new expressions** in a clean space carved out by the **war** between the **old** and the **new**. Groundbreakers are not necessarily better than the other two types of innovators, but perhaps, like **Solomon, they show up on the earth at an opportune time**. Having seen the **shortcomings of traditionalism and idealism** in their predecessors, Groundbreakers move toward **practicality**”.

[All emphases in above quotations are added]

The Truth:

Young pastors reading the material quoted above are *supposed* to feel ineffective, inept, incompetent and out of touch. They may feel like dismal failures. This use of language is very slick. In contrast, the three change agent roles were created for new pastors and young leaders who were willing to step outside the boundaries of Gospel Truth. They would be applauded and rewarded when they became facilitators for the emergent paradigm shift.

Young pastors, do not be discouraged nor dismayed! Flee back to the Word of God and cling to it with all of your might. For in these Scriptures you will find comfort in these last days of trouble, and you will receive strength to stand and stamina to endure the trials. ([Online Source](#))²

The Paradigm Presented in Scriptures

These practices I just mentioned sound clear enough you would think the average Christian could separate the truth from the lies (discerning as the Bereans Acts 17:11). However, using the cliché of “not being able to see the forest because of the trees” sums up how most Christians live and go on day to day whether in the old or new churches. The old and new paradigms are incompatible like day to night. To clarify further, Dr. Francis Schaeffer once said, “The snow lies along that watershed, unbroken, as a seeming unity. But when it melts, where it ends in its destinations is literally a thousand miles apart. That is a watershed. That is what a watershed is. A watershed divides”. – That divide is growing today but both sides argue they are on the right side of the growing chasm. Dr. Schaeffer continued, “Within evangelicalism there are a growing number who are modifying their views on the inerrancy of the Bible so that the full authority of Scripture is completely undercut. But it is happening in very subtle ways”.

Dr. Schaeffer’s words are just as applicable today!

The Background of the Organic Church and New Paradigm

² <http://herescope.blogspot.com/2006/01/shifting-emergent-paradigm.html>

The teachers of the Emergent and Organic Church would take you through twists and turns in an attempt to persuade as many as possible that the old practices and traditions of churches are mostly rooted in pagan teachings from centuries ago. One book that exploits weak Christians is the book by Frank Viola and George Barna called *Pagan Christianity* – relying heavily on secular history to prove many of its points. Furthermore, *Pagan Christianity* levels some valid criticisms against churches as it throws most denominations into one basket. I see it as a means to an end - Please hold this thought as you read on!

George Barna, Frank Viola and other reformers are teaching they are bringing the church back to its historic Biblical roots. So where did the “organic” in the Organic Church come from? Frank Viola is often credited with the term Organic Church (though he points to T. Austin Sparks as the one who first coined it) Viola stated he has used it since 1993.

“When T. Austin Sparks employed the word organic to refer to church, he was not speaking of a system, a method, a technique, or even a movement. Instead, he was speaking of the particular expression a church takes when she is living according to her God-given nature as a living organism” (Frank Viola in “Why Organic Church Is Not Exactly a Movement” Christianity Today 1/10)

Viola continues to give the history that compares the Organic Church to those of the ‘60s, early ‘70s, ‘80s and ‘90s (the cell/home based churches). While Viola defends the Organic Church is not a movement, the equation he presents shows it is a movement. He splits hairs referring to this as a living organism (per T. Austin Sparks.) After reading a fair amount of his material, he and others like him believe it to be a movement of God! How many books of Viola and friends is necessary to prove the point? For starters: *Reimagining Church, Finding Organic Church, So You Want to Start a House Church?: First-Century Styled Church Planting For Today, Pagan Christianity* and more recently the *Jesus Manifesto*, which I will discuss further in Part 2.

A good friend and sister in Christ covered much of the cell/home church movement in the past. Sarah Leslie said this in 1999,

“Before proceeding, it is important to point out that the cell church movement has always been extra-denominational, i.e. it has proliferated both within and without established denominations. Some have charged that it has been a chief vehicle for the cross-pollination of doctrinal ideas. Others have charged that it has wreaked havoc with established orthodoxies based upon traditional doctrines, and has served as a vehicle to dismantle denominations. Indeed, much of the cell church literature is very derogatory towards denominations and traditions. There is some evidence that suggests that this is purposeful, with the intention of bringing down denominational barriers in order to erect a new church structure, global in scope, yet local in oversight”. (Sarah Leslie, 1999 in Research Notes - Analyzing The “Cell Church” Model)³

So is the Organic – Home – Cell Church Movement something new or just something re-packaged?

Organic Meets Emergent Church

In June 2010 a much publicized book in the Organic & Emergent circle was released, the *Jesus Manifesto* by Frank Viola and Leonard Sweet. Leonard Sweet is a well-known Emergent Church Leader also known by some as a New Ager (in spite of his denials but his own words contradict him)⁴. I saw a number of individuals endorsing the book without reading it, lauding it as a much needed tool for the church. Like “birds of the feather”, the endorsements of the *Jesus Manifesto* reads like a who’s who of the Emergent Movement with direct ties to the New Apostolic Reformation⁵ “...where apostles and prophets are rising up to take control of the Church and to build and usher in the Kingdom of God”. Of course you will not read about these backgrounds and affiliations unless you research the names endorsing it. Why? The short story, they want your focus on the new paradigm (practices) for the “new church” as they define them and to abandon the old IC “instituti-

³ <http://www.deceptioninthechurch.com/cellchurch.html>

⁴ <http://www.wayoflife.org/files/5fbb8b205f28bcd33436db81fa384e86-590.html>

⁵ <http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/Psychology/vine/vineyard.htm>

onal church”. I must question these men who say and do these things drawing on a plethora of extra-Biblical and often non-Christian sources. The books of these men are full of them!

Who are these people favorably quoted in the *Jesus Manifesto*? Here are several:

John Henry Newman – An Anglican who converted to Roman Catholicism

Sören Kierkegaard – Mystic leading into Secular & Religious Existentialism

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (BDM Link)⁶ – While a hero against the Nazi’s, NOT a Biblical Christian

Meister Eckhart⁷ – Mystic whose writings looked to by both Emergent and Organic teachers

Timothy Radcliffe - a Roman Catholic priest who has an entire book devoted to Meister Eckhart⁷ just mentioned

(Gilbert Keith) G.K. Chesterton – Roman Catholic theologian and apologist - known as a “Common Sense Apostle & Cigar Smoking Mystic” by those who liked him

Reinhold Niebuhr⁸ (Wikipedia link) – Known for helping to shape liberal Protestant / Neo-orthodox theology in the 1940s and 50s and holding to the effect that “...secular idealism can speak the Word of God to us better than the Bible”, in answer Niebuhr’s views by Dr. Francis Schaeffer.

They treat these men as if they are bringing something new to the table that we have been missing in scriptures – but they are the liberal theologians of the past that have been creeping into the churches in a new garment of wool for more than a century!

These new “apostles” Viola, Sweet and others are attempting to redefine the leadership within local churches as we know it – according to these men we have had it wrong for some 1900 years and that it is time for reformation or more recently referred to as revolutionary thought. They would have you believe it is extra-biblical to give to any “institutional church” as if we worship the building or that it is wrong to support our pastors and missionaries. While they refer to their brethren in the local churches and encourage their disciples not to tear down the organized churches **the teachings coming out of the organic churches is an attack of the foundation of the local church!** The ‘real’ Apostle Paul knew their type all too well when he said, 2 Cor. 11:8 “*I robbed other churches, taking wages [of them], to do you service*”. – The Apostle Paul confronted these false apostles mocking them for their lies!

Who are these teachers? What is their background?

Who are these teachers? What is their background? What fruit do they bear to show they are sent by God to be our experts to reform the churches? Which side of the watershed are they on? Here are only a few links (of many) to reveal the fruit tying them with the Emergent Church Movement, a variety of heresies, liberal theology and ties to the New Age. Although these men may attempt to distance themselves and downplay accusations of heresy their continued use of aberrant teachings show them not to be trustworthy!

The Other Side of Emergent: The New Apostolic Reformation ⁹	Emergence Christianity: Quantum Shift To Pantheism ¹⁰
Beware of Leonard Sweet: Master of Double-peak ¹¹	Frank Viola And The Merry Monk ¹²
Emergent Metaphysics - Part 6: From Cosmos, To Chaos, To Consciousness (Speaks to the Je-	Frank Viola And Corrupt Contemplative Spirituality/Mysticism ¹⁴

⁶ <http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/exposes/bonhoeffer/general.htm>

⁷ <http://apprising.org/2010/06/01/leonard-sweet-frank-viola-and-mystic-meister-eckhart/>

⁸ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reinhold_Niebuhr

⁹ <http://www.crossroad.to/articles2/010/discernment/7-sweet-apostolic-emergent.htm>

¹⁰ <http://apprising.org/2009/07/24/emergence-christianity-quantum-shift-to-panentheism/>

¹¹ <http://www.wayoflife.org/files/5fbb8b205f28bcd33436db81fa384e86-590.html>

¹² <http://apprising.org/2010/05/31/frank-viola-and-the-merry-monk/>

sus Manifesto) ¹³	
Leonard Sweet, Frank Viola, and The Third Way ¹⁵	*Update* Frank Viola Practices Corrupt Contemplative/Centering Prayer? ¹⁶
Leonard Sweet On The Gospel ¹⁷	Giving Leonard Sweet A Nudge ¹⁸

The Shack --- as Litmus test for the Organic and Emergent Church Leaders

If this is not enough to persuade you of the dangers of listening to these teachers/apostles besides all of their other extra-biblical quotes, the open endorsement, praise and use of the book called *The Shack* may grab your attention. If you have read *The Shack* comparing it to most orthodox Christian teachings the author shows himself to be a person disenchanted with Christianity and the Bible. He lashes out at most fundamental truths held sacred by those holding the old paradigm (Biblicist view). Here are just a few examples:

The Shack's version of the Trinity:

Pages 82-84 with a variety of ethnic descriptions as well as two of the three being female, "...a large African-American woman..." Papa God the Father. "...a small distinctively Asian woman...virtually transparent and hard to see..." Sarayu as the Holy Spirit. A man "...appeared Middle Eastern and dressed like a laborer complete with tool belt and gloves..." Jesus as a carpenter.

The Shack's version of the Holy Spirit:

Page 171 Sophia is named and defined as, "...a personification of Papa's wisdom", and "She's part of the mystery surrounding of Sarayu". The conversation between Mack and Jesus concerning Sophia is as follows with a few inconsequential details left out (such as Mack stopping to tie his shoes): Mack asks if she is God too, making four of them. Jesus says no, there are only three of us. "Sophia is a personification of God's wisdom". Mack says, "Oh, like in Proverbs, where wisdom is pictured as a woman calling out in the streets, trying to find anyone who'll listen to her?" Jesus: "That's her". Mack: "But...she seemed so real". Jesus: "Oh, she's quite real". "She's part of the mystery surrounding of Sarayu".

The Shack's powerless God that cannot take away pain:

Page 92 Papa is telling Mack, "Honey, there's no easy answer that will take your pain away. Believe me, if I had one, I'd use it now. I have no magic wand to wave over you and make it all better. Life takes a bit of time and a lot of relationship".

The nature of *The Shack's* God:

Page 112, teaching pantheism, "God, who is the ground of all being, dwells in, around, and through all things..."

These are not isolated quotes from *The Shack*! Please read the following on our site:

[Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth Exposes the Truth about *The Shack*](#)¹⁹

***The Shack* can be used as a sort of spiritual litmus (fruit) test, whether a person is not saved, ignorant or an apostate person claiming the name of our Lord Jesus. *The Shack* plainly teaches of another God, Holy Spirit and Jesus! Both Frank Viola and Leonard Sweet endorse, praise and/or use *The Shack* in their writings, speech, or blogs along with their partners in the Emergent Church movement:**

¹⁴ <http://apprising.org/2010/06/07/frank-viola-and-corrupt-contemplative-spiritualitymysticism/>

¹³ <http://herescope.blogspot.com/search?q=confluence>

¹⁵ <http://apprising.org/2010/06/08/leonard-sweet-frank-viola-and-the-third-way/>

¹⁶ <http://apprising.org/2010/06/06/frank-viola-practices-corrupt-contemplativecentering-prayer/>

¹⁷ <http://apprising.org/2010/05/27/leonard-sweet-on-the-gospel/>

¹⁸ <http://apprising.org/2010/09/13/giving-leonard-sweet-a-nudge/>

¹⁹ <http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/BookReviews/shack.htm>

Frank Viola said, “All told: I will shamelessly throw my hat in the ring with those who are giving unqualified praise for *The Shack*. I believe that this book will make history in more ways than one. And as I’ve told Paul myself, I can’t wait until it trumps “*The Purpose Driven Life*”. At the present rate the book is selling, it won’t be too long for that to happen. Thank you, Paul Young, for writing this monumental work. The Kingdom of God is better off for it. “ Source was now dead link: <http://frankviola.wordpress.com/2008/07/28/short-book-review-of-the-shack-by-william-p-young/>

In his 2009 book *So Beautiful*, Leonard Sweet underscores his quantum “relational worldview” by favorably quoting from William Young’s *The Shack* regarding relationship.

Leonard Sweet, *So Beautiful* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2009), p. 279, #118. Source: <http://www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com/blog/?tag=leonard-sweet>

They promote a form of theosophy, meaning we can get God’s truth from any religion (everyone has something to bring to the table) – that would explain their use of Reinhold Niebuhr (referenced above) in the *Jesus Manifesto*. This is in addition to the overabundance of books being sold making merchandise of ignorant (unlearned) or apostate believers. The Bible warns us of men like this, 2 Peter 2:3 “*And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not*”.

In my readings, I see them claiming the name of Christ as Savior and His Supremacy but in the other hand denying a Biblicist view in promoting the a new paradigm. Second, an eager willingness to use non-Biblical resources and at the same time condemn many in the local churches similar practices with their traditions.

One Christian’s Perspective

Another perspective coming into focus is the exodus of many from churches both (church and members) weakened by a host of other false teachings and programs that have been brought in supplanting good preaching of the Word. These programs have left many confused, disenchanted and embittered ready to leave and join their new way (paradigm). Our site has been warning of the dangers of many programs for better than 13 years now and we believe we are starting to see the real fruit of them!

If you take Viola and Sweet at the words of their books they point you to House Church resources and even offering help to pastors abandoning or considering to abandon their God called positions! They allege to have found the right way to have church with little organization, little structure, and loose doctrine. In their “church” everyone is equal no matter your gifting.

The Organic Church is a part of the Emergent Church movement – they are in bed together co-authoring books, making appearances together and so on with those of the Emergent Church Movement. Part 2 and Part 3 will make the case. Their books act as an introduction into a variety of false teachings (linked in this article) again with direct ties to the New Apostolic Reformation²⁰. The open praise and endorsement of *The Shack* shows they stand together attacking what any Bible believing Christian holds to be true. Then use a few legitimate criticisms in their books about what is wrong with the churches today they use this to ingratiate (suck up) to those who see these problems in their churches. – For almost every church problem they appear to have an answer! Viola and Sweet both will quote big names from history (Christian and non-Christian alike) to support whatever “fix” they propose but in what I see as a strategy to undermine the authority of the local church. One example, Charles Haddon Spurgeon whom they quote at least once in a positive light in the *Jesus Manifesto* I believe would quickly repudiate the use of his name in any positive association with that book!

I sense an arrogant attitude in their writing and have experienced it firsthand from some of their disciples. Some friends, who have dealt with this movement, have compared this to a cult-like mentality and I concur!

²⁰ <http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/Psychology/vine/vineyard.htm>

This is Spiritual Warfare at the Frontlines

As this TRULY relates to spiritual warfare for the Bible Believing Christian – Rom. 16:17-18

To any Christian wavering on this topic, do you consider yourself spirit filled? Or “...tossed to and fro...” Eph. 4:14, 1 Cor. 3:1-2. Do you study your Bible? Acts 17:11, 2 Tim. 3:15. Are you a soldier for Christ as the Bible defines one? 2 Cor. 10:4-5, Eph. 6:13, (*not like those of the Domini-onist²¹ thinking of forcibly taking the world or the church*).

