

# Chapter 11: The Sociological Cycle of Church Growth

## Parable of the Life-Saving Station

On a dangerous seacoast where shipwrecks often occur there was once a crude little lifesaving station. The building was just a hut, and there was only one boat, but the few devoted members kept a constant watch over the sea, and with no thought for themselves they went out day or night tirelessly searching for the lost. Many lives were saved by this wonderful little station, so that it became famous. Some of those who were saved, and various others in the surrounding area, wanted to associate and give their time and money. New boats were brought and new crews were trained. The little lifesaving station grew.

Some of the new members of the lifesaving station were unhappy that the building was so crude and so poorly equipped. They felt that a more comfortable place should be provided at the first refuge of those saved from the sea. So they replaced the emergency cots with beds and put better furniture in an enlarged building. Now the lifesaving station became a popular gathering place for its members, and they redecorated it beautifully and furnished it exquisitely. Fewer members were now interested in going on lifesaving missions, so they hired lifeboat crews. The lifesaving motif still prevailed in the club decoration and there was a liturgical lifesaving boat in the meeting room. About this time, a large ship was wrecked off the coast, and the hired crews brought in boatloads of cold, wet and half-drowned people. They were dirty and sick and some of them had yellow skin. The beautiful new club was considerably messed up. So the property committee immediately had a shower house built outside the club where victims of shipwreck could be cleaned up before coming inside.

At the next meeting, there was a split in the club membership. Most of the members wanted to stop the club's lifesaving activities as being unpleasant and a hindrance to the normal social life of the club. Some members insisted upon lifesaving as their primary purpose and pointed out that they were still called a lifesaving station. But they were finally voted down and told that if they wanted to save lives of all the various kinds of people who were shipwrecked in those waters, they could begin their own lifesaving station down the coast. They did.

As the years went by, the new station experienced the same changes that had occurred in the old. It evolved into a club, and yet another lifesaving station was founded. History continued to repeat itself, and today you will find a number of exclusive clubs along that shore. Shipwrecks are still frequent in those waters, but most of the people drown!

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## Parable of Church Growth

On a dangerous dark side street near the steel mill located between two taverns was a crude little storefront church building. Wooden folding chairs were set up, a crude pulpit constructed, and a few devoted members prayed constantly for the salvation of transient millworkers. With no thought for self or pleasure, the members went out visiting continually in every home, speaking to reach lost people for Jesus Christ. Many were converted and when a notorious gambler was converted, the little mission became famous. Christians from surrounding areas commuted to the church, giving their time, money, and effort. New pews were bought and ushers were trained. The little mission purchased the shop next door and doubled its auditorium size.

Some of the new members were unhappy with the crude building and poor equipment. It was said in a congregational meeting, "A man can better worship God in a comfortable pew in an air-

conditioned auditorium." Matching chancel furniture was donated when new pews were installed. The members redecorated with tinted glass windows, adding Christian education facilities and a parking lot. The members lost interest in visitation, so they hired young zealous preachers to do their work. A revival was held and a man of God preached repentance. Perspiring mill hands were led to the Lord and when high school greasers started attending regularly, the deacons complained, not wanting their daughters to be contaminated. Small kids brought by Sunday school buses did not have shoes or clean clothes. The Women's Missionary Union immediately installed a "millworkers' closet" so the needy could put on proper clothes. But the women were critical when the immaculately clean floors were muddied.

At the next congregational meeting some members wanted the pastor to quit evangelistic preaching, wanting a more dignified, reverent worship service. Other members insisted soul winning was the primary purpose of the church. They were finally voted down and told to go elsewhere. "After all, millworkers like sensationalism," remarked a bank vice-president. They rented a store building across the street and began services with only crude folding chairs and a small pulpit. As the years went by the new mission experienced the same changes that had occurred in the old. It evolved into a religious club and yet another soul winning station was founded. History continued to repeat itself, and if you visit the mill section today you will find a number of exclusive sophisticated churches. Because of the neighborhood, none of those who attend the exclusive churches live there, but have moved to the better parts of the town. It was determined that not one of the millworkers in the neighborhood attends a single church in the area.

## Why Churches Grow ... And Decline

How does a lifesaving station, dedicated to the saving of drowning seamen, slowly erode into a social club? The answer is not simple, but any organization changes when the members change. How does a fundamentalist church, dedicated to preaching the gospel to individuals bound in the slavery, slowly erode into a liberal-dead church? Obviously, church buildings or organizations do not depart from the faith. When people change the church changes.

The ten churches in this book grow because of an inner strength, not organization or techniques. They reflect the growth dynamic that is found at the beginning stage of the religious movement known as the sociological cycle of church growth. Most of these churches were founded by the present pastor or he came when the church was small. These ten churches should grow in the future because they have overcome expansion barriers. Each one is now a flaming witness for God, but sometime in the distant future, even these ten churches will deteriorate. However, their drop in attendance will probably not come with the present pastor or the next. These churches will erode into liberal edifices in the next 100 or 200 years. The present pastors will be grieved with the prospect and their members will vehemently deny that their church will grow liberal. Yet, death is as inevitable to a church as to every newborn baby. The purpose of this chapter is to examine those factors that cause churches first to grow and then to deteriorate. The most dynamic growth comes at the beginning of the cycle (where these ten churches are found). America is witnessing general church decline, yet here are ten churches that register monthly growth. Unsaved people come to hear the sermons, many of them walking down the aisle to receive Jesus Christ. Drunkards are sobered by the power of the gospel and broken homes are restored. These converts remain in the church, causing an attendance growth. Then they join in the task of evangelizing others and the church continues to grow. With time, churches change and shift in purpose, causing progress around the cycle. Natural growth based on religious factors becomes more difficult. This chapter is more concerned with positive attendance growth factors, but negative deterrents to growth will be noted.

A minister of a declining Baptist church in Chicago recently said, "Fifteen years ago, our church had a fishermen's club and we had ten men who went on the streets to win souls and preach in

street meetings. We were concerned about men going to hell." The minister sighed, "Our flaming witnesses are gone, these same men are now respectable property owners." What happened?

Another minister replied, "No one calls Christians 'fanatics' any more." The church of Jesus Christ is in the midst of radical changes, and most of them are not for the better. Harvard University was once the citadel of Conservative Christianity, training men for the gospel ministry. There was no doubt about its theological position. However, Harvard has long since slipped from its original purpose, becoming a liberal school. Not only do churches and colleges shift to a more liberal institution, the Christian family goes through a process of deterioration. Richard Niebuhr, a sociologist, set forth the rags-to-riches-to-rags cycle that takes place in religious families. According to him:

Children born into families of first-generation sect members begin to change the sect into a church even before they reach adulthood. With their coming, the sect must become an educational and disciplinary institution in order to make the new generation conform to its ideas and customs. The second generation holds its convictions less fervently than pioneers of the sects, whose convictions were formed in the heat of conflict and sometimes at the threat of martyrdom. With each succeeding generation, isolation from the world becomes more difficult.<sup>1</sup>

The process of degeneration from a high revival peak to a low valley of sin is often noted in Scripture. When God finds His people in the mire of sin, He raises up a man who can lead the people back to a high point of spiritual devotion. God's working is limited to men—they are His channel. The more abilities a man has, the greater God is able to work through him. The pastors of the ten churches in this book are godly men and they accomplish much because of their abilities (see Chapter 12 on charisma). The cycle evident in Scripture shows that when the godly man died, the people eventually fell into sin.

And the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord, that he did for Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died being an hundred and ten years old . . . And also that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works he had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim (Judges 2:8-11).

Critics claim the Sunday school is dying. Thirteen years ago, Wesley Schrader suggested in *Life* magazine that Sunday school was the "most wasted hour of the week." Attendance in mainline denominational Sunday Schools is markedly going downhill. These are substantiated facts. However, at the same time there is a growth in most Sunday schools among the evangelicals and fundamentalists.

After studying the ten largest Sunday schools in America, this author maintained that those churches were the largest in America because they had sectarian-type characteristics or were closely identified with characteristics of fundamentalism. Ernst Troeltsch, the German philosopher-sociologist wrote that churches grow from a sect status to ecclesia or a denominational stage.<sup>2</sup> The following cycle is an elaboration of Troeltsch's position to show the church's sociological cycle. A church begins as a sect and moves to the second stage on the cycle, an institution. The third stage on the cycle is a fully organized denomination, and the final stage is deterioration. In this chapter the sect will be associated with the theological position called fundamentalism. The second stage of the cycle called the institution will be identified with evangelicalism.<sup>3</sup> Denominationalism will be associated with the mainline denominations and/or the position of theological liberalism.<sup>4</sup>

## Sociological Cycle

The thesis of this chapter is that Sunday school numerical growth reflects the theological and sociological posture of the church's position on the sociological cycle. (1) Fundamentalist churches have the capacity for the fastest numerical growth, although not all fundamentalist churches are growing. The ten churches of this book are found at this stage of the cycle. (2) Evangelical churches have capacity for growth, although not as fast as fundamentalism. Also, all evangelical churches are not growing. (3) Liberalism or mainline denominationalism does not have the religious dynamic to naturally attract individuals. When the attendance at denominational-type churches climbs, it does so for extraneous reasons of an external nature. Most denominational-type churches do not grow because they apply no external pressure for growth or their spiritual life is void, hence they have no internal dynamic for growth.

David Moberg, the church sociologist from Marquette University, has designed the cycle as "a process by which cults originate, develop into sects, and then change into denominations, perhaps finally to emerge from the process as churches."<sup>5</sup> Harvey Cox in his controversial book, *The Secular City*, explains the development of churches in relationship to the socio-economic factors of society. He sees the cycle as: (1) the tribe, (2) the town, (3) metropolis, and (4) megalopolis.<sup>6</sup> His cycle has many parallel factors to Moberg's and Troeltsch's cycles.

## An Examination of Sects/Fundamentalism

Webster defines the sect as "A class, order, or kind of men; a group having in common a leader or a distinctive doctrine; a following; a school, as of philosophy; a group holding similar views; a party. In religion: (a) a party dissenting from an established or parent church; a body of sectaries, (b) one of the organized bodies of Christians."<sup>7</sup> The sects have theological beliefs that fall within the context of historic Christianity.

The evangelical and/or fundamentalist movement, arising in this country since the turn of the century took its name from the magazine, *The Fundamentals*, which was a rallying point for theologically conservative individuals. However, the term fundamentalist that once reflected a conservative enlightened position no longer has that connotation in the perspective of others. In the mind of many the term fundamentalist today implies a negative connotation. But those who are fundamentalist are proud to wear this label.

Carl F. H. Henry, past editor of *Christianity Today*, is a severe critic of fundamentalism, indicating that it is more than a doctrinal position, that fundamentalism has a life-style or methodology all its own. "Historically fundamentalism was a theological position; only gradually did the movement come to signify a mood and disposition as well."<sup>8</sup> Later Henry went on to describe fundamentalism both theologically and methodologically:

Fundamentalism is considered a summary term for theological pugnaciousness, ecumenic disruptiveness, also unprogressiveness, scientific obliviousness, and/or anti-intellectual inexcusableness. By others, fundamentalism is equated with extreme dispensationalism, pulpit sensationalism, accepted emotionalism, social withdrawal, and bawdy church music.<sup>9</sup>

Fundamentalists and sects have similar characteristics and these will be developed in this chapter. Some fundamentalists may resent being called a sect. However, Christianity was a sect in its beginning (Acts 4:5, 28:22), as was the Pharisees (Acts 5:17, 15:5, 26:5). Hence, the title sect in the Scriptures is a religious title.

Arnold Hearn, writing in the *Christian Century*, 1958, in an article entitled, "Fundamentalist Renaissance" describes a "revival" (his term) going on among fundamentalists concerning scholarship and scientific investigation.<sup>10</sup> (We are not sure whether Hearn was referring to fundamentalist or evangelicals as a group; he probably was referring to all church groups to the theological right of the neo-orthodox position.)

William Hordern recognizes a division in the right wing of the theological world in a chapter entitled, "The New Face of Conservatism," written for *New Directions in Theology Today*, claiming many in the church thought:

Fundamentalism was pronounced dead, and it was assumed that it would soon disappear from its sanctuaries in the hinterlands. To those who were writing the obituaries of fundamentalism, there were disturbing signs.<sup>11</sup>

Hordern indicates the strength of fundamentalism is growth in church attendance, higher per capita giving than liberal congregations, and the fact that these fundamentalists were providing far more than their share of candidates for the ministry.<sup>12</sup> These facts are reflected in a survey of the 100 largest Sunday Schools in America. Hordern was teaching at Garrett Theological Seminary, Evanston, Illinois, where he observed the conservative churches of Chicago changing in nature from the fundamentalist to the evangelical camp. He characterizes these changes:

During the fifties, however, a group of young scholars arose from the fundamentalist circles to forge a new theology. These scholars rejected the term "fundamentalist" because they felt that it had become a term of abuse and not a meaningful description of a theological position. Furthermore, they were conscious of the shortcomings of their theological fathers and wished to remold the tradition. They were as concerned as the liberals of an earlier day were to make Christianity relevant to the modern age, but they were determined not to repeat what they saw as the errors of liberalism. Although most of these young men came from fundamentalist seminaries and colleges, they began taking graduate degrees at nonfundamentalist institutions. They returned to their denominations and seminaries to revitalize the theology that had hardened during the fundamentalist-modernist controversy. There is no agreed name . . . They prefer the name "evangelical" or "new evangelical."<sup>13</sup>

The categories for a sect that was developed by Troeltsch are perhaps the best outline to use in this chapter to describe fundamentalism.<sup>14</sup>

1. Sects/ fundamentalism is comparatively small. Troeltsch lived in Lutheran Germany where the state church encompassed most of the inhabitants. Sects, according to his observation, were small. However, in Protestant America sect-type churches are rapidly growing and are numbered among large denominations. This author indicated in the book *The Ten Largest Sunday Schools* that these churches were sectarian in nature. (He has preached in 71 of the 100 largest churches in America and feels that most of the large churches are sectarian in nature.)

2. Sects/ fundamentalism tends to avoid state and society. Most fundamentalists have a deep desire to be separated from secular influences that would contaminate their life. Some fundamentalist denominations, such as the General Association of Regular Baptists and the Independent Fundamental Churches of America, seem to place personal purity as the first priority for the Christian. By doing this they make personal separation an end, rather than a means. The churches of this book feel that evangelism is the main priority of the church. However, personal holiness is not neglected, for these churches preach separation from sinful practices. These churches feel separation is a means to gain spiritual power so that a Christian may be an effective soul winner. However, most fundamentalists, whatever the purpose, feel separation is a vital aspect of living the Christian life.

Some fundamentalists feel ecclesiastical separation from doctrinal heresies also is a criterion of the Christian church. For this reason, Bob Jones University will not fellowship with Billy Graham,

not because they disagree with the content of his preaching, but because Billy Graham fellowships with liberals who cooperate in his evangelistic endeavors.

Elizabeth Nottingham indicates there are several types of sects.<sup>15</sup> Some are withdrawing sects who take on the characteristics of the medieval monastic orders. These might be Plymouth Brethren or Old Amish Mennonites. Others are militant sects who are aggressive in their outreach. Nottingham indicates that many of the present denominations at one time were sects, such as the Methodists and Southern Baptists, but have made their peace with the world. These groups no longer practice personal separation based on biblical commands.

3. Sects/ fundamentalism is connected with lower socio-economic classes. When visiting these ten churches a vast number of lower-class (Socio-economic) people are observed in the congregation although there is an evidence of both middle-class and upper-class members. When Dr. Jack Hyles, pastor, First Baptist Church, Hammond, Indiana, was asked what class his people were, he replied, "All my people are upper class." By this he meant his respect for each person, but on many occasions he indicates his love for the common man. Some high-church ministers tend to criticize lower-class churches, equating them with naiveté and/or ignorance. The strength of sectarianism/ fundamentalism is in its identification with the common man. Jesus indicated a rich man had as much difficulty entering into heaven as a camel passing through the eye of a needle (Mark 10:25). Also there are a number of Scriptures that criticize the rich (Matt. 13:22, James 5:1-4) and commend the poor (James 2:1-4). Perhaps the poor are more aware of the harshness of life: lack of food, adequate shelter, financial security, and recreational pleasures. The poor, during the New Testament as well as today, find in Jesus Christ the answer to many pressures of life. Money can give a false sense of security to the affluent. The rich suburbanite insulates himself from the ultimate issues and lives in a plastic world created by his own wealth. Money usually produces self-sufficiency and a man who has little material need, does not turn to God as readily as the poor. Perhaps the poor, as the fundamentalist, reflects a constant need for the presence of God in his life.

