

Flow Chart of Emergent Leaders - Understanding Key Influencers and Connecting the Dots

From *Faith Undone – Roger Oakland*

Outline by Dick Pence with Joan Sundheim 9/21/2009

Introduction – Re-occurring themes.: In ch. 1 we find. In a very low key way, some basic tenants of the movement that are worth noting before we go on.

1. P. 11 We see the “several options”. In a low key way, this is the tip of the iceberg of the “dialectic” approach that we saw in Marxism. This approach we will see below the surface of the entire movement. Theses – well I think this, Antitheses – the old way was this or I think THAT, and Syntheses – the next plain is reached. As apposed to...”didactic teaching”

2. P. 12 This is a lot more than candles and incense, it is a whole new theology...man can find his own way to God. The path will be mysticism.

3. P. 3 Those who resist this global movement will be viewed as obstructionists.

4. p. 14 We see a general movement from a Truth base to a Postmodern base, or a willingness to look the other way. Logic and rational are replaced by EXPERIENCE base. There is a underlying arrogance that assumes this is the superior way.

5. P. 15 The culture is pluralistic, and the church must follow.

6. P 16-17 The traditional church is irrelevant – centered too much on personal salvation and the eternal Kingdom and not enough on the Kingdom of God being formed on earth.

I. Birth of the Emergent Church – 1950’s

A. **Peter Drucker** Background: Peter Drucker (1909-2005 from Austria See *Pipers of Purpose* p. 6)

1. Business guru who influenced lives in business and the church, President of General Motors.
2. Devoted student of **Soren Kierkegaard, existential philosopher** and mystic, even learning Danish in order to study him. **This influence obviously becomes the BACKBONE of the Emergent and Church Growth Movements.**
3. He also had a strong bond with panentheist/mystic Martin Buber.
4. He believed that as we moved from the modern age to the post-modern, the old of yesterday no longer acts effectively and "this is a new view, different from the traditional".
5. Later in life. in 1990’s he established a "thought forum" of different ideologies - evangelical, Buddhist, New Age, etc.
6. He believed that "people's needs" supersede "doctrine" or "institutional structure".

B. Drucker’s Religious beliefs – were the seeds of the Emergent Church and were Postmodern. Kierkegaard was his mentor/teacher (from a century earlier). He was the “father of Existentialism’ (or in religious terms Neo-orthodoxy)

1. What is **Existentialism**? While by nature it defies definition it would generally fit the following outline: It is the backbone of the Philosophy departments in nearly every University in America.
 - I. Webster – doctrine from Kierkegaard that man is not part of an ordered metaphysical scheme...each man must create

his own being. Branch of Philosophy dealing with the first principles including Ontology (the study of being or essence of things) and Cosmology (dealing with the universe as a systematic order).

- II. Wikipedia - took the human subject - not merely the thinking subject, but the acting, feeling, living human individual and his or her conditions of existence (e.g. death, loneliness) — as a starting point for philosophical thought. Existential philosophy is the "explicit conceptual manifestation of an existential attitude" that begins with a sense of disorientation and confusion in the face of an apparently meaningless or absurd world. (This apparently denies any Metanarrative)
 - III. Truth is subjective; they focused on subjective human experience rather than the objective truths of mathematics and science, which they believed were too detached or observational to truly get at the human experience. They were interested in people's quiet struggle with the apparent meaninglessness of life and the use of diversion to escape from boredom
 - IV. Refusal to belong to any school of thought
 - V. **Repudiation of the adequacy of any body of beliefs whatever, especially of systems**
 - VI. Marked dissatisfaction with traditional philosophy as superficial, academic, and remote to life
 - VII. **Passion and feelings trump knowledge**
 - VIII. **The traditions of theology, ethics, and metaphysics are all self-deceptions.**
 - IX. Kierkegaard's writings were confusing, contradicting himself on the same page but...meet Existentialism!
 - X. He renounced clear and distinct thinking
 - XI. Thinking moved from rational to irrational
 - XII. Reason gave way to feeling
 - XIII. Final truth slipped away and the thinking of the world became a set of self-contradictions
 - XIV. Theological and philosophical diffusion – that is Existentialism.
 - XV. Think this is minor? Dave Reese says of it “While composed minds would agree that it is a form of insanity, it has become **the most pervasive philosophy of our time.** There is virtually no philosophy department in any major university in Western civilization that is not built upon and existentialist base (all of above from “Seven Men Who Rule the World from the Grave” , p. 205-)
2. Kierkegaard was deeply involved in Mysticism

3. Drucker embraced the Mysticism of the Japanese, Zen and Pure Land Buddhism
4. He looked to a Post-Modern World as early as 1957 and a move from the Modern Age. (p.26) in his book “Landmarks of Tomorrow.” We will create a new philosophy – a fresh way of looking at the world.
5. He had a strong bond with Martin Buber who embraced the teachings of Hasadism (Jewish mysticism)
6. He established the Leader to Leader Institute, and interspiritual *thought forum* which to this day includes Buddhist sympathizers, globalists, evangelicals, and New Age sympathizers. His philosophy of **gathering ideologies from great thinkers was not something he saw as contrary to his ideas of religion.** (p.27)
Here we see shades of Rick Warren’s goals as we will show later.