Consider these words from my father-in-law who was a missionary to the Lakota and Navajo Indians in days gone by, “*It is not enough to remain on the defensive, for if we elect to do so, we will, by attrition fall behind. No successful military commander ever prevailed in the long run by merely maintaining defensive emplacements*”. (Missionary Warren Williams in his unpublished booklet warning about the New Age Movement and others involved with the Latter Rain Movement and Manifest Sons of God) – Comparable to the New Apostolic Reformation mentioned earlier.

This Organic Church Movement has made more than a proverbial line in the sand. History provides a perspective during the World War Two French defense ‘Magenot Line.’ Without an offense, it allowed Germany to flank them (run around) their defense position. – However for the faithful praying saints who know the scripture, *you know the enemy cannot flank the God of the Bible with fine sounding words and eloquent speech!* While weaker brothers and sisters are falling into this apostasy with the Organic, Emergent Church Movements what we are witnessing are battle lines being redrawn with a Satanic stronghold being established as never seen before within some Church walls!

Dr. Schaeffer nailed it when showing these things as watershed events, you may not see that dividing line in the snow today but eventually they are thousands of miles apart!

The Bible told us how to recognize them and judge by the fruit. 2 Cor. 11:13 “For such [are] false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ”. The ‘Jesus’ being preached by these apostles IS ANOTHER JESUS, who permits, tolerates and even embraces false teachings as God’s truth. Doctrine (Biblical teaching) is downplayed labeling us as Pharisee or being a jaded fundamentalist when we quote scriptures in opposition to expose their false teachings! This sort of circular reasoning is common in the cults to justify and rationalize their positions and marginalize us.

My warning to those of the old Biblicist paradigm (that I count myself a part) - beware of the organic and emergent teachings the same as you would the cults! The truth does not fear examination be as the Bereans Acts 17:11 and see who is presenting the truth and who is lying!

Closing Part 1- A Battle Cry!

Christian, this is a battle cry! *Ephesians 6:12-18 gives us our directions and although much of our armor is defensive there is an offensive weapon listed. The sword of the spirit, the Word of God, it was never meant to be kept in the sheath or to be used just to protect ourselves. Any defensive armor will eventually break down if the enemy is allowed to beat upon it without pause or opposition. We, as Christian warriors must grasp our swords and go on the offensive as in 2 Cor. 10:3-5 with the Sword of the Spirit. With the armor we have, the faithful Christian has nothing to fear, for the war was won at Calvary. Battles are coming to be fought but the Word of God tells us clearly that the final victory is His. One day we will share in the rejoicing when the enemy and his troops are confined to their POW compound for eternity.* (Missionary Warren Williams in his unpublished booklet warning about the New Age Movement)

My father-in-law was a man ahead of his time not realizing fully what a threat he saw with these people when he, likened them [the New Agers] “*to a large fishnet. It is a loose network of individual knots and strings, having no central point, headquarters, clearly defined leader, (in the human sense), or chain of command. As with a fishnet, each segment is self-sufficient. A knot within a fishnet can be cut, but the overall integrity of the net is not affected*”. The same can be said of the

²¹ <http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/Psychology/cor/>

Emergent Church and Organic Church types based on the evidence here and in their books showing they are nothing more than closet New Agers (false teachers) in their doctrine at best or the wolves in sheep's clothing the real apostles warned us about!

2. The Way of The Organic Church: Part 2

by John Beardsley - March 3, 2011

1Ki 18:21 "And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD [be] God, follow him: but if Baal, [then] follow him. And the people answered him not a word".

One of the mantras of the neo-evangelical is "All truth is God's truth"²² versus the Biblicist Five Solas. The Biblicist would state God's truth is the 'true' truth only found in scriptures - *Sola Scriptura*. The term of "true truth" was a phrase presented in the past by the late Dr. Francis Schaeffer. Dr. Schaeffer warned years ago about the compromise we are witnessing today:

"Here is the great evangelical disaster - the failure of the evangelical world to stand for truth as truth. There is only one word for this - namely accommodation: the evangelical church has accommodated to the world spirit of the age. First, there has been accommodation on Scripture, so that many who call themselves evangelicals hold a weakened view of the Bible and no longer affirm the truth of all the Bible teaches - truth not only in religious matters but in the areas of science and history and morality. As part of this, many evangelicals²³ are now accepting the higher critical methods in the study of the Bible. Remember, it was these same methods which destroyed the authority of the Bible for the Protestant church in Germany in the last century, and which have destroyed the Bible for the liberal in our own country from the beginning of this century. And second, there has been accommodation on the issues, with no clear stand being taken even on matters of life and death" (37). Francis Schaeffer, *The Great Evangelical Disaster*²⁴

I believe it is no coincidence these men lean so heavily on the liberal theologians (as covered in Part 1) and what is often referred to as post-modernism for the church or known as the Emerging/Emergent Church teachings. As you read you may experience what feels like a mountainous road with new doctrines going on pretty steep inclines and declines (mixing of liberal theology and mysticism), a number of twists and turns (confusing ideas to make it exciting), plus a bit of rebellious thrill seeking off-road – to places far outside the bounds of sound Biblical teachings. I do my best to keep what the authors present in context with a number of quotes with implications that go well beyond the issue of accommodation to matters of life and death as it relates to knowing Christ as Saviour.

The Tree of Life (as defined by the New Paradigm/Organic View)

Two of the Organic Church leaders present a rather unique view of scriptures opposing the Biblicist paradigm. Of their numerous books, *The Jesus Manifesto* published in 2010 drives this point home. I enter into evidence the following quotations from *The Jesus Manifesto* by Frank Viola and Leonard Sweet and *From Eternity to Here* by Frank Viola that was published in 2009, a year before *The Jesus Manifesto*. The wild ride ahead provides a number of insights so please strap in and read through each section to understand what they state or imply:

- a. *The Jesus Manifesto* states we (mankind) have a choice of two trees for salvation: one is the tree of self-determination that we can decide what is right or wrong. The second is, "The tree of life was God's own life made accessible to human beings. Today, the tree of life is the Lord Jesus Christ" (p. 129).

²² <http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/Introduction/atgt.htm>

²³ <http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/Psychology/neo.htm>

²⁴ <http://www.amazon.com/Great-Evangelical-Disaster-Francis-Schaeffer/dp/0891073086>

Yes, we indeed must surrender to God, repenting of all of our self-will and SIN²⁵ – I do not see sin addressed in a Biblical way here. Sin is reduced to self-will and self-determination that we can be like God falling for the serpent’s promise.

The Choice of Two Trees in chapter 8 pages 129 -131 continue:

b. The trees as defined by *The Jesus Manifesto* page 129 states that “...the tree of the knowledge of good and evil can be understood by the serpent’s promise...” that we can decide for ourselves what is good and evil. Then proceeds, “Eating from the tree of life meant receiving the uncreated life of God into oneself. The tree of life was God’s own life made accessible to human beings. Today, the tree of life is the Lord Jesus Christ”.

On the surface the quote above almost sounds like the Biblical position but *The Jesus Manifesto* continues,

c. *The Jesus Manifesto* on page 130 clarifies “Receiving Christ is simply taking the first bite from the right tree”. Then followed by numerous platitudes about how many churches simply teach to imitate Christ, act like Christ, try to do good as the Gospel, (which even a babe in Christ knows is not the Gospel). *The Jesus Manifesto* states what the Gospel is for a person, “Instead, he allows the life of God to flow within and through him. He *yields* to the instincts, promptings, and energy of that God-life”.

The Jesus Manifesto sounds as if it is turning the salvation experience into some sort of mystical experience “...receiving the uncreated life of God into oneself” and “...energy of that God-life” but considering the authors are so steeped in the emergent teachings it is not a surprise to me. Why not stick to scriptures?

The Jesus Manifesto attempts to build a case by stating those who CHOOSE to intellectually discern good from evil and try to do good is the same as following the serpent’s lie that we are not living by the life of God and must go to the tree of life as they define it:

d. “1. The choice to intellectually know good from evil and to try to do good = the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. [or] 2. Living by the life of God, which is goodness itself = the tree of life” Page 130.

This is preceded by a rather odd remark, “You see, “good” is a form of life. And only God is good”. Where will you read in scripture, “good is a form of life?” – Still looking into the source of that idea perhaps Aristotle but certainly not from God’s word!

You may want to stop and argue that only the spiritual man/woman can understand spiritual things of God, I am not debating that point (1 Co 2:10-16). *The Jesus Manifesto* juxtaposes the scriptures saying, “Mark it down: the knowledge of good is the accepted counterfeit to living by life (p130). The next line states:

e. “The Christian religion¹⁸ is built on the tree of the knowledge of good and evil”. The footnote #18 in the back of *The Jesus Manifesto* defines the word religion in this statement as, “We are not defining “religion” the way the apostle James did in James 1. There the word religion means “worship”. We are instead using the word to mean a system of human thought, belief, and practice that typically involves a higher power”. They state at this level we can compare the Christian religion to other religions of the world and how we may believe we have God under control through our knowledge of religion.

The problem with that thinking is anyone presenting a doctrinal teaching does not fit *The Jesus Manifesto* definition, James 1:27 states, “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, [and] to keep himself unspotted from the world”.

Keeping the verse from the Apostle James in context together with the quotes above a – e, *The Jesus Manifesto*’s answer is:

²⁵ <http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/Introduction/repent.htm>

f. *The Jesus Manifesto* page 131, “The Christian religion teaches that the Bible answers virtually every question that’s brought to the sacred text. The problem with this line of thought is that the true God cannot fit into anyone’s box”.

Here *The Jesus Manifesto* breaks away from scripture and begins to reveal what they are saying. Christians would agree the Bible is God’s Word but these men teach the Bible PLUS new revelations, support liberal theology, the use of psychology (Viola is a psychologist) and a heavy leaning on mystical teachings of the Emergent Church. *The Jesus Manifesto* is really just old Modernistic poison in a new sugar coat! J. Gresham Machen, in *What is Faith?* states, “The retrograde, anti-intellectual (*sic*) movement, called Modernism, a movement which really degrades the intellect by excluding it from the sphere of religion, will be overcome, and thinking will again come to its rights” (p. 18). The Bible is God’s box?! - If the Bible is a box not even the visible contents of the known universe begin to reveal all is contained therein!

g. *The Jesus Manifesto* continues, “Yet many Christians have turned the Bible into a form of the knowledge of good and evil. They approach the Bible as raw material by which they can gain control over their lives...” *The Jesus Manifesto* goes on to say, “This is a profoundly grievous misuse of the Bible”.

Yes, the Bible does reveal to us the knowledge of good and evil. However, connected with *The Jesus Manifesto* definition it would make the use of scripture to judge anything a sin against God! It is the Bible that establishes our understanding of God, consider the following Bible verses as examples:

1 Jo 2:27 “But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him”.

2 Ti 2:15 “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth”.

Ps 12:6 “The words of the LORD [are] pure words: [as] silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times”.

Ps 119:128 “Therefore I esteem all [thy] precepts [concerning] all [things to be] right; [and] I hate every false way”.

Ps 119:140 “Thy word [is] very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it”.

The Jesus Manifesto teaches what I call ‘a facsimile of Christianity’ by neglect of the Bible, doctrine and judging/discerning according to the Bible. The Bible is the Word of God. If you approach the Bible with the correct premise we are not eating from the Tree of Life, but we are part of the Vine:

John 15:1-8 “I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples”.

Our doctrine must be established by the Bible, there is no other trustworthy measure! There are more than 50 references in scripture concerning doctrine and living according to it as part of the Vine:

Titus 2:7-8 “In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine [shewing] uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you”.

The Jesus Manifesto next goes off road taking one curve too many:

h. *The Jesus Manifesto*, Page 131 “Jesus didn’t misuse the Scriptures to gain control and predictability in His own life. To Him, the Scriptures were simply the joystick on the Father’s controller. **They were the instrument through which He got to know His Father better and to discover how to live out His mission**”. (Bold emphasis mine)

Did Jesus the Son of God have to “...discover how to live out His mission”? There is no basis for such a thing in scripture!

Further connecting the dots to the quotes above, *The Jesus Manifesto* states:

- i. Page 137, “The Bible does not offer a plan or a blueprint for living”
- j. Page 138, “The Bible does not hit just one note for sixty-six books. It speaks anew to every age. It should be read in the light of new information and fresh discoveries”. [New revelations for today read previous quotations]
- k. Page 139, It [the Bible] must also be understood in community, not as an individual. Both Testaments were written to communities and can only be rightly understood within that same context”. – Stating that only a few of the books were written to individuals.
- l. Page 142, “The authentic Christian life, therefore, is not an individual pursuit. It’s a corporate journey. For all of today’s talk of “community”, what matters in life is still primarily played out in a “Youniverse” of inward, self-certifying scrutiny and the privacy of subjective illumination, not dimensions of biblical tradition and community”.

One word I personally use to describe *The Jesus Manifesto* is, sophistry, defined as “reasoning that is superficially plausible but actually fallacious [his masterful but irresponsible sophistry]” (Merriam-Webster Unabridged, 2002).

Who Jesus Christ is According to Frank Viola - Writing Together with Leonard Sweet

Next on this off-road drive, page 141 presents a different line of thought, “Jesus Christ cannot be separated from His church. While Jesus is distinct from His Bride, He is not separate from her. **She is, in fact, His very own body in the earth**”. [bold emphasis mine] Then on page 143 following some discussion on 1 Co 12:1-3 how “the church is Jesus Christ in corporate expression” *The Jesus Manifesto* continues quoting the non-Christian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who said regarding the church, [is] “Christ existing as community”. Later *The Jesus Manifesto* says, “Practically, this means that we know Jesus Christ through one another, not just by ourselves. We see Him, hear Him, touch Him, taste and smell Him through our sisters and brothers within whom He dwells”.

A search where *The Jesus Manifesto* writers get this thinking one only needs to look at Frank Viola’s book published a year earlier in 2009 *From Eternity to Here* regarding the “choice of two trees” and it goes further by teaching:

“It’s worth noting that Paul never speaks of the “body of Christians”. He always uses the phrase the “body of Christ”. For Paul, the body of Christ is a particular person. It’s not a metaphor. Paul never says the church is *like* His body. No, we *are* His body. Each member is the physical complement, the extension, of the same person, Jesus Christ. And we happen to be the only body He has” (Frank Viola, *From Eternity to Here* Page 266).

If you did not catch what Viola was saying he continues:

“Paul’s idea is not that the Head is somehow screwed onto the body. His idea is that Christ embodies the church. The risen Christ is a living, inclusive, “more-than-individual” personality. The church is a corporate entity that is made up of diverse individuals. It is a person, living in and expressing Himself through His many members.

Put another way, the church is the visible image of the invisible Lord. It is the corporate Christ. It is Christ in collective human expression. To Paul’s mind, the church in Corinth was none other than Jesus Christ in the city of Corinth. Paul’s apostolic ministry was built upon this very revelation. And it comes screaming through all of his letters, including 1 Corinthians” (Frank Viola, *From*

Eternity to Here Page 267). --- Note: these quotes from pages 266 and 267 while not identical are nearly the same as *The Jesus Manifesto* pages 142- 143.