4. Sects/ fundamentalists oppose the established culture. When most sociologists examine the content of sermons preached by fundamentalist preachers, they find a heavy emphasis on the Second Coming of Christ and the judgment of this world. Since fundamentalists believe this present culture will eventually be destroyed, they put little stock in its present enjoyment. Also, since man is sinful in his design and nature, the culture that he creates is a product of that sinful nature.

When a man is converted in a fundamentalist church, he usually has a great desire to spend time working in his church. A truck driver was led to the Lord at Thomas Road Baptist Church and he immediately began driving a Sunday school bus, spending 6 to 8 hours each Saturday visiting in homes to reach others for Christ. Because he loves Christ and the church, he totally involved himself in its ministry. His former friends feel he was missing the pleasures of life; however, he no longer enjoyed drinking with his friends. He had found new pleasures for this life and enjoyed serving in the church.

5. Sects/ fundamentalists have voluntary membership based upon a new birth for entrance. Many mainline denominational churches accept a person for membership based on a verbal agreement with the church doctrinal statement. However, sectarian/ fundamentalist churches emphasize the new birth experience and many of their members are brought into the church through conversion, rather than by transfer of church membership. One of the signs that a church is beginning to move around the sociological cycle is when most of the new members transfer in from other churches rather than being converted in the church. The number of conversions in these ten churches indicates that they are alive. Their growth is reflected in the weekly baptismal service where new Christians are immersed in water.

6. Sects/ fundamentalists emphasize enthusiasm as a sincere expression of their dedication. Preaching at fundamentalist churches is sometimes interrupted with shouts of "Amen!" Zeal is a criterion for spiritual service. Pastors spend time making announcements to motivate Christians to

soul winning and Christian service. Outward enthusiasm is an obvious characteristic of fundamentalist churches. New members are judged by this zeal and emotional vitality.<sup>16</sup>

The critics of fundamentalism accuse them of being emotional, hence shallow. The morning service in a fundamentalist church is not characterized with liturgy, ritualism expressed in printed programs, robed choirs, anthems and threefold amens. The churches in this book emphasize informality and warmth of fellowship. Dr. Jerry Falwell, pastor, Thomas Road Baptist Church, said to Doug Oldham, soloist, "Sing another solo; they are not ready to listen to the Scripture." Oldham sang a song with "happy enthusiasm." When Oldham had finished, Falwell felt the congregation was ready to receive the preached message.

Fundamentalists point to Christianity in the New Testament. They indicate there were no formal cathedrals or sanctuaries; rather, congregations worshiped God in simple houses, fields or street meetings. The preaching of the gospel and the teaching of the Word of God was the catalyst that drew people together. Dr. Jerry Falwell indicated a blueprint for building a church auditorium: "Preach the gospel and put walls around it."

Fundamentalists still emphasize the rededication service, whereby individuals are asked to stand or come to the altar as an outward profession of an inner act of dedicating oneself to God. Many evangelicals, who have moved in the cycle, do not appreciate a rededication service. A minister in the Evangelical Free Church stated recently, "If a man is dedicated to God, it's a fact; he doesn't have to keep reminding God." The fundamentalist answers this charge by rebuttal that all men are sinners by nature and have a tendency to slip into sin. The biblical principle of leaven, that sin can permeate the whole of man, forces the fundamentalist to constantly preach rededication.

7. Sects/ fundamentalism emphasizes conversion experience. The fundamentalist believes that the conversion experience prepares a man for heaven. The term experience is the core of understanding what happens to a man when he is born again. First of all the conversion experience is based on knowledge of the Word of God. A man must know he is a sinner and that "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). This knowledge includes the fact that Jesus died for sin and that man must believe the fundamental facts of the gospel to become a Christian. However, this knowledge does not qualify a man for heaven. A person must have an experience based on that knowledge. Emotions are the second step involved in this conversion experience. A man's total being is affected; as a result he may hate sin or love God--both are emotions. The emotion of love is as strong as the nature of man and a man must love, to be converted (Matt. 22:37-39). Third, the will of man is involved in a conversion experience. The man must want to be saved. His will must respond to God and he "must receive Jesus Christ" (John 1:12). These three aspects make up a conversion experience. Fundamentalists stress this conversion experience, that is usually emotional in nature. Evangelicals usually stress an academic conversion. One of the signs that indicate a church is drifting into liberalism is when "mental-belief" or agreement with the doctrinal statement is substituted for a conversion experience. A church begins to drift into liberalism when it no longer stresses conversion experiences, but rather only emphasizes rational understanding of Christianity.

8. Sects/ fundamentalists emphasize lay leadership at the pastoral level. One of the amazing phenomena found in these ten Sunday Schools was that a number of full-time staff members had never attended Bible college and/or theological seminary. They were laymen who were promoted to full-time staff status as a result of their successful ministry in the church. Reverend Roscoe Brewer, youth minister, Kansas City Baptist Temple, is one of the most influential youth directors in America. In the past few years, he has been responsible for preparing over ten laymen who have not had formal training for the positions of youth ministers. These men are now in full-time Christian work. This author would judge that approximately one-third of the staff members of these churches have never attended a Bible college or theological seminary. They have learned how to build a church by working in a local church under a successful pastor. One visitation pastor commented, "I attended the school of hard knocks."

The use of laymen in full-time positions brings zeal into the leadership of local churches which usually produces results. But some of these lay leaders also bring theological shallowness. Most of these lay pastors have only a lay knowledge of the Bible and doctrine, learned from their pastors. One visitation minister (not from these 10 churches) told me, in all seriousness, "My course in the power of positive thinking by Dale Carnegie is excellent theology. It's all a young man needs to go into full-time Christian service." This naiveté scares me.

9. Sects/ fundamentalists emphasize a mystical religious relationship to God. Troeltsch said a mystical relationship to God is characterized as communicating with God apart from the five senses: i.e., sight, taste, hearing, smell, and touch. The fundamentalist believes he has a relationship with God through a sixth sense, "the Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God" (Rom. 8:16). Ask the fundamentalist who arises from his knees if he talked to God. His reply, "God spoke to me-I know it in my heart." Because of mystical inclination, many fundamentalists rely much on feelings rather than the rational teachings of the Word of God.

There is nothing wrong with mysticism; all true Christians have Jesus Christ in their hearts, which results in a mystical relationship to God. "Christ lives in my heart," testifies the believer. Paul witnessed, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20). "Mystical" does not mean unreal, but refers to an unseen relationship with Christ. The basis for a mystical relationship is in the objective revelation-the Word of God. A mystical relationship with Christ cannot prove one's Christianity, but only reflects one's walk with God.

10. Sects/ fundamentalists emphasize law more than grace. In this designation, the manner of living by law is referred to rather than salvation by law. Fundamentalists have always emphasized salvation by grace through faith. By this is meant the complete sufficiency of the atonement of Jesus Christ applied to those who repent and call upon God. But in the Christian life, fundamentalists do apparently emphasize law. Their emphasis on the doctrinal basis of law is sometimes confused with the laws found in the New Testament for Christian living. The New Testament teaches that the Christian is to live a disciplined life. One of the fruits of the Spirit is self-control. This self-discipline is not an end in itself but a means to spiritual power for evangelistic outreach. When a Christian refuses to smoke tobacco, partake of alcoholic beverages, or indulge his sexual appetites, it appears that he is emphasizing legalism. However, his negative prohibitions are motivated by self-discipline rather than a search for merit before God.

The sect/ fundamentalist is not antinomian (without law). The laws of God as seen in the Ten Commandments are reflective of the nature of God. Both the character of God and His attributes, which make up His nature, are reflected in the laws revealed in the Old Testament and the standards of the New Testament. Fundamentalists are accused of obeying laws out of religious naiveté. However, the fundamentalist obeys the laws of God as a reflection of faith and love to God.

11. Sects/ fundamentalists believe in the personal bodily return of Jesus Christ, retribution of wickedness and the establishment of the millennial kingdom. Troeltsch observed that sectarian movements literally interpreted the Scripture, which forced them into a view that God's people expect Jesus Christ to conclude the events on this earth. Troeltsch stated that sectarians believe, "God will allow His elect to pass through tribulation and misery, but finally He will complete the work of redemption upon His return to earth and the establishment of the kingdom of God."

The fundamentalist does not believe that ecology will run its course, so that man pollutes himself to death. Neither will the population explosion cause man to populate himself out of existence. They believe that Jesus Christ shall return as judge to bring vengeance upon all unrighteousness on this earth. But this age represents a day of grace in which God's mercy and love offers to every man salvation. The fundamentalist believes it is his duty to reach every living person on this earth with the gospel, motivating the lost to receive Jesus Christ.

12. Sects/ fundamentalists believe the work of redemption was completed in the atoning death of Jesus Christ. Since they have a literal interpretation of Scripture, fundamentalists believe the work of Jesus Christ upon the cross was final and that nothing in man's goodness could add to personal salvation. The sinner must humbly receive the mercy granted because of the death of Jesus Christ. Christ's death was neither designed as an example nor as a moral influence upon all men. The death of Christ satisfied the wrath that God had for sin-all sin. Since God's vengeance is satisfied - atoned for - God is now free to respond in mercy to those who repent and believe.

13. Sects/ fundamentalists believe in literal obedience to primitive church ideas. The field of Christian education becomes a dividing line between evangelicals and fundamentalists. The evangelicals believe that the church must apply the methods of education, psychology, sociology and philosophy to the Christian education process. Of course, evangelicals believe the method changes from generation to generation. Relevancy becomes the dividing issue. But in contrast, fundamentalists believe the message and method are implied in Scripture. The church should obey the scriptural methods to carry out God's work. Fundamentalists believe that the New Testament church in the book of Acts supplies the biblical method: i.e., house-to-house visitation, personal soul winning, public proclamation, private Bible study, public and private prayers. These methods allow the Holy Spirit to work through the cleansed man of God.

Fundamentalists do not believe the church must become relevant to the sinner, but the sinner must become relevant (repent) to God's plan of salvation. Therefore, coffee houses, dialog groups, Koinonia fellowships, the Jesus People, and other relevant ministries are not adopted and used by most fundamentalist organizations. Evangelicals, because of their apparent lack of faith or their desire to be relevant, have found that traditional soul-winning techniques have not been effective for numerical growth. Therefore, they turn to other methods as a viable option, which is in fact a turning away from Scripture.

14. Sects/ fundamentalists teach constant renewal and revival. The theological basis for the continual need of renewal and revival is found in the doctrine of sin. The old nature is not eradicated once a man becomes a Christian, but a new nature (the power of the Holy Spirit and the presence of Jesus Christ) is added to the man's nature. The old and new natures constantly strive for supremacy. Hence, the Christian needs to be constantly reminded to place Jesus Christ on the throne of his life. Since the sinful nature allows the old man to occupy the throne, the Christian needs to constantly return and place Christ at the center of his life. This is repentance or rededication, where the Christian returns to the first principles of Christianity to renew his walk with God. Evangelicals seldom have rededication services and altar calls for adults and high school students to yield their life to God. Many times the rededication service is looked down on, perhaps because of a softened attitude toward sin.

15. Sects/ fundamentalists expect to transform the world solely by the moral principles of the gospel. Evangelicals are fast embracing social action as an extension to the gospel ministry. So much so, that they are in danger of losing their emphasis on evangelism. At the same time, fundamentalists see their biblical task as presenting Christ to unsaved people so they can be saved. Social action of the evangelicals takes many forms, such as: the war on poverty, feeding the poor, voter registration, and drives for racial equity. The fundamentalist is not anti-social action, but feels deeply that the transformed individual will ultimately make an impact against social and civil ills. The fundamentalist, however, will not give primary consideration to social action but to soul winning. Dr. Jack Hyles has often said, "We do more social action on our way to win souls than the average liberal church does on purpose."

16. Sects/ fundamentalists differentiate between themselves and hypocrites or heretics. Since fundamentalists believe in the verbal-plenary inspiration of Scripture, those who deviate from this position are noted as "heretics." A "hypocrite" is one who claims to live by the standards of Scripture, yet fails to live by that standard either by his ignorance or deceptive practices. A "heretic"

is one who has espoused the beliefs of fundamentalism and has doctrinally deviated. Fundamentalists believe the Scriptures teach a position of doctrinal and personal purity. Therefore they (1) note those who deviate and (2) separate themselves from those who are heretics.

Those who dislike fundamentalists accuse them of being "fighting fundamentalists," but misunderstand their motives. Those who attacked Bishop James Pike for his doctrinal deviations were not seeking harm to the man. Fundamentalists attack people they believe are heretics because they want to protect the young Christian and untaught believer from contaminating their Christian walk and witness for God. However, there are some fundamentalists who carry crusades to fight Billy Graham or liberals as a personal vindication for their ministry or other subliminal motives. These fundamentalists might be motivated out of pseudo-charismatic qualities (messiah complex). The minister constantly faces the problem of balance in his ministry, yet one doubts if God calls a man to spend his main energies and time in attacking religious deviants. God calls ministers to win souls and build churches.

Summary. The true fundamentalist church is an aggressive band of born-again Christians who have mutually agreed that the world is going to hell and the drift of this life is governed by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Therefore, strict standards of personal purity are prized. Every man who has not experienced the new birth is lost and going to hell, so the aggressive fundamentalist attempts to win him to Christ, caring nothing of the charge of proselyting. The passive fundamentalist is committed to pure doctrine, giving diligent attention to teaching children and new members the doctrine of the Scriptures. Doctrinal deviates are ostracized from fellowship.

The fundamentalist is judged by his zeal in personal service and attendance of meetings. He walks in a day-by-day communion with his Lord whom he loves, and counts his church life the center of his existence. He feels his Christianity at a "gut" level and is sure of the correct stance of his position.

## Institutional—Evangelical

The term evangelical is sometimes broadly applied to all Bible-believing Christians, including fundamentalists, evangelicals, neo-evangelicals, or conservatives. However, this is a wrong usage of the term; most fundamentalists do not want to be called evangelicals. The broad use of the term evangelical is frequently used by mainline denominational spokesmen.

Evangelicals prefer to think of themselves as conservative in doctrine, yet relevant in methodology. One thing an evangelical knows for sure, he is not a fundamentalist. There are other names which might apply to evangelicals. The term orthodox and conservative is usually applied to both fundamentalists and evangelicals. However, the term orthodox and conservative, when applied, usually designates "that branch of Christendom which limits the ground of religious authority to the Bible."<sup>17</sup> As a result, the term orthodox and conservative can be applied to Christians who are either evangelical or fundamentalist.

Christian Life defined eight trends of the evangelical that distinguish him from a fundamentalist.

These include: a friendly attitude toward science; a willingness to re-examine beliefs concerning the work of the Holy Ghost; a more tolerant attitude toward varying attitudes on eschatology; a shift away from so-called dispensationalism: an increased emphasis on scholarship; a more definite recognition of social responsibility; a reopening of the subject of Biblical inspiration; and a growing willingness on the part of the evangelical to converse with the liberal and dialectical theologians.<sup>18</sup>

The sect/fundamentalist is characterized by a compelling concern to reach people by any and every means, persuading them to repent and turn to Jesus Christ. Crowds hungry for spiritual answers come to fundamentalist churches to hear the Word of God. Ministers give attention to the function of Christianity rather than to its form. Little thought is given to choir robes, printed programs, liturgy, or education of the minister (one indication that Christian Life shifted from serving a fundamentalist audience to an evangelical clientele, is that they substituted the term pastor for the more sophisticated term minister). To the fundamentalists, evangelistic and educational function is more important than outward form. This truth might be illustrated by special music; it is more important for a soloist or choir to "speak to the heart" than to enunciate correctly or use a higher class of music (anthem). The following points reflect the institutional/ evangelical interpretation of Christianity.

1. The evangelical/ institutional Christian is interested in efficiency and coordination. The evangelical feels a basic point of the church is to have a pattern or organization as seen in Scripture. Whereas the fundamentalist might let his emotions guide the arrangement of the morning service, the evangelical is concerned about wasted motion, wasted time, and wasted energy. The fundamentalists are concerned about efficiency, but this is not a basic assumption. When the evangelicals see a growing number of agencies in their churches, they usually organize a Board of Christian Education so there will be a coordination of energy rather than an omission or over-emphasis in their ministry. The Board of Christian Education helps to coordinate and systematically plan the activities of the church. It is felt, "In the multitude of counselors there is wisdom" (Prov. 11:14). Therefore, responsibility is turned over to committees so that the work of God may prosper.

