Confronting the 21st Century Worldview
Ron Cason, D.Min.

The Role of Change In Defining the 21st Century

Yogi Berra, the baseball Hall of Fame catcher for the New York Yankees, is noted for his perplexing but often poignant comments. Two of his more memorable statements in regard to the future are, “When you come to a fork in the road, take it,” and “The future ain’t what it use to be.” As paradoxical as these words sound, they are insightful and illustrative of the confusion people are experiencing as they prepare for the future and the 21st century. Many realize the world has “come to a fork in the road,” and making a decision concerning which direction to take is causing great fear and anxiety. They respond by fighting against change or hoping the future will be like the past. These people and their leaders will go kicking and screaming into the 21st century. Others, paralyzed by the risks inherent in change, stand on the brink of the future unable to provide vision and direction and so continue to minister by default. Nothing is ventured and nothing gained, but in a time of rapid, chaotic change, a generation stands in danger of being lost and the voice of the church relegated to the periphery of American culture.

Yogi is also correct when he maintains “The future ain’t what it use to be.” Poised at the beginning of a new century, we find the year 2000 has captured the world’s attention as has no other date. There exists at the same time a new age optimism and an apocalyptic pessimism. We are seeing the end of one era and the beginning of another. The year 2000 has come to symbolize not only specific change, but also change itself. Many futurists say the world is at a “hinge of history.”
This is a time like the time of Christ, the fall of the Roman Empire, the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the Industrial Revolution. The primary similarity is that each of these hinges swung the world in a new direction. Each left behind the way the culture operated and society was organized. Each introduced a new era unlike the one before. Each was a time of fear and hope, resistance and welcome.¹

Of course, change in itself is not new. What is significant going into the 21st century is the unprecedented rate of change. More changes have occurred in the past 100 years than in the previous 2,000 years combined. Changes in the final ten years of this decade (1991 through 2000) have matched if not exceeded the changes of the first ninety years of this century. Our culture could be compared to a large truck going downhill without brakes. Every mile doubles the rate of speed. Likewise, as the closing years of this decade have swiftly passed, the rate of change has doubled, and it might be more accurate to speak of tripling or quadrupling.

How we approach Christian ministry amid such rapid change is the compelling issue. Some prefer to ignore change, hoping it will just go away. Others hope tomorrow will turn out to be yesterday and tragically continue to minister as if they were in the 19th century. Obviously pretending no changes exist will not stop change. Ministering with antiquated methods is no virtue. Leith Anderson tells us how Israel responded and how present day churches and leaders should still respond to change in the 21st century. In First Chronicles 12 we read of the tumultuous days when the monarchies of Saul and David overlapped.

Israel was full of anxiety. They were also at a hinge of history and they must have been confused and frightened. King Saul was anointed by God and so they wanted to serve him. But David was also anointed by God to rule the same kingdom. Which one were the Israelites to follow? First Chronicles 12:32 says that certain of the sons of Issachar “understood the times, with knowledge of what Israel should do.” Their numbers were
small (only 200 of them) compared to the national population. That is often the way it is - a few understand changing culture and know what to do.²

We need modern sons and daughters of Issachar who “understand the times and know what to do.” I am also convinced that as we endeavor to minister in the 21st century dependence upon discernment from the Holy Spirit will be required as never before. I say this because I firmly believe God works in and through change to accomplish His purposes. Change is not the problem, but how we handle it. As we begin the 21st century, the currents of society are becoming more powerful and the waves of change are crashing closer.

Some of the more significant changes we are already seeing at the beginning of the millennium include: the collapse of communism and the end of the cold war; an exploding world population which will double to 12 billion by the year 2050; the growth of world religions and the rise of fundamentalism, whether it be Islam, Hinduism, or orthodox Christianity; and political changes with national boundaries being redrawn and power struggles occurring between ethnic traditions. In relation to the church we are facing hemispherically a decline in the west and a rise in the south and east, and in the United States the inadequacy of old structures, the growth of megachurches, and an increasing biblical illiteracy. We also face for the first time the challenge of ministering to six or seven different generations sitting in our pews, with some more likely to think deductively and systematically and having a delayed gratification ethic, and others more typically thinking inductively and eclectically with an instant gratification ethic.³

However, there is perhaps no greater challenge and opportunity facing the 21st century church than the shift we are seeing in worldviews.
It might prove beneficial to understand what is meant by a worldview. James Sire defines a worldview as “a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic make up of our world.” In other words a worldview is a system of belief held by each person that enables her/him to live in this world and by which she/he attempts to make sense of the universe at a very personal level. It is what shapes a person’s values by informing her/him about what is important in life. A worldview must of necessity include one’s beliefs about the world, God, humanity, life and death. “It is what enables one to understand the relatedness within the diversity of creation and therefore make sense of and assign meaning to individual events and/or intelligible data.”