Turn the page and again on the following page the added step:

“For Paul, the church is the embodiment of the risen Jesus on earth. **It’s the actual body of Christ present in the world, His physical presence on the planet.** When a local body of believers understands and believes this, the New Testament will become an open book to them. It will also affect the way they experience and practice their church life” (Frank Viola, From Eternity to Here Page 268). [Emphasis in bold mine]

The sources of these teachings are men Viola quotes often: Watchman Nee, Witness Lee, Bill Freeman, and T. Austin Sparks to name a few. A Google search reveals only a few places where this doctrine has been taught and originates from what is called “The Local Church Movement” (more later on that movement – in short teaches one church in every city following the teachings of Witness Lee) In response to a debate on the topic online Viola gives us the sources as well: (*Copied exactly as in the links below*)

“17) Ben’s view reduces the term —body of Christ to a very poor and weak metaphor. Paul’s use of the phrase doesn’t map at all to this. The statements about the body being totally separate from the head are addressed above in my discussion on our union with Christ. The body and the head are distinct, but they are not separate. John A.T. Robinson, Dietrich Bonhoeffer (scholars) as well as Watchman Nee and T. Austin-Sparks (more popular writers) have written extensively about the intimate union between the head and the body. This union is an actual, real, and living thing. It’s not metaphorical. Paul says so much in 1 Cor. 12:12. I recommend Bill Freeman’s excellent book, —The Church is Christ and T. Austin-Sparks’ —God’s Spiritual House. In effect, Ben sees our relationship to Christ as purely external. This is a monumental subject; but the fact that Ben and I differ so much on it reveals why our views of ecclesiology are so profoundly different”. Posted on Viola’s blog: www.ptmin.org/FV_BW.pdf <http://benwitherington.blogspot.com/2008/09/frank-coda.html>

Starting from the first “scholar” referenced, the Bishop John A.T. Robinson on this topic above by Viola, Dr. Walter Martin made this comment,

[Episcopal] Bishop [John] A.T. Robinson cannot be unfrocked by the Anglican Church despite the fact that he is a living devil when it comes to Christian theology—denying everything and turning the faith of people into darkness. Do you know why they can’t unfrock A.T. Robertson; because [Episcopal leadership] is as heretical as he is. Therefore they can’t touch him...” (Walter Martin Religious InfoNet, CD ROM)

Next as for Dietrich Bonhoeffer²⁶?! The 1996 article on Biblical Discernment Ministries ties Bonhoeffer to Robinson and more:

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945) was a neo-orthodox German theologian, pastor, preacher, radio broadcaster, and prolific writer in the 1930s and early-1940s, during the rise, rule, and downfall of Adolph Hitler. He was greatly fascinated with neo-orthodox thought, theology, and terminology, and was greatly influenced by the major theologian of neo-orthodoxy, Karl Barth (1886-1968).

Bonhoeffer’s writings are credited with helping to father the “Death of God” theology which was popularized by the Anglican Bishop John A.T. Robinson in the decade of the 1960s. Bonhoeffer was in reality a practical atheist and a religious humanist who denied virtually every cardinal doctrine of the historic Christian faith (Letters and Papers from Prison, ed. Eberhard Bethge, New York: Macmillan Co., 1972, pp. 9-12).

Bonhoeffer readily acknowledged “the debt he owes to liberal theology”. **Declaring that it was impossible to know the objective truth about Christ’s real nature and essence, Bonhoeffer proclaimed that God was dead.** Moreover, Bonhoeffer believed that the true Christian was the confessing believer who totally immersed his life in the secular world, becoming a secular Christian. Rejecting the objective unalterable moral standards of the Bible, Bonhoeffer proclaimed a situational ethics -- that right and wrong are determined solely by the “loving obligations of the mo-

²⁶ <http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/exposes/bonhoeffer/general.htm>

ment” (Letters and Papers from Prison, ed. Eberhard Bethge, New York: Macmillan Co., 1972, pp. 9-12, 378; Ethics, pp. 38, 186; No Rusty Swords, pp. 44-45).

If you are astounded about the sources here are the others mentioned, Viola references goes on to Watchman Nee and Witness Lee of the Local Church Movement known for its unbiblical views on the Trinity that sound remarkably like the view presented by Viola. This view is at least comparable to a heresy known as Modalism/Sabellianism originating in the third century regarding the Trinity and I believe it is no coincidence Viola references material from Witness Lee in *From Eternity to Here*.

In the book *The New Cults*, Dr. Walter Martin stated, “Witness Lee teaches that the church, the Body of Christ, *is* Christ, and is becoming more and more “full” of God, to the point where eventually the church *is* God manifest in the flesh, fulfilling God’s original intention to “work Himself into man”” (Page 404). Dr. Martin references several items from Witness Lee, two that specifically relate:

Speaking of the Church and Christ: “in number we are different, but in nature we are exactly the same”. Witness Lee, *The All-Inclusive Christ* page 103.

“This Christ has expanded from one Person to thousands and thousands of persons. He was once the individual Christ, but in Acts He has become a corporate Christ”. Witness Lee, *Life Study in Matthew, Message One (Stream Publishers)*, page 3.

Connect *The Jesus Manifesto* together with the teachings of the Local Church Movement! *The Jesus Manifesto* states, “The earth awaits a body of Christians in every city who will receive Jesus utterly and completely. A body who will esteem Him above everything else, giving Him His rightful place of supremacy” (pages 158-159). More information in summation below but this sounds like dangerous Dominionist teaching not found in scriptures! The other two references by Frank Viola to Bill Freeman and T. Austin Sparks I may include in part 3 but enough said!

Summation of the evidence presented:

1. *The Jesus Manifesto* paints Christians with a broad brush as the world does; no definitive line between true and false believers, doctrines, and denominations.
2. The reader is introduced to words typically used by mystics and new agers by referring to a person who got saved as experiencing the “...energy of that God-life”.
3. Marginalizing of Biblicist position (Christians relying on the Bible), referring to it as going to the tree of knowledge of good and evil.
4. A presentation of doctrine that anyone holding God to what the Bible teaches about His nature is to put Him into a box, denying the sufficiency of scripture, and denying the Biblicist paradigm.
5. Following the logic of #4 with the denial of Biblical sufficiency leads us to the doctrine where others have something to bring to the table (extra-Biblical sources) – that is not Christianity but theosophy; (numerous extra-biblical sources used by them)
6. That we know Christ through our experiences and through our brothers and sisters without mention of scriptures. Refer to #4 – new revelations are encouraged contrary to scriptures.
7. For #3 and #4 Viola and Sweet, clarify Christians cannot judge according to scriptures calling it “a profoundly grievous misuse of the Bible”.
8. They deny the Biblical Jesus by presenting a Jesus ignorant to His mission on Earth!
9. Following the logic of *The Jesus Manifesto* and *From Eternity to Here*, those of the Biblicist paradigm have it wrong about the very identity of the body of Christ. Additionally at least Viola promotes a rather bizarre view that the body of Christ is the Church physically.
10. Closely resembles the Local Church Movement and teachings of Witness Lee referred to as “cultic” by the late Dr. Walter Martin with regard to the teachings of the Trinity and more.

11. A Local Church Movement type teaching that, “The earth awaits a body of Christians in every city who will receive Jesus utterly and completely” (Page 158). The opposite of the Bibli-cist paradigm and most traditional Christian teachings who are awaiting Christ to return as He said would. This point shows these teachings align closely with other dangerous false teachings, such as preparing the earth for Christ’s kingdom fitting of NAR, Dominionism, Latter Rain, and Manifest Sons of God – the implications are shocking!

Addressing a crucial doctrine of the Manifest Sons of God, in the book *Vengeance Is Ours*, Albert Dager provides more insight to this being nothing new, “*Some who have been infected by the Manifest Sons of God teachings even believe He will not return physically, but rather that Christ and the Church are becoming one in nature and essence, and that the Church, as the “on-going incarnation of God”, is Christ on earth (page 70)*”.

To my readers, I am sure this list is not exhaustive of the items above! There are more problems with *The Jesus Manifesto* throughout the book, which I have not touched on, including, the individual teachings of Frank Viola and Leonard Sweet. This part covered only the most alarming problems jumping off the pages.

I present to you that the section covering “The Choice of Two Trees” in both *The Jesus Manifesto* and *From Eternity to Here* is a red herring argument (fallacy). It is a mixing of error (deliberate sophistry or not) leading the naïve’ reader to believe a Biblical Christian is just religious and really not a Christian!

Who Is the Pharisee?

- The Pharisaical Comparison a Continued Attack of the Biblicist Christian

In other articles I have asked the question who is the Pharisee? What were Pharisees known for? *The Jesus Manifesto* basically states they are those who saw themselves better than everyone else going to great lengths to separate themselves as holy. *The Jesus Manifesto* claims the Pharisees were the self-appointed guardians of the Judaic religion. However, the Pharisees²⁷ added to the scriptures with a number of burdensome rules no one could live up to. The Pharisees brought commercialism into the temple and the list goes on. Funny thing is *The Jesus Manifesto* compares the Pharisees as those living by the tree of good and evil, akin to their statements against Biblicist Christians in defense of their book to sell yet another copy – making merchandise of believers!

The Jesus of the Bible gives plenty of warning about the leaven of the Pharisees. The leaven is in the myriad of extra-biblical quotes from mystics, including a teaching from those recognized as being cultic by Dr. Walter Martin! An illustration comes to mind of an infection in the body, one small area may be affected today but left unattended without antibiotics can spread to the rest of the body and kill you. As a Bible believing Christian we need to be as the Bereans (Acts 17:11) and we need to refute these insidious lies of Satan for what they are.

Based on the evidence presented, it is my opinion these teachers are individuals claiming the name of Jesus to restore the church to what it ‘should be’ but like the cults they redefine who God is compared with the Biblicist position, including the Person of Jesus Christ, His relationship with His Father, and Holy Spirit. Like their friends of the Emergent Church, they blend liberal theology, psychology, mysticism, and new age teachings. PLEASE remember to tie part 1 of this series to part 2 – these same men give a glowing endorsement of the heretical/blasphemous book *The Shack*²⁸, which ironically redefines the Trinity! These men may use a number of Christian connotative words in their teachings but mean different things by them as presented here. The Bible gives the strongest condemnation to those who despite (insult) the grace of God through the false teachings of His very Person! If ever there are some men who need to turn away (repent) of their teachings Frank Viola and Leonard Sweet are two of them!

A post on Herescope June 21, 2008 addressing the leaven of (error)²⁹: “Dr. Harry Ironside, pastor of Chicago’s Moody Memorial Church from 1930-1948, emphasizes the fact that truth mixed with

²⁷ <http://www.wayoflife.org/database/fundamentalistpharisees.html>

²⁸ <http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/BookReviews/shack.htm>

²⁹ <http://herescope.blogspot.com/search?q=THE+SHACK+%26+Its+New+Age+Leaven+ironside>

error results in “all error” — a direct refutation of the Emergent Church teaching to find “truth” wherever it may be found — including books like *The Shack*²⁸. Ironside wrote:

“Error is like leaven, of which we read, ‘A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.’ Truth mixed with error is equivalent to all error, except that it is more innocent looking and, therefore, more dangerous. God hates such a mixture! Any error, or any truth-and-error mixture, calls for definite exposure and repudiation. To condone such is to be unfaithful to God and His Word and treacherous to imperiled souls for whom Christ died”. (Exposing Error: Is It Worthwhile)

Heb 10:29 KJV “Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?”

Ga 1:6 KJV “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel”:

Parting Thoughts for My Readers

I take exception with their choice of the Garden of Eden to build their philosophy on “The Choice of Two Trees”. Looking at scripture on this topic, *Genesis 2:9* “*And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil*”.

When Adam and Eve were in the garden, they did not know sin; they lived in pure innocence with a command not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Later the Devil as a serpent deceived them to commit sin. Here is the crux of the matter! Adam and Eve’s decision to sin changed everyone giving us the sin nature that would require a Saviour, God’s Son who came and died for all who would believe. Satan’s lie to Eve was that she is going to be like God; the experiential knowledge from eating of the tree is not what defines God.

The tree was a fork in the road but does not equate to the Bible as painted by *The Jesus Manifesto*. The Bible is a huge part of the Christian’s tree of life, it is God’s Word, pure, and holy. If we cannot trust and rely on it as a pattern (blueprint) for sound Christian living we do not have Christianity, only some sort of facsimile of it. If you choose to ignore the Bible or treat it with contempt as if it is not relevant for today, or you choose to follow *The Jesus Manifesto* which says, “...It should be read in the light of new information and fresh discoveries...” – this is Emergent/Emerging Church doctrine not Biblical doctrine. God is the One who said He never changes and just how do I know that? I know that from the Bible, God’s Word – not the heaps of books being pushed at us from the Emerging, Emergent and Organic crowd³⁰. *Hebrews 13:8-9* “*Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever. Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein*”. The Bible speaks plenty to such false teachings and we should heed the warning:

2 Corinthians 11:1-4 “*Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly: and indeed bear with me. For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. **But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.** For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or [if] ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with [him]*”.

Any objective observer of the strange doctrines put forth and the rewriting of fundamental doctrines of Christianity coming from this Emergent movement compared to Biblicist teachings demonstrate we are thousands of miles apart since the watershed event took place as described in part 1.

I am planning to write a part 3 in the next couple of months to address even more of the dangers of the Organic Church. If you have encounters with some of the teachings from this movement please feel free to pass them along as the research continues.

³⁰ <http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/Psychology/emerge/>

The Way of The Organic Church - Appendix

By John Beardsley - August 30, 2011 / Updated October 2011 with added names

Birds of the Feather Gathering Together- The Starlings of The Jesus Manifesto

Here is the rather “Sorted Line up” of 26 43 published endorsers of *The Jesus Manifesto*, is this going too far to show these endorsements? Or is this part of a group of Birds of the Feather Gathering Together?

These birds I would compare the behavior to that of the invasive European Starlings, they have to thank their fellow species of birds for the nests they steal driving off native species, they mimic other birds, are boisterous, loud, they are hated by farmers and for the mess the awful mess they leave behind everywhere they go.

Compare that spiritually speaking, picking off and devouring the good fruit of the churches replacing the churches (nests) for their way of doing church patting each other on the back, fleecing believers of their funds with their conferences, books and other wares... They leave believers bewildered, dazed and confused with their assorted Emergent, Ecumenical, Organic and Liberal teachings. Need I mention the awful mess they leave behind as they introduce so many into a postmodern paradigm for Christians!?

Quoting directly from the Jesus Manifesto book site:

“Endorsements by Ed Young, Matt Chandler, Rowan Williams, Jack Hayford, Shane Claiborne, Ed Stetzer, Calvin Miller, Reggie McNeal, Gregory A. Boyd, Mark Batterson, David Fitch, Dan Kimball, Margaret Feinberg, Scot McKnight, Mark Chironna, Francis Frangipane, Todd Hunter, John R. Franke, Alan Hirsch, Chris Seay, Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, Anne Jackson, Steve Brown, Ken Ulmer, Tommy Barnett, Sally Morgenthaler, and others”.

---- I do not see any notable Bible Believing teachers in that list!!! But check out this flock of Starlings:

Here are just some of the links more will be added this is a work in progress -

1. Ed Young

DR. ED YOUNG PROMOTING CONTEMPLATIVE SPIRITUALITY/MYSTICISM FOR HIS SOUTHERN BAPTISTS

<http://apprising.org/2011/07/14/dr-ed-young-promoting-contemplative-spiritualitymysticism-for-his-southern-baptists/>

ED YOUNG, JR SCANDAL CONTINUES

<http://apprising.org/2010/04/29/ed-young-jr-scandal-continues/>

ED YOUNG, JR PAYS HOMAGE TO JOEL OSTEEN

<http://apprising.org/2010/02/19/ed-young-jr-pays-homage-to-joel-osteen/>

When Did the Trinity Become Non-Essential Doctrine? by Dave Miller on February 21, 2011 --
- Young together with TD Jakes, Joyce Meyer

<http://sbcvoices.com/when-did-the-trinity-become-non-essential-doctrine/>

2. Matt Chandler

ACTS 29 PASTOR MATT CHANDLER ON BEING A REFORMED CHARISMATIC

<http://apprising.org/2010/05/20/acts-29-pastor-matt-chandler-on-being-a-reformed-charismatic/>

(Video part of link)

3. Rowan Williams

Archbishop - or Arch-heretic? Stone of Triumph - or Stone of Shame?

<http://www.thechristianexpositor.org/page118.html>

Williams was variously described as a pro-homosexual, yet supporters described him as ‘intellectual, radical and holy.’ Williams’ was said to be content with the 1998 Lambeth Conference declaration against homosexual unions and the ordination of practicing homosexuals...”

