

PURPOSE: To connect with those who have an active relationship with Church Doctor Ministries as peers in ministry, clients, and partners in prayer and support.

The Church Doctor® Report provides a quick read of strategic and influential information. This information is free to share as long as the source is respected: *The Church Doctor® Report*, www.churchdoctor.org.

20/20 VISION: WHAT THE NORTH AMERICAN CHURCH MAY LOOK LIKE IN 10 YEARS

Jesus said what must have sounded like a strange comment to His disciples: “I only do what I see the Father doing” (John 15:9). In that powerful theological statement lies the appropriate approach to diagnosing and analyzing the local church—and the movement called Christianity, even as we look into the next decade. I agree with Phyllis Tickle, Brian McLaren, and others who say, “If you want to know what the church in North America will look like in the next decade or so, look at the church in England.” That is what I have been doing for the last eight years. The deeper I look, the more I am convinced that England is a unique classroom to observe “what the Father is doing” and going to be doing in North America.

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The British context, and much of continental Europe, is approximately ten years more secularized than the United States and Canada. What God began there, in terms of revival, is now just beginning here on North American soil. There is no question in my mind that revival is coming not only to this continent, but, very likely, on a wide scale across the world. As a pastor or church leader, job #1 is to prepare your church for the coming revival. In my perception, you have about three to five years. You will put a major stake in the ground to reposition your church for what God is doing or, if you do nothing, by default, you will miss the window of opportunity, and your church, though probably benefitting a little from what is coming, will miss the greatest opportunity for the most significant spiritual harvest we will experience in this lifetime.

MULTIPLYING MINISTRY

- ▶ The *Church Doctor® Report* is provided at no cost. Forward it to those in your network of influence and add value to their lives!
- ▶ Forward it to staff and leaders in your church, denomination, network, or fellowship.

CHRISTIANITY VERSION 5.0

The door is closing on your father's church. If that old style—present style—way of doing Christianity continues, it may still exist by 2050, or it may not. For those churches that do make it through the transition, they will go through a long process of modification. However, for those churches that look to see what God is doing and want to be a part of that, they will be prepared and God will use them as a harvest mechanism for the revival that is coming. The vast majority of church leaders could not prepare their churches without intervention help. There are a few pioneers. They work with churches and understand the movement that is now being experienced in England and on the continent of Europe, and to a lesser degree somewhat in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and, just in the incubation stage, in North America. In my perception, the two pioneering ministries that can help churches are CMA resources (www.cmaresources.org) and Church Doctor Ministries (www.churchdoctor.org). It is important to remember that to retool your church, you can't do this alone—nobody can. This movement is too new, too different, and too complex. It would take you five to ten years to learn the nuances that would direct your leadership influence to reinvent the culture of your congregation. By then, it would probably be too late. As a leader at this time in history, you are a gatekeeper for your church with unique historical responsibility.

This is the fifth time in the history of Christianity that leaders like you have had this responsibility. The first were those Jesus gathered. They were those who were willing to learn that new wine required a new wineskin. Not everybody bought it. Not everybody could get it. Those who did were used by God to launch the Christian Movement of the New Covenant. In this sense, the key to preparing your church is to lead and influence in such a way that you softly, tenderly, and persistently develop a new culture. To say it another way, it is to resurrect a New Testament culture.

The second time this happened was around the year 500. This was the birth of the Roman Catholic Church. It brought a focus on order (reflected in the liturgy in worship) and, for the first time ever, trained leaders (clergy). Christianity version 3.0 happened around the year 1000. This was the era of what is often called the Great Schism. Following the fall of the Roman Empire, the Roman Catholic pope, Gregory the Great, cleaned up much of the mess of the church. He also started the Monastic Movement, which would be the cohesive force for mission until the Reformation. It was also the time of the Council of Chalcedon, which determined that Jesus was not a son of God, but *the* Son of God, with both human and divine nature.

MISSIONAL MOVEMENT MEASURES

1. Consider an emersion trip to Sheffield, England—a trip to the Book of Acts in 21st century clothes.
2. Learn from the Emergent Church literature, even though you won't agree with everything.
3. Think about everything you do at your church from the perspective of *institution* or *relationship*.
4. Get help to change your church government to a relational network approach.
5. Begin to process this hinge point in history with your church leaders.
6. Lead discussions with staff and church leaders using the twenty 5.0 strategies.
7. Consider using the CDM Emergent Church Process that will lead your church to a gentle extension strategy. www.churchdoctor.org.
8. Check out the CMA Resources Website, www.cmaresources.org.
9. Begin mentoring one or two others in the discipleship catechism of the Sheffield Movement (*LifeShapes*, by Mike Breen).
10. Begin to focus on the infrastructure of the Sheffield Movement: missional clusters and huddles.