Michael Palmer, in his book Elements of a Christian Worldview, states worldview refers to a set of beliefs and practices that shape a person’s approach to the most important issues in life. One of the most common features of the term’s use is that of a view, outlook or perspective in life and the world that characterizes a people or a culture. All of this tells us a worldview relates to our way-of-being-in-the-world, our foundation for socio-cultural action. It is always a vision for the world. It tells us both what is the case (vision of the world) and what ought to be the case (vision for the world). Therefore worldviews are both descriptive and normative. A vision of life is always a vision for life. Finally, worldviews are religious in character and rooted in beliefs that are answers to what could be termed questions that are simply constitutive to human life. 1) Where am I, or what is the nature of the reality in which I find myself? 2) Who am I, or what is the nature of human being? How do we relate to each other and what is our
relation to God or the divine?  3) What is wrong? Since we all recognize that something is out of balance, disordered and broken in life, that there is evil, we are all forced to find some way to account for and understand this brokenness.  4) What is the remedy? How do we find a path through our brokenness to wholeness?

The reader will note that the above subtitle is “21st Century Worldviews.” It is obvious from the previous definitions that there is no one worldview that is commonly held by all people and cultures. Instead there are many worldviews, even among those in Pentecost. I will not attempt in this paper to describe or analyze the worldviews of my brothers and sisters in other global settings and cultural milieus. I will speak to the worldview or worldviews of my own experience and culture, that being one of an American Caucasian male.

**Postmodernism Defined**

We live in a time period where we are seeing major transitions occurring in the way we view life and religion and, more importantly, how we think (our epistemology). We have now begun the shift from one time period to another, moving from “modernism” to “postmodernism.” Although there is no exact date when these shifts have occurred, and we are still very much under the influence of modernity (enlightenment thinking), we can observe changes happening in the cultural landscape of music, the arts, theology and philosophy.

It has been said this is the first generation in American history that has been born into a world where Christian truth is no longer the reference point for defining the story of humanity. This, along with many other factors we will examine, is creating a new paradigm for how we view reality and how truth is defined and deconstructed. The below
chart gives a brief summary of how these epistemological and philosophical changes have occurred.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Modern Period</th>
<th>Modern Period</th>
<th>Postmodern Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 1500</td>
<td>1500 - 1960</td>
<td>1960 +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epistemology:</td>
<td>Epistemology:</td>
<td>Epistemology:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God-centered</td>
<td>Shift to human-centered</td>
<td>Human-centered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>worldview</td>
<td>trust in reason to discover truth</td>
<td>worldview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manuscript and oral communication communication</td>
<td>Printing press transforms communication</td>
<td>Hypertext and media begins transformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faith and the Bible</td>
<td>Human reason becomes the foundation for understanding</td>
<td>Experience and community for understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>were the foundation for understanding</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>God was viewed as the author of a divine story that humanity was part of</td>
<td>Humanity is viewed as the author of its own story and God is “reserved” to write the parts humanity can’t</td>
<td>Humanity realized it cannot write its own story, so it assumes there is no story at all - the Bible is only a man-made story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premodern period characterized by faith in God and knowledge in authoritative tradition</td>
<td>The Enlightenment (1600-1800) lifts up reason and science as the means to discover truth</td>
<td>The postmodern individual determines his/her own truth - there is no absolute truth. Pluralism and tolerance are valued.</td>
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“I believe in order that you happy I may understand.” Descartes 1596-1650 Sheryl Crow

Brian Carrell, Rolf Hille, Bruce Little, Thomas Oden, and other evangelical scholars equate postmodernity with the rise of a post-Christian society in America. David
Wells assaulsts postmodernity by advocating we are only involved in antimodernism, a disillusionment with old Enlightenment ideals.