However is on the record: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rowan_Williams#Gay_bishops
“Gay bishops Further information: Homosexuality and Anglicanism

“Though acknowledging that he was simplifying the Church’s position, Williams said in September 2010 “There’s no problem about a gay person who’s a bishop. It’s about the fact that there are traditionally, historically, standards that the clergy are expected to observe”. Asked what was wrong with a homosexual bishop having a partner, he said: “I think because the scriptural and traditional approach to this doesn’t give much ground for being positive about it”.[45]”

4. Jack Hayford

<http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/exposes/hayford/general.htm> “ Hayford praised Richard Foster for his efforts in bringing together all the streams of the church. (Foster is the head of Renovaré, an international ecumenical organization that espouses the use of guided imagery and visualization³¹ as means of obtaining “personal spiritual renewal”.)”<http://apprising.org/?s=Jack+Hayford&submit=go>
<http://www.deceptioninthechurch.com/fprophets.html#jhayford>

5. Shane Claiborne

IS SHANE CLAIBORNE A CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM?

<http://apprising.org/2010/09/26/is-shane-claiborne-a-christian-muslim/>

“Yeah, unfortunately the Bible just keeps getting in the way of their lovefest with Islam so as Campolo says:

We don’t have to give up trying to convert each other. What we have to do is show respect to one another. And to speak to each other with a sense that even if people don’t convert, they are God’s people,... (Online source)³²

Ok, we say hi to Humpty Dumpty again; right Tony, we can keep ”trying to convert” ...um, ”God’s people” and...ah, “even if people don’t convert, they are God’s people”. I see it now; after lying awake as I sleep in the light tonight, I can then start my evening tomorrow morning by taking a shower with cool, dry, hot water. Gothcha boys. And as I close this, for now, in the article I just quoted above Claiborne confesses:

When a **devout Muslim brother** asked Tony and I to have this cross-generational dialogue about interreligious cooperation for an interfaith publication, we jumped on it. (Online source³², emphasis mine)

My question is: If Shane Claiborne has a devout Muslim ”brother”, does this now make Claiborne himself a Christian-Muslim? I mean, apparently he’s in the process of approaching this in the opposite direction from those alleged hybrid Muslim-Christians, who’re practicing Muslims that supposedly ”love Jesus”. So could it be that, in Shane Claiborne, we’re witnessing a new breed hybrid of Christian-Muslims practicing Christianity but who also love Muhammad?”

6. Ed Stetzer

<http://apprising.org/2010/02/19/curious-associations-ed-stetzer-dan-kimball-and-tim-keller-missionshift/>

³¹ <http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/Psychology/inheal.htm>

³² <http://www.thesimpleway.org/about/archive/on-evangelicals-and-interfaith-cooperation/>

“Here we find along with Stetzer and Kimball, among “The framers” the further curious association of Reformed pastor Dr. Tim Keller and Alan Hirsch, who’s long been deeply involved with the Emerging/ent/ence Church rebellion against Sola Scriptura. In fact, Hirsch is the author of *The Forgotten Ways* (TFW) with its foreword by EC theologian Leonard Sweet³³ which, besides Stetzer’s carries the endorsements of EC luminaries like Andrew Jones³⁴ (aka Tall Skinny Kiwi) as well as Sweet’s good friend, and spiritual twin, Brian McLaren who says of the book:”

Every chapter has the kind of rich insight and inspiring challenge that we have come to expect from Alan Hirsch

—Brian McLaren, author of *A New Kind of Christian*, *A Generous Orthodoxy* and *The Story We Find Ourselves In*

7. Calvin Miller

<http://apprising.org/2005/10/06/the-twin-pythons-of-deception/>

Life Wide Open has just been republished in a new edition for a new set of readers. Deborah Dombrowski writes:

“In light of the fact that in David Jeremiah’s 2003 book, *Life Wide Open*, he favorably quotes feminine spiritualist Sue Monk Kidd (*When the Heart Waits*), contemplative Calvin Miller (*Into the Depths of God*), Buddhist sympathizer Peter Senge (*The Fifth Discipline*), emerging church leader, Erwin McManus, and mystic sympathizer Jim Collins, it may not be any wonder that he has partnered up with Ken Blanchard who is a board member of the Hoffman Quadrinity Process Institute and a participant in the interspiritual, New Age organization, Heartland Circle”. (<http://www.sliceoflaodicea.com/>)

8. Reggie McNeal

Connected with Leadership Network <http://leadnet.org/about/staff-info/reggiemcneal>

Tied with Rick Warren Saddleback and Peter Wagner NAR

<http://christianaudio.com/fts-the-purposeful-church-download-rick-warren-john-maxwell-peter-wagner-reggie-mcneal>

The Collapse of the Church Culture By Reggie McNeal

http://www.lutheranrenewal.org/archives/feb2005/newsletter_1.html

And showing a touch of the contemplative and very strong connections with the church growth movement teachings and George Barna:

“Reggie McNeal is scheduled to appear in the SED to promote his new Mission/Kingdom presentation in front of SED leaders. The ironic and insane thing is that Reggie is now sales pitching that “Lifestyle Evangelism/Club Membership” was a failure because of member works righteousness ‘burn out’. Now he’s pushing a softer ‘people development’ healthy alternative—**contemplative** and Missional. This is insane because it is he and other Third Party Experts, that sold that failed idea to the LCMS in the first place and the LCMS leadership ..”.

http://www.roguelutheran.com/RL/Home/Entries/2010/4/19_Wheat_Ridge_Ministries_Part_2-separating_the_wheat_from_the_shaft_&_how_the_SE_District_morphed_into_Progressivism_as_evidenced_by_the_Wellspring_Conference_Center..html

Reconnected to many of the names here:

<http://www.liveintentionally.org/2009/09/08/the-nines-free-online-leadership-conferenc/>

9. Gregory A. Boyd

<http://apprising.org/2008/12/12/greg-boyd-heretic/>

“Open theist Greg Boyd is not only gaining increasing popularity within the nearly comatose spiritually evangelical community but he’s especially soothing to the itching ears in the postli-

³³ <http://www.lighthousestrailsresearch.com/leonardsweet.htm>

³⁴ <http://tallskinnykiwi.typepad.com/>

beral cult of the Emergent Church This is evidenced by e.g. Rob Bell having Boyd come speak at his Mars Hill Bible Church”.

10. Mark Batterson

And a Google search reveals a bit of a mystic/contemplative bent: In his book, *ID: The True You* uses the mystics like many of the others here on page 54, while discussing that “Life is an eternal quest to discover who God is” and how we learn more about God over time with a nice quote by AW Tozer for legitimacy departs the Biblical and quotes the mystic Saint Teresa of Avila, “As I see it, we shall never succeed in knowing ourselves unless we seek to know God”.

But if that is not enough he uses Richard Foster well known in the area shall I say ‘modern mysticism’³⁵, emergent work and more! Batterson use him as a positive reference tying himself in with the rest of these nasty birds. *ID: The True You* pages 41, 108 or how about using Brian McLaren too? Pages 167 and 170... this is the only book I looked at and it didn’t take long to see who he flies with!

No stranger to questions either going unanswered: <http://apprising.org/2010/01/02/the-comments-that-mark-batterson-doesn%E2%80%99t-want-you-to-see/>

11. David Fitch

<http://apprising.org/2010/04/04/why-evangelicalism-is-failing-a-new-generation-as-is-the-emerging-church/> Ties back with Stetzer with his Missional stuff... And on his own site links to some of the usuals copied directly from <http://www.reclaimingthemission.com/about-david-fitch/>

Brian McLaren³⁶, Dan Brennan³⁷, Emergent Village³⁸, Jonny Baker³⁹, Julie Clawson⁴⁰, Ma-keesha Fisher⁴¹ and Tony Jones⁴² - Another of the flock...not as well known so I will move on...

12. Dan Kimball

<http://apprising.org/2011/01/01/dan-kimball-of-the-emerging-church-and-lectio-divina/>

“What’s wrong with that would be: This isn’t even Lectio Divina in the first place. The fact is, Dan Kimball is the one who writes promoting Lectio Divina, and then with no disclaimer in his teachings, he turns around and redefines what it is. Therefore, Kimball is the one who is taking things out of context, and not discernment people criticizing this practice of Counter Reformation spirituality, which I pointed out in Spread Of Contemplative Spirituality/Mysticism: Lectio Divina⁴³ most certainly does involve Contemplative/Centering Prayer⁴⁴ (CCP)—meditation in an altered state of consciousness—the main vehicle of CSM aka “silence”. You see, this practice of antibiblical ascetism—and all the so-called spiritual disciplines—would flower in the monastic traditions of apostate Roman Catholicism⁴⁵; i.e. this contributed to why the Lord would send His Reformers in the first place to bring us back to His Word”.

13. Margaret Feinberg

Positive review of Rob Bell’s Velvet Elvis

<http://www.faithfulreader.com/reviews/031026345X.asp>

Ties back to others

<http://originsproject.org/about-origins/>

³⁵ <http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/exposes/foster/foster.htm>

³⁶ <http://www.brianmclaren.net/>

³⁷ <http://danbrennan.typepad.com/>

³⁸ <http://www.emergentvillage.com/weblog/>

³⁹ <http://jonnybaker.blogs.com/>

⁴⁰ <http://julieclawson.com/>

⁴¹ <http://www.swingingfromthevine.com/>

⁴² <http://blog.tonyj.net/>

⁴³ <http://apprising.org/2010/12/08/spread-of-contemplative-spiritualitymysticism-lectio-divina/>

⁴⁴ <http://apprising.org/2008/12/keeping-you-apprised-of-contemplativecentering-prayer/>

⁴⁵ <http://apprising.org/category/roman-catholicism/>

A Contemplative Teacher – The Sacred Echo

“With renewed verve, I began studying contemplative prayer, centering prayer, and Scripture prayer. I tried praying standing up, sitting down, and lying on the floor. I committed to praying early in the morning before work, “. The Sacred Echo: Hearing God’s Voice in Every Area of Your Life - Page 16

http://books.google.com/books?id=5yzeqXsRyO0C&pg=PA16&lpg=PA16&dq=Margaret+Feinberg+contemplative&source=bl&ots=kEZZwtUfLV&sig=DJLNjJJ6lai_uA1RH3kCs4gSvAA&hl=en&ei=2eRaTvKeF8nv0gGE3smUCQ&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=5&ved=0CEUQ6AEwBA#v=onepage&q&f=false

14. Scot McKnight - also recently endorsed book by the other endorser Fitch here...

<http://apprising.org/2011/01/02/ecumenical-apologetics-weekend-of-rick-warren/>

COMMUNITY BLOG

Annual Apologetics Weekend: Who is Jesus?

Monday December 06 2010 12:00 AM | Posted by Katie Convertino



Who is Jesus?

ANNUAL APOLOGETICS WEEKEND • DECEMBER 11/12

Join five of the world's leading authorities on the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ as they deliver thought-provoking messages and help us to better answer the question, *Who is Jesus?*

Jesus Before His Birth On Earth
Saturday at 4:30 p.m.
Dr. Christopher Wright

Christopher Wright, Dr. Scot McKnight, Dr. Peter Kreeft, Dr. Greg Kouss, Dr. Philip Yancey

Really; “five of the world’s leading authorities” concerning the life of our Creator? *cough* Well, for now let’s leave aside Scot McKnight, a theologian well respected within the sinfully ecumenical neo-liberal cult of the Emergent Church aka the Emerging Church,...

15. Mark Chironna - part of wacky Elijah List and Dominion link and other ties to Viola and Sweet

Destiny-Driven Dominionism

<http://herescope.blogspot.com/2010/07/destiny-driven-dominionism.html>

<http://apprising.org/2010/10/17/rick-warren-dr-laverne-adams-and-dr-mark-chironna/>

“As Steve Lumbley of the fine online apologetics and discernment ministry [Apostasy Watch](#) points out concerning Mark Chironna, he is part of “the TBN lineup of apostate preachers”

16. Francis Frangipane

<http://www.deceptioninthechurch.com/newapostolic.html#ffrangepane>

“Francis Frangipane’s church has been involved in the laughter movement for a number of years and has written several books. Lighthouses of Prayer Quote from this page: ““God has entrusted us to fill His plans and purposes for reaching our cities for Him. He has called, chosen, and commissioned us to conquer our city”. I see nothing in scripture about conquering cities. Christ said his kingdom is not of this world. We are to preach the gospel and disciple people. Francis goes on to say - “That’s not too far-fetched to imagine. It’s happened in past revivals and it’s happening in cities today. In Resistencia, Argentina, (population 400,000) Ed Silviso and his team joined forces with many of the pastors, incorporating prayer evangelism of an entire city! (Note: This is linked to the laughter/dominionist movement - see also <http://www.generals.org/>)”.

17. Todd Hunter

<https://mkayla.wordpress.com/tag/todd-hunter/> Regarding an interview with Frank Viola this blog makes the connections for us: (more detail in link) "So Todd goes – Calvary Chapel, Vineyard, Alpha Course, "Missio", THEN claims a call to Anglican Bishop. Not to mention the influence in his life from Richard Foster and Dallas Willard! Do they ever stop and take a look at this change in the path objectively? There is a definitive falling away going on here".

18. John R. Franke - also an endorser to Fitch's latest work another endorser here propping up the work of each other

<http://apprising.org/2011/06/30/we-know-more-of-the-bible-than-you-may-think/>

I know it's not fashionable to use "proof texts" today in our postmodern culture that sees itself as so advanced in our thinking; indeed just *ahem* think, now we will readily agree that there is no such thing as an absolute truth. The reason EC philoso-theologians like John Franke tell us is because no one can ever really know anything for sure as truth is an "irreducible plurality". John Franke, [Manifold Witness: The Plurality of Truth](#)⁴⁶ [Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2009]

19. Alan Hirsch

<http://apprising.org/2011/07/29/erik-dykstra-and-the-crossing-church/>

"Jeremy Roghan now continues by testifying that even non-believers were allowed to be pastors at TCC:

There was a young man named Jeremy who was on our FIT team. He was a seeker who started going to The Crossing. One week he took me aside and told me that he was planning on moving to Florida and did not think that he "buys" into this Jesus thing.

The following week, he was running around telling everyone that he was now going to become the next "campus pastor". I asked my leader what was going on, and how that it Biblical, he said that Eric thinks that Jeremy H. needs to be challenged to push him along in faith. ([Online source](#))⁴⁷

Before you're tempted to write this off, consider that the PD/SS sector believes in what they call pre-conversion discipleship; yes, you read that right. Consider the following from emerging missiologist Alan Hirsch:

we need to reframe evangelism within the context of discipleship...even "the Twelve" (and "the Seventy") were all what we would call "pre-conversion disciples".

<http://apprising.org/2011/01/16/mark-driscoll-acts-29-network-the-emerging-church/>

Emerging Incarnational, concerned with structural revision within the church. Downplay large group worship and like house church. Alan Hirsch, Lance Ford, Bob Hyatt, Neil Cole, Jonathon Cambell. ([Online source](#), emphasis his)"

20. Chris Seay

<http://apprising.org/2010/11/20/dan-kimball-on-the-record/> Doug Pagitt, McLaren, and others such as Chris Seay, Tony Jones, Dan Kimball, and Andrew Jones stayed together and continued speaking and writing together as friends.

21. Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove

<http://apprising.org/2011/06/30/in-touch-magazine-of-charles-stanley-promoting-contemplative-new-monasticism/>

Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove is a writer, speaker, and activist who is a leader in the "New Monastic" movement. He lives in North Carolina at the Rutba House, a new monastic community.

⁴⁶ <http://www.amazon.com/Manifold-Witness-Plurality-Living-Theology/dp/0687491959#>

⁴⁷ <http://ourcrossingstory.blogspot.com/2011/07/time-has-come-to-share-our-story.html>

See for yourself from his site: [Author, Speaker and New Monastic](#)⁴⁸ for more on why this is something to beware of many articles here on the Christian Research Network:

<http://christianresearchnetwork.com/?cat=227>

22. Anne Jackson

Haven't heard of her but will let the endorsements speak for themselves

<http://www.permissiontospeakfreely.com/endorsements/>

Endorsements from [Donald Miller \(Blue Like Jazz\)](#)⁴⁹, Shane Claiborne, Dan Kimball, c-rockers Charlie Lowell and Dan Haseltine of Jars of Clay, [Craig Gross Pastor](#)⁵⁰, XXXchurch.com,

23. Steve Brown - <http://stevebrownetc.com/> clearly a friend to Tony Campolo

<http://stevebrownetc.com/our-favorite-lib/> and others friendly to the homosexual movement finding ways into the church

<http://teampyro.blogspot.com/2010/02/steve-browns-grace-in-church-course-at.html>

“Brown says people should burn Dave Hunt’s book that criticizes Richard Foster (because Foster is a hero of Brown’s); and he told a whole audience to burn John MacArthur’s *The Gospel According to Jesus* — when he hadn’t even read it! So Hunt’s bad, MacArthur’s bad, yet...”