Version 4.0 of the church occurred 500 years ago, the Protestant Reformation. The protestant reformers' new wineskin for Christianity provided the environment for an extraordinary expansion of the Christian Movement. 500 years later is NOW. To read more about this, see Phyllis Tickle's excellent book *The Great Emergence*.

If you trace history, about every 500 years, Christianity has what Phyllis Tickle calls a great rummage sale. Christians offload all the cultural baggage accumulated during the previous 500 years (with exception of the New Testament era, which reengineered thousands of years of preparation of God's Messiah). So what does it look like today?

RUMMAGE SALE VERSION 5.0

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, there was an explosion of contemporary music. This began in churches, along with a proliferation of Christian radio stations. This was the first sign of offloading cultural baggage, old language. It spilled over into the redesign of new worship forms, thoughts, and expressions for biblical theology that never changes.

Another earlier sign of this hinge point in history, Version 5.0, was a deterioration of denominations. Denominational wineskins were primarily a product and result of the Protestant Reformation. While they served many good purposes for hundreds of years, there was—and still is—an increasing awareness that this may not be the way God connects Christians in the most useful way forever. The early signs of this change of wineskins began with movements, like the Calvary Chapel Movement, the Vineyard Movement, Independent Churches, apostolic churches, networks, and fellowships.

Christians began to intersect with other Christians beyond their own denominations. Efforts like Promise Keepers, Women of Faith, and Bible Study Fellowship exploded across the landscape. Christians felt a new freshness in operating in wider circles while, in most cases, not abandoning their doctrinal distinctives.

Parachurch organizations began to multiply and flourish as people sensed the need for mission and outreach to be expressed through structures that were uniquely designed to provide a specific ministry task. Many of these people did not necessarily leave their denominational connections, but stepped with one foot into another world of cooperative efforts. This was a task-oriented, mission-directed effort that was willing to “agree to disagree” (on nonessentials) for the sake of the cause.

The rise of megachurches became a new way of thinking about how Christians are organized together. These megachurches operate with the influence of denominations. Many of them provid-

CONSULTATION SERVICE

EMERGENT CHURCH CONSULTATION PROCESS

The world has drastically changed. Every 500 years, the Christian Movement has a rummage sale, offloading a large amount of cultural baggage. It is transformed dramatically and a great expansion of Christianity results. The last time this occurred was the Protestant Reformation. Five hundred years later is now!

Secular, postmodern, young adults are not attracted by the church of the 20th century. New wine requires new wineskins. Most approaches to change the church today “blow up” the local church. This process focuses on change by the extension model.

Pastors and church leaders are the gatekeepers of their churches. You have about three years to prepare your church for the coming revival influenced by the Emergent Church Movement. You cannot do this alone. This process gently prepares your congregation for the coming revival. You don't want to miss it!

For information, talk, without obligation, to one of our consultants.

CHURCH DOCTOR[®] MINISTRIES
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JUNE 2010

EMERSON EXPERIENCE

June 3-10, 2010, Church Doctor Ministries will lead a group of pastors and church leaders to the church that, for twenty-five years, has been the source of a spreading world revival. A movement is more caught than taught. This trip may be eligible for advanced degree credit at some seminaries, Bible colleges, or Christian universities.

Limit: 20 pastors and church leaders.

For an application form,
e-mail jasonatkinson@churchdoctor.org

ed conferences to train church leaders, a direct challenge to traditional Bible colleges and seminaries. Many of these churches developed their own publishing arms providing resources that challenged Version 4.0 denominational publishing companies. Many church leaders became part of something new they often didn't understand. These were the first steps into the world of Christianity, Version 5.0, sometimes called the Emergent Church.

5.0 STRATEGIES

While churches offload cultural baggage (systems, methodologies, and delivery mechanisms for the Gospel), there is a parallel movement toward approaches similar to Christianity in the 1st century. The following represents a partial list of those primary strategies.

1. Acts of Repentance. The Greek word *metanoia* means to change your mind. Romans 12:1 says, "Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind." This means your church members must be led to change the way they think. We behave the way we think. These are the ten worldviews I have articulated in my book *Discover Your Windows*, also used in the campaign developed for local churches called *70 Days of Vision*. When leaders help Christians rethink biblical worldviews, it reshapes the New Testament culture of their churches.
2. Reversing Church. We are postured to bring people to church. In Version 5.0, we will put a greater emphasis on bringing church to people.
3. The emphasis will shift from institutions to relationship, from programs to ministries.
4. Outreach will move from an evangelism committee to everyone sharing with their own way-of-life contacts.
5. The target for outreach will shift from "our city" or "our neighborhood" or "those who have visited our church" or "those who have participated in Vacation Bible School" to the social network of people in your church.
6. Evangelism will become witnessing. Christians will share what God has done/is doing in their lives.
7. Christians will recapture the importance of authenticity: Christianity in word and deed.