2. The evangelical/ institutional Christian is motivated by rational appeals to the intellect. When a person is saved from raw heathenism (he is not a member of a church family and has no church profession) he does not need a course in apologetics to prove the existence of God. His emotional experience becomes the basis of his salvation and the basis of his faith. "I know God exists because He saved me." The average first-generation fundamentalist has little difficulty with the theory of evolution or other attacks against the Bible. He might say, "I know God created the world, because He saved my soul from sin. My experience proves the existence of God to me. I know God lives because my life is changed." Because fundamentalists base their Christianity upon their experience (emotions), if their feelings change, their basis of salvation can crumble. But many keep an even keel throughout life. However, when second-generation Christians (their children) come along, there is usually not a radical change in the life-style of the children at their conversion. They do not repent from outward sins. Therefore, they cannot appeal to their emotions. These children grow up in the church. Sunday school becomes an educational experience and they usually have a rational rather than an emotional commitment to Christ. Therefore, Christianity must be reasonable to them because their faith is based upon an intellectual understanding of Christianity. The evangelical needs a clear articulation of his convictions. The son speaks to his father, "If smoking is wrong, why can't you prove it to me?" Across the generation gap, another father is perplexed, "Why can't my daughter see that dancing is wrong?" The father deeply feels (emotions) dancing is wrong, but the daughter wants reasons. The father feels that since Christ saved him from sin, his daughter should not want to sin. However, the father doesn't realize the daughter has not had the same experience. Yet the daughter, reflecting the evangelical position, loves Christ as much as the father.

3. The evangelical/ institutional Christian will cooperate with both the fundamentalist and the liberal. Because the evangelical wants dialogue with the mainline denominations, he will cooperate in the local ministerial with ministers who are not of the same theological conviction. Evangelist Billy Graham has a crusade and the evangelical is happy to cooperate with mainline Presbyterian or Methodist denominations, or other groups of broad theological conviction, even though his fundamentalist friends will not. At the same time, the evangelical wants to cooperate with the fundamentalists, because they have the same theological persuasion. The evangelical minister might phone the fundamentalist church to arrange a singspiration for his teen-agers, only to be refused

politely. Evangelicals are noted for their tolerance for others holding differing opinions. Fundamentalists are noted for their dogged allegiance to the tenets they feel are biblical.

4. The evangelical/ institutional is committed to relevant Christianity. -The evangelical is concerned about social action and cooperates with community projects in drug abuse, temperance, and campaigns for civic decency. The evangelical points to the Old Testament prophets, indicating that preaching was socially oriented, aimed at changing society. Therefore, the evangelical feels he is following a biblical mandate.

Dr. Lois LeBar, professor of Christian education, Wheaton College, in her latest book, *Focus on People in Christian Education*, builds an entire philosophy of Christian education on the basis that needs become the starting point in Christian education, "ministry is meeting needs."<sup>19</sup> She uses the following cycle, indicating those who serve Christ must know needs before he can meet them. This cycle has been adopted by most evangelicals as a basis for their ministry; however, most have not analyzed its implications. A basic weakness of the chart is a definition of the term needs. If the ministry is "meeting the needs" of an individual, all effort could be channeled into supplying food or shelter for the poor. The ministry then is aimed at the felt need level. If the ministry begins with ultimate needs, Christian education is a biblical imperative. The Bible indicates the greatest need of man is spiritual - salvation from sin - because man is a sinner. However, when needs are interpreted as felt needs then the ministry is aimed at alleviating the temporary problems of man. These problems are usually physical or material. When a church gives all its energy to meeting felt needs it is easy to stray from the biblical imperatives of the Word of God. Both the YMCA and Salvation Army now serve with the supposition that their task is to meet needs (felt needs). At one time these organizations were known for a soul-winning ministry (ultimate needs), but have degenerated into primarily humanitarian organizations, departing from the biblical imperative of personal regeneration.<sup>20</sup>

The ministry in most evangelical churches is measured by its ability to meet needs; however, need is not the first step in establishing strategy for, church ministry. Strategy is formulated on biblical imperatives, from which needs are viewed.

The fundamentalists believe there are truths a pupil should learn; these lessons are not primarily practical (relevant), nor do these lessons meet felt needs. Some doctrine does not have immediate practical application, but the child of God is commanded to know doctrine. Facts about God should be taught simply because God is the source of Christianity. Therefore, the fundamentalist does not accept the presupposition of relevancy to guide his curriculum construction. However, he feels that the Word of God when properly learned will change his life, making the student relevant to God. The fundamentalists would go a step farther. The sinner should be made relevant to Scriptures, and not vice versa.

5. The evangelical/ institutional church emphasizes the positive Christian life. Many evangelicals feel fundamentalists are not motivated by guilt feelings in their separation from worldly amusements. The evangelical points to the positive aspects of the Scriptures and interprets verses about happiness to teach that God has given many good things in life to enjoy.

The evangelical teaches that separation is turning to God from sin (1 Thess. 1:9). Whereas, the fundamentalist emphasizes the opposite. The evangelical tends to emphasize turning to God, or the positive. Whereas the fundamentalist emphasizes repentance or turning from sin, many evangelicals would permit dancing, movies, and social drinking, if done in moderation. A teen-ager arrives home from high school, and argues, "But, Mother, the daughter of the minister of the First Baptist Church is going to the prom. Why can't I go?" As a result, fundamentalist parents are caught in tension; either they give in to their convictions or give in to their children. Neither is satisfactory to the fundamentalist.

6. The evangelical/ institutional church is held together by organization. When a religious movement is in its primitive state, growth is realized through dedication, zeal, and active

involvement by the entire membership. Many times growth comes through charismatic leadership. As the church becomes more institutionalized, leadership changes into the traditional mold. Authority is decentralized and the staff of specialists assumes more responsibilities. Full-time ministers of music, recreational directors, ministers of education, and business managers are employed to carry on the work of the church. The organizational form becomes more important than the church's function. It is not clear whether specialists are employed because laymen no longer have the zeal to carry on the ministry, or lay members no longer feel needed because full-time workers are employed. However, they have less zeal to carry on the work of the ministry. With the shift of leadership from laymen to the professional, efficiency becomes a standard of operation. The professional guides the church, with the laymen widely involved in the actual work. Only later as the church approaches denominational status do the laymen seem to lose their interest and involvement in church affairs. At that time "institutional blight" affects the church.

The sectarian/ fundamentalist places high emphasis upon zeal and dedication, which is reflected in emotionalism, at the same time de-emphasizing educational qualifications of the ministry. Many fundamentalist ministers will publicly criticize higher education, which is synonymous with college education, seminary training or intelligencia, yet at the same time they deeply respect the intellectual they personally meet. Academic excellence is equated with liberalism and is placed in an opposing position against zeal and fundamentalism. When the church grows into an institutional state, a growing desire to articulate convictions is felt, whereas previously the congregation is held together by a deep emotional level of commitment. One might theorize that the fundamentalist puts faith (.a term that might mean emotional commitment) over reason. The slow evolution to institutionalism sees rational Christianity slowly replacing emotional Christianity. Generally, solving the problems of higher criticism (i.e., inerrancy of Scripture, the deity of Christ, the existence of God, and evolution) seems to be the topics of conversation among evangelicals rather than fundamentalists.

The pastors of fundamentalist churches assume a laymen's mentality, even though many of them have graduated from a Bible college or a fundamentalist seminary. These schools give the pastor knowledge of theology, Bible, Christian education, and training in pastoral duties, but do not provide a liberal arts education. The liberal arts graduate is broadened, i.e., made a man of the world. Because of this lay mentality and desire for charismatic leadership, most true sectarian pastors rarely leave their first pastorate because they feel called by God to reach a neighborhood. Reverend Larry Chappell, United Baptist Church, San Jose, California, has often said, "I plan to make my life's ministry in San Jose." Hence, pastors from sectarian churches have longer tenure than evangelicals. The pastors of the ten largest churches in America have an average tenure of 24 years, two months. The evangelical pastor has a more professional attitude to the ministry, and at the same time a less provincial outlook, resulting in a lessened identification with any one neighborhood. Hence, the evangelicals tend to change pastorates much more frequently than do fundamentalists. Many pastors attempt to climb the totem pole to success by changing churches every three to five years. As a result, they do not build large churches because they do not invest enough time to establish their ministry and build momentum which might result in attendance growth. Any minister who changes pulpits too often, seeking greener pastures, is guilty of "green grass, low-fence mentality."

7. The evangelical/ institutional Christian bases separation from worldly amusement on a rational basis. Since many evangelicals are second-generation Christians, they seldom have the emotional/ guilt motivations for separating from sinful practices that were characteristic of their parents. The first-generation Christian is saved from the damaging effect of sin upon the life; his conversion centers around repentance from the polluting effects of sin. The factory worker knows that drinking beer, dancing all night in a nightclub or carousing in a tavern did not satisfy. When he received Jesus Christ he put away sin. His love to Jesus Christ motivates him to serve Jesus Christ with all his heart. He often quotes, "Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature, old things

are passed away, behold all things are become new" (II Cor. 5:17). Most second-generation Christians have grown up in a church and never had the opportunity to participate in outward sin. Their conversion is seldom an emotional-based experience. There is no turning front outward sin. Many second-generation Christians are converted early in life, receiving Jesus Christ in Sunday School or at mother's knee. These second-generation Christians feel cheated, not having an opportunity to enjoy the pleasures of the world. "What's wrong with a mini-dress?" the daughter asked her mother. The daughter is given emotional arguments, but she is searching for rational arguments. Hence, she sees nothing wrong with short skirts, if the mother cannot give rational reasons.

The evangelical uses the Scripture to formulate arguments against sinful practices. But the basis of interpreting the Bible is logic and rational Christianity. The question to be answered: "Is the Christian life based on logic or feeling?" The fundamentalist and evangelical usually disagree in their answer.

8. The evangelical/ institutional position places emphasis on the man rather than on the whole. The evangelical has a higher commitment to the person than he does to the church. He feels man is the center of the universe and the purpose of redemption. Therefore, he builds a ministry on sensitivity and respect for individuals. Since man is made in the image of God, he argues that a ministry must be built on respect for individuals. The evangelical often accuses the fundamentalist of "playing the numbers game," which is getting people to church, only to count a large attendance. The evangelical will spend more time in counseling people with problems. The evangelical seminaries will concentrate on positive counseling courses, whereas most fundamentalist schools usually do not have any course in this area. Dr. Lee Roberson once answered the people at Highland Park Baptist Church, Chattanooga, Tennessee, "If someone has a problem, I have two minutes to spend with him; my time is reserved for reaching the lost." He went on to say, "If a Christian will take advantage of proper Bible study and the fellowship of church attendance, he will not have problems."

The fundamentalist places a high emphasis on the corporate community-the church. He believes that a strong church will produce strong Christians. Hence, the whole is important, perhaps more strategic than the parts. The fundamentalist feels that if the church is growing in attendance and quality ministry, the individual Christian will also grow. He feels the illustration of an army best reflects the church. Just as the soldier is part of the whole and loses his individuality in the army, so the Christian is a member of God's army. Irenius said in the first century, "Christians, like soldiers and slaves, ask no questions." Therefore, the fundamentalist emphasizes yieldedness to God and active service through the church. When this militancy is lost, church attendance begins to decline. Hence, evangelicals have difficulty attracting a large crowd, while fundamentalists will have both a growing and a large attendance.

Summary. The evangelical is committed to Jesus Christ and feels his Christian life should be a positive influence in his church and community. He does not want to be labeled a fanatic or "woodenheaded fundamentalist." He attempts to integrate his faith into every area of life, being consistent. He wants the respect of the unsaved and feels the best testimony is a positive, constructive life that attracts others to Jesus Christ.

Evangelical ministers base their preaching upon the clear explanatives of the Word of God and feel the unsaved should understand God's Word, so they will respond to the gospel. The evangelical does not resort to "buttonholing" the unsaved, persuading them into the church. They have a high regard for the personhood of each individual and feel that manipulation is wrong, even when the goal is proper. The person is more important than the local church, because the universal church is composed of individuals, each important to God and His program.

## Denomination-Deterioration

The third category in the evolution of church growth is the denominational stage. Webster has defined it as "a religious organization uniting in a single legal and administrative body, a number of local congregations." However, the term "denomination" used in the sociological cycle carries a broader meaning than an organization of many small churches. A denomination represents a group of churches which allow central control to gradually centralize and decision-making power to slip from the members who founded the churches out of deep theological conviction, to clergymen who view their task through the eyes of professional competence. The term denominational can be applied to (1) a group of churches, (2) administered under a central organization, (3) that has been in existence long enough for the primary commitment of charter members at individual churches to slowly evolve to professional clergymen and (4) a state of institutional blight which settles throughout the social life-style of a movement. Institutional blight is the process of social decay where individuals, committees, and churches lose sight of the original goals of the founding fathers and succeeding generations unable to identify with the principles that formed the original catalyst, search for a new reason for existence. When the organization is unable to find a new reason for existence, the whole superstructure tends to drift with little aim. Voices within the denomination cry for a return to the original precepts, yet these prophets appear to have a hollow cry, because no one will heed them. One observer has characterized such denominations as having an identity crisis.

Even though the term denomination is used, the social process can refer to an individual church or a religious organization. The church first begins as a sect, then changes its nature and basic tenets. The church desiring more efficiency, slowly builds an organization. The denominational stage of the cycle is the natural outgrowth of organization efficiency of local churches. The denomination is an extension of local church institutional system at a "super church" level. According to David Moberg, the denominational level of the cycle takes on added sociological characteristics. He defines these as:

Formalism saps the group's vitality. Its leadership is dominated by established bureaucracy more concerned with perpetuating its own interests than with maintaining the distinctives that helped bring the group into existence. Administration centers on boards and committees that tend to become self-perpetuating. Dominated by the small group, the organization may become like boss-ridden parties . . . the very small ones who, because of the position they hold, should be most ready and anxious to make the Christian ministry a real brotherhood, talk one thing and practice another.<sup>21</sup>

1. The denomination reflects the religious life of the community. The denomination is tolerant of the outside world, no longer at war with society. They are accepted as a part of the community. Denominational churches are tolerant of sin and no longer prohibit the "questionable practices." Respectability becomes a motive for people joining the membership. People transfer from one "status" church to the next, often more concerned about business prospects or women's clothes styles than the actual religious commitment of the church. Activities the sect once considered worldly are now the center of interest. Ministers become members of the Kiwanis Club, and the official board feels it is important that he has a membership in the local country club, to make the right contacts. The church has a distinct image to uphold in the community, and no longer desires to be considered fanatical or "wild-eyed Baptists."

2. The denomination is committed to a relevant ministry. -The minister in a denominational church has a commitment to existential philosophical assumptions. Since he must find self-definition, his church also must seek an identity in a changing world. As a result, he resists any type of ministry that does not meet human need at an individual or corporate level. As a result the individual and his

needs are primary in planning programs or administering the church. When this happens the focus of the church has moved away from God-centered priorities to a human-centered authority. The authority of God over the individual is no longer important and the necessity of making programs relevant to individuals becomes the criterion for judging the success of a church.

3. The denomination is concerned about perpetuation. -The Sunday school superintendent in the sectarian church is primarily responsible for leading the staff in an evangelistic outreach. When the church evolves to institutional status, the Sunday school superintendent loses the evangelist's role and becomes an educator. Now, he is more concerned about educating students. Sunday school literature gives him guidance in retaining "dropouts." Usually he is more concerned with "keeping the Sunday School going" rather than aggressively reaching the neighborhood for Christ. Committees and offices that were constituted to perform a job, often enjoy status simply because they get the job done. With the passing of time, people take the job because they want the status, yet are hardly capable of functioning on the committee. Hence a Sunday school superintendent may be appointed because "nobody else wanted the job." Or a committee continues to exist without a function; "We always have DVBS in our Sunday school; if it is dropped this summer our children might go to the Presbyterian Church."

Another factor that characterizes the denominational development is the growing desire of pastors to leave the pastorate for administrative positions. The shift reflects a change of values. The pastor comes to believe that the work of the denomination is of greater importance than the local church. When pastors believe that the denomination's work is of more significance than the church for which Jesus died, decline is inevitable. Three years ago 600 Presbyterian pastors applied for two administrative openings at their denominational headquarters.