Little maintains the problem with the postmodern mind is it scorns the notion of a coherent worldview or the possibility of a unified field of knowledge. “Properly speaking, therefore, there is no ‘postmodern worldview,’ nor the possibility of one. The postmodern paradigm is by its nature fundamentally subversive of all paradigms, for at its core is the awareness of reality as being at once multiple, local, and temporal, and without demonstrable foundation.” He states in order for the Christian worldview to have an influence on the postmodern mind Christians must resist the influence of postmodernity on their own minds. At the same time, they need to purpose in their hearts to think, act and minister within the framework of a Christian worldview, recapturing the high ground in the current epistemological and ontological chaos.

David Wells joins Little in strong condemnation of postmodernity and its influence upon the church. He laments the loss of the “theological center” of evangelicalism and blames the Church Growth Movement for causing “the local church pastor to displace theology in favor of methods that result in visible success,” resulting in “the Christian ministry becoming a profession in competition with secular professions for worldly status.” Wells condemns George Barna as the principal motivator in the movement to “market the church” and criticizes even the conventional use of the term “postmodern.” The term is inaccurate because it derives from the modern mind’s need to be better, new, and improved, as it reaches therapeutically toward the optimistic. He writes that it is, in fact,
this assumption of an ability to move from one plateau of achievement to another that has given us a need always to be post: we feel compelled to assure ourselves that we are post-Puritan, post-Christian, and post-modern… But do we really think that as modern people we can extract ourselves from modernity and, in the next stage of the story of our progress, become post-modern?\textsuperscript{11}

A more moderate and helpful response to postmodernity is found in the writings of Hille, Carrell, and Oden. Rolf Hille believes the once Christian West no longer has spiritual clarity nor a cultural identity that will allow for an efficient response to opposing ideological challenges. “The postmodern period resembles a reaction against enlightened modernity, but without seeing any necessity to deal with the Christian faith at all. The result of the postmodern world is a post-Christian situation.”\textsuperscript{12} This is evidenced by modern agnosticism, hedonism, which Hille views as the reason for the attractiveness of the Far Eastern idea of reincarnation, and the fact of moral disorientation, where the highest ambition of a human being is to become an autonomous personality.

Carrell sees four significant paradigm shifts which have occurred over the past thirty years.\textsuperscript{13} 1) Privatized faith. “The holding of religious belief has come to be seen as the mark of an individual rather than a feature of a community. With this has come a steady removal of religious concerns or perspectives from educational philosophy and practice, from political argument and accountability.” So we see a society that is not anti-religious; it just insists that matters of faith be a private concern (i.e., Bill Clinton).

2) Pluralized belief. “This new secular climate within which we now all live has as one of its unwritten tenets that all belief systems are valid…no one set of beliefs is true, tolerance is king.” The consequence of this pluralization is we deny society any preference for one faith over another. The “scandal of particularity” is an offense in such
a society. Carrell says as a result we are no longer, even in a very general sense, a Christian country.

3) Marginalized religion. “The exclusion of religious faith from the public realm eventually leads to a diminution of respect for its presence and substance on the local scene.” Tragically this brings the loss of a sense of the sacred. Holy days lose their significance. In such a society, where respect for the transcendent has disappeared, it is little wonder that God becomes irrelevant.

4) Relativized values. “Remove God and there is little need for religion; remove religion and there is little ground for absolute values.” Carrell maintains where once our society had a pretty good idea of what was right and what was wrong, of the reality of good and the fearsomeness of evil, in a secular society all these are comparatively relative. It is a morally gray world in which we live. There is no authority outside our own consensus to which we are accountable. “Doubt in such a world is more acceptable than dogma; searching than discovery; feelings than thoughts; departing than arriving.”

Thomas Oden states the premise of much evangelical missiology is that we live in a post-Christian or non-Christian world. This does not mean that the world exists without God or “the work of the Holy Spirit is totally eclipsed or dysfunctional within the estranged world.” It can mean only “the world that has defiantly decided to proceed as if the Incarnate Lord had not come in our midst, and has no abiding relevance for the world. It can mean only that a world is falsely posited by unbelievers which lacks the justifying grace of the Son and from which the sanctifying fruits of the Spirit are spurned and rejected. It can only point to a world which lives in despair.” Oden says it is time
evangelicals learn to kick the post out of a fatigued ultra-modernity camouflaging as postmodernity.