II. The Leadership Network - 1990’s

- A. Key Players - Young Leaders Network, later left Leadership Network to go on their own – became Emergent
 1. Doug Pagitt –
 2. Brian McLaren
 3. Chris Seay
 4. Toney Jones
 5. Dan Kimball
 6. Andrew Jones
- B. Leadership network was started in 1984 by **Bob Buford** – Background:
 1. Owner of successful cable television company in Texas
 2. **Very close to Drucker**, even describing him as his "intellectual father " of most all that guided his philosophy. He commented he'd ceased trying to determine which thoughts were his and which thoughts Drucker's. Drucker was the **“man who formed my mind.”**
 3. There is a chance it could even have been Drucker who planted the seed for Buford's goal of being a resource to the mega-church. Buford saw the mega-church as a highly influential instrument for social changes.
 4. In 1984 he introduced "Leadership Network" (young emerging leaders) as a "resource broker" to churches - hoping to help leaders of "innovative churches" to connect.
 5. **In his autobiography *Halftime*** he quotes **Kierkegaard** several times and endorses Jim Collins who has a connection with Eastern philosophies and mysticism
 6. So...What were Buford’s religious beliefs? = Same as Druckers
 - I. He endorses those who practice Eastern mysticism, meditation techniques, and the practice of emptying your mind.

III. The Spirituality of Systems Thinking, Lynn Stuter, NewsWithViews

- A. Systems Thinking: What is it? The Gaia Hypothesis – the New Age premise that the world is a living, breathing organism, irreducible to its parts so what affects one part affects all parts. To save the Earth, we must change our society.
- IV. **The Paradigm Shift – Leadership Network births the Emergent Church** – the only way to cope and be effective during the period of societal change was to change how we see the world and the church (Leith Anderson, A Church for the 21st Century, Paget’s pastor)
- A. The major players – Anderson, Buford, and Drucker played a role
 - B. Rich Warren – supported Buford
 - 1. Quoting Drucker Warren said “the most significant sociological phenomenon of the first half of the 20th century was the rise of the corporation. The most significant sociological phenomenon of the second half of the 20th century has been the development of the large pastoral church – the mega-church. It is the only organization that is actually working in our society.”
 - 2. He is my mentor; I have spent twenty years under his tutelage learning about leadership.
 - 3. Buford’s goal was to be a resource to the mega church because he saw it as a *highly influential instrument for societal change*
 - C. Bill Hybels - Buford saw Warren and Bill Hybels as “change makers”
 - 1. Willow Creek’s partnership with Leadership Network with its well attended conferences and endorsements of books has been key.
 - I. Have helped Sweet, McLaren McManus and others propagate the Emergent message. (p.30)
 - D. Leonard Sweet – Warren, Hybels and company
 - 1. Warren role – vital, joined Sweet in *Tides of Change – Riding the Next Wave in Ministry* audio series
 - I. 1995 trial balloon for the Emerging Church.
 - 2. In 2006, voted one of 50 most influential Christians in America – eighth just under Hybels and higher than Warren.
 - I. Series discussed New Spirituality looming on the horizon
 - II. Letting go of old ways of doing things.
 - III. Very similar to Drucker’s 1957 messages.
 - IV. Drucker said then what matters for us in the first post-modern generation is the change in fundamental worldview. (Landmarks of Tomorrow)
 - 3. *Quantum Spirituality* –
 - I. New Light Leaders who were role models to him of the true nature of the postmodern apologetic:
 - I. Reads like a who’s who of the New Age movement (see p32)
 - II. These are his “translators of the gospel without compromise”

- II. This New Light apologetic is a forerunner and hope that the church may be on the edge of another awakening...a willingness to dance to a new rhythm.
- III. Key among these – Matthew Fox who says in *The Coming of the Cosmic Christ* – “I foresee...a rebirth based on a spiritual initiative ...that will cut through all cultures and religions...in a global awakening I call Deep ecumenism”
 - I. Theme of the book is that the cosmic Christ resides in all humans. A New Age “truth” that Schuler and Warren both get caught endorsing (See A Wonderful Deception)
 - IV. Review: Remember, Sweet is a person that both Warren and Hybels endorse, speak with and have at conferences
- 4. Bob Buford, founder of the Emergent Church says about Sweet (p.34) “he is the icebreaker of the 21st century church.
- 5. At this point in time, the New Age movement has been introducing the world to radical Eastern mysticism – now the bridge is being built to those who profess to be Christian.
- E. Dan Kimball – author of *The Emerging Church*, forward by non other than...Rick Warren
 - 1. Warren says “the book is a wonderful example of what a purpose-driven church should look like. My book tells what the church is called to do, his tells how to do it” (paraphrased)
- V. **Minds of the Youth** – Youth Specialties, late 1960s
 - A. Zondervan and Rupert Murdock (Fox News owner)
 - 1. Zondervan became a leading publisher of Youth Specialties publishing 500 resources for them
 - 2. Purchased by Murdock in 1988
 - 3. He became a major catalyst of the Purpose Driven Life
 - 4. **Warren says he is Murdock’s pastor** even though he received “papal knighthood” from Paul II for his donations to the Catholic Church.
 - 5. Became a part of Youth Ministries & Spirituality Project in 1996. Also began to work with key Emergent leaders.
 - 6. 2006 Zondervan bought Youth Specialties promising to continue to support emergent leaders.
 - 7. Do not underestimate the power of publishers. A key reason that a Brian McLaren is one of the top 25 most influential Evangelicals is their prolific writing of books.
 - B. **Leadership Network has become a loosely organized way of supporting Postmoderns** – financially and otherwise – from the megachurches. (p.37)