## Deterioration

The final stage of deterioration in the cycle results from over-institutionalization of local churches, with the resultant disintegration of the denomination. Churches decline because the original purpose of the church changes. People lose interest because their spiritual needs are not satisfied; then attendance drops and income declines. Membership begins to fall off. Since there is no urgency in reaching the community, new candidates for the ministry are difficult to find. Churches go without pastors. Moberg describes the process of deterioration as, "diseases which show symptoms of this stage are formalism, indifference, obsolescence, absolutism, red tape, patronage, and corruption."<sup>22</sup> The original spiritual vision of the founding group is gone. The impersonalization of people sets in. Schaller calls this "institutional blight."<sup>23</sup> The member feels detached from the church; the denominational headquarters are not responsive to their needs. The leaders at headquarters, removed from local church economy and individual responsibility, may feel they can and should lead the church into new programs of action, whether or not the individual members respond. In the past few years several denominational officials have attempted to lead a group of churches into programs of social action, because the denominational hierarchy feels the members at the grass roots level are biased and/or ignorant. The officials of the United Presbyterian Church of America persisted in donating money to defend Angela Davis, charged with conspiracy in the death of a courtroom judge. According to an opinion poll, the church members voted against supporting Miss Davis, but the officials ignored their obligation to the clientele of hardly the denomination. When denominational leaders no longer represent the membership, deterioration sets in when those paying the bills refuse to give and attend. Schaller observes:

The inevitable decline of congregational economy and the accompanying socialization of the decision-making process within the hierarchy of the denomination

is not necessarily a deplorable trend. While it is true that power has a corruptive influence, it is also true that independence has encouraged irresponsibility.<sup>24</sup>

The long evolution toward centralization of church authority usually causes a church to operate more efficiently, resulting in a stronger denomination. The sect and institutional church become stronger through organized outreach. When churches shift to a centralized authority, they reach more people. But usually in the process, the members become less responsible for church direction, hence over a period of time the movement becomes weaker. The problem is time. Those wanting a larger, stronger church are willing to delegate leadership to the paid staff. When the professional gets results, the membership is generally satisfied. However, with the passing of time both the membership and leadership change, then the next generation of leaders alter the direction of the church, and the membership is either powerless to stop them or does not care. Schaller predicts, "It now appears that the future is almost certain to witness a further deterioration of congregational autonomy."<sup>25</sup>

Kinchela, in his article, "The Behavioral Sequence of a Dying Church," notes that a congregation finally dies in one of three ways: (1) vacated by the pastor, (2) securing a part-time pastor, and (3) complete abandonment or by merging with another group.<sup>26</sup> Schaller gives an analytical and practical discussion of a dying church in the deterioration cycle. They can (1) merge, (2) relocate, or (3) remain and struggle with death.<sup>27</sup>

Many believe the present-day trends of merging denominations are simply a move by dying organizations to save the deteriorating superstructure from oblivion. Leaders feel that the consolidation of headquarters and reduction of overhead cost can eventually save the denomination. However, by alienating members at the local church level, the ecumenical movement cannot fulfill its promise.

As the church deteriorates in vitality, many people leave and seek to get their spiritual needs fulfilled elsewhere. Where do they go? Moberg indicates that people who withdraw from institutionalized or deteriorating churches withdraw "into new sects or are drifting without any formal church connection."<sup>28</sup> Many of the sectarian churches have received members from mainline denominations. Some new members (those already converted) usually bring their church memberships with them and serve God out of renewed dedication. Other individuals become converted, throwing over empty church membership for vital union with Jesus Christ. They find a spiritual rapport with other members and serve God with renewed zeal.

The sociological cycle indicates that a fundamentalist sectarian church is founded upon warm fervor to God and ends up in a cold liberal denominational church on the brink of deterioration.

## Principles of Church Growth Drawn from the Sociological Cycle

1. Churches can move through the cycle sociologically, and not theologically. A small fundamentalist sectarian church may grow because of an inner dynamic. However, without realizing the subtle shift in emphasis, the church changes its methodology. Even though the sect-church does not change its message or beliefs, it changes its methodology. Most denominations become cold, from making the organization the goal of existence, rather than fulfilling a biblical purpose. Dead churches cannot produce life. Dr. Jerry Falwell places some dead fundamentalist churches in the same category as liberal churches. "Whether a church has dead orthodoxy or dead liberalism, makes no difference-to be dead is dead." A church can be orthodox in doctrine, but not biblical in purpose. A living church is correct in doctrine and purpose. One of the dangers of dead conservatism is degenerating into a single desire for doctrinal purity. This emphasis is only half correct which makes it half wrong. A church must have correct message and correct methodology. The General Association of Regular Baptists and the Independent Fundamental Churches of America many times

give the appearance of being more concerned about purity of doctrine than aggressive, warm, evangelistic outreach. Not all, but some of these churches are dead. Even though they call themselves fundamentalists, their organizational structure and lack of evangelistic outreach place them in the denominational stage of the cycle, making them similar to liberal churches. Of course, not all of their churches are characteristic of this generalization.

2. Churches tend to reflect more than one phase of the cycle at a given time. It is possible that small sectarian churches have some of the organizational characteristics of institutional churches. A fundamentalist church may have the appearance of a denomination. The Baptist Bible Fellowship, which is a sect, has large churches which are beginning to organize for efficiency. However, having some marks of denominationalism does not mean every characteristic is found in a cycle stage. The controlling characteristic places a church on the cycle. Moberg makes the following observation, "The five stages in the church's life cycle overlap."<sup>29</sup>

3. The cycle is inevitable. Most fundamentalists believe that their church or Bible college will never go liberal. This is a naive observation. The cycle is inevitable because of the sinful nature of man, the principle of leaven within the individual, and natural desire for perpetuation. Most ministers in the Baptist Bible Fellowship deeply believe that their movement will never go liberal. However, every church, Christian school and movement has inevitably deteriorated into liberalism and/or an institutionalization.

Dr. Noel Smith, editor of *The Baptist Bible Tribune*, often writes editorials against the control by the headquarters of the Southern Baptist Convention over cooperating churches. He has pointed out that local churches which support the cooperative program are giving to liberal colleges and seminaries. Smith apparently believes that pointing out the sins of the Southern Baptist Convention will keep the Baptist Bible Fellowship, from following in its steps.

Many concerned Christians ask, "What can be done to save our church from slipping?" The first answer is simply, place emphasis on reaching people according to the biblical mandate, rather than organizing the church for efficiency. People gather together, organize themselves into a church for the purpose of meeting their spiritual needs and winning others to Jesus Christ.

Institutionalization sets in when people begin overemphasizing their organization and/or buildings. These improvements are not wrong when emphasis is placed on ministry to individuals. But when improvements become an end rather than a means of ministering to people, deterioration sets in. If the local church keeps its eyes on original purposes i.e., evangelism, building churches, and Christian education, then the process will be stopped.

The cycle is inevitable, but at least not for two or three generations. The lesson from the kings of Israel teaches that God's people serve the Lord for approximately two generations after a revival. Joshua served the Lord and the elders that outlived him; but in the third generation, Israel sought other gods and worshipped Baalim (Judges 2: 8-11).

### **The Baptist Bible Fellowship: The Fastest Growing Religious Body in the U.S.**

The Baptist Bible Fellowship will become the largest denomination in the United States.<sup>30</sup> The ministers of the Baptist Bible Fellowship will immediately reject this statement, because the word denomination is used. They feel the Fellowship is a movement rather than a denomination. At present the Baptist Bible Fellowship is a movement; however, within the next 30 years the Fellowship may take on the organizational characteristics of, and appear similar to, other denominations. At present the BBF is a movement made up of churches of similar emphasis and description.

## What Is the Baptist Bible Fellowship?

1. The Baptist Bible Fellowship is a movement describing itself as a fellowship, and not a denomination. At present there is neither hierarchy nor centralization of authority. Each church is independent and responsible only to the members, as are all true Baptist churches. The BBF is a dynamic movement because of the internal growth. The churches are characterized by soul winning, where sinners are transformed from a life of sin to a life of godliness. Also, life-giving quality is seen in the churches. In the 1971 yearbook, 376 new churches were listed. Many of these were begun by individuals in the fellowship; of course some were churches that admired the BBF and joined the movement.

The term movement reflects life and action. Whether one agrees with what action is found in the BBF churches, one cannot deny their vitality. Money is being raised, crowds are growing in attendance, numerical growth is registered each year, and people are excited about Christianity.

2. The BBF is a movement of methodology, not doctrine. Even though BBF churches are conservative or fundamental in doctrine, theology does not hold the BBF together as in other similar conservative denominations. Most BBF churches believe the orthodox position expressed in the footnotes of the Scofield Bible, and their pastors carry *King James Bibles*; yet theology is not the primary catalyst. The BBF is a movement of methodology best expressed as evangelism. The principles of their methodology are not yet written for outsiders to study. Most of their churches are similarly organized, their Sunday School classes are similar in administrative techniques, and their pastors lead their churches as though all are instructed by the same teacher. The methodology of BBF churches is more "caught" than learned in the classroom. When this author first realized so many pastors of growing churches were trained at the Baptist Bible College, Springfield, Missouri, he examined carefully the curriculum and life-style of the Springfield school to determine its success. Here he found the spirit of early Americanhood prevails the campus. Pastors of large churches speak in chapel and young men desire to imitate their success. Dr. G. Beauchamp Vick, pastor of Temple Baptist Church, Detroit, Michigan, a pastor of 4,000 people, and Dr. John Rawlings of Landmark Baptist Temple, the pastor of 5,000 people, are president and vice-president, respectively. Young men have little aspiration to climb ecclesiastical ladders to success. Upon graduation from the three-year course of study, they pack their car on the following morning, drive to a town God has laid upon their hearts, and begin knocking on doors, inviting people to a rented building. They have a vision of beginning one of the largest Sunday Schools in that area. The young men who graduate from the school have "caught" the movement and they are single-minded in their purpose to build a Sunday school. These young men are not highly trained in theology, sophisticated in pastoral techniques, nor are they eloquent in the English language. They simply know the Bible, know how to lead people to Christ, and have the passion to build a great church. Young pastors admit that they remember more of the challenge from great men than the classroom material.

3. The BBF is a movement of pastors. Most denominations are an organization of local churches, similar in doctrinal conviction and lifestyle. Most congregations can vote themselves in or out of the denomination. However, the Baptist Bible Fellowship is a movement of pastors. The pastor can determine if he will join or not. This may seem unusual to the average churchman, expecting a local church to be governed by the deacons. The churches in the BBF are not committee-controlled, nor do the deacons exercise delegated responsibilities or authority. The churches are pastor-led, and the success of a local church is measured by the pastor's success in guiding the congregation, even to becoming a member of the Baptist Bible Fellowship. The movement believes that the pastor is shepherd of the flock and leads the flock. Dr. Vick pointed out, "You never saw a flock leading a shepherd." When asked if he believed in democracy in his church he indicated, "Yes, and I'm the biggest democrat of all." By that he did not imply dictatorship but aggressive leadership. The pastor has executive power to administer the church and he looks to his deacons for counsel. The

congregation is the legislative branch of the church, making decisions such as approval of annual budget, purchase of equipment, or beginning of new programs. The pastors believe that the congregation is the seat of authority. Most of them boast, "The congregation has never voted me down on one point." The Reverend Cecil Hodges came to his church when it was a small infant group meeting in the living room of a member on the west side of Savannah, Georgia, considered the poor section of the city. The church progressed rapidly and, after a couple of years, some men presented a list of demands to the pastor, in essence charging that he had too much responsibility. Hodges had been away on a series of meetings and when he came back, he met with his men for approximately six hours. Two of the men brought a list of demands and read them to Pastor Hodges. The first dealt with his having too much authority and leadership. Hodges discussed the item with the men for approximately an hour, searching the Scriptures for the place of biblical leadership. At the end of the hour, the men agreed that the pastor was the leader of the flock, and was responsible for preaching, oversight, rebuke of sin and false doctrine, leading an aggressive program of evangelism, and building up the people in the nurture and the admonition of the Lord. The second question dealt with Pastor Hodges having control of the finances. Hodges spent the second hour showing the relationship between money and the work of God in a local church. It was determined, "The man that controls the money, controls the leadership of the church." Of course Hodges had never signed a check or actually counted the money, but had acted as comptroller and purchasing agent for the church. At the end of the second hour the men agreed that he should remain the leader in financial affairs. The third criticism had to do with Hodges' appointment of staff and leaders in the church. Hodges pointed out that the workman is loyal to the boss who hires and fires. He said, "If I have no control over my staff, they will never work for me." Hodges pointed out to the men the built-in problems of a staff member whose loyalty was to the men, yet alleged responsibility to the pastor. At present, Hodges does not hire staff members nor appoint lay leaders in the church without the knowledge of the deacons, but in the final analysis he makes the decisions, with the blessing and support of the deacons. Should he choose, he can go directly to the congregation for a vote on staff members.

Dr. Wendell Zimmerman, former pastor, Kansas City Baptist Temple, was criticized for 25 years for being a dictator. Yet his dynamic leadership was required to build a church through the first stage of growth. Reverend Truman Dollar works more closely with his lay leadership, yet is insistent that he be the leader if he is the pastor.

Dr. J. Frank Norris, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Fort Worth, Texas, at one time was the titular head of the BBF movement before it broke from the World Baptist Fellowship. Norris said on many occasions, "The statue of a pastor casts a long shadow over the congregation." The congregation becomes the spiritual extension or reflection of the pastor. His preaching, example and leadership is usually reflected in the lives of his members. Inasmuch as the BBF is a movement of pastors, it becomes a movement of likeminded men. Since most of the pastors are soul winners, the lay leaders and core members of their congregations also are soul winners. Since the Baptist Bible Fellowship is a movement of likeminded pastors, it is a movement of like-minded congregations, because the people reflect their pastors.

Churches do not vote to become a part of the BBF, rather pastors make the decisions. Therefore, a pastor who desires to fellowship with the BBF may begin fellowshiping and have the name of his church listed in the directory of the Baptist Bible Fellowship. There is no commitment on the part of the pastor or congregation to the policies of the BBF; there is no vote to determine agreement with doctrine, support of program, or turning over physical assets to headquarters. Traditionally, a church has been listed in the directory if it made a financial contribution to the college in Springfield or to one of the approved missionaries going to the foreign field.

Dr. John Rawlings has often said, "You don't join us, you just start having fellowship with us." By that he meant any pastor that attends the pastors' monthly fellowship meeting was a part of

the BBF. These monthly meetings usually have several inspirational sermons preached on one day, centered on the theme of evangelism and rededication of pastors to the work of Christ. The movement is not concerned about minor doctrinal deviations in pastors who might want to fellowship. The commitment is to evangelism, not purity of doctrine. However, if doctrinal deviation is so severe that it is not compatible with evangelism, the pastor usually stops attending the monthly pastors' fellowship; hence is out of the BBF. Dr. John Rawlings also mentioned, "You don't vote to unjoin us, you simply stop fellowshipping." Because no vote is taken to join there is no vote to disassociate. Hence, the BBF is a movement of like-minded churches rather than a confederation or organization of churches with similar beliefs and/ or practices.

Some pastors in the BBF have basic disagreements with other pastors, but fellowship together because the commitment is to local church evangelism. The pastor who is revered is the one who is having evangelistic success--which usually means growing numerically. Academic success is usually not revered, nor is monetary success. Rev. Roscoe Brewer, associate pastor, Kansas City Baptist Temple, once said, "If any man in our fellowship has an earned doctor's degree, I don't know it. He probably has a church of less than 100."

### Why the BBF Can Become the Largest Religious Body in the U.S.

The following reasons have been gleaned from observation of the movement over the past six years. The reasons may not be complete. I take full responsibility for the observations.

1. A cautious desire to organize without losing the esprit de corps movement. The Baptist Bible Fellowship is slowly drifting around the sociological cycle, taking on some of the characteristics of the institutional stage. The printing ministry was consolidated into fellowship publications from a decentralized ministry of three agencies. *The Baptist Bible Tribune*, the *Crescendo Press* under the college, and *Christian Youth Today* magazine in Kansas City Baptist Temple, were consolidated into *Fellowship Publications*. This move was suspect in the minds of some BBF pastors, while most felt it was a positive step forward.

The board of directors, made up of thirteen pastors, each elected by his fellow pastors, represents a geographical district. The directors have been given more power to direct the movement.

Local churches are using more organization and pastors are getting more education. As of yet, most of them have not switched from a Bible-preaching, evangelistic ministry to a relevant-oriented ministry. Evangelism still controls the local church. However, the desire for efficiency of organization is seen throughout the movement. Of course the purpose remains evangelism, which indicates numerical growth in the future.

2. The isolation of churches and insulation of Christians. The Baptist Bible Fellowship still preaches separation from the world. Also, the churches separate themselves from neo-evangelical influence. As a result, their members do not accept the life-style of Christianity presented in interdenominationalism, i.e., the National Association of Evangelicals. Pastors have kept their people isolated from the type of Christianity reflected in groups outside the BBF, simply because they do not cooperate with other church groups. They have preached against neo-evangelicals, not allowing the influence of neo-evangelicals or the NAE in their church. Pastors also continue this insulation by writing their own Sunday school literature. Hence, they have protected the corporate body of believers from the influence of evangelicalism and individual believers are isolated to the Word of God for their religious stimulation. Cecil Hodges stood before his people and held a *Christian Life Magazine* up, "I don't believe most of what's in here, but you should buy it and read what Elmer Towns says."