Although these authors, especially the work of Carrell and Oden, are helpful in understanding the impact of modernity upon a 21st century worldview, a more balanced approach to the topic at hand is contained in the writings of such authors as William Easum, Loren Mead, Lyle Schaller and Leonard Sweet.15 The issue is one of relevancy. I want to contend that the problem is not making the Word of God relevant to postmodern contemporary society. God’s Word is eternally relevant. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. Our problem and challenge has always been making our culture, our lives, relevant to God’s Word. This is one of the unchanging propositions we must keep in mind as we minister to contemporary society. God’s truth is transcendent. The Bible’s revelation is for every culture, language and generation. Culture is the container but God’s truth is absolute. We can pour the truth from its 1st century container into our century but it is the container that is relative, not God’s truth. The church is still the body of Christ. It is people who belong to Jesus Christ, assemble together, have spiritual gifts, and carry out God’s Word and work in every successive generation. The church has a responsibility to understand and know the culture and times in which we live. We have done well on revelation (the bible) but poorly on relevance (the culture). This culture and every culture needs to learn how it can become relevant to God’s Word. We must strike a balance between risk and reason. We must take the risk of anticipating the future by understanding the times, but we must also avoid the unfounded assumption that tomorrow will be like today.
Among all futurists, the writings of Easum, Mead, Schaller and Sweet are beneficial because they strike this balance with an overarching concern for relevance and always in the context of hope, although Sweet at times displays an overconfidence in the opportunities available to the church in postmodern culture. This concern for relevance is seen in Sweet’s latest book, *Aqua Church*.

I am a virtual fundamentalist about content. I am a virtual libertarian about containers. Only in Jesus the Christ did container and content become one. Jesus’ comments about new wine in old wineskins reminds us that we cannot make an idolatry of any form or container. We must not elevate an ecclesial form to the level of authority or primacy that belongs only to the content. Too many churches will only pour the living water into something they like or would pick up. A lot of churches are languishing because they won’t trust the gospel to fit and fill containers with handles they don’t like.

The above authors disagree with many evangelicals who maintain we are dealing with a post-Christian society. They believe, instead, the challenge facing the church in this hour is ministry to a pre-Christian society. Certainly many agree postmodern culture can be described as anti-Christian. We will see in the future in this country increased hostility toward Christianity in general and organized religion in particular. For one to even identify himself or herself as a Christian causes postmodern people to lean away from the individual with a suspicious and guilt-by-association response. “Christendom is dead, and with it the institutionalized distinctions of leadership. The pre-Christian era has begun, and with it a whole new understanding of leadership.”

In using this terminology the authors maintain we are in many ways back in the first century, dealing with a culture which is ignorant of the basic tenets of Christianity and, more important, “in the midst of a culture that still has yet to hear about who we are and what we believe.” Sweet states the church’s two largest mission constituencies are
the unchurched and the overchurched. “Only two countries have more nonbelievers than the US: India and China. The US is the third-largest mission field in the world.”

George Barna’s research confirms the analysis of America being overchurched. Each month Christian churches come into contact with 100 million adults and more than 30 million children. Unfortunately, Barna observes, “most of them are involved in a religious ritual and have little connection with Christ.” If by “Christian” one means that someone has had a life-transforming encounter with the gospel that has consequences for both earth and eternity, then Barna’s studies reveal one-half the church lacks both convictions and compulsion at best or is non-Christian at worst, with only 10-15% of the nation’s 320,000 churches rated “highly effective.” Sweet says postmodern Christianity is “chock-full of religious men and women with little faith in Christ - Christian agnostics, if you will.”

Loren Mead vividly describes the predicament facing the church in this postmodern culture.

In spite of the fact that we are surrounded by great church buildings, theologies, and traditions, I believe the life has disappeared from many of the structures that have been so important and supportive for us. As the people of Israel were separated from the traditions that had given them life, so more and more of us in the churches are finding ourselves separated from that which gave life to previous generations.