And one other quote fitting this same site: “Brown frequently speaks of how much insight he’s gotten from this or that Roman Catholic or otherwise heretical writer, on various aspects of Christian living”.

24. Ken Ulmer

<http://apprising.org/2011/08/20/adrian-rogers-preaching-symposium-dr-philip-davis/>

I filled you in on the non-gospel preached by United Methodist Church minister Leonard Sweet, a leading theologian who helped shape the Emerging Church, in the aforementioned Leonard Sweet Set For Adrian Rogers Preaching Symposium. “Bishop” Kenneth Ulmer is:

... the Senior Pastor-Teacher of Faithful Central Bible Church in Inglewood, California...[and] the Presiding Bishop over the Macedonia International Bible Fellowship,... (Online source) Ulmer is also a well known figure in the heretical Word Faith (WF) movement; unfortunately the video and audio is out of sync, but you’ll still hear Ulmer with classic WF fare including supposedly receiving direct revelation from God and claiming to speak things into existence:

<http://apprising.org/2006/12/28/faith-forward-straight-into-the-worship-of-man/>

Also representing the dominion theology of the “King’s Kids” in the Word Faith Church section of the ECoD is another “Bishop” called Kenneth Ulmer senior pastor of Faithful Central Bible Church where they’re “building champions for divine deployment”. FFF informs us Ulmer “will share lessons he’s learned from the expanding urban ministry of Los Angeles’ Faithful Central Bible Church, which purchased the Great Western Forum for its 20,000+ congregation...[and] discuss how churches can usher in social and economic change in metropolitan areas”. Well, if we’re not going to preach the actual Gospel of Jesus Christ our demonically deployed champions might as well make those poor souls comfortable before they’re off to an eternity in Hell.

25. Tommy Barnett –

<http://www.dreamcenter.org/about-us/founders/>

“Is the Senior Pastor of one of the fastest growing churches in America, Phoenix First Assembly of God, in Phoenix, Arizona. The church is known as The Church with a Heart, because of its 260 outreach ministries”. In September 1994, Tommy Barnett, with his son Matthew Barnett, launched the Los Angeles Dream Center as a home missions project. --- Wonder if they know what he endorsed! Does not appear to fit the typical Jesus Manifesto endorsers... Well except using a number of female pastors in one conference listed. From a site no friend of ours researching the New Apostolic Reformation and the wacky Religious Right of C Peter Wagner and Jack Hayford I found the Jesus Manifesto endorser Pastor Tommy Barnett mentioned with a

⁴⁸ <http://jonathanwilsonhartgrove.com/>

⁴⁹ <http://apprising.org/2011/05/24/donald-miller-enneagram-and-who-feels-closer-to-god/>

⁵⁰ <http://apprising.org/2007/11/11/sex-in-christ-a-proposal-for-a-%E2%80%9CChristian%E2%80%9D-pornography/>

bit of interesting history. <http://www.talk2action.org/story/2010/3/6/95620/29842> “The Master’s Commission programs were also initiated in 1985 by **Tommy Barnett [Jesus Manifesto endorser]** at his Phoenix Assembly of God. This is now an international program for post-high school students with a curriculum in discipleship, evangelism, and spiritual warfare. In June 2008 Sarah Palin was the keynote speaker at the Master’s Commission graduation ceremony at the Wasilla Assembly of God. At the end of the ceremony the graduates were given samurai swords.

The Wasilla Assembly of God subsequently partnered with the Alaska Assemblies of God District Council to open Alaska’s first Dream Center”. ”Spiritual mapping and associated spiritual warfare techniques were pioneered and introduced into the evangelical world as a way to “take territory” by C. Peter Wagner, Ed Silvano, Cindy Jacobs, Ted Haggard, and Harold Caballeros. George Otis, Jr., producer of the Transformations series of movies, and Youth With A Mission’s John Dawson are considered the authors of the definitive texts on spiritual mapping and spiritual warfare for taking control of cities”. ”... The book includes a section on essentials for spiritual warfare by C. Peter Wagner and also includes “citywide strategies” from Ed Silvano, Tony Evans, pollster **George Barna**⁵¹ (also featured in one of the Transformations movies), George Otis, Jr., and Paul Cedar, head of Mission America Coalition. **(Barna – Pagan Christianity with Viola)**⁵¹ For those of you looking to understanding more of the “Spiritual Mapping”, ties to some of today’s politicians and more here are some links to show just how dangerous this is to your spiritual welfare!

Divorcing Baal - Part 1: Divorce and Remarriage, Political Dominion Style

<http://herescope.blogspot.com/search?q=spiritual+mapping>

Jack Hayford And C. Peter Wagner On Spiritual Mapping

<http://apprising.org/2011/08/27/jack-hayford-and-c-peter-wagner-on-spiritual-mapping/> - some really bizarre stuff with video!

26. Sally Morgenthaler

<http://apprising.org/2010/12/29/the-emerging-church-and-evolutionary-christianity/>

“You’ll see them refer to this as “transformation”, which quite literally means one will see reality in a new way. Earlier in Doug Pagitt Agrees With Evolutionary Evangelist Michael Dowd I explained to you why this CSM was so important to the EC’s evil agenda to penetrate the mainstream as its forebears in the original Cult of Liberal Theology once did the mainline. You see, mysticism is perfectly suited to the philosophy of postmodernism that now dominates much of this capricious culture in which we find ourselves; you see, as with neo-orthodoxy ala Karl Barth, postmodernism is “anti-logical” and “embraces Paradox”[1] while its deconstructionists viciously attack rational thought with what’s commonly known as irrational philosophy:

Irrational philosophies accordingly stress the will at the expense of reason, as exemplified in the existentialism of Jean-Paul Sartre or Karl Jaspers. (Online source) Now you have the background you need to understand why Ingrid Schlueter would write Emergent Church Leaders Promote Evolutionary Spirituality. Today Schlueter brings out:

Emergent Church leaders Sally Morgenthaler, Spencer Burke, Doug Pagitt and Brian McLaren are joining “Evolutionary Evangelist” Michael Dowd in the promotion of evolutionary spirituality, long taught by leading New Age gurus like Barbara Marx Hubbard”.

And there are more endorsers on the site since I put this article up in September! A few notables along the way but to endorse *The Jesus Manifesto* shows a tremendous lack of discernment or ignorance to what we have exposed in it:

⁵¹ <http://teampyro.blogspot.com/2011/08/open-letter-to-george-barna.html>

27. **Bill Easum, Church Consultant and Christian Futurist, www.churchconsultations.com** - Easum is a regular resource in a number of Leonard Sweet's books also exposed for his errors here⁵² not counting those included regarding *The Jesus Manifesto*.
28. **Phil Cooke, Author, Speaker, Filmmaker, Media Consultant, www.philcooke.com**
29. **Bishop Donald Hilliard, Jr., Senior Pastor, Cathedral International**
30. **Craig Keener, Professor of New Testament at Palmer Seminary of Eastern University; author, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary*.**
31. **Searching Together/Baptist Reformation Review**
32. **Christian Book Reviews**
33. **Book Talk Reviews**
34. **Faithful Reader Reviews**
35. **Michael Newnham, pastor and blogger, phoenixpreacher.net more here - *Update* Frank Viola Practices Corrupt Contemplative/Centering Prayer?⁵³**
36. **Brett Blair, President and Founder of Sermons.com**
37. **Robert Ricciardelli, Founder Converging Zone Network & Visionary Advancement Strategies -Also an endorser of Viola's latest book *Revise Us Again***
38. **John Voelz, songwriter, johnvoelzblog.blogspot.com**
39. **Dr. Thomas Hohstadt, FutureChurch.net**
40. **Milt Rodriguez, Author, *The Butterfly in You* and *The Community Life of God*, www.therebuilders.org**
41. **Jeremy Lopez, Founder of www.identitynetwork.net**
Prophet for hire? Send \$30 donation get a prophetic word!
"If you need a word for your life from Jeremy Lopez, just click on the paypal button below to make your love offering of \$30.00. We will then send you a word to your email as an audio download".
42. **Benny Perez, Lead Pastor, The Church at South Las Vegas, www.thechurchlv.com**
43. **Rick James, Publisher CruPress, author of *Jesus Without Religion* and *A Million Ways To Die* - (Someone who favorably quotes and uses psychiatrist/new ager M. Scott Peck⁵⁴ in at least one of his books.)**

Do we really need to go further showing more readers? You discern but use the Bible as the measure! Be as the Bereans - *Acts 17:11* "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so".

These things being done, taught, and demonstrated by the endorsers of The Jesus Manifesto shows what birds of the feather they are!

Biblical Discernment Ministries - 8/2011 / and 10/2011 updated
by John Beardsley

⁵² <http://www.wayoflife.org/files/5fbb8b205f28bcd33436db81fa384e86-590.html>

⁵³ <http://apprising.org/2010/06/06/frank-viola-practices-corrupt-contemplativecentering-prayer/>

⁵⁴ <http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/exposes/peck/general.htm>

3. The Organic Church – Doctrines of Demons and of Men: Part 3

By John Beardsley - August 30, 2011

Many call the days we live the last days, awaiting the rapture to snatch them away from this world with all the trials and tribulations but seem to forget we are also warned of an apostasy that must come first – so often we would forget! If these are not the days of apostasy Jesus Christ warned his Apostles, I'd hate to see what is! No special knowledge needed to see this, just need to read the Bible. – The New Testament paints the picture of the spiritual darkness growing today:

Matthew 24:5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

Matthew 24:11-13 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. 12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. 13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

*1 John 4:3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that [spirit] of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; **and even now already is it in the world.***

Acts 20:29-30 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 Let no man deceive you by any means: for [that day shall not come], except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

2 Thessalonians 2:10-11 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: 12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

The Naked Church

Churches who have depended on a host of experts for how to grow churches, do church, how to counsel integrating psychology, employ the world's music, and defer what is true doctrine to some programs have left the church defenseless to the attack. The church faces (or faced past-tense) an attack they are ill-prepared to fight. Your church attendees or members will undo your organized church to make it "relevant" or leave to start their own flavor with the organic "home" church. Emergent, emerging churches or organic I have shown, the roots are very similar and the names blend between both, they are closely related and at times connected.

Worldly Connections of the Organic Church to Emergent to New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) – Birds of the feather

The evidence shows when it comes to the handling of the Word of God, these teachers cannot be trusted to teach it Biblically. A God fearing, Bible reading Christian is taught to mark and avoid anyone teaching a gospel contrary to God's Word (Ro 16:17-18). Yet thousands have flocked to the teachings of the emergent churches, music, books and assorted conferences. Whether I am talking about Rick Warren, Brian McLaren, Leonard Sweet or Frank Viola (the main focus of this series), I perceive them as false apostles and deceitful workers, whether you want to categorize them as emergers, organics or whatever - I am simply calling them what the Bible calls them again based on the evidence presented.

Earlier I documented the connections of Frank Viola with the Local Church Movement (of Watchman Nee & Witness Lee and others covered in the series Part 2), which the late Dr. Walter Martin

considered “cultic”. This is very similar to their emergent church counterparts who bring in: Dominion, kingdom and restoration theology⁵⁵ with the idea the Church needs restoring (or misuses the word reforming). The evidence shows these teachings are nearly identical not only by those being put forward by Viola & Sweet but those of the radical “Third Wave” or “Seven Mountains or Spheres”⁵⁶ closely aligned with the so-called New Apostolic Reformation⁵⁷. (*More links related to these topics at end of part 3*)

Another trait of the emergent church is the extreme ecumenism where the buzz word is “dialogue” whether it is with the Mormons, homosexuals and even Muslims in an attempt to find common ground. Compromising to the point of trading off of belief systems (reading from the Quran in a Christian Church and vice-versa), tolerance saying same sex marriage is okay with God and more to bring us under one umbrella of faith saying we all worship the same god. (Little “g” intended) Why I make this point will become clear in what follows.

For a bit of off-road driving (especially for those of you who claim to be part of the Organic Church), here is one of your beloved leaders Frank Viola with connections that tie neatly into all the points made above:

1. In his latest book April 2011, *Revise Us Again*, Viola **again** demonstrates his bent toward contemplative mysticism and at the same time, ignorance of the scriptures he claims to love: (emphasis in bold mine)

People often use very different vocabulary to express the exact same thing. For instance, Watchman Nee used a unique phrase when he referred to his fellowship with the Lord. He called it “touching the Lord”. Others use the phrase “sweet communion”. Others use “divine encounter”. Others use less phenomenological phrases. To describe fixing one’s heart upon the Lord, some people use the phrase “turning to the Lord”. Others use the word “gazing”. Others say “beholding” or “looking into the face of God”. Still others say “**contemplating**”, “**centering**”, “abiding”, or “partaking”. Others describe it as “meditating”. **By and large, it’s semantics. I’ve observed this phenomenon all my Christian life. People express the same experiences differently.** (page 72).

Apprising Ministries revealed Viola’s emergent and contemplative leanings in the June 2010 article Contemplative Law, The Gospel Of Grace, And Frank Viola⁵⁸. Herescope also said in that piece,

Sweet and Viola’s book, *Jesus Manifesto*, is subtitled “Restoring the Supremacy and Sovereignty of Jesus Christ”, and it pushes the envelope on redefining Jesus, including “You can be a Jesus Manifest”.² A quick glance at the lineup of key endorsers for this book includes a list of who’s who in Emergent, the Latter Rain cult, neoevangelicalism and the New Apostolic Reformation. (Online source)

Viola’s book *Revise Us Again* only confirms his modus operandi with the quote earlier. My translation from such a glob of mumbo-jumbo emergent double-speak: Is whatever your belief system is irrelevant, what matters is your encounter with god, it is semantics to argue right and wrong or variety of differences in our belief systems. Remember Viola said, “...whether you say “contemplating”, “centering”, “abiding”, or “partaking”. Or “...meditating”. By and large, it’s semantics. People express the same experiences differently”.

2. In chapter 10 of *Revise Us Again* Viola refers the reader back to *Reimagining Church* but doesn’t say where to go in it. (*Reimagining Church* is another of his books and a follow-up to *Pagan Christianity*) There is a very notable part in *Reimagining Church*, chapter on “**Church Practice and God’s Eternal Purpose**”, under the heading, “Drawing it all together” Frank Viola quotes Miroslav Volf⁵⁹,

⁵⁵ <http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/Psychology/cor/dominion.htm>

⁵⁶ <http://herescope.blogspot.com/search?q=Seven+Mountains+>

⁵⁷ <http://www.letusreason.org/latrain21.htm>

⁵⁸ <http://apprising.org/2010/06/09/contemplative-law-the-gospel-of-grace-and-frank-viola/>

⁵⁹ <http://apprising.org/2011/03/10/national-association-of-evangelicals-seeks-common-ground-with-mormonism/>

“As Miroslav Volf says, “The church lives from something and toward something **that is greater than the church itself**”. **That something is God and His eternal purpose**”. (page 147)

Miroslav Volf has made NO secret as to what kind of “church” he is referring – it includes Muslims. On the Yale University website, Volf is one of the **key** persons in the November 2007 article, Loving God And Neighbor Together: A Christian Response To A Common Word Between Us And You⁶⁰,

“Indeed, together with you we believe that we need to move beyond “a polite ecumenical dialogue between selected religious leaders” and work diligently together to reshape relations between our communities and our nations so that they genuinely reflect our common love for God and for one another”.