3. Ecclesiastical leadership is centered in growing churches rather than large churches. -The Southern Baptist Convention has several large churches and the man who assumes the pastorate of these congregations automatically becomes one of the leaders in the Convention. However, the

Baptist Bible Fellowship has not followed this example. Several large churches have been vacated, but the man who assumed the pastorate did not become a leader in the Fellowship simply because he pastored the church, nor did he receive admiration of other pastors because of that position. Rev. Wendell Zimmerman spent 25 years in the Kansas City Baptist Temple building up the Sunday school. When he left, Truman Dollar took over the pastorate as a young man, basically unproven. Even though Dollar should have been congratulated for being called to such a large church, one of his friends said, "Just because you are pastor of a large church does not mean you have made it. Remember, you never built a church yet." The criticism stung, but Truman understood its implications. He had to build a great work of God to receive the respect of his peers. Also in Kansas City was the Blue Ridge Baptist Temple, begun in 1957 by Rev. Parker Daley. Daley had built this congregation from a small handful of people to over 1,200 in Sunday school. He received the approval of the Baptist Bible Fellowship, becoming its president.

In the coming years, the leadership and control of the Baptist Bible Fellowship will continue to rest with pastors who are building large churches. The men who are building churches will not change pulpits to get a better church or more influence. Most will remain in one place and build one church. These men will not gravitate to the large churches that have already been built, after the present pastor dies. Rather, men without the pioneer spirit or men who are not able to build churches will tend to climb up the totem pole to these large churches. However the previous influence of these churches will not transfer to the second-generation pastors. Influence in the BBF will transfer to first-generation pastors, pastors of large existing churches who have proved themselves in the role of evangelism, these will have a great influence in the movement. The leadership of the entire movement will continue to reside with first-generation Christians, hence controlling the whole movement and making for continual growth.

4. The BBF is anti-interdenominational. The interdenominational movement in America has seen unparalleled growth since the Second World War. These movements are reflected in such organizations as the Gideons, Youth for Christ, Christian Servicemen's Centers, interdenominational mission boards, and a number of other organizations, each created to meet a specific need of a segment of Christianity. The basic premise of most interdenominational agencies is, "Since the church has failed, we have been raised up to meet this need." Youth for Christ speakers often preface their remarks with the assumption that the local church has not met the needs of high school students; therefore God has raised up Youth for Christ to evangelize the high schools with the gospel. Also Youth for Christ assumes the responsibility of providing education and nurture for Christians who are in the high schools. Most BBF pastors look upon this as unbiblical, quoting the statement by Christ, "I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). Truman Dollar listened to a Youth for Christ speaker and said after the service, "He is accusing Christ of being a liar, since Christ predicted His church will never fail." Therefore, with invincible faith and boundless energy, the BBF pastors go about building local churches.

A second assumption of interdenominationalism is the universal church, the mystical body of Christ. Most evangelical Christian organizations teach the twofold interpretation of the church; i.e., the church is a local organization and the church is a mystical body; therefore, every Christian is a member of the mystical body which is reflected in interdenominationalization. However, most pastors in the Baptist Bible Fellowship reject the universal church as taught in Scripture. They believe every reference to the word "church" in the New Testament should be interpreted according to its Greek connotation, assembly (ecclesia). Since they believe the church is an assembly of believers, there is no mystical union--ruling out the existence of interdenominationalism. Therefore, the Baptist Bible Fellowship teaches every organization of Christians should be in a local church. Pastors do not dissipate their energy by encouraging their Christians to participate in interdenominational activities. Instead, they teach that loyalty to Jesus Christ is measured by loyalty to the local church, the only organization taught in Scripture. The Baptist Bible Fellowship is strong

on loyalty to the local church as an institution. Since serving Christ is building a local New Testament church, the Baptist Bible Fellowship will pour its energies into building churches, another factor that can cause it to be the largest denomination in America.

According to a survey of the Baptist Bible Fellowship churches in 1970, the average Baptist Bible Fellowship church has 427 members, with an average attendance of 357 in Sunday School. They are growing at a 4.7 percent annual rate over the previous year's base.

5. A desire to build large churches rather than dividing into small neighborhood geographical parishes. At present there seems to be no desire on the part of pastors in the Baptist Bible Fellowship to send out missionary teams from a local church to start other New Testament churches in the immediate vicinity. In contrast, there is an extreme desire to build a large testimony, if not the largest church in the city in which they are located. This desire to build a great church will result in growing numbers and enlarged membership, causing the Baptist Bible Fellowship to expand. This desire for large testimonies does not rule out a desire to start mission churches. Dedicated laymen or young students from Bible college are given assistance in going into new areas to start churches. However, colony teams (as 20 families sent to start a branch Sunday school) are not encouraged among the BBF.

The desire for large churches seems to have proper motivation, rather than the alleged wrong motives attributed to BBF pastors "They are building an edifice to their ego or for self-gratification." Their desire to build large churches can be summarized in the following seven reasons. (The results of a large church are given by Dr. Greg Dixon, Chapter 4.)

(1) A large church is biblical and reflects the numerical growth in the book of Acts. (Acts 1:21; Acts 2:41; Acts 4:4; Acts 5:14, 28, 42, Acts 6:1, 7.) The emphasis on large numbers in the book of Acts allows for a local church to be large. (2) The large church is able to evangelize the entire metropolitan area. BBF pastors feel the day of the local neighborhood parish church is dead, and that they must raise up an evangelistic testimony to reach the entire area. The author previously wrote, "The ten largest churches were large in the heart of the pastor long before they were large on the street corner."

(3) The large church provides all of the spiritual gifts to the total local church. This argument simply allows for specialists to minister to each area of need in a local church. A spiritual gift is a capacity or ability given by God to a man to perform a spiritual task. Large churches have a staff of many gifted men with many different abilities so that the corporate needs of a local church can be met.

(4) The large church can be a conscience to the community. Small churches do not influence the community by their stand against sin or social evils. However, the large church can speak out against the social evils in the community, and has the ear of the population simply because of its size and access to mass media.

(5) The large church replaces the necessity for a denomination. There are four basic services that a denomination gives to a small local church. First, it provides fellowship for the pastor and Christians; second, it provides counsel and planned program of outreach so that the small church does not have to plan the total church program; third, it provides finances for loans, purchasing and other corporate buying; and fourth, it services the denomination with literature, advertisement and other helps to carry out a small church function. The large church can provide all of these four services within its local church organization, hence ruling out the need for a denomination. Dr. W. A. Criswell, pastor of First Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas, stated, "The Southern Baptist Convention needs us more than we need them." By that he meant many small churches would follow his example. But in the final analysis, a church as large as First Baptist Church in Dallas is self-sufficient and does not need the Southern Baptist Convention for services, fellowship or counsel.

## Dangers in the Baptist Bible Fellowship

Even though the Baptist Bible Fellowship has the possibility of becoming one of the largest denominations in America, there are implied dangers in the movement that could stop its growth. First, there could be a split into several smaller movements. This split could arise from personalities. A strong pastor up North could gather many young pastors around him, while a similarly strong pastor from the South with a different organization might gather young men around him. A second split could come in the Fellowship over geography. Churches on the West Coast sometimes feel isolated from the on the East Coast, thus precipitating a split. Also, there could come a split around schools. The Baptist Bible College in Springfield is the only officially recognized school. However, several pastors in local churches have started a Bible college. There could be a natural cleavage to these schools with the movement pulling away from itself, rather than becoming organized for efficiency.

A split could happen when the founding leaders of the movement at the Baptist Bible College, Springfield, Missouri, die. The greatest challenge to the BBF is the problem of succession. The tendency toward schism among fundamentalists has always occurred at the point when the first generation leadership died. Another split could occur over doctrine. Many of the Baptist Bible Fellowship churches in Florida believe in a "Baptist bride" position: i.e., when Christ returns with His bride, it will be those who have been most obedient, that is Baptists who have been immersed and associated with local churches. Those who attend the marriage supper are saved and in heaven, yet not in a place of prominence of God's blessing. These will be other believers, but not members of Baptist churches. A layman's guess indicates that 25 percent of the Baptist Bible Fellowship supports the "Baptist bride" position. If the Fellowship loses its allegiance to evangelism as its catalyst and espouses pure doctrine as its aim, a split could occur, keeping it from becoming the largest denomination in America.

Another reason to keep the Baptist Bible Fellowship from growing would be a change of emphasis. At present its Sunday school is an evangelistic, reaching institution. The original Southern Baptist purpose of the Sunday school is the guideline for the average BBF Sunday School, which is: (1) to reach, (2) to teach, (3) to win, and (4) to train. However, when their Sunday Schools become educational institutions, turning away from evangelism, this shift could curtail their outreach and hurt their growth. Also, if the second generation of the BBF allows deacons to control their churches rather than remaining pastor-led, the movement could be curtailed in growth, especially in evangelistic outreach. Literature will have to be forthcoming, explaining to their churches the built-in detriment of deacon-controlled churches. If deacons, who are the continuing leadership symbol in a local church, can pass leadership from one pastor to the next, their churches can continue growing in numerical outreach.

The leaders of the BBF use Biblical charisma. Charismatic leadership usually refuses to allow young leadership to develop. It is then always difficult to extend the spirit of the movement into the second generation. A "crisis of leadership" frequently develops. This could either split the movement or a second-generation leader of different persuasion could detour the fellowship from its original purpose.

Finally, if the Baptist Bible Fellowship does not progress too rapidly around the cycle, becoming first institutionalized in local church government and finally denominationalized in the movement, the Baptist Bible Fellowship will continue to grow numerically. Remember, movement around the cycle is inevitable, and the Baptist Bible Fellowship is slowly moving toward becoming a large denomination. If the entire movement will realize the dangers implied in becoming a denomination and will slow the growth, the BBF can enjoy the dynamic expansion of sectarian movement. If not, the efficiency they desire may be the albatross that ultimately drags them to deterioration. But if the Baptist Bible Fellowship can keep the zeal and growth of its sectarian

movement, and incorporate the efficiency of growth of institutionalization without being hurt in its zeal and dedication, the Baptist Bible Fellowship should become the largest religious force for God in America.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* (Hamden, Connecticut: Shoe String Press, 1954), pp. 19-21.

<sup>2</sup> Ernst Troeltsch, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*, trans. by Olive Wyan (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1931), 2 Vols. An outstanding analysis of the factors that cause deterioration in churches.

<sup>3</sup> The term "evangelical" is generally synonymous with neo-evangelical.

<sup>4</sup> I have often been asked to evaluate and place the Southern Baptist Convention on the sociological cycle. I find Southern Baptist churches at each stage of sociological development. In reference to the sociological cycle, Southern Baptists do not usually classify themselves by the label fundamentalist and evangelical. Rather they tend to use the label conservative and liberal, leaving out the mid-point designation of evangelicalism or institutionalizationism.

<sup>5</sup> David O. Moberg, *The Church or a Social Institution* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1962), p. 100.

<sup>6</sup> Harvey Cox, *The Secular City* (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1965), pp. 1-13. When Cox sees the bankruptcy of American denominations he suggests we advance to a religionless society, where God is dead, as an answer. When I see the same bankruptcy, I maintain we must return to the origination, the sect/fundamentalist church.

<sup>7</sup> *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* (Springfield, Mass., 1963).

<sup>8</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, "Dare We Renew the Controversy?", *Christianity Today*, June 24, 1957, pp. 23f.

<sup>9</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, "What is Fundamentalism?", *United Evangelical Action*, July 16, 1966, p. 303. I find Henry's evaluation of fundamentalism as example of an uneducated name-calling bias, without documentation. He has the same weakness he criticizes in the fundamentalists.

<sup>10</sup> Arnold Hearn, "Fundamentalist Renaissance," *Christian Century*, April 30, 1958, p. 528.

<sup>11</sup> William Hordern, *New Directions in Theology Today*, Vol. I, Introduction, (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1966), p. 75.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> Hordern, *op. cit.*, p. 76

<sup>14</sup> Troeltsch, *op. cit.*, The following discussion is based on a summary of Vol. I, pp. 331-81, Vol. II, pp. 993-1013. This summary was made by David Moberg, *The Church or a Social Institution*, pp. 74-75.

<sup>15</sup> Elizabeth K. Nottingham, *Religion and Society* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1954), pp. 62-67.

<sup>16</sup> I feel one of the basic differences between a fundamentalist and an evangelical is the emphasis stressed on either the emotional or the rational nature of Christianity. The fundamentalist tends to "feel" his Christianity deeply. He then makes feeling the criterion for "finding the will of God" and other personal needs. The evangelical tends to be rational in his approach to the Christian life, requiring a logical understanding for actions and attitudes.

<sup>17</sup> Edward John Carnell, *The Case for Orthodox Theology* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1959), p. 13.

<sup>18</sup> "Is Evangelical Theology Changing?" *Christian Life*, March 1966, pp. 16ff. There is little theological difference between the fundamentalist and the evangelical; they differ in methodology. The eight issues pointed out by *Christian Life* reflect a different approach to Christianity. Therefore, the field of Christian Education, a discipline of methodology, reveals where fundamentalists and evangelicals basically disagree.

<sup>19</sup> Lois LeBar, *Focus on People in Christian Education* (Westwood, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1968).

<sup>20</sup> I feel many liberal churches have followed the pattern of the Salvation Army and the YMCA, simply because they have departed from allegiance to biblical authority. I fear that many churches in the evangelical camp will follow the same course.

<sup>21</sup> Moberg, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 122.

<sup>23</sup> Lyle Schaller, *Planning for Protestantism in Urban America* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1965), Schaller gives an excellent summary to causes of church and denominational deterioration, especially analyzing the bankruptcy of many inner city churches. *Ibid.*, p. 209.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 211.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Kinchela, "Behavioral Sequence of a Dying Church," *Religious Education*, Vol. 24, pp. 329-45.

<sup>27</sup> Schaller, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-46.

<sup>28</sup> Moberg, *op. cit.*, p. 122. Moberg cites a footnote at this point, "Insofar as sects result from weaknesses and failure of churches, the proliferation of sects is a judgment on the churches." (Editorial, "The Judge and the Judgment," *Christian Century*, 74 [May 1, 1957], pp. 551-52). Whereas Moberg deplores the founding of sectarian churches, I rejoice when they fulfill the biblical imperative.

<sup>29</sup> Moberg, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

<sup>30</sup> The Baptist Bible Fellowship is chosen for examination for two reasons; first its fast growth. Beginning with 13 churches in 1950, the 1971 Directory lists 1,756 churches. The author first examined the Baptist Bible Fellowship in an article,

Text taken from Elmer L. Towns, *America's Fastest Growing Churches* (Nashville, TN: Impact Books, 1972).

"The Fastest Growing Sunday Schools in the U.S." *Christian Life*, September, 1968. Second, because the Baptist Bible Fellowship reflects a movement at the beginning stages of the sociological cycle. A study of Baptist Bible Fellowship will help the reader to understand the drift of American churches and perhaps help some to stop the drift in their life and church. The popular accepted use of initials BBF will be used to refer to the Baptist Bible Fellowship.

## Chapter 12: Charismatic Leadership\*

\*The term charisma does not refer to the Pentecostal manifestation of tongues, miracles or other phenomena surrounding the alleged "second blessing." The term is used by sociologists to designate personal magnetism used by leaders to accomplish a predetermined goal in their organization or movement.

Some pastors seem to have an "extra power," so that the masses are moved by their sermons; their requests are unquestionably obeyed by followers, people seem to empty their pocketbooks into the offering plate, and sinners almost run down the aisle at their invitation.

These few unique pastors go forth and preach the gospel, as most pastors, yet their results are startling. They turn communities upside-down, and some even capture whole cities for God. They revive dead churches, restore broken homes, and see alcoholics released from bondage under their ministry. Their results are much greater than the average pastor.

How can Jack Hyles build a church from 700 to 5,000 with over 50 adult professions each Sunday, yet a few miles away several fundamental pastors struggle with mediocrity? Those struggling pastors serve the same God, have access to the same spiritual reserves and follow the same principles, yet one seemingly fails and another is eminently successful. The difference between a growing church and a stagnant one is pastoral leadership. Gifted men build great churches and average men build average churches. Obviously, the pastors of the ten fastest growing churches are gifted men with a unique type of leadership. Dr. G. Beauchamp Vick, pastor of Temple Baptist Church, Detroit, has said, "Some are 200 men, 1,500 men or 3,000." By this Dr. Vick implied that some pastors could build a church of 200; others 1,500; and still others 3,000. Whether these predictions are true is not the issue; Vick could see in certain young men an intangible quality of leadership that could enable the potential preacher to build a church, if the circumstances were equal in all cases.