Mead continues by reflecting on the people of Israel and how they were uprooted and separated from Jerusalem by the exile. They had to face that hard reality every morning when they saw Babylon, not Jerusalem, outside their windows. He says the problem with the church today is,

We still wake up in the morning thinking we are in Jerusalem. Until a generation or so ago that seemed to be true. But now we wake up finding ourselves
in Babylon. We can fool ourselves in ways they could not. We look out the window and see all the furniture of our supposed Jerusalem; churches on the corners, some of them bursting at the seams. And yet more and more of us have begun to realize that the world we inhabit is not Jerusalem. We live in Babylon. And I see no signs that Babylon is going to become Jerusalem.²²

Bill Easum, in his excellent book Sacred Cows Make Gourmet Burgers, helps us understand and interpret the challenges and opportunities confronting the 21st century church.²³ He illustrates in the below chart a move from a Newtonian to a Quantum worldview.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEWTONIAN WORLD</th>
<th>QUANTUM WORLD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linear thought</td>
<td>Interconnectedness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boundaries</td>
<td>Varying boundaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid chaos</td>
<td>Embrace chaos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hierarchy</td>
<td>Networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper money</td>
<td>Electronic funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service sector</td>
<td>Service inherent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machines</td>
<td>Organic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automobile</td>
<td>Microprocessors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parts</td>
<td>Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evolution</td>
<td>Discontinuity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cause and effect</td>
<td>Unrealized potentials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Static process</td>
<td>Dynamic process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective reality</td>
<td>No objective reality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Things</td>
<td>Organic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entropy</td>
<td>Dissipation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is it?</td>
<td>How does it work?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A new worldview is emerging, according to Easum, which is driven by two new disciplines - quantum physics and microprocessors. Quantum physics seeks to understand the system as well as the relationships that exist between the parts. The whole is understood to be more than the sum of the parts because of the relationships between parts. Quantitative measures which were so important to the Newtonian world now give way to qualitative sensitivities of a new world. That objects exist is less important than
that they are in relationship. This means what a person is, is less important than what a person is becoming. Deductive, step-by-step reasoning cannot prove the existence of God, but the inductive reasoning of quantum physics can notice a consistent, unexplainable “benevolence” to the course of human experience. Space itself is alive with relationships, each one affecting the other no matter how far removed. Nothing happens in quantum physics without something encountering something else.

While in the Newtonian world inertia was the norm of the universe until some object struck another object, in the quantum world change is the norm of the universe. No constant exists. A radical unpredictability underlies all experience and a profound irrationality lies at the heart of experience. Living and changing networks replace non-thinking machines. Linear thinking is replaced with interactive thought. Unlike the Newtonian world, the quantum world does not have predetermined destinations as a result of our actions. Instead of cause and effect, it offers potentials depending on how someone or something comes into relationship with the event. Every situation has many potentials.

This all means objective reality is not as verifiable and predictable as was thought in the Newtonian world. Everything is connected. Nothing stands alone. So quantum physics presents us with an orderly world of paradoxes where either side of the paradox could be correct, depending on its relationship to another. There is no “either/or,” only potentials that materialize based on the interaction of relationships. There is no need to decide between polarities. Instead we focus on the relationship between the two. Thus, absolutes and uniformity do not exist. Truth and order are not immutable; they are based
on the interaction of individuals. This new world offers a serious challenge to those of us who believe in a never-changing God behind everything that exists.

Newtonian thermodynamics say that sooner or later all systems or forces disintegrate. Quantum physics asserts the opposite. Things in the environment that disturb a system’s equilibrium help create new forms of order. Chaos or disorder becomes the source of new order. Chaos is desirable because it is the start of something new. Organizations, over time, do not have to wind down and go out of existence if they embrace the chaos and learn a new way to achieve old things.

The Industrial Age focused on the parts, but the Quantum Age focuses on the whole. The Industrial Age was concerned with linear thinking and cause and effect, but the Quantum Age is concerned with the interconnectedness of all the parts and their relationships. The Industrial Age saw clearly defined compartments of life all neatly functioning, but the Quantum age realizes that there are no natural boundaries, only those that we create when we walk into a new time or space, because everything in the universe is connected to everything else. In the Industrial Age chaos was to be avoided, but in the Quantum Age chaos leads to a new order. Hierarchy was the backbone of the Industrial Age, but networks are more important in the Quantum Age. In the industrial society paper money was basic, but the Quantum Age uses a tangible means of exchange known as the electronic funds transfer system. In the Industrial Age service was a category of business among many others, but in the Quantum Age service is an essential ingredient of every business.