Volf ignores Biblical admonitions and openly recognizes the god of Islam as the same as the God of the Bible. Volf is in fact one of the biggest voices in the move towards a merging; a ‘Chrislam’ as coined. Frank Viola’s use of Volf to me is more than just mere coincidence, and more than passing association, Viola made it a key point in how we are to be ‘reimagining church.’ “Drawing it all together”, is an undeniable choice by Viola to associate with and recognize Volf’s contribution... but I state it is to associate with someone guilty of teaching a doctrine of demons! The article written in part by Volf and others dated in 2007 crossing lines that Bible Believing Christians dare not cross,

“A *Common Word Between Us and You* identifies some core common ground between Christianity and Islam which lies at the heart of our respective faiths as well as at the heart of the most ancient Abrahamic faith, Judaism”.

Including a social gospel,

“The future of the world depends on our ability as Christians and Muslims to live together in peace. If we fail to make every effort to make peace and come together in harmony you correctly remind us that **“our eternal souls”** are at stake as well”.

- So is this God’s **eternal purpose** for His church? Viola’s double-speak gets him into a lot of doctrinal trouble using Volf as a springboard to prop up his organic church thinking!

There are many more connections with more names: *Loving God And Neighbor Together: A Christian Response To A Common Word Between Us And You* Under portion that a selection of prominent signatories follows:

Fuller Theological Seminary

- Rick Warren, Founder and Senior Pastor, Saddleback Church, and The Purpose Driven Life, Lake Forest, CA
- Bill Hybels, **Founder and Senior Pastor, Willow Creek Community Church**, South Barrington, IL

(The list too long to include here just including big names related to this series)

3. My focus on the part of *Reimagining Church* chapter on “Church Practice and God’s Eternal Purpose”, section on “Drawing it all together” is due to Viola’s emphasis on this section in that book. Viola continues on the next page quoting Gilbert Bilezikian co-founder and elder noted for the seeker-sensitive, church growth, positive confession and emergent church leanings Willow Creek. *(His senior Pastor Hybels a signatory above)*

“Christ did not die just to save us from sins, but to bring us together into community. After coming to Christ, our next step is to be involved in community. A church that does not experience community is a parody, a sham”. (Bilezikian as quoted page 148 in *Reimagining Church*)

- Please remember the type of church Willow Creek is and those who do not know follow the link back to BDM, there is plenty of history here. Bill Hybels says, “There would be no Willow Creek

⁶⁰ <http://www.yale.edu/faith/downloads/Christian%20response%20to%20A%20Common%20Word%2011-07.pdf>

without Gilbert Bilezikian”. Quote from a bio on Bilezikian located at http://www.elijahlist.com/words/display_word/9229 (*The Elijah List - A hyper-charismatic group tied to a variety of people including the wacky Rick Joyner*)

4. In an article by Southern View Chapel, Pastor Gary Gilley mentions Bilezikian regarding the modern (or should say post-modern) teaching of Open Theism -

“More lethal is the fact that this new concept of God is sneaking in through the backdoor of the camp by means of popular writers such as Phil Yancey⁶¹, and the influence of men like Gilbert Bilezikian, who, as the resident theologian of the Willow Creek Community Church, wields tremendous power over the minds of many modern church leaders. Others in line with Yancey and Bilezikian include devotional/mystical writer Richard Foster⁶² and theologian Donald Bloesch.[1] Particular danger of this latter group is that they may seldom, if ever, admit to holding open theistic convictions but espouse those views in attractive formats (e.g. Yancey’s popular book, *Disappointment with God*)”. Southern View Chapel, Pastor Gary Gilley⁶³

5. Tying this together with the first points – it is impossible for me to ignore how easily Viola compares our encounters with “God” as simply, “...it’s semantics. People express the same experiences differently”, When you roll that together with the reference in *Revise Us Again* in chapter 10 back to his 2009 book *Reimagining Church* in my opinion, this is all a ploy.

a. Frank Viola cleverly omits Volf’s extreme ecumenical position. I could not accept ignorance of Volf’s position – he believe he knows what he is doing. My opinion this was done so he can draw more from Volf at a later date in one of his later books, giving Volf more time to gain acceptance in the so called Organic Churches and with his Emergent leading friends such as Brian McLaren⁶⁴.

b. This ploy is nothing new, as when Brian McLaren called for a five year moratorium on the issue of homosexuality - after the five years revisit the issue if there is clarity. More like the dialogue has led to the compromise we see now! It is a type bait and switch, just play stupid down the road, if it is found out and still seen to be unacceptable.

c. Additionally, Gilbert Bilezikian is co-founder of a church that is a signatory of that same Chrislam document co-authored by Volf.

d. The quote chosen by Viola of Volf again,

“As Miroslav Volf says, “The church lives from something and toward something **that is greater than the church itself**”. **That something is God and His eternal purpose**”. (page 147) - *A number of other implications or meanings can be drawn from such a statement but merely keeping it in the context of Volf’s teachings is heretical at best and damnable based on scriptures! (2 Peter 2:1-2)*

e. Please refer to Viola why I keep coming back to his previous books, he is the one who keeps drawing on them as if because they exist they are an authority unto themselves.

6. In an article that is closely related to this series by Herescope⁶⁵ and on the Apprising Ministries sites had the article The Other Side Of Emergent: The New Apostolic Reformation⁶⁶ published July 2010 and a portion of that article is excerpted here to further ‘draw it all together’ more on Viola and Sweet: (Used with permission)

Today [June 1] is the launching of a new book⁶⁷, co-authored by Leonard Sweet and Frank Viola. **This marks the open marriage of the Emergent movement with the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR).**

⁶¹ <http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/exposes/yancey/yancey.htm>

⁶² <http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/exposes/foster/>

⁶³ <http://www.svchapel.org/resources/articles/23-doctrine/550-open-theism-part-1>

⁶⁴ <http://www.wayoflife.org/files/8366a78fea5d3961b7ccb0d184c66109-143.html>

⁶⁵ <http://herescope.blogspot.com/2010/06/other-side-of-emergent.html>

⁶⁶ <http://apprising.org/2010/07/08/the-other-side-of-emergent-the-new-apostolic-reformation/>

⁶⁷ <http://zoecarnate.wordpress.com/2010/06/01/frank-viola-leonard-sweet-on-a-jesus-manifesto/>

Sweet and Viola's book, Jesus Manifesto⁶⁸, is subtitled "Restoring the Supremacy and Sovereignty of Jesus Christ", and it pushes the envelope on redefining Jesus, including "You can be a Jesus Manifest".[2] A quick glance at the lineup of key endorsers for this book includes a list of who's who in Emergent, the Latter Rain cult, neoevangelicalism and the New Apostolic Reformation⁶⁹.

In recent posts on this blog we have noticed that emerging church leader Leonard Sweet has links to the NAR.[3] **The co-author of his book, Frank Viola⁷⁰, also has roots in the NAR. He has been connected with the House2House group, a movement that is ostensibly about "house" churches, but in reality is concerned with building the networking apostolic cellular model of church⁷¹ for the purpose of building the kingdom of God on earth⁷². This is the same Dominionist goal that is characteristic of the NAR:** "This amazing network of churches is rapidly transitioning as a network to embrace the simple church models that the Lord is blessing all around the world", leading to the "transforming work of God in bringing people to Christ. . . leading to dramatic advances of the Kingdom of God".[4] John Arnott of the Toronto "Laughing Revival" has been a notable contributor to the House2House magazine.[5]

A key name associated with Frank Viola is Heidi Baker, whose frequently appears with her husband Rolland. They flourish in the New Apostolic Reformation⁷³ and can often be found on the **Elijah List** (chief organ for the NAR)[6] and OpenHeaven.com (a radical Dominionist group).[7] The Bakers spoke at the Global Awakening "Voice of the Apostles" conference, October 28-31, 2009 along with other NAR apostles Randy Clark⁷⁴, Che Ann, Bill Johnson and John Arnott⁷⁵. [8] Heidi was featured along with Latter Rain cult leader Rick Joyner⁷⁶ at his MorningStar Ministries "Harvest Fest" held September 24-30, 2009.[9] The list of interconnections and associations with the NAR⁷⁷ could go on and on...

Neil Cole is another well-known name associated with Frank Viola and the House2House movement. He is also connected with Leadership Network.[10] Furthermore, Frank Viola's book Organic Church: Growing Faith Where Life Happens⁷⁸ is endorsed by such notables as Bob Buford (head of Leadership Network) and John Maxwell.[11]

Leonard Sweet endorsed one of Frank Viola's earlier books, Reimagining Church: Pursuing the Dream of Organic Christianity⁷⁹, by connecting it to the idea of "God's Dream",⁸⁰ an increasingly common metaphor.[12] Viola has also authored *From Eternity to Here: Rediscovering the Ageless Purpose of God*, described as "a whole new way of looking at the Scriptures, at Jesus, at the church, and at me", [13] and endorsed by such Emergent leaders as Leonard Sweet, Brian McLaren⁸¹, Dan Kimball⁸², Shane Claiborne⁸³ and many others.

Characteristic of all of these recent emerging convergences, a MANIFESTO⁸⁴ accompanies the agenda being promoted jointly by Sweet and Viola. It is called "A Magna Carta for Restoring the Supremacy of Jesus Christ a.k.a. A Jesus Manifesto for the 21st Century Church".⁸⁵ This

⁶⁸ <http://www.thejesusmanifesto.com/>

⁶⁹ <http://www.blogger.com/www.deceptioninthechurch.com/newapostolic.html>

⁷⁰ <http://www.bible.ca/ef/topical-pagan-christianity-reviewed.htm>

⁷¹ <http://herescope.blogspot.com/2007/02/networking-church.html>

⁷² <http://www.blogger.com/herescope.blogspot.com/2008/02/creating-heaven-on-earth.html>

⁷³ <http://www.deceptioninthechurch.com/dangerous.pdf>

⁷⁴ <http://www.deceptioninthechurch.com/quotes.html>

⁷⁵ <http://www.deceptioninthechurch.com/blessing.html#jarnott>

⁷⁶ <http://www.deceptioninthechurch.com/newapostolic.html#rjoyner>

⁷⁷ <http://www.deceptioninthechurch.com/newapostolic.html>

⁷⁸ <http://www.amazon.com/Organic-Church-Growing-Faith-Happens/dp/078798129X>

⁷⁹ <http://www.amazon.com/Reimagining-Church-Pursuing-Organic-Christianity/dp/1434768759>

⁸⁰ <http://www.blogger.com/herescope.blogspot.com/2008/07/gods-dream.html>

⁸¹ <http://www.deceptioninthechurch.com/emergingchurch.html#bmclaren>

⁸² <http://apprising.org/category/dan-kimball/>

⁸³ <http://apprising.org/category/shane-claibornenew-monasticism/>

⁸⁴ <http://herescope.blogspot.com/2009/02/manifestos-declarations-and-covenants.html>

⁸⁵ <http://www.story.house2house.com/2009/07/08/a-magna-carta-for-restoring-the-supremacy-of-jesus-christ-aka-a-jesus-manifesto-for-the-21st-century-church/>

Manifesto does not hearken back to the written Word of God in order to follow Jesus or His teachings. Instead it speaks of “implantation and impartation⁸⁶” and “incarnation”. This is based on imaging, imagining, visualization, meditation, and following a “Presence”,⁸⁷ even using the term “cosmic Christ”⁸⁸. [14] The document also makes this amazing statement – an example of psycho-spiritual biblical revisionism:

The Bible does not offer a plan or a blueprint for living. The “good news” was not a new set of laws, or a new set of ethical injunctions, or a new and better PLAN. The “good news” was the story of a person’s life, as reflected in The Apostle’s Creed. The Mystery of Faith proclaims this narrative: “Christ has died, Christ has risen, Christ will come again”. The meaning of Christianity does not come from allegiance to complex theological doctrines, but a passionate love for a way of living in the world that revolves around following Jesus, who taught that love is what makes life a success . . . not wealth or health or anything else: but love. And God is love.

It also seems to claim we are Christ: Jesus Christ cannot be separated from his church. While Jesus is distinct from his Bride, he is not separate from her. She is in fact his very own Body in the earth. God has chosen to vest all of power, authority, and life in the living Christ. And God in Christ is only known fully in and through his church. . . . We, collectively, as the ekklesia of God, are Christ in and to this world. [15] (*A Magna Carta for Restoring the Supremacy of Jesus Christ a.k.a. A Jesus Manifesto for the 21st Century Church*, by Leonard Sweet and Frank Viola, JULY 8, 2009)

All of this is a very quick overview, there are many more connections and associations. ***Click here for 26 published endorsers of *The Jesus Manifesto* for starters. The key point is the context of this new book by Sweet and Viola, it isn’t just Emergent! This represents that much-anticipated, much touted New Apostolic Reformation great convergence⁸⁹, the many streams coming together into one big river!⁹⁰

Where Is This River Heading?

Above are only a handful of links to other information showing this convergence of streams into a river. As my research on this topic has continued, sifting through the huge amount of regurgitated information and obvious connections have proven to be too many to count.

Those in the organic churches while arguing they are not condemning what they coined the Institutional Church (any organized group of people attending service in what they know as a church building) they are quite vocal in pointing out its problems. In their literature they are not so kind even condemning of the pastorate as a position or office calling it unbiblical. Much like a cult, Viola’s organic church process preys on the discontented, making his way sound appealing and therefore people following him are taken hook, line and sinker by the teachings of his and *George Barna’s book Pagan Christianity*⁹¹ which is the primer for *Reimagining Church*, proudly stated at the end!

The picture coming into focus with part 3 demonstrates the duplicity these people operate with routinely. It is not a conspiracy, it is right out in the open – it is an agenda! An agenda that can easily be traced to the teachings of liberal theology, restorationism, Manifest Sons of God, and more recently the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR), the Leadership Network and even following the playbook of the homosexual agenda.

The teachings exposed are a frontal assault on the basic tenets of Christianity trampling on the Word of truth, the Bible (Mat 7:6). While the writers of *Pagan Christianity*⁹², *Reimagining Church*, and *The Jesus Manifesto* offer lip service that they are all about the centrality and supremacy of Christ they are taking advantage of the frustrations many may feel, even in a solid Bible Believing

⁸⁶ <http://www.deceptioninthechurch.com/videoorder.html>

⁸⁷ http://www.amazon.com/Presence-Human-Purpose-Field-Future/dp/0385516304/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1275414763&sr=8-1

⁸⁸ <http://www.amazon.com/Coming-Cosmic-Christ-Matthew-Fox/dp/0060629150>

⁸⁹ <http://www.blogger.com/www.crossroad.to/articles2/009/discernment/7-emerging-5.htm>

⁹⁰ <http://herescope.blogspot.com/2007/03/synergy-river.html>

⁹¹ <http://teampyro.blogspot.com/2011/08/open-letter-to-george-barna.html>

⁹² <http://www.discerningreader.com/book-reviews/pagan-christianity>

Church. Similar to the cults, *Pagan Christianity* is a tool for playing the heart strings of many within organized churches that are inundated with programs, filled with men's ideas of business management, psychology. The "Institutional Churches" (*as they use as disparaging term*) are where they are making inroads because men and women have been weakened by poor leadership who abandon scriptures for something else, something "relevant" but reap what has been sown with a the convergence in a river of lies sweeping over them.

So many dissatisfied by the programs and psychology are looking for something new they think is missing. Next, along comes *Pagan Christianity* naming a list of things wrong with the church and showing many alleged pagan roots that largely draw on resources outside of scriptures to make their points. (*A separate study would be needed to cover them all!*)

Am I saying all of the criticisms laid at the steps of the organized churches are erroneous? ***Not at all!*** But I state they are using propaganda to mislead the reader for another agenda – theirs being the restoration of the Church, but restoring it to what kind of Church? The Organic Church or Emergent Church? Take your pick, they have the same creator and it's NOT the God in the Bible! Here are two quick reminders:

From the Jesus Manifesto, *The Jesus Manifesto* states, "The earth awaits a body of Christians in every city who will receive Jesus utterly and completely. A body who will esteem Him above everything else, giving Him His rightful place of supremacy" (pages 158-159).