KEY RESOURCES

-  www.3dministries.org.
-  Church Doctor Ministries. Church Government Consultation Process www.churchdoctor.org.
-  Church Doctor Ministries. *Emergent Church Process* www.churchdoctor.org.
-  Cole, Neil. *Church 3.0: Upgrades for the Future of the Church*. Hoboken, NJ: Jossey-Bass, 2010.
-  Cole, Neil. *Organic Church: Growing Faith Where Life Happens*. Hoboken, NJ: Jossey-Bass, 2005.
-  <http://www.emergentvillage.com>.
-  Hunter, Kent R. *Discover Your Windows: Lining up With God's Vision*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2003.
-  Hunter, Kent R. *The Sheffield Report*, 2007.
-  Hunter, Kent R. "Want to Really Change Your Church?" *Rev! Magazine*. November/December 2009.
-  Ma, Jaeson. *The Blueprint: A Revolutionary Plan to Plant Missional Communities on Campus*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2007.
-  McLaren, Brian D. *A New Kind of Christian: A Tale of Two Friends on a Spiritual Journey*. Hoboken, NJ: Jossey-Bass, 2001.
-  McNeal, Reggie. *The Present Future: Six Tough Questions for the Church*. Hoboken, NJ: Jossey-Bass, 2009.
-  Rainer, Thom S. *Simple Church: Returning to God's Process for Making Disciples*. Nashville, TN: B&H Books, 2006.
-  Sheffield Pilgrimage, jason@churchdoctor.org
-  Stark, Rodney. *The Rise of Christianity: How the Obscure Marginal Jesus Movement Became the Dominant Religious Force in the Western World in a Few Centuries*. San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins Publishers, 1996.
-  Tickle, Phyllis. *Great Emergence, The: How Christianity is Changing and Why*. Grand Rapids, MI: BakerBooks., 2008.
-  Towns, Elmer. Ed Stetzer, and Warren Bird. *11 Innovations in the Local Church: How Today's Leaders Can Learn, Discern, and Move Into the Future*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2007.

8. Christians will increase emphasis on meeting needs and, in the process, develop relationships, expanding their network with people who don't know Christ.
9. Christians will know when those in their social network show signs of receptivity.
10. Christians will understand post-modern thinking that truth is relative. On the front end of outreach, Christians will not share Bible verses, religious stories, or church (institution) issues. They will be taught to share personal, experiential, and relational encounters with the living Jesus Christ who has made a difference in their lives.
11. Church decision-making will become biblical. The secular votes, nominations, committees, rules, top-down structure will change to a relationally-based, flat structure.
12. Organizational volunteerism will be replaced by biblical, relational discipling.
13. Church staff will follow an Ephesians 4 approach to equipping others for the work of ministry.
14. The church office will be moved to a strip mall or shopping center.
15. Most "church" activity will happen outside the building in neutral, public places.
16. Church buildings will be less important. More public buildings will be rented for church. Many buildings will be shared by many different congregations. They will increasingly be located in public, marketplace settings—commercial property.
17. Playing church will no longer be tolerated. Christians will be authentic and honest about being both saints and sinners. Christians will become more accepting of more marginal behaviors—not abandoning the severity of sin, but being much better at loving the sinner. This reinstatement of the culture of grace will make Christianity more attractive to those who struggle with alcohol, adultery, addictions, divorce, and homosexuality. Christians will be less likely to shoot their own wounded while balancing the biblical seriousness of sin.
18. Christians will become familiar with the power of God as demonstrated in healing, miracles, casting out demons, prophecy, speaking in tongues, and the role of modern apostles.
19. The "silo" posture of churches working in geographical proximity, but in isolation from one another, will shift to a willingness to cooperate toward Kingdom building.
20. When Christians look in a mirror and describe themselves, their first thought will be "I am a missionary."

OVERCOMING PRIDE

Christianity Version 5.0 is coming. Will your church be ready? Those churches that are ready will be led by those who have subordinated their arrogance. Leaders will recognize they can't figure all this out and implement it in their church without help from the outside. They have, instead, partnered with those who have spent the last twenty to thirty years preparing for the most exciting move of God since the Protestant Reformation. They will live the proverb, "A wise man has many counselors" (Proverbs 15:22 TEV).

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