What is all this saying? The postmodern culture of the 21st century has much more relationship to the Quantum World than the Newtonian, Industrial World.
Postmodernity is chaotic, where change is life’s natural, normative state. Postmodern culture is a change-or-be-changed world. It is a wildly disconcerting and confusing time. Leonard Sweet says we know less than we thought we did. More than that, we know too many things that are not true. Some contend that postmoderns believe in nothing. Just the opposite is true. Postmoderns believe in everything, but there is a crisis of epistemology. Old centers of power are being undermined, and old systems of authority are being challenged. Information inequality is a painful byproduct of the Information Age. The growing gap between the “knows” and the “know-nots” is more crucial than the wealth gap. The bridge between the “connected” and the “unconnected/disconnected” is getting bigger all the time. Sweet says postmoderns have a real hunger for the experiential, the participatory, the interactive and the communal. He concludes churches which provide for these hungers will experience great results in the form of transformed lives as they minister to individuals in the 21st century.24

The brevity of this paper will not allow me to continue with examples and evidence that we face many new challenges along with tremendous opportunities in the future. We need to keep in mind the effect of quantum theory on the scientific world has been shattering. Will the effects of a postmodern, pre-Christian worldview be devastating to the church? This need not be the case. The writer of Hebrews is still correct in his contention that the people of faith in the Old Testament sought a city with durable foundations, which they never identified with the earthly Jerusalem. The issue for Israel and the early church is the same one we struggle with today. We are in the world yet not of the world. We are in society and yet we are to be a contrast society. Notice I did not say we are called to be a counter culture, but a contrast society. We confront 21st century
worldviews, not with antagonism and cynicism, but with lives transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit. Just like Israel, we are commanded to love God more than the culture around us. The church brings God’s reality to a world that thinks the reality it knows is all there is. We live in and out of a different reality. In this contrast society, the charismata exist. Empowerment takes place. People are endued, clothed with power, and given gifts of God’s grace - tongues, prophecy, miracles, discernment, wisdom, knowledge, healing, gifts of service and helps and so forth. These all operate in God’s contrast society. And finally, there is love. Divine agape is shed abroad in our hearts. The postmodern world looks on, and sees the world not as it is but as God intended it to be. The kingdom of God is lived out in this contrast society, people see God’s reality, and they are drawn to Christ and into the church.

Listen to the words of one outside our tradition:

There was a time when Pentecostals warned themselves and anyone else who would listen not to become entangled and dependent on the ‘things of this world.’ Pentecostals were suspicious of the passing fads of stylish clothing, the latest hair-do, glitzy new consumer products. They were also - as it turns out rightly - suspicious that the powerful new mass media could be a seductive lure, tricking people into the empty values of the consumer market culture. Perhaps it is time for a rebirth of that ethic of simplicity, that suspicion of ‘the things of this world,’ for which the early Pentecostals were so famous.25

Perhaps it is time. Perhaps.

2. Ibid, 4.


   - **Autonomous Individualism** – the detached individual as a self-sufficient, sovereign self.
   - **Narcissistic Hedonism** – self-interest and particularly the pursuit of pleasuring the self. What makes me feel good is good for me.
   - **Reductive Naturalism** – the view that seeks to reduce all forms of knowing to laboratory experimentation, empirical observation, and quantitative analysis. A growing dependence on technology and ingenuity.
   - **Absolute Moral Relativism** – views all moral values as arbitrarily contingent upon the changing social determinants of human cultures. It is dogmatically absolute in its moral relativism because it asserts relativism uncritically and unconditionally. This has led to the forgetfulness of final judgment beyond history, the reduction of all moral claims to a common denominator of mediocrity, and the pretense that all value judgments are equally legitimate and all ideas are born equal and equally tolerable.

9. Bruce A Little (see note #5).

11. Wells, No Place for Truth, 60.


16. This overconfidence is especially evident in Sweet’s book, FaithQuakes. He states on p. 16 in Soul Tsunami, “What I failed to appreciate in FaithQuakes was just how seismically dangerous postmodern culture could be.”