"Mystical leadership" is the theme of this chapter. The author is convinced a pastor will not become a great leader by reading this analysis; he will receive some insight into what motivates these pastors. A pastor can become a great leader by direct influence of a great pastor. Among the ten largest Sunday Schools, three pastors (Vick, Rawlings, Henninger) served on the staff under J. Frank Norris, a man who definitely had this mystical leadership. Two pastors in this book served on his staff. The author believes charismatic leadership can be learned, even though many believe it is an inborn quality. This chapter is dedicated to, examining the nature of leadership found in large churches and fast-growing churches.

After making the study of *The Ten Largest Sunday School and What Made Them Grow*, the author sensed a type of leadership in the pastors of these churches never before personally experienced, even though this dynamic attraction is seen in historical literature. The term charisma kept poking its head into conversations. "Jack Hyles has charisma," said one observer. Webster defines "charisma" as, an extraordinary power (personal magic of leadership arousing special popular loyalty or enthusiasm) given a Christian by the Holy Spirit for the good of the church."<sup>1</sup> This chapter will attempt to answer several questions. What is charisma? How does a pastor develop charismatic leadership? Can a pastor use charisma to accomplish New Testament aims?

Charisma comes from the word *charis*, "a gift of grace." The word charisma usually refers to gifted individuals. A study of doctoral dissertations on the topic indicate that leadership charisma is usually found in political, military, and religious circles. Some refer to charisma as "a personality cult," while Freud referred to men who apparently had charisma as having a "messiah complex." A popular magazine article referred to the charisma of John Kennedy as sex appeal. These generalizations attempting to reduce charismatic leadership to such simple formulas cannot be accepted.

Max Weber, the German sociologist, was the first to define the term charisma as "a certain quality of an individual personality, by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities which are regarded as of divine origin or exemplary."<sup>2</sup> This definition describes the personality of a leader but does not include the results of his ministry.

Apparently the word charisma first entered popular journalism in 1949 through the pen of Daniel Bell, former Columbia University professor. Used in *Fortune* magazine as a caption to a cartoon describing the qualities of John L. Lewis, an editor blue-penciled the word charisma out of Bell's article accompanying the cartoon because the word was obscure. The word charismatic was inserted beneath the picture of Lewis at the last minute because an eleven-letter word was needed to fill out the line. When examining leadership, Weber suggests three broad categories by which society is governed and to which an ultimate appeal of authority is made by the leader when leading his group. (1) Traditional: leadership based on rigid societal forms of antiquity. The monarchy or rule by a tribal chief falls under this category. A person (usually a king) becomes a leader because he was born into the office or the process of history evolves him into that capacity. (2) Legal-rational: leadership based on adherence to laws established by democratic process. A leader depends on being elected to the position for his authority. (3) Charismatic: leadership based on personal magnetism of one man. This area is also termed revolutionary leadership, because an individual leader usually is elevated to his office because of social needs by the masses; those needs are expressed by the populace or perceived by the leader. Weber felt charisma had been too dominant in the past to ignore it as a type of government. Most new revolutionary governments are established upon charisma but ultimately pass to legal-rational and eventually to traditional.<sup>3</sup>

Charismatic leadership in this chapter has nothing to do with the charismatic gifts in Pentecostal-type churches. Some Pentecostal pastors may have charismatic leadership, but the basis of his success is not speaking in tongues, healings, etc. The reason the two may be confused is because of similarity of the term charisma (root meaning, "gift of grace"). The extensive use of the term charismatic leadership by sociologists should have eliminated confusion, but it has not. Some Baptist ministers are insulted when the author implied they have charismatic leadership. However, an explanation usually solves the problem.

Charismatic leadership is a natural gift. In this chapter the gift of charismatic leadership will be attributed to the ten godly men of these churches. But anti-Christian leaders have charismatic leadership, such as Napoleon, Hitler, Mussolini and Fidel Castro. The gift is an ability that a man can dedicate to the glory of God or to the destruction of society. The ten pastors have yielded their leadership gifts to God, and have been used to build a local church. Since charisma is a natural gift, we can examine it to understand its workings. The quotations from sociological studies will reflect the operation of charismatic leadership in political and military circles. Insight from these churches will be reflected in religious circles.

The following outline will analyze charisma.<sup>4</sup> (1) Charismatic leadership arises during unstable social milieu. (2) The charismatic leader devises a special formula for deliverance. (3) The charismatic leader has a basis on which to guarantee success. (4) The degree of charismatic leadership is measured by the allegiance of the followers. (5) Transcendental/divine-like qualities are attributed to or claimed by the charismatic leader.

## Charismatic Leadership Arises During Unstable Times

Two of the main characteristics of charismatic leadership are (1) an awareness of the dilemma of the populace and (2) a determination to do something about it. These two qualities alone do not make a man a charismatic leader, but they are necessary ingredients. Some past political leaders with potential charisma have attacked the establishment, but the masses were not ready to

revolt and embrace his leadership. Even though a crisis did exist, neither the economic, social, or political scenes were severe enough to cause the populace to lose confidence in the traditional leadership. Barry Goldwater, presidential candidate in 1964, emerged with potential charismatic qualities, attacked the establishment, suggested new remedies and promised the government would undergo profound structural changes. However, aside from 24 million faithful Republicans, he could not attract a mass following. Since charismatic leaders rarely provoke indifference or neutrality, Goldwater was attacked as a demagogue and dictator, and hence defeated. Some Bible-preaching pastors attempt to begin a church, yet the results reflect failure. The pastor did not establish a "need" in those he attempted to reach. He could have created a "spiritual need" by preaching on sin. Some charismatic leaders use the unsettled social conditions to create a "need," hence gather a following.

Max Weber indicates there must be a crisis, turmoil and psychic strain where people begin looking for a political messiah. He feels that pressurized social conditions alone do not necessarily produce charismatic leaders; times of stress only afford opportunities for the charismatic leader to become visible.<sup>5</sup>

The successful charismatic pastor stands against the established church society of tradition and ritualism. He sees a dead Methodist or Baptist church as a tool in Satan's hand; therefore, he attacks the traditional churches and maintains his church is correct because it is founded on the Bible. He attacks hypocrisy, just as the Old Testament prophet preaches against sin. He attacks the evils in government, the secularization of public schools and the permissive society. Dr. Jack Hudson received popular support from the TV and newspapers of Charlotte, North Carolina, when he opposed topless and bottomless dancing in the city, striking out against nudity. The common man who feels helpless identifies with the charismatic leader who voices his "beefs" against the establishment.

Fundamentalist preachers who have a deep belief in total depravity (doctrine of sin) are convinced that sin is the disruptive force that keeps society in a constant state of turmoil. They preach that a return to God and repentance from sins will solve the issue at hand. Some fundamentalist preachers mistakenly preach that America should return to the "good ole days," Those citizens who are afraid of the future or find security in the past identify with this preaching. The author's experience with the pastors in the ten fastest growing Sunday schools did not seem to be a yen for past America, rather a return to the biblical principles of the New Testament.

Some charismatic leaders attempt to establish a church in a neighborhood that is conducive to their ministry. When the populace to which they appeal are alienated from established society, these people will respond to preaching that attacks society. Most charismatic leadership is found among the poor in the slums or in housing projects. Many large fundamentalist churches in the North are built on transplanted Southerners who feel isolated among the surrounding "Yankees." This social phenomenon does not take away from the integrity of these churches. God is working through a person's sociological environment to motivate him to get saved. The strong churches founded by The Evangelical Free Church in Northern cities were built on foreign-speaking Scandinavians who were alienated because of their language or life-style.

In contrast, some charismatic leader will have difficulty building a church in a middle-class suburban development, simply because the populace has a degree of financial security and feels a general acceptance in community life.

When we view the members of the churches in this book, we see the fur-clad drivers of Cadillacs, middle-class families in Ford station wagons, and the poor of the community on buses. Can these people be called the disenfranchised Americans? No, at least not economically and geographically. However, there is a negative feeling against organized religion among these Christians, because they are "fed up" with fakery in traditional churches, emptiness of life, and futility of social contacts without Jesus Christ. More and more, Americans are disillusioned with the

emptiness of money. All these factors produce a spiritual restlessness that drives individuals to churches with charismatic pastors.

Richard Fagen writes in the *Western Political Quarterly* concerning the charismatic authority of Fidel Castro, stating that one base of Castro's success was the unstable times in Cuba, which he either created or took advantage of.<sup>6</sup> This unstable condition is reflective of the French Revolution that gave rise to Napoleon or a similar panic in England that led to the collapse of Prime Minister Chamberlain in 1939, propelling Winston Churchill into the leadership of Parliament. Later in life, Churchill, the writer-historian, gained prestige for producing his multi-volumes of history, in which he holds the philosophy "Man makes history." Churchill projects charisma-like qualifications back on many past political and military leaders, without which, according to Churchill, the free world would have been consumed by the tide of oppression. Interestingly, Churchill who so definitely had charismatic leadership, projects it to others of bygone days . . . or did Churchill so identify with leaders of the past that when Hitler threw all of the strategy of his military machine at the almost defenseless island of England, Churchill had to act out the hero of his dreams? Churchill's grit and charismatic leadership through his speeches turned the tide against Hitler: "We will fight on the beaches, in the fields, and in the streets."

### The Charismatic Leader Devises a Special Formula for Deliverance

When a charismatic leader begins his climb to leadership, he initially states a doctrine or formula which is easily understood by the people. This formula is an answer to the dilemma of the populace. The charismatic leader is usually known for his great oratory and persuasive abilities. The people believe in him and his message. He correctly analyzes the dilemma of the masses, hence giving the leader acceptance because of his insight into the problem of the community. The formula, because it is easily understood by the populace, becomes a basis of hope. The people believe the leader because they believe that the answer to their problems found in his message will lead them out of their dilemma.

Since charismatic leadership is revolutionary in nature, the leader depends upon the people wanting to be delivered and reciprocates by promising a new day. Fagen suggested Castro was a charismatic leader created by his followers, though Fidel himself claimed to be elected from above, "transcendent" to fulfill the mission of freeing Cuba.<sup>7</sup>

The charismatic leader usually expresses his ideas in nostalgic or histrionic speech. In many cases, the newly emerged deliverer is a mouthpiece for sentiments that exist at the subliminal level of the masses. Many charismatic pastors use country or western phrases in their sermons, especially to appeal to members of the congregation who come from rural backgrounds.

America was built on the Protestant value system: i.e., the value of the future, hard work to gain rewards, purity of sex, retribution for evil, honesty of one's word, pride in accomplishment, planning for the future, cleanliness of the body and home, and success; Americans admire success. Most journalists today criticize the Protestant ethic and have generally succeeded in creating a bad image so that anyone who practices the Protestant ethic is "out of it." Perhaps journalists are just products of the American educational system which has repudiated the Protestant ethic. However, sociologists maintain that the Protestant ethic was a powerful influence in the founding of America. They also maintain that the Protestant ethic grows out of preaching based on a literal interpretation of the Scriptures.

When charismatic preachers offer a formula, they do more than "rant and rave in the pulpit." Since charisma demands a formula to lead people out of the dilemma, the pastor who correctly uses charisma must: (1) offer a formula to individuals to change their life; and (2) offer a formula to cause a dying or lethargic church to grow rapidly and succeed. Bound up in the formula of the charismatic

leader are changed lives of individuals, numerical growth in the church, financial success, continued building programs, and continual enlargement of the ministry.

In preparing the book *The Christian Hall of Fame*, the author read seven or eight sermons from each of the 80 outstanding ministers or heroes of the faith who are enshrined in *The Christian Hall of Fame* located in Canton (Ohio) Baptist Temple.<sup>8</sup> One fact arose from reading these great sermons: the great preachers of the past not only preached the message of God (the content of revelations) but preached methods whereby the work of God could be accomplished. Hence, they preached a formula for deliverance of the people.

The ministers of the ten fastest growing Sunday Schools have not created a formula for the deliverance of the people nor have these preachers manufactured it out of their thinking. They deeply believe that the only answer to man's dilemma is found in the Word of God. Jesus Christ transforms individuals; a drunkard can become a Sunday School teacher, a prostitute can be cleaned up and work in child evangelism, and Americans with meaningless lives can become avid soul-winners. Also, the pastors in this book understand the method of building a great church.

Two years ago, a study revealed that 23 pastors of the 75 largest Sunday Schools in America graduated from the Baptist Bible College, Springfield, Missouri.<sup>9</sup> This author studied carefully the curriculum at the Springfield school, trying to determine what made the college such an effective preacher factory. The college curriculum was no different than most other Bible colleges, yet no other school had such outstanding results among its alumni. The successful ministers in the Baptist Bible Fellowship understand "how" to build a Sunday school. They learned the methods from the pastor who led them to Christ. These methods are not learned by studying class notes, but were learned by coming in contact with great pastors who were building growing churches. Great preachers are brought to the chapel periods at the Baptist Bible College to inspire future preachers to go out and begin churches. Young men leave the college to found New Testament churches, beginning with nothing but the vision of building the largest church in town.

### The Charismatic Leader Has a Basis on Which to Guarantee Success

The charismatic leader must have a basis for the success of his formula or the clientele will not follow him. His mystic influence over people is difficult to describe. Usually, the charismatic leader influences people both individually and en masse. The degree of success of his leadership is measured by the allegiance of his followers. Usually, past successes of the leader become the basis on which the people believe he can produce results in the future. The young pastor who can win one alcoholic to Christ is assured of a place of "specialness" in the eyes of his congregation. When he personally leads several "down-and-outs" to Christ, the congregation is willing to give him greater allegiance. He becomes greater than the average preacher in the eyes of his people. A young pastor may attack city council and defeat a liquor ordinance. Since he has shown the "boys at city hall," the average man will follow his direction. They know he can get results, so when he asks for tithes and offerings, the people are not reluctant to give. The congregation of Thomas Road Baptist Church gives a higher financial ratio than the national average because each week over 50 adults profess Christ during the invitation. They know their money is used to win souls.

Carl Friedrich, in his study of charisma, *Journal of Politics*, indicates that there are usually four appeals to authority by the charismatic leader: (1) appeal to absolutes, (2) appeal to tradition, (3) appeal to experts, and (4) appeal to the will of governed.<sup>10</sup> The fundamentalist preacher first appeals to the absolutes of the Word of God. In the early days, Billy Graham often repeated his appeal to authority, "The Bible says . . ." Also, many fundamentalist preachers appeal to tradition. He reasons that what God has done in the past, He can do in the future and is willing to do. Experts are quoted by the charismatic leader in his appeal to the congregation. Bob Moore reflects his charismatic

leadership by the will of his people, "My congregation has never voted against a recommendation of mine."

The Madison Avenue public relations executive cannot create a charismatic leader. Advertising cannot make a great leader, although some have tried it. Publicity may enhance leadership of the traditional pastor or can be used by the charismatic leader once he has gained his following, but the charismatic leader must have a previous basis for his leadership before a public relations man polishes his image.

Since the image of the leader may be manipulated by effective propaganda campaigns, the type of relationship of the pastor and people before he gains the office and after his ascension to office must be examined. The pre-office charismatic leader is socially accepted by the group he leads and is so judged by the intensity of personal devotion given to him. Political charismatic leaders use two devices to gain power: unity and factualism. The politician appeals for unity, aiming his argument to the fringe groups of the society (educationally disadvantaged, geographically disadvantaged, and economically disadvantaged). In each, he will attempt to convince the group that their dilemma is blamed on the status quo. Deliverance is promised through his program. Usually the charismatic leader reinforces his claims by appealing to the nostalgic history of the disenfranchised. He appeals to their hero and will probably adhere to their traditions. Cultural symbols that give him strength and courage are emulated, such as speech, temperament, style of action, ideas expressed, or identifying oneself with the legendary heroes of the past. The many comparisons of John F. Kennedy to Abraham Lincoln after Kennedy's assassination only validated his earlier charisma, and later perhaps enhanced the rising charisma of Robert Kennedy before he was assassinated. The many biblical allusions used by Franklin D. Roosevelt to captivate his audience gave him acceptance by the biblically oriented American society.

## The Degree of Charismatic Leadership Is Measured By the Allegiance of the Followers

The charismatic leader is socially validated by his followers and so evaluated for success by the intensity of the personal devotion they give him. The charismatic leader needs to communicate to his followers a sense of continuity between himself and his mission. Weber says there is no universal gift of charisma, but it is identified with a culture. The charismatic leader can only influence another society or culture to the extent that he shares common histories or value systems. Hence, the minister who grew up in a housing project or on the wrong side of the tracks can be a great leader of the poor. This leadership is more than a "hometown boy makes good" but certainly his success contributes to his leadership.