- *Where are we told this? Certainly not in scripture but it is straight out of heretical restoration, kingdom and dominion theology!*

In a recent endorsement made by Frank Viola for a book released 6/30/2011,

"Jon Zen's book [*The Pastor Has No Clothes*] demonstrates beyond dispute that the clergy-system (in the form of the modern pastorate) is not only unbiblical but also contrary to the headship of Jesus Christ. I hope that every Christian reads this volume with an open heart and mind, especially those who deem themselves "leaders" in the body of Christ. I applaud Jon for his courage in **adding another Scripture-based book to help foment the growing revolution that God has begun today - a revolution designed to give His church back to His beloved Son**". (emphasis in bold mine)

- *More evidence of the hate of the pastorate and proof they are teaching revolution in the churches it is not Biblical reformation!*

The gates of Hell have not prevailed against the Church, nor will they. This talk gives smells a bit of Mormon restorationism that somehow the Church is dead. No, some churches are dead but some remain, maybe a remnant **but** God knows who and where they are. Viola in his piece of why he left the institutional church brings the accusation to the churches that they are the ones throwing the baby out with the bath water while he has stepped into a hole of his own making. He and Barna in *Pagan Christianity*, plus his own teachings are often contradictory, eclectic and confusing to the new believers. They hope to sway people towards Christ but again what Christ and what Church? His Organic Church following his teachings is no different than the popery of others and in my opinion an of those in the remnant that remain that seek to follow the Biblicist paradigm, the way of the Bereans and the Solas of scripture.

What Is the Evidence Showing Us?

Based on the preponderance of the evidence (only a fraction of what there is), I have revealed a number of snares for believer and non-believer alike. Viola and Sweet do not directly advocate the extreme ecumenism (inclusive of Islam) but they are connected with those who do, with numerous positive quotations and endorsements exposed in this series. Their friends are opening the doors making it inclusive to false religions, no Hell, some openly universalist. I refer you to the appendix of part 2 of *The Jesus Manifesto* endorsers for the details.

Our site has been up since 1997 warning of the dangers we were seeing with everything from Promise Keepers, Psychology, rock music with a Christian name, and a host of fads. Today it is easy to

see how these things were a means to an end. Within the churches these worldly things helped to undermine and supplant scriptures and the use of scriptures to defend truth.

Here is what I lay at the doorstep of those who bring these *Pagan Christianity, Reimagining Church, The Jesus Manifesto, The Shack* and a list of other books to the churches – **You are foolish false teachers and harbingers of spiritual death to apathetic lukewarm churches remaining today.** You offer nothing new. You are reintroducing the old ways (so-called) as new knowledge which is nothing more than the old Gnosticism condemned in scriptures and wrestled with for over a thousand years by those who stand by what the scriptures teach! Repent!

For teachers claiming to be all about the centrality of Jesus Christ in our lives they are foreigners, tares among the wheat in many ways, as discussed in part 1 and part 2 of this series. Some have argued how can you say something bad about making Christ central in your life and in the church? Logic dictates you cannot – until you qualify the Jesus they are talking about is NOT the Jesus of the Bible! There are other Jesus' and the scripture teaches us even long ago there were and would be others claiming His name and teaching another Gospel. Beware, a whole host of books are being pushed at us to help us on our way into the Emergent Church, Organic Church or something else they consider relevant wherever we are today. These books are laced with an old leaven revived in the pits of Hell, it is a poison that blinds the eyes and ears of those taken in by it, I have seen it! Dr Francis Schaeffer's insights to this are also priceless:

“We have come then to this fearsome place where the word Jesus has become the enemy of the Person Jesus, and the enemy of what Jesus taught. We must fear this contentless banner of the word Jesus not because we do not love Jesus, but because we do love Him. We must fight this contentless banner, with its deep motivations, rooted into the memories of the race, which is being used for the purpose of sociological form and control. ...

If evangelical Christians begin to slip into a dichotomy, to separate an encounter with Jesus from the content of the Scriptures (including the discussable and the verifiable portions of Scripture), we shall, without intending to, be throwing ourselves and the next generation into the millstream of the modern system. This system surrounds us as an almost monolithic consensus”.
Dr. Schaeffer, Francis A. Schaeffer, *Escape From Reason*, Chapter 7

Personal Message to Readers

If you are offended, hurt, and or convicted by what I shared, good! Whether you like what you've read or not, your eyes have been opened and if you are caught up in it, know that you can escape your snare. My intent for the articles parts 1 through 3 are largely inspired by persons my wife and I love that we see ensnared by the lies exposed here. I will not be more specific on the Internet but suffice it to say we see a number of them going down the emergent/organic path unwittingly. - Please accept the hurt with the heart intended! *Proverbs 27: 5-6* “*Open rebuke is better than secret love. Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful*”. We are sure there are other Christians who are ignorant of the duplicity being used to pull them away from a Biblical faith. My personal experience in dealing with the arguments coming from the Organic Church reminds me of dealing with the cults including Catholicism, Mormons and Islam – it is a dangerous path.

If I got through to you, please don't continue to be played the fool and follow this path a moment longer! The Bible has this to say of the matter, *Proverbs 14:16* “*A wise [man] feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident*”. Depart the evil, and seek the truth of scriptures! Turn from these old dark paths unto the light that is found in the Bible and expose these evildoers. Let this rebuke (correction) be one that takes you on God's paths, not the paths of men or of demons!

In all of the discernment work I have done to date, I have found what is coming into focus to be the most disturbing of all. The archive of files Biblical Discernment Ministries (BDM) site has become more of a historical picture of what is coming in these dark days we live.

Now for a word for my critics, consider this. Since 1997 BDM has asked for **NOTHING** in the way of monetary assistance. It is a ministry and does not try to sell you books, seek speaking engage-

ments or get you to go to the latest seminar or conference. **These men I have exposed are my opposite!**

2 Peter 2:1-3 “But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not”.

My exhortation to you: **If they are not making merchandise of you don't let them! Wise up, ask questions!** Most importantly, pray for wisdom to know the truth and don't be afraid or intimidated to speak out. If a false teacher can be bold in carrying out his agenda, we can be bold in defending the true gospel.

There is much more you can read on these topics revealed on sites linked with BDM such as Apprising Ministries and Herescope – I hope they are of help to you as well.

God's promise to you that turn to Him, here is the Bible's doctrine on the tree of life! Not some confusing heretical mumbo jumbo of some man's ideas:

Re 2:7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

Re 2:11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

Re 2:17 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth [it].

Closing Thoughts

I often hear two things from the teachers today, first asking what is relevant for the church today? Second is a comparison to the lukewarm church at Laodicea, Revelation 3:15-16 “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth”.

Both miss the mark, how about a comparison to the Church at Sardis - it is written, “Rev. 3:1 And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead”.

- Any church claiming the name of Christ, claiming to being alive and relevant to this generation **while teaching another Jesus has no life, no Holy Spirit in it – it is dead.**

What a joyous day it will be to put the mess of this world with all of its trials and tribulations is behind us when we meet Jesus in the clouds!

Additional Links and other information not included in the series that tie to Frank Viola and Leonard Sweet: (excerpts point to the connections)

<http://herescope.blogspot.com/2007/02/networking-church.html>

“Small group “cells” aren't usually marketed to the church as a networking plan. Restructuring the church into a small group structure has been presented as a church relationship-building endeavor that will produce better results and meet “felt needs”. Very seldom has the top-down nature of the hierarchy been revealed. The people in the pews have been kept in the dark for several decades about this”.

<http://www.bible.ca/ef/topical-pagan-christianity-reviewed.htm>

“Frank Viola is “a high school Psychology and Philosophy teacher”, who in “his spare time...plants house churches, speaks at church-life conferences, and authors books on Christ and His church”. On one of the opening pages he says that he “left the religious system”. One of his arguments against preaching is “it suffocates mutual ministry”. And as he debates the case against church buildings, he implies the friendlier, warmer atmosphere of a house (the sofa over the pew). So the agenda emerges. He is a destroyer of one system in the interests of promoting another. This phenomenon (the house church movement) is built on certain common premises: (1) smaller is better, (2) informality {though defined by the leaders} is preferable over order, (3) spontaneous/conversational teaching is superior to a prepared orderly presentation, (4) diversity is celebrated, (5) breaking from “tradition”, and (6) opposition to pulpits, buildings and treasuries. All of these items (like a systematic theology) show up in some form in Viola’s book, urged upon the reader as a warmer, more spiritual atmosphere and derived from the New Testament (not as a “manual”, but more like a love-letter hermeneutic)”.

<http://herescope.blogspot.com/2010/07/destiny-driven-dominionism.html>

“Chironna was featured at the “Let the Eagles Gather: The International Gathering of Prophets, Apostles and Intercessors” conference in Orlando in August 2009 along with top NAR “apostles” Chuck Pierce and Cindy Jacobs.[44] Chironna must be considered important in these circles, because he is also listed as an endorser of the Frank Viola and Leonard Sweet’s recently released Jesus Manifesto book.[45]”

<http://herescope.blogspot.com/2010/06/great-confluence.html>

“Emergent leader Mike Morrell got the plum job of conducting the book-launching “Interview With Frank Viola and Leonard Sweet”, which was posted on June 1 at Morrell’s webpage [HERE](#). Morrell, “an editor with TheOoze.com and founder of the popular ‘alt.Christian’ web directory zoecarnate.com,[2] explains how he originally hooked up with Frank Viola in his article “House Church: Ready for Prime Time? Frank Viola says ‘Yes!’“ Morrell, describing Frank Viola as a “family friend”, records that he “started reading Frank right at the beginning of my house church journey in 1998, my freshman year in college” and how “[o]ne year later, he crashed on a pallet beside me and three other guys on my parents living room floor!”[3] He then explains the significance of connecting the Emergent movement to the NAR’s “house church” movement”. “...At this point it is important to explain that the emerging “house church” concept in the NAR is engineered to be an organic whole that is facilitated and networked by a growing alliance of international self-anointed, self-appointed apostles and prophets - a living “body” on earth that is both hierarchical and cellular in nature. It is an “organism” that must be managed by the machinations of man (not God), assessed via feedback mechanisms, monitored and propelled towards an evolutionary target of a collective “emergence”. Don’t be misled by the rhetoric! The NAR concept of “house church” is not about humble little autonomous churches meeting in living rooms.[5]”

More on Volf and his book named “Allah” <http://www.harpercollins.com/books/Allah-Miroslav-Volf/?isbn=9780061927072>

Book Description

“Three and a half billion people—the majority of the world’s population—profess Christianity or Islam. Renowned scholar Miroslav Volf’s controversial proposal is that Muslims and Christians do worship the same God—the only God”. ...

- A person can be both a practicing Muslim and 100 percent Christian without denying core convictions of belief and practice.
- How two faiths, worshipping the same God, can work toward the common good under a single government”.

Volf -Also tied to Rick Warren’s PEACE initiative picture online with him and Rwandan president (blamed in many deaths), praised by Tony Blair and more. ([Links](#))⁹³ A former student of Fuller

⁹³ <http://www.crossroad.to/charts/millennium-goals-peace.htm>

Theological Seminary along with some other big names of the emergent church, of course such as Rick Warren and

In an article on Yale News Daily, September 9, 2009, *In Blair's shadow, Volf shines*⁹⁴ "According to former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, his co-teacher for the "Faith and Globalization" seminar, Miroslav Volf, is a "a lot smarter and more knowledgeable than me".

In reference to Volf, "Now, after moving to the United States in 1977 when he began studying at the Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif., Volf maintains contact with spiritual leaders around the world. He spent hours in a discussion group with the Dalai Lama..."

More Leonard Sweet connections (similar to Viola):

<http://herescope.blogspot.com/2010/05/mainstreaming-dominionism.html>

Excerpts:

Another interesting name connected with the 7 Mountain Mandate is mystic leader Leonard Sweet, who has mainstreamed himself into the evangelical world-at-large, coming out of his obscure role as Emergent professor-in-residence. How he did this is a study in itself. In June 2007, a SYNERGIZE! Billion Soul Pastors Conference for January 2008 began to be advertised as a way to become "equipped to impact 'seven spheres of society.'" [15] This was being promoted and sponsored by a recently formed organization, Second Billion, a spinoff of the Global Pastors Network. [16] Headed by James O. Davis and globally-renowned "apostle" Sunday Adelaja, the organization grew rapidly, using a "synergistic approach to fulfilling the Great Commission [mandate]... exponentially in every region of the world". [17] **Len Sweet** was billed as a speaker at this first conference where the "seven spheres of society" were touted. He quickly rose to prominence to become a fixture in the organization. By August 17, 2007 he was listed in the e-newsletter under "Leadership Series" as a "Futurist and author". The current e-newsletters routinely feature his writings and speaking, and he is now listed as a leader.

Pastor Sunday Adelaja, who along with **Len Sweet** has been prominently connected with this Second Billion group since its inception, has deep roots in C. Peter Wagner's New Apostolic Reformation, and is listed as one of the key "apostles" of the world. [18] Adelaja's book CHURCHSHIFT is a how-to manual for implementing the 7 Mountain/Sphere Mandate, teaching people how to "impose Kingdom values and principles upon their area of influence" and to divide each "nation into seven spheres of influence, and to send church members into each sphere". [19] Os Hillman of marketplace transformation fame, writing at the www.reclaim7mountains.com website, uses Pastor Adelaja as an example of how "the local church is called to change culture in all spheres of society, especially the seven mountains". [20]

Another name connected with **Leonard Sweet** since the earliest days of the Second Billion organization is James (Jim) Garlow, who is also listed as a leader. [21] Garlow is a well-known Christian Right activist, who recently was a conference speaker (along with Lance Wallnau and C. Peter Wagner) at NAR leader Cindy Jacob's "Convergence 2010: A Cry To Awaken A Nation" conference. [22] Jim Garlow's interesting bio is posted [HERE](#). He now chairs Newt Gingrich's ReAL (Renewing American Leadership) organization at <http://www.torenewamerica.com/> [23] Garlow is leading "The Next Great Awakening Tour" along with patriotic American Dominionist David Barton, June 25-July 24 this summer, and Lance Wallnau is listed as one of the featured guests. [24] Garlow is all over the map on his activism. He is listed as an instructor for an ominous-sounding upcoming Border Sheriff's Posse "Strategic Border Intelligence" School to "partner with intercessors around the United States to protect...the United States of America and our heritage as a nation founded under God". [25] And, perhaps most significantly, Garlow was listed on the Committee that put on the May Day event in Washington, D.C. this past May 1. [26]

Biblical Discernment Ministries - 8/2011

by John Beardsley

⁹⁴ <http://www.yaledailynews.com/news/2009/sep/11/in-blairs-shadow-volf-shines/>

4. In Typical Christian Na'vi Blue - The message comes forth! “Epic Jesus: The Christ You Never Knew” - by Frank Viola 9/4/11 As reviewed by John Beardsley 9/7/11

Frank Viola gives a presentation like no other I have ever heard from the Jacksonville, FL “Momentum Basics and Beyond” National House Church Conference this past September 2-4, 2011 with “Daily Keynote Sessions from house church pioneers Neil Cole, Frank Viola, and Wolfgang Simson will provid[ing] the latest information on the organic church movement”. (Momentum website media page)

Little did I suspect I would be swept away on a trip to a garden and a “very special tree” called the tree of life, “...and that tree is pulsating and beating with a certain kind of life, it is the life of God Himself” where he invited all humans to partake. But I will let Frank Viola tell it with his own incomparable words:

“And God creates a Garden and in the center of the garden He puts a very special tree it’s called The Tree of Life and that tree is pulsating and beating with a certain kind of life, it is the Life of God Himself, and He invites the apex of His creation, human beings to partake of that life but tragedy strikes and the one who created the universe watches it fall and morph into an enemy, even His own enemy”. (Frank Viola)

Incomparable words I have never heard, much less from the Holy Scripture! The very foundation of the Christian faith is trivialized to mere ‘tragedy’ where mankind falls into sin that leads us all to death, the enemy was not a tree morphed but an adversary named Satan. And what is with the pulsating and beating tree? Sounds somewhat like a scene straight out of the movie *Avatar* to me! With the previous introduction into fantasy thinking of CS Lewis from *Prince Caspian* why not think that? So do I mock Frank Viola, or did he mock God trying to woo and impress a crowd? On so many levels what I heard was disturbing, altering, mind blowing and foreign to anything in scriptures *but wait that’s not all* he continues,

“So God’s sets out to restore His good creation and He chooses a man and from that man he chooses a people called by His name and the story Israel is the story of a God who wants to get His creation back but Israel fails and the Lord does the unthinkable. He penetrates a falling universe Himself. Time becomes pregnant in what Kierkegaard called the absolute paradox breaks into the visible universe and the unchanging God becomes fully human and pierces the veil of space time. Jesus is born in a humble village called Bethlehem...”. (Frank Viola)

Dominion Restoration theology at its roots! Quasi-Dominion Theologian Frank Viola would have us believe we are to go back to the Garden of Eden for the new Kingdom. Together with other teachings on the tree of life and theology from his book *The Jesus Manifesto* (together with Leonard Sweet) and Viola’s book such as *From Eternity to Here* – another Tree of Life, another God, another Jesus start to come into focus. It is a hodge-podge, mumbo-jumbo of a little fantasy, a bit of old liberal theology, a blend of mysticism and some totally wacky ideas born, I guess, in the mind of Frank Viola.