17. Sweet, Aqua Church, 29.


22. Mead, 83.


Resources on the Web

www.easum.com - web site for William Easum. Click on articles in “Net Results.” Also check out resources and the “Find of the Month.”

www.leonardsweet.com - web site for Leonard Sweet. Find here his latest writings and additional links to information on the postmodern church.

theooze.com - click on “Postmodern Churches” for a list by state of cutting edge churches and ministries across the U.S.

www.leadnet.org - site for the Leadership Network. Chat with other pastors who are doing innovative ministries. Check out the “Young Leaders” site as well as what large megachurch pastors are doing. A great resource is the Lay Mobilization Starter Kit. Many links to information on leadership.

barna.org - web site for George Barna research and resources.

webminister.com - site with free articles on church growth, leadership, church Internet web sites, and book recommendations.

4churchgrowth.com - site dedicated to church growth, both spiritually and numerically.

www.leaderu.com - web site for Leadership University with hundreds of free articles on leadership, current issues, sociology and religion, psychology and religion, etc.

www.gospelcom.net - Christian news, resources. Click on “Cross Search” for links to over 13,000 sites. Note “pastoral resources” and “ministry resources.” One of the most popular and frequently used sites on the net.

www.Christianity.net - popular site for resources, news, information, as well as links to other Christian ministries and organizations.

www.goshen.net - another often used site with links for researching a large number of topics related to Christianity.

www.servehim.com - many links to resources.

www.ldolphin.org - hundreds of links and directories for missions, organizations, resources and research.

www.iclnet.org - site for Internet Christian Library. Directories for resources, missions, Christian literature, early church documents, as well as articles and dialogue with faculty
from Christian colleges, universities and seminaries. Note especially the “Reading Room.”

stephenministries.org - site for Stephen Ministries, congregational renewal and research organization. An excellent site on lay and care ministries.

www.YouthPastor.com - free site covering resources, games, youth pastor white pages, and ministry listings.

www.amazon.com - browse the world’s largest bookstore with over one million titles, many with reviews and at a substantial savings.

www.tfwm.com - offers a variety of information about new technologies available to churches for worship. Note the archives for free downloading of past articles.

www.ccbministries.com - a great site for deep discounts to churches on software and hardware. Negotiated discounts with such companies as Corel, Adobe, Norton, Microsoft, Dell, HP and Compac. They have over 20,000 business titles and over 500 Bible titles.

www.fcccanton.org/WebSite - great site that walks local churches through setting up and maintaining web sites.

**Edge Churches** - from Leonard Sweet’s book, *Soul Tsunami*. These are pastors and congregations doing innovative 21st century ministry.

www.newhope-hawaii.org - New Hope Christian Fellowship, Honolulu, HA. In slightly over 2 years this church has grown to 8,000 in worship through use of team ministries. Order the book by pastor Wayne Cordeiro, *Doing Church as a Team*.

www.pastors.com - Saddleback Valley Community Church, Mission Viejo, CA, pastor Rick Warren.

www.joyonline.org - Community Church of Joy, Glendale, AZ, pastor Walt Kallestad.

www.christchurchum.org - Christ Church, Ft. Lauderdale, FL, pastor Dick Wills.


www.northwoodchurch.org - NorthWood, a Church for the Communities, Keller, TX, pastor Bob Roberts.

www.fpcoco.org - First Presbyterian Church, Orlando, FL, pastor Howard Edington.
www.celebration.church@celebration.sl.us - Community Presbyterian Church, Celebration, FL, pastor Patrick Wrisley.

www.dawsonmemorial.org - Dawson Memorial Baptist Church, Birmingham, AL, pastor Gary Fenton.

www.hillvue.com - Hillvue Heights Church, Bowling Green, KY, pastor Steve Ayers.

www.harambee.org - Harambee Center, Pasadena, CA, pastors Rudy Carrasco and Derek Perkins.

www.marshillchurch.org - MarsHill Fellowship, Seattle, WA, pastor Mark Driscoll. Order their video *Postmodern Pilgrims*.

www.baymarin.org - Bay Marin Community Church, San Rafael, CA, pastor Sam Williams.