Why do people follow the charismatic leader? Many people follow the charismatic pastor, not for rational reasons, but because the odds are against him and, in fact, appear insurmountable. The charismatic leader appeals to the deep feelings of the populace and they hope he can somehow "pull it off." Since the leader claims to have transcendental/divine-like characteristics, his sense of mission seems to make him omniscient and omnipotent in the eyes of the people. Many people said of J. Frank Norris, "If he wanted to charge hell with a water pistol, I would follow."

Tucker suggests another reason why charismatic leaders are successful: the populace response is not necessarily absolute obedience toward their leader, but simply that by virtue of extraordinary qualities, he exercises a kind of domination over the followers. Tucker also suggests, "The personal characteristics of the leader are promoted and copied by a large segment of the group."<sup>11</sup> Hitler, Mussolini and Napoleon had charismatic leadership and their insight into problems supported their mystical leadership. Even though their insight proved wrong, the populace believed them for a while. Bierstadt goes on to say, "Charismatic leadership depends on belief by the people, that the person designated is fully able to receive destiny in a way that no ordinary man can

fathom."<sup>12</sup> Becker indicates that the followers of the charismatic leader realize that for society to remain integrated (orientated towards acceptance) one functional prerequisite was the continuance of the past inheritance and the central value system. The charismatic leader promised that, therefore, the people needed him.<sup>13</sup>

## Transcendental/Divine-like Qualities are Attributed to/Claimed by the Charismatic Leader

Many charismatic leaders possess traits that would distinguish them from ordinary leaders. Two facts are prominent from the sociology literatures: (1) Some charismatic leaders claim divine qualities (this is perhaps a pseudo-charismatic leader), while others (2) have divine-like characteristics thrust upon them by the followers.

The charismatic pastors who follow the New Testament pattern of church growth do not claim divine characteristics nor are these qualities attributed to them by their followers. These are regular men who have appropriated the spiritual assets available to them for the Christian life and service. These men have incorporated into their lives the spiritual power available to all believers. But they have been chosen by God to lead a church. God has worked through them to a greater degree than He has worked through average pastors; hence the congregation has attributed to their pastor a high degree of loyalty. These pastors win more people to Christ, get answers to prayer, attack sin in the community and win.

Because of the eruption of a volcano when Bobby Kennedy visited South America, he was attributed with divine characteristics. Also, a charismatic leader can associate with divine authority without making divine claims, and enhance his leadership: "The Lord led me to establish this church." Not all pastors with great accomplishments have charismatic leadership. Some pastors never claim to be great, nor will they accept credit for their greatness, yet their accomplishments point to their greatness. These pastors will not let their congregation think of them as special. Other pastors boast of great accomplishments, yet their disillusioned followers do not ascribe loyalty to their pastor. Perhaps the boasting is without basis. If a charismatic leader can get his followers to believe his boastings, he may get loyalty from his followers until they learn the truth.

John Markus argues that transcendence is one of the dominant themes of charismatic leadership, reflected in various forms as union with God, a breakthrough of the walls of suffering (Ghandi), withdrawal into fantasy toward the fulfillment of aesthetic experience, and an historical consciousness leading to some teleology of history.<sup>14</sup>

## Charismatic Personality

The true charismatic leader believes he will not, cannot fail. During the Second World War, Dallas Billington, pastor, Akron Baptist Temple, found out an embargo was placed on his Sunday School buses. He appealed directly to President Franklin D. Roosevelt and got the embargo lifted, hence elevating the pastor's esteem in the eyes of his congregation.

Some might accuse charismatic leaders of having a great confidence in themselves. This might be true, as they are usually correct in their judgment, even about their own ability. They usually have greater knowledge about human personality than those about them. Sometimes charismatic pastors appear to be egotistical. The pseudo-charismatic leader is usually egotistical, but those used by God usually do what they do for the Lord's glory. Some average pastors might criticize a pastor of a large church for driving a Buick and living in an air-conditioned home. However, the charismatic pastor-leader might reply, "The large car and the air-conditioned house save my strength so I can preach more sermons and win more to Christ." This statement leads to the conclusion that the charismatic leader has great ego strength. The pastor with "false humility" can never be a great leader of a congregation, because his personality will not allow it.

Some pastors do not grow in their leadership ability because they are unwilling to risk, to extend themselves. The charismatic leader never takes the safe route, but is willing to risk himself many times. Just as there are no victories without a fight, there are no successes in the Lord's work without attempting great things for God. (A pastor who is afraid of failure will not build a great church.) At the same time, the charismatic pastor has never had a great defeat, at least outwardly. This author has observed some men who have been growing in their leadership ability, but a severe setback scarred their personality and hindered their personal growth so that they never reached their full potential. The charismatic pastor usually explains away his failure. Thomas Road Baptist Church advertised a goal of 12,000 in Sunday school. The goal was not reached and Jerry Falwell said, "This is the first time I've ever apologized for 9,172 in Sunday school."

The most interesting question to be raised is, "How is the charismatic personality formed?" Ann and Dorothy Willner in *Political Leadership* list multiple causal factors<sup>15</sup> which influence development of the charismatic leader: (1) heterogeneity rather than homogeneity of family background in one or more dimensions, (2) mobility and/or instability of family during the childhood of the leader, (3) mobility of the leader and consequent exposure to varied social and geographical environments in his youth. This observation basically means that the pastor who would lead a great work must be able to live in more than one social environment. Plato stated, "He who would preach in the marketplace must know more than the marketplace;" so the pastor who would preach to a congregation of blue-collar workers must know more than the blue-collar world, yet identify and be identified with that world. This varied background is obtained by travel, education, and many types of employment and experiences.

Charismatic leadership is one-generation long, and it cannot be passed to its followers. After the charismatic leader dies or passes off the scene, the next leader tends to have traditional and rational leadership. Hence, Abernathy will not succeed Martin Luther King, Jr., and hold the same esteem and loyalty in the eyes of his followers. An article in the Chicago Daily News indicates Abernathy understands this and is moving toward a traditional-democratic-type leadership.<sup>16</sup> Weber indicates, "The charismatic leader being the source of legitimate authority, (1) is a revolutionary force, tending to upset stability of institutionalization and order, and (2) it cannot itself become the basis of a stabilized order without undergoing profound structural changes."<sup>17</sup> Most researchers feel that the charismatic leader cannot undergo that change. Castro will never give Cuba the stable government, but after his death the next leader can if another revolution does not happen.

It is an observable phenomenon that the sons of charismatic leaders are better educated, more sophisticated, better organized, but alas, infinitely less effective. Charismatic leaders have inevitably experienced great hardship which helped mould their capacity for leadership. Their sons almost never have this opportunity and share in the financial benefits of the success of their fathers.

Weber wrote, "Charisma can only be awakened and tested: it cannot be learned."<sup>18</sup> He went on to summarize that when leadership is channeled through routine strategy, its charismatic character is altered. Leadership is no longer dependent under the personality of the leader, but upon the forms of the newly established institution. Hence, the charismatic pastor is not in favor of a board of Christian education, job descriptions, or normal channels of authority. He is concerned with the function of a church, not its forms.

Ann and Dorothy Willner were the only authors brave enough to suggest a personality trait list of charismatic leaders.<sup>19</sup> They have suggested the following list: (1) A high level of energy or extra-ordinary vitality. The charismatic leader can give long campaigning hours or can exist on little sleep while keeping a heavy schedule, such as when Winston Churchill was prime minister of England in the Second World War. (2) Unusual presence of mind under conditions of stress and challenge. The charismatic leader has the ability to think on his feet. This gives him the "edge" on both his followers and those who disagree. He usually has a wide vocabulary and can use it appropriately. (3) The charismatic leader is strong-willed and firm in decision-making processes. His

resoluteness is a source of strength to his followers. He usually appears unmoved, stubborn, and, once he has made a decision, will not change from his point of view. Sometimes, this quick ability to make decisions is called naiveté. He is accused of refusing to analyze the issues. His stubbornness gains admiration from his followers, because he will not buckle. Also, his stubbornness might grow out of naiveté with a simplistic view to politics either in Washington or in denominational headquarters. (4) The charismatic leader has unusual mental attainment. The Willners believe the charismatic leader does not always have high intellect, but he usually has the ability to seize upon information from many sources and by an excellent memory give the impression of being widely read, hence knowledgeable.<sup>20</sup> Dr. Jerry Falwell has a photographic memory and in high school was defeated in a state spelling test. During the following year he read the complete dictionary, knowing that once he saw a word he could spell it, and the following year won the state spelling contest. (5) The charismatic leader has a flair for originality and a capacity for innovation in his own behavior. Creativity may be reflected in his speech, ideas, even to the extent of his being a phrase-maker. Catchy slogans will gain attention and keep interest in a sermon. Creativity may be expressed by his unique solution to the unstable social problems of the masses. Or, creativity may be a new technique he uses to attract more people to Sunday school. (6) The charismatic leader usually has a lack of understanding of economic or financial matters. He may be naive in offering simple financial solutions to complex problems. Also, the Willners suggest possibly an indifference or impracticability with respect to personal financial affairs. At first I thought this point does not apply to great pastors, because they are usually financial businessmen and operate their churches by detailed accounting systems. But their faith in God to supply money may be a reflection of this characteristic. This is why they are called naive. They might spend money to reach lost people, knowing that once the person is saved, he will give to the church. The average pastor will not spend money on advertisement, especially if he does not have it. Many charismatic pastors I know have led their churches to over-borrow because they believed in the future of the work. The reaction might be, "I know God will supply because He led me to begin the church." Because the money comes in, he once again is vindicated in the eyes of his people. But many average pastors follow the same role and go bankrupt. (7) Charisma has the ability to elicit an extraordinary degree of devotion and self-sacrifice from women.--It is noted that two women made this observation, and perhaps saw this most in churches where churchmen depend upon women for a following. However, in these large churches a high degree of members are men. (8) Charismatic leaders have extraordinary eyes which are fierce and hypnotic in effect. When Billy Graham first preached in Harringay Arena, London, England, he was accused by the press of coaxing people forward through his hypnotic, piercing eyes.

## Traditional Leadership

Traditional leadership works under the authority of a democratic process, where the leader is elected. In the church setting, the pastor is called to a church by a popular vote, usually upon recommendation of a pulpit committee. One author described the role of the traditional pastor as: "Leadership is the activity of influencing people to cooperate toward some goal which they come to find is desirable."<sup>21</sup> This definition is broad and can be applied to several situations. It does not say how the leader influences people nor does it indicate the motives or success of the leader. Gangel uses the following definitions, "Leadership is the exercise by a member of a group of certain qualities, character and ability which at any given time will result in his changing group behavior in the direction of mutually acceptable goals."<sup>22</sup> He goes on to explain that leadership is an ability to work with people. Most pastors in America will follow the traditional leadership model, as they are not personally equipped to be charismatic leaders.

## Biblical Charismatic Leadership

The Bible seems to teach that the success of the work of God is in direct proportion to the ability of the man of God. Hence, Moses, Abraham, Elijah, Isaiah, and Jeremiah were great leaders who used charismatically defined leadership. Also in the New Testament, Peter and Paul used charismatic-type leadership. The Bible seems to teach the "gifted man" philosophy.

Time Magazine argues that charisma, "one of the dominant clichés of the 60's, is clearly on the wane."<sup>23</sup> The article goes on to say that charismatic leaders are the product of a social-economic turmoil and since we have no major struggle in the United States we have no need for charismatic leaders. Of course the magazine referred to political leaders, yet was wrong in its analysis. The black street gangs of Chicago, the civil rights movement, the war in Southeast Asia, uneasiness about crime in the streets, and inflation demand answers. "If America is not in social-economic turmoil now, what is peace?"

Many church leaders are claiming this is the decade of the common or average man. By this they mean there will be no great leaders in the future. Some are claiming that Billy Graham is the last great charismatic leader. Therefore, small Bible study groups are suggested as theological answers, rather than great preachers who speak to large audiences. Pastoral counseling has become vogue rather than life-changing soul winning. The observer wonders whether the emphasis on small groups has ruled out recognition of the great men of God or vice versa. Has the day of John Wesley, Dwight L. Moody, and Martin Luther passed? Or, does the unsettled times of the American church scene lay the groundwork for the emergence of perhaps the greatest leaders of the past 2,000 years? This author contends that some of the pastors in the large churches of America are reaching and influencing more individuals than did some of the great charismatic leaders of the past, such as Asbury, Billy Sunday, Jonathan Edwards, and John Calvin.

Charisma seems to be a personality trait that grows naturally in certain men. The trait is amoral, hence one, cannot say that to use charisma leadership is good or bad. Perhaps the answer is that the great man of God, with charismatic qualities, who is under the control of the Holy Spirit, can accomplish great works for God.

Wayne Lukens in his Master's thesis on charisma maintains that charisma is used primarily to build numerical attendance, and transform or revive old religious forms.<sup>24</sup> He goes on to declare that the exercise of charismatic leadership will not bring about good-quality Christian education in a program.

Leadership is usually attributed to two sources: First, the leadership ability is inborn. Some men apparently have leadership from the time they are small children and the qualities that make them a great leader apparently are inherited.<sup>25</sup> Second, leadership can be developed. Certain leaders seem to successfully face a crisis and through that experience become greater. The question naturally follows, "Did the pastor with leadership ability inherit his gift or was it learned?" The fact that pastors of 23 of the 75 largest churches in America have been associated with or received their education from the Baptist Bible College, Springfield, Missouri, leads one to conclude that leadership can be developed. Or, those with potential charisma are sent or come to this college.

God uses a man according to his ability. It is incongruent with the nature of God to bring a person with leadership ability to salvation, then place that person on the shelf and not use his leadership ability. First, God may give leadership ability, and, second, God may guide in its further development. Charismatic leadership is a natural gift that some pastors have used to build a great church. If these men were not pastors they would be great leaders in some other area of life. There are several elements from a spiritual perspective that make up charismatic leadership.

1. Implicit faith in God. The leader who is aware of the sovereignty of God and His intervention in the affairs of this life will have an inner confidence that God can guide his affairs. This inner confidence results in outer respect by the populace, making him a better leader. This

psychological reason is only half the picture. The leader who has great trust in God will have great spiritual power.

2. Yieldedness to the purpose of God. When the followers see the hard work and personal loyalty of their leader, they also will sacrifice for the cause. The charismatic leader is the one who emulates respect and obedience from his followers. The pseudo-charismatic pastor builds an image of dedication to God, while in reality he has no true biblical passion to reach people. He uses his leadership abilities for wrong reasons. The leader who is totally dedicated to his local church is the leader who will motivate members to greater service.

3. Unswerving obedience to divine absolutes. There are many common men in life who are looking for answers. The minister who stands and thunders, "Thus saith the Lord" will gather a hearing, if he gives the people a basis for believing him. Since God has spoken, and these pastors believe the Scriptures are divinely inspired and inerrant, they believe their leadership is based upon divine authority. Even though these charismatic leaders see themselves as channels, their followers project onto them a level of "specialness" that is reserved for a select few.

4. A belief in the devastation of sin. The pastors of these churches believe that a man cannot build a great New Testament church without a deep conviction in the damage and damnation that results from sin. When Truman Dollar pleads, "We're singing another verse for you to come forward and find Jesus Christ," this is not a salesman begging for a signature on the dotted line. He is deeply convicted that men stand on the precipice of hell and eternity waits to suck them away. Dollar may sing ten stanzas of "Just As I Am" during the altar call. He stated, "I fear the wrath of God greater than the irate displeasure of a parishioner whose dinner plans are spoiled." Sin is the greatest dilemma, as far as these pastors are concerned. Their success is directly related to their ability to convince others of the effects of sin.

5. A trust in the infinite power of God to work through the weakest human channel. Pastors in these fast-growing churches do not see themselves as possessing a unique holiness. They were each individually asked if at any time in their life they had an experience with God, apart from salvation, that uniquely equipped them to pastor a fast-growing church. They were specifically asked if they had an experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the infilling of the Holy Spirit or a similar type of experience. Each of the men testified he had had no special experience to make him holy or that gave him power to build a fast-growing church. Herb Fitzpatrick declared, "I am an average man. Any average man can build a great church if he is willing to work hard, win souls, and be faithful to preach the Word of God." Fitzpatrick went on to indicate, "When I speak of hard work, I refer to man's part. Of course, I realize that God must work and He does so through yielded, dedicated men, but there is no spiritual secret to building a fast-growing church."