Jumping to what I have shown previously from *The Jesus Manifesto*,

On page 130 clarifies “Receiving Christ is simply taking the first bite from the right tree”. Then followed by numerous platitudes about how many churches simply teach to imitate Christ, act like Christ, try to do good as the Gospel, (which even a babe in Christ knows is not the Gospel).

The Jesus Manifesto goes on to state what the Gospel is for a person, “Instead, he allows the life of God to flow within and through him. He yields to the instincts, promptings, and energy of that God-life”. *The Jesus Manifesto* sounds as if it is turning the salvation experience into some sort of mystical experience “...receiving the uncreated life of God into oneself” and “...energy of that God-life” but considering the authors are so steeped in the emergent teachings it is not a surprise to me. Why not stick to scriptures?

But back to this message, you really do get something incomparable, and as epic as that horrid *Avatar* film that also took a little of this and that culture into a fantasy movie that never should have seen the light of day. This is only a short way into Viola’s message, I heard out the rest of the epic 54 minute message and more thoughts that still make my head reel and any should Bible believing Christian,

“A matchless throng that no man can number from every tribe, every race, every kindred every tongue and God does something incredible – the throng turns into a whirlwind of glorious light, as glorious as the face of God, and it begins to form, and out of it, out of this whirlwind steps the most glorious woman, beyond the imagination of mortals, the bride makes her entrance, the mystery of the ages the new Eve, and gold is poured into gold and light into light, and the bride of the Lamb becomes the wife of God and the two shall become one. For behold I show you a mystery the woman was taken out of the man and brought to the man and the two become one flesh but I’m not speaking of Adam and Eve, I’m speaking of Christ and the Church. And I just quoted Paul in Ephesians 5”. (Frank Viola)

This is what steroids does to eschatology I suppose... this is so far removed from the reality in the Bible I cannot begin to cover it all here.

Viola is saying plainly the throng (the church) turns into a beautiful woman - the wife of GOD?! This is a blend of a little this, a little of that and a wild imagination reminiscent of those I have shown Dominion Theologian Frank Viola to be associated in my humble opinion at this link: (*Birds of the Feather Gathering Together- The Starlings of The Jesus Manifesto*) There were many other items in the message that he may have sounded right but if these two excerpts were stated in any Bible believing church would have caused the cry – “that’s a LIE!” And ended the services calling into question the one bringing such a horrific blasphemous message, and to those of you in attendance at the conference someone should have pulled the plug on the PA system. AND where is the HOLY SPIRIT in that Vision?! ABSENT!

I guess Quasi-Dominion Theologian Frank Viola was a bit too much in the spirit (of some sort) when he ended that quote above saying it was from Ephesians 5. Maybe he started in:

Revelation 7:9 “After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;” but how he ever got to Ephesians 5 makes as much sense as the vision or whatever it was he presented.

Tying this altogether from *The Way of The Organic Church: Part 2* this message fits hand in glove:

“A search where *The Jesus Manifesto* writers get this thinking one only needs to look at Frank Viola’s book published a year earlier in 2009 *From Eternity to Here* regarding the “choice of two trees” and it goes further by teaching:

“It’s worth noting that Paul never speaks of the “body of Christians”. He always uses the phrase the “body of Christ”. For Paul, the body of Christ is a particular person. It’s not a metaphor. Paul never says the church is like His body. No, we are His body. Each member is the physical complement, the extension, of the same person, Jesus Christ. And we happen to be the only body He has” (Frank Viola, *From Eternity to Here* Page 266).

If you did not catch what Viola was saying he continues:

“Paul’s idea is not that the Head is somehow screwed onto the body. His idea is that Christ embodies the church. The risen Christ is a living, inclusive, “more-than-individual” personality.

The church is a corporate entity that is made up of diverse individuals. It is a person, living in and expressing Himself through His many members.

Put another way, the church is the visible image of the invisible Lord. It is the corporate Christ. It is Christ in collective human expression. To Paul's mind, the church in Corinth was none other than Jesus Christ in the city of Corinth. Paul's apostolic ministry was built upon this very revelation. And it comes screaming through all of his letters, including 1 Corinthians" (Frank Viola, *From Eternity to Here* Page 267).

--- Note: these quotes from pages 266 and 267 while not identical are nearly the same as *The Jesus Manifesto* pages 142- 143.

To build on that rather odd theology that physical extension, complement, corporate entity of diverse individuals - is a woman and the wife of God connecting the dots of definitions given in at least two of the other books quoted above. It is utter nonsense to what I read in scriptures!

Some of what I said may seem harsh and mocking but that is not the intent, the intent is to get your attention to the gravity and seriousness of what was said at this conference and to show how far removed these teachers are behind the Organic Church. Perhaps you do not agree with everything said by me or even Viola but you need to realize the implications are not about me, they are about you and your very soul. God will not be mocked, and His word will not return unto Him void Isa 55:11, in spite of any shortcoming I have and what I show to be false teachings, if even one verse of scripture goes out it has the power to save. Not of me but of the God of the Bible.

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God [is] quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and [is] a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Isaiah 55:11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper [in the thing] whereto I sent it.

Biblical Discernment Ministries - 9/2011
by John Beardsley

5. The Organic Church: House2House - and the NAR & Contemplative Way

By John Beardsley - September 5, 2011

I ran across a link to a House2House conference the weekend following the series being posted on BDM, I felt would be valuable to our readers and warn those seriously seeking to follow scriptures:



<http://www.cvent.com/events/momentum-basics-and-beyond/event-summary-35d9eb8b489245b383c00068e2ebd074.aspx>

- Daily Keynote Sessions from house church pioneers Neil Cole, Frank Viola, and Wolfgang Simson will provide the latest information on the organic church movement
- Handout materials from ALL breakout session workshops will be available for electronic download.
- Birds of a Feather sessions have been added to enable you to schedule a meeting on the topic of your choice. Share your story or bring your questions to discuss with other conference attendees.

Aside from the usuals of Neil Cole⁹⁵ and Frank Viola⁹⁶ add **Wolfgang Simson known for interpreting dreams, extrabiblical revelations, winning Muslims by dreams:**

“**Heavens TV.** When God speaks to you in dreams. How we learn to stop missing the real night show; practical introduction to interpreting dreams humans have from God – and how we in turn can become what God dreams of us (Starfish Edition, 2010)” - on his site:

<http://www.simsonwolfgang.de/html/welcome.html>

- Simson one of the key speakers is advocating interpretation of dreams to convert Muslims to Jesus, that they are having visions of a literal Jesus:

“Many Muslims, for example, report a vivid dream that had this message: A white person appearing to them in a dream, saying: “I am the way, the truth and life. No one comes to the father except through me”. Then they would wake up, wondering what this meant, and start out on a quest. A colleague of mine in Indonesia has been asking many thousands of Muslims a simple question: “Have you recently seen a white man?” Some would shrug, others would get excited and say: “Yes, indeed”, and he would go on to explain who that person in white clothes might be, and that he probably wants the very same thing from the human he gave a personal visit to than he had wanted from everyone else he met: to get up, follow him and become his disciple. This way, thousands of Muslims have been led to Christ”. Starfish Manifesto, page 511

- More Simson from his homepage showing he is on the same talking points as Neil Cole and Frank Viola teaching a Dominionist NAR theology:

“All the signs of the times indicate one thing: **Jesus, the King of his Kingdom, is preparing his Bride for his return. In order for this to happen, Jesus has to do some intense housecleaning.** Centuries of ill management, defunct teaching and blatant religious consumerism has created self-serving systems to cater for the spiritual needs of its members while they basically pursue a Babylonian concept of life: work and earn, pay taxes and burn! Gods word speaks of house churches – we built church-houses”.

<http://www.simsonwolfgang.de/betterthantheHippies.pdf> (emphasis in bold mine)

This is very comparable to Viola and Sweet’s statement in the Jesus Manifesto:

“page 141 presents a different line of thought, “Jesus Christ cannot be separated from His church. While Jesus is distinct from His Bride, He is not separate from her. **She is, in fact, His very own body in the earth**”. [bold emphasis mine] Then on page 143 following some discussion on 1 Co 12:1-3 how “the church is Jesus Christ in corporate expression” *The Jesus Manifesto* continues quoting the non-Christian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who said regarding the church, [is] “Christ existing as community”. Later *The Jesus Manifesto* says, “Practically, this means that we know Jesus Christ through one another, not just by ourselves. We see Him, hear Him, touch Him, taste and smell Him through our sisters and brothers within whom He dwells”.

and

“The Jesus Manifesto states, “The earth awaits a body of Christians in every city who will receive Jesus utterly and completely. A body who will esteem Him above everything else, giving Him His rightful place of supremacy” (pages 158-159). More information in summation below but this sounds like dangerous Dominionist teaching not found in scriptures! The other two refe-

⁹⁵ <http://apprising.org/2010/07/08/the-other-side-of-emergent-the-new-apostolic-reformation/>

⁹⁶ <http://apprising.org/2011/09/01/the-organic-church%E2%80%94doctrines-of-demons-and-of-men-part-3/>

rences by Frank Viola to Bill Freeman and T. Austin Sparks..”. from *The Way of The Organic Church*: Part 2

- Next a nice wholesome breakout Session with a Contemplative Spirituality and Mysticism teacher - If you don't get enough remember they have smaller sessions after available??!!

Dr. Michael G. Bischof Holistic Spiritual Formation <http://www.cvent.com/events/momentum-basics-and-beyond/custom-18-35d9eb8b489245b383c00068e2ebd074.aspx>.

He is the Founder and Executive Director of SOULeader Resources <http://www.souleader.org/index.html> - endorsed by Dallas Willard

- While this guy says he is talking about a Biblical things his links contradict that notion!

Bischof openly promotes Contemplative Prayer -Centering Prayer, Ignation Meditation, Lectio Divina, Solitude, Spiritual Friendship and Direction, The Daily Office, and The Jesus Prayer are posted on his site!

Spiritual Formation

*Contemplative Prayer*⁹⁷

*Spiritual Disciplines*⁹⁸

... This is the primary focus of Formative Spirituality (or the Science of Foundational Human Formation) as developed by **Adrian van Kaam**. (<http://metamorphablog.com/content/thoughts-adrian-van-kaam-spiritual-directors>)It also refers to the more deliberate attempt to form oneself or to allow oneself to be formed within a particular spiritual tradition.

Quotes to show the very strong Contemplative background of this teacher at the conference from Bischof's SOULeader site:

“It is clear that to **Willard** “each essential dimension of the human being” is important and all are involved in the process of spiritual transformation. Another example of a holistic cry comes through the writings of **Richard Foster**. In his book *Streams of Living Water*, Foster explores six great traditions of the Christian faith: contemplative, holiness, charismatic, social justice, evangelical, and incarnational. This moves in a direction of kingdom focus and away from the segregated traditions which typically characterize various denominations, tribes, and associations of churches”.

Richard Foster is a modern day mystic! Link here to more on him⁹⁹

“In the area of **emotional formation**, a passion for holistic understanding can be seen in new approaches to counseling and inner healing. Professional therapists and psychologists used to corner the market in the realm of “soul work” and dealing with emotional issues. Today, there is strong movement into areas such as spiritual direction and the importance of relationships to emotional healing. One example is Christian psychologist **Larry Crabb** who has moved in a direction asserting that spiritual direction can replace standard therapeutic models and methods. In integrating the emotional with the spiritual, Crabb wants Christian counselors to recognize that “what lies at the root of a person’s non-organic struggles is the lack of experienced communion with God”. A movement away from symptomatic solutions toward more integrated systems approaches can be experienced in both personal and corporate areas dealing with emotional and relational formation”.

No surprise here is a link to the heretical teachings of Crabb¹⁰⁰ ... he has been around on the BDM Site for his aberrant teachings for a long time!

Dallas Willard defines spiritual formation as “the process by which the human spirit or will is given a definite ‘form’ or character”. **Eugene Peterson** elaborates on the journey of spiritual formation: “Spirituality is the attention we give to our souls, to the invisible interior of our lives

⁹⁷ <http://www.souleader.org/formation/contemplative/contemplative.html>

⁹⁸ <http://www.souleader.org/formation/spiritual/spiritualdisciplines.html>

⁹⁹ <http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/exposes/foster/>

¹⁰⁰ <http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/exposes/crabb/>

that is the core of our identity, these image-of-God souls that compose our uniqueness and glory. Spirituality is the concern we have for the invisibility that inheres in every visibility, for the interior that provides content to every exterior. It necessarily deals much with innerness, with silence, with solitude. It takes all matters of soul with utmost seriousness”.

While on the same site arguing against the very thing he is promoting with CSM! And Dallas Willard¹⁰¹ who is no stranger to the CSM scandal

... A widespread secularized concept of spirituality is also prevalent today. This form of “spirituality” is popularized by contemporary pop psychologists, self-help books, and television talk shows. It is characterized by spirituality as one’s relationship to whatever is most important in life, or even the process of becoming a positive, creative, and empowered person. This is not the type of spirituality or spiritual formation that is being dealt with here.

***** Contradictory Message Warning *****

“Spiritual formation has a distinct focus – the teachings of Jesus and the Bible”. “Therefore, this view of spiritual formation could be summarized as active and progressive involvement in focusing on Jesus, focusing on Scripture, and focusing on spiritual disciplines. These are the foci of Christian spiritual formation. Spiritual formation is a process, not an instantaneous experience, even though there may be such experiences as part of the process. It is difficult for many to accept this aspect of process since it goes against the grain of a culture which continually seeks instant gratification. People are conditioned to expect immediate returns on their investments, which is not necessarily the case with spiritual formation. **For further reading, check out the Relational Formation¹⁰² section in the SOULeader Bookstore¹⁰²”.**

**Bischof’s links are distinctly NOT of Jesus and the Bible
- but the Contemplative Spirituality and Mysticism I have been
warning you about!**

The SOULeader bookstore is also complete with the mystics Henri Nouwen, Richard Foster and many more! The links they take you to pages on how to practice these things! The links are a how to do CSM!

<p style="text-align: center;">Contemplative Prayer</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Centering Prayer Ignation Meditation Lectio Divina Solitude Spiritual Friendship and Direction The Daily Office The Jesus Prayer</p>
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Tie this to the other material already exposed on The Organic Church puts it squarely in the same circles of the Emergent Church Movement. **The Organic Church is just the House Church equivalent of Emergent!**

I have not looked closer at the other sessions but may in the future... If you have landed on this page and not seen the rest of the material exposing what we are talking about here are the links again:

Biblical Discernment Ministries - 9/2011
by John Beardsley

¹⁰¹ <http://apprising.org/2011/06/28/mainstream-evangelicalism-embracing-contemplative-mysticism/>

¹⁰² <http://www.souleader.org/resources/bookstorerelational.html>