## Pseudo-Charismatic Leadership

Pseudo-Charisma. The abuses of charismatic leadership are abundant. A pastor eliminates the board of deacons, runs the church as a dictator, and finally absconds with the till, stealing thousands of dollars. A second pseudo-charismatic pastor elicits devotion to himself rather than Christ, and has a sexual affair with a woman of the church. Also, pseudo-charisma is seen in the belligerent dictator who rules his church with the iron fist, destroying people rather than helping them. When this oligarchy crumbles, the deacons get together and resolve that no pastor will ever again have absolute authority. The pendulum swings in the opposite direction, resulting in a committee-led church.

Robert Tucker in *Daedalus* indicates one of the marks of the charismatic leader is the existence of a cult personality.<sup>26</sup> The leader is revered, resulting in a worshipful relationship of the led to the leader. Tucker goes on to indicate that in this setting, members will most likely imitate their leader, attempting to live the same kind of life-style as he. The pseudo-charismatic leader inflates his personal ego or builds his machine rather than matures his followers.

A pastor who builds the church on his personality rather than through his leadership, is using pseudo-charismatic leadership to build a church. True biblical leadership develops the Christians who are following the pastor. However, when the work is built on the pastor's personality, the attendance declines when the pastor leaves or dies. A pastor who is ministering according to the New Testament standards will develop mature individual Christians and a strong local church. If the church deteriorates after the charismatic pastor leaves or dies, the decline proves he has pseudo-charismatic gifts.

J. Frank Norris built the First Baptist Church, Ft. Worth, Texas, into the largest Sunday school in America. In his early life he apparently employed a biblical charisma but toward the end of his ministry in the church turned into a pseudo-charismatic leadership. In his early life his Sunday School averaged over 5,000 in attendance. After Norris' death, attendance declined and today there are less than 500 in attendance.

Another form of pseudo-charismatic leader is found in the individual who desires power and maintains it through advertisement or control, but is not revered by his people. Emmet studied the pseudo-charismatic leaders of Africa, indicating they attracted large crowds, evoked interest, but did not enjoy a sense of specialness in the eyes of the populace.<sup>27</sup> These pseudo-charismatic leaders are usually intensely popular, enjoy close emotional bonds to the followers who make up the majority of the people, yet are narrowly elected to office, and after election use mass media and huge propaganda campaigns to keep their popularity. Emmet indicated their difficulty in collecting taxes was a reflection of the weakness of their leadership.<sup>28</sup>

The pseudo-charismatic leader in Christian circles may give lip service to Jesus Christ but in the final analysis his work, whether in the lives of individuals or in the corporate testimony, does not measure up to New Testament standards. Some Pentecostal-type preaching tabernacles in downtown areas fall under this category. These are usually found in abandoned movie houses or similar auditoriums. The pseudo-charismatic leader claims to preach the gospel but the Spirit is lacking. He apparently "uses" the gospel to further his own aims. The New Testament warns against the false shepherd who would deceive God's sheep (John 10; Acts 20:29; James 3:1).

## Succession of Charisma

Pastoral leadership has eternal implications for a local church. The pastor should have a stronger place of leadership than the average American church allows. The Scriptures show Christ as the leader of the church and the shepherd of the flock. The pastor is the under-shepherd and is responsible for leading, feeding and protecting the flock. (Acts 20:17-31). Too often, pastors have abdicated their leadership to the board of deacons, tying their hands and curtailing the work of God.

One key problem in a new church is the succession of leadership from the founder of the church to the second pastor. God uses a man to constitute a local church and this man usually becomes the first pastor. Because of his dedication and service, he has a special level of respect among the people. Usually the founding pastor's faith, vision and spiritual sacrifice provide the growth of the church. This pioneer pastor leads many adults to Christ and in the early days before an exhaustive organization, his personal leadership holds the church together. Since the founder has led most of the deacons to Christ, they never question his authority or leadership in meetings. His success gives him some charismatic reverence in the eyes of his followers. When the founder passes off the scene, either through death or by being called to another church, the problem of choosing a successor falls to the shoulders of the deacons. The deacons who have been in the role of secondary leadership suddenly shift into a primary leadership role. Since the deacons give leadership in calling the new pastor, he is responsible to them, placing him in the role of secondary leadership or a subordinate. Thus, a church passes from charismatic leadership to traditional leadership.

Lingeman wrote in *New York Times Magazine* that charisma is rarely transferred by heredity or other means.<sup>29</sup> Fidel Castro has charisma but cannot pass it on to his brother Raoul. However, Lingeman believes Ghandi gave it to Nehru. Reinhard Bendix suggests three ways in which the succession of charismatic leadership may take place:<sup>30</sup> (1) A prospective leader who resembles the former charismatic leader is found and appointed. (2) The original charismatic leader designates his own successor. William B. Riley, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Minneapolis, and president of Northwestern Schools, upon his deathbed pointed to Billy Graham as the successor to the presidency. (3) The disciples can appoint a new leader to take the place of the departed. Though these methods of succession may work in isolated incidents, they usually are unsatisfactory.

## Problems of Charismatic Leadership

Charismatic leadership can be stable or unstable, depending upon the maturity of the leader, because direction and momentum of the movement resides in the leader. Charismatic leadership lasts throughout the tenure of the founder. The success of the ten largest churches was in the length of their tenure, 22 years and seven months (now over 25 years tenure). When the pastor is stable and has had a long tenure at the church, there is stability. However, not all pastors are stable enough to build a large church because they are not emotionally secure enough to remain at one church over a long period of time. When the educational program is built upon the unstable personality of the pastor, the program is questionable. Christian education is oriented towards equipping the individual for the work of the ministry (Eph. 4:11, 12). One of the oft-repeated axioms of Christian education is that the pastor/minister of Christian education should work himself out of a job, so the laymen can carry on the work of the ministry. The very nature of charismatic leadership is that the pastor leads the church because of his ability. The pastor is the Sunday school superintendent, director of promotion, comptroller and personnel manager wrapped up in one. Christian education usually attempts to decentralize leadership into committees, involving many individuals. Charismatic leadership draws leadership to itself.

1. The danger of authoritarian leadership. Since the charismatic pastor tends to consolidate power around himself, the members must look to him for guidance. Some large churches are built on the personality of the pastor, while others are built on his leadership. When the pastor realizes he is an under-shepherd, receiving his authority from the Word of God, he gives an authoritative leadership to his church. When the pastor localizes power in his personality, he gives authoritarian leadership to his church. Many churches handcuff the gifted pastor and do not give him the freedom to lead the flock. The Bible recognizes the gifted man and teaches that the greater the man, the greater the results. A leader must be authoritative without becoming authoritarian. Because some pastors swing to one extreme, the lay leaders strip the next pastor of his ability to lead. This is a tragic swing to the other extreme because God still works through individuals. The greater the leadership ability of the man, the greater the work he can accomplish on earth. A pastor with gifted leadership should be working in two directions at the same time. First, he must continually pull more leadership to himself, attempting greater things for God each year. At the same time, he must push (delegate) more authority to his laymen, making them responsible and accountable for the work of God in his church. Most Christian educators advocate the second but deny the first.

2. Charismatic leadership may produce quantity not quality. Charismatic leadership may bring about superficial Christians because these pastors tend to build loyalty to themselves, rather than to Christ. Charismatic leadership tends toward centralized hierarchy, hence it may manipulate individuals. The church should be built on a solid foundation of doctrine and knowledge of the Word of God. A church should be based on quality, where each layman, using his abilities given to him by God, ministers in evangelism and edification. Wayne Lukens in his thesis advocates that charismatic leadership is most effective in producing numerical growth, but is most negligent in producing

maturity in followers. However, this point is only theory and cannot be proved. Lack of quality lives may be a result of pseudo-charismatic leadership, while New Testament charisma may produce maturity among the followers.

3. Charismatic leadership usually attracts the disenfranchised fringe area of society. David Moberg in *The Church As a Social Institution* argues that factors of social migration, social disorientation, social change, conflict, and socio-economic disenfranchisement contributes to the rise of new religious bodies, especially through charismatic leadership. These factors could certainly be labeled social distress, and any church built upon these factors alone would be the result of pseudo-charismatic leadership, certainly not New Testament charisma. The deeper question lies, what caused these above-mentioned unstable social conditions? If sin is the ultimate problem with the universe, then the pastor must approach social problems from the point of view of the gospel.

The Scriptures teach that the person undergoing social mobility is the greatest candidate for salvation. A man goes through mobility when he moves his home (geographical mobility) or changes his job (economic mobility), or his wife has a baby (psychological mobility), or there is a death in the family (existential mobility). A man in mobility is more concerned about ultimate questions because change brings about a threat to his existence, hence he is a candidate for the gospel. Also, the poor in housing projects or in the ghettos are not insulated from the anxieties of life nor are they isolated in the protective custody of suburbia. Since they daily face the ultimate questions and dilemmas of life, perhaps they are greater candidates for the gospel. The New Testament charismatic pastor has a great opportunity to present salvation to them because they will be responsive to his leadership.

The charismatic leader stands over against the established society and preaches a return to former values. Liturgy and ritualism is the catalyst which holds many traditional American congregations together. The members of typical middle-class congregations are likely to look to former rituals as a major support for their faith. Therefore, the pastor who religiously reacts against the general culture in the U.S. usually preaches an antilurgical and antiformal message. Therefore, congregations of charismatic leaders are usually antiformal, which was the case in the ten largest Sunday Schools.

4. Members are only personal disciples of the charismatic leader. Max Weber in *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* describes how the charismatic leader organizes his staff. Subordinates cannot occupy leadership positions in the traditional sense of organized government. By this, Weber meant a subordinate is traditionally chosen for his ability or past competency. The staff member of the charismatic leader is usually chosen on his personal devotion to the leader. Staff members are judged by their enthusiasm for the cause, and personal loyalty to the leader, or both. The staff members of the ten largest Sunday Schools were not always chosen because of their theological training in a Bible college or a theological seminary, but were chosen because of their loyalty to the local church, and success as layman in that church.

The pastor is the under-shepherd and responsible for the growth of the flock. But as the flock grows in size, the leader is limited in time, by geographical boundaries and energy to carry out all of the ministry to the flock. Therefore, he delegates responsibilities to a subordinate. In the cast of ministering to the youth of the congregation, a youth pastor is hired. The question arises, "Does the youth pastor work for the board of Christian education, the deacon board, or the pastor?" There is no question in charismatic-led churches--the youth pastor is responsible to the senior minister. The position of the youth pastor is described as, "The youth pastor is the extension of the pastoral ministry into the lives of the young people." Therefore, the youth pastor must have extreme loyalty to work both for and with the senior pastor. He must see himself as a person under authority, yet a minister of Jesus Christ; he must use all of his abilities to accomplish success in his youth department.

## Conclusion

On the basis of sociological research and a study of large Sunday schools, it has been determined that the principles of charismatic leadership contribute to the rapid growth of the Sunday School in a local church. Probably the most fertile soil for rapid growth would be the marginal and mobile groups of our society. The working class would seem more susceptible to the successful strong leader than the middle or upper class. This principle was taught and practiced by Jesus Christ.

The type of preaching that would appeal to the masses is a theology of hope in the future and expectation of the present working of the power of God. The pastor should have simple faith in God, a strong will to carry out the dictates of God, and yet be a loving, kind leader. He must be financially capable of managing large amounts of money and of inspiring people to instant action. The pastor must have evidence of a special calling of God upon his life to the ministry, qualifying him to preach the gospel. This qualification arises above all other worldly success, even academic training. Once the pastor has fulfilled the spiritual expectation of a church and has given evidence of the special hand of God upon his life, he could be classified as having New Testament charisma. He would not then be able to inspire people because he has charisma but his ability to inspire people is evidence of his charisma. When he has such evidence, he qualifies to be "the chief administrator both in the church and Sunday School and/or the Christian education program of the church."

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary* (Springfield, Mass.: G. & C. Merriam Company, 1969), p. 140.

<sup>2</sup> Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, trans. by A. M. Henderson and ed. by Talcolf Parsons (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 358.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65.

<sup>4</sup> James Davis, "Charisma in the 1952 Campaign," *American Political Science Review*, XLVIII, (December, 1954), p. 1085. Davis argues that the social conditions make a political-charismatic leader. He set forth five postulates that determine charisma: (1) Appealing leaders, (2) Despondent followers, (3) Weakness of inhibiting political tradition and institutions that hinder the superman-politician, (4) A degree of political instability (so people will turn to the leader rather than elsewhere for solutions), and (5) Existence of a crisis. These criteria are found in the pastors with charismatic leadership.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 72.

<sup>6</sup> Richard Fagen, "Charismatic Authority and the Leadership of Fidel Castro," *Western Political Quarterly*, XVIII, (January, 1965), p. 275. Fagen made a firsthand study of the Cuban Revolution under Fidel Castro, examining five hypotheses concerning charismatic leadership: (1) The charismatic leader is always the creation of his followers, (2) There are no universal charismatics, (3) The leader regards himself as elected from above to fulfill a mission, (4) The emergent leader is anti-bureaucratic, and (5) Charismatic authority is unstable in nature. Fagen found all five of these principles were true in Castro's leadership.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Elmer L. Towns, *The Christian Hall of Fame* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1971).

<sup>9</sup> Elmer L. Towns, "The 75 Largest Sunday Schools in America," *Christian Life*, (August, 1970). pp. 15ff.

<sup>10</sup> Carl Friedrich, "Political Leadership and the Problem of Charismatic Power," *Journal of Politics*, XXIII, (February, 1961), p. 26.

<sup>11</sup> Robert Tucker, "The Theory of Charismatic Leadership," *Daedalus*, XCVIII, No. 3, (Summer, 1968), p. 747. Tucker advances the "personality cult" concept of charismatic leadership. In this book this is referred to as the pseudo-charismatic leader.

<sup>12</sup> Robert Bierstadt, *Modern Social Sciences* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), pp. 269-70.

<sup>13</sup> Howard Becker, *Modern Sociological Theory* (New York: Dryden Press, 1959), p. 20ff.

<sup>14</sup> John Marcus, "Transcendence and Charisma," *Western Political Quarterly*, XIV, (March, 1961), pp. 236-237.

<sup>15</sup> Ann and Dorothy Willner, "The Rise and Role of Charismatic Leaders," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, No. 358, (March, 1965), pp. 61-69. Although many in social research have examined charismatic leadership, only the Willners have been brave enough to attempt a personality profile. After having close fellowship with many of the pastors in the largest churches of America (those most likely to have charisma), I am convinced there is a distinct personality pattern in charismatic leaders. The Willners have given us great insight, but I think more study needs to be done in this area as we have not gained full understanding of the charismatic personality.

<sup>16</sup> L. F. Palmer, Jr., "Jesse Furor Points to New Black Leadership," *The Chicago Daily News*, (April 20, 1971), p. 13.

<sup>17</sup> Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 367.

<sup>19</sup> Willner, *op. cit.*, pp. 61-69. See footnote 15.

Text taken from Elmer L. Towns, *America's Fastest Growing Churches* (Nashville, TN: Impact Books, 1972).

<sup>20</sup> Charles Wegener, "Lord Morgan or Churchill: Mastery Over Men," *Ethics*, LXXVII, (January, 1967), pp. 148-151. Most people consider Churchill a brilliant person, yet Wegener states, "Churchill was a very intuitive and creative individual with a practical bent. He possessed a burning desire for personal distinction. He was poorly educated, not well read, of unstable temperament, but had an indomitable will."

<sup>21</sup> Ordway Tead, *The Art of Leadership* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963), p. 20.

<sup>22</sup> Kenneth Gangel, *Leadership for Church Education* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1970), p. 12.

<sup>23</sup> "What Ever Happened to Charisma?" *Time*, SCIV, (October 17, 1969), pp. 40-41.

<sup>24</sup> Wayne Lukens, "A study of charismatic leadership in Christian Education," (unpublished Master's thesis, Department of Christian Education, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 1970).

<sup>25</sup> Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 367. Weber believes charismatic leadership is inborn. "Charisma may only be awakened and tested; it cannot be learned or taught." This cannot be proved and I tend to doubt its validity when applied to pastoral-charismatic leadership gifts.

<sup>26</sup> Tucker, *op. cit.*, p. 747.

<sup>27</sup> Dorothy Emmet, *Function, Purpose and Powers* (New York: MacMillan, 1958), p. 6.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> Richard Lingeman, "The Greeks Had a Word for It-But What Does It Mean?" *New York Times Magazine*, (August 4, 1968), p. 30.

<sup>30</sup> Reinhard Bendix, "Reflections of Charismatic Leadership," *Asian Survey*, No. 7, (June, 1967), p. 307.