

**Spiritual Growth in the Context of  
Christian Community**

by

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On a personal note: during the period of writing this dissertation I have been going through a dark night of the soul experience in my own spiritual walk, for the past four or five years, in terms of health problems, changing and often uncertain work and ministry situations, and a prolonged period of unemployment. In that, I have found it important to hang on to some spiritual disciplines, in particular, having a spiritual director walking alongside me, and being regular in prayer. I feel I am emerging from that darkness, aware that the Lord has been with me, close alongside in that time, and working his healing power. As I emerge from that darkness, I feel almost a rebirth experience, leaving the old self further behind, and rising to a new life in Christ, and a greater knowledge and trust and hope in him. The writing of this dissertation has been an integral part of experiencing that new life, healing and wholeness.

## A Prayer attributed to Benedict

Gracious and Holy Father give us  
wisdom to perceive you,  
diligence to seek you,  
patience to wait for you,  
eyes to behold you,  
a heart to meditate on you,  
and a life to proclaim you;  
through the power  
of the Spirit of Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

## Summary of Dissertation

This dissertation examines the spiritual growth of individuals: what growth is; why growth is necessary; and how it can be nurtured. An individual's spiritual growth needs to happen in relationship with others, so that Christ's commandments to love God and neighbour are fulfilled. Thus the dynamics, goals and effects of community life are examined. Spiritual growth and community raises implications for the Christian Church. These are examined, in particular the need for transformed leadership and models of ministry, transforming communities that will enable the church to fulfil its mission to the world.

## Key Terms

Christian community;

Emotional Intelligence;

faith;

faith-development;

prayer;

self;

servant leadership;

spiritual growth;

Spiritual Intelligence;

spirituality

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## Chapter 1 Introduction

### *1.1 Introduction*

This chapter addresses an introduction to the topic of the dissertation (section 1.2) including a discussion of the problem to be addressed (section 1.2.1); a description of the approach adopted (section 1.3), which includes: the research methodology adopted (section 1.3.1); and a discussion of the main works surveyed (section 1.3.2).

### *1.2 Introduction to the topic of the dissertation*

This dissertation examines the dynamics of spiritual growth (of individuals and groups) within the context of Christian community, and sets out to examine some of the consequences and issues that arise for the Christian Church today.

Mark 12:29-31 records:

Jesus said, "The first commandment is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these (NRSV)<sup>1</sup>."

The society we live in has lost much of the awareness of living a 'shared

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<sup>1</sup> *New Revised Standard Version Bible*. Copyright 1989. Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

life' so our largely urban society is marked by the loss of a sense of community and a heightened drive to 'individualism'. Leech (1997:144-145) writing from his ministry context in the East End of London says, "The 'peril of England', according to Disraeli's novel *Coningsby*, lay in its decline of its character as a community. Today much of the language used suggests nostalgia and a lost world. Indeed, much talk about community seems to be based on an idealised model of village life." At the same time as there is a loss of a sense of 'shared life', there is also a sense of loss of personal identity. Moore ([1992] 1994:xi) opens his work with the statement, "The great malady of the twentieth century, implicated in all of our troubles and affecting us individually and socially is 'loss of soul'." The neglect of soul manifests through symptoms, such as obsessional behaviour; violence; loss of meaning or addictions (alcohol, drugs etc.). The temptation is to isolate these symptoms instead of addressing the root problem, which is that we have lost any wisdom about 'soul', and have lost even any interest in it.

Manning ([1986] 1996:27-41) discusses the Church using two analogies from the American West. The *Settler Church* is structured around rules, commandments and statutes, with Jesus as the sheriff, policing and enforcing the rules. The *Pioneer<sup>2</sup> Church* is depicted as a wagon train with Jesus as the scout, leading into new territory. In essence, the issue of

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<sup>2</sup> In this dissertation the person on the journey of faith is often referred to as a *pilgrim*, and could equally have been referred to as a *pioneer*, or, indeed to a disciple. Pilgrim was selected for two reasons, (a) it signifies the journey embarked on, and (b) it has no gender connotation.

spiritual growth picks up the excitement of a journey, with Jesus as guide, and when community is discussed, this is still against the dynamic of movement and growth, not settled in rules, commandments and place. The goal of this dissertation is to suggest that the Church examine itself and seek ways of regaining the dynamic of growth and community, and not to remain settled with the dynamic of growth and community obscured behind yet more rules and commandments.

### *1.2.1 The problem to be addressed*

This dissertation addresses issues concerning:

- (a) Spiritual growth is examined as a solution to the phenomenon of loss of 'soul' in contemporary society. As a pilgrim grows in relationship with God the Father, the creator; the redeemer God the Son and with empowered by God the Holy Spirit, the experience of new life and growth is discussed.
- (b) As an extension of individual growth, the need to regain a sense of 'shared life' in community is examined. Community is examined as an outworking of the individual's spiritual growth and a recapturing of timeless values as embodied in scripture and in the writings of the early Church;
- (c) The ministry implications of the issues of spiritual growth and growth in community are explored. An attempt is made to provide practical, meaningful ways forward for the Christian

## Church, its structures and its leadership.

Some may say that the Church is dying along with a decaying society. There is an old adage that says, 'The more things change, the more they stay the same.' In many respects this is true of the issues and challenges facing the Church. Civilisation and society are always changing, yet in many ways the challenge to Christianity is to meet those challenges as opportunities. As Sheen (1999:27) writes, "Western civilisation with its Christian roots is not perishing; it is beginning to come into its own." This quote embodies the optimistic line that is adopted in this dissertation. The troubles and woes of the Church and of human society could be addressed by people being rooted and grounded in Christ, with a commitment to personal growth and wholeness; to living shared lives (in community) with others; to experience the changing, transforming effect of being — and being seen to be — living Christian community on the society we live in. Those outside the early church used to comment, "See how those Christians love one another." That is not said of the Church today, but could be again, if the church lived out the values and principles of community life.

Peck opens each of the three *Road Less Travelled* books<sup>3</sup> with a different, developing statement about life. Peck ([1978] 1988:15) writes, "Life is difficult." Peck (1993:13) then builds on that, saying, "Life is complex." Peck

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<sup>3</sup> Peck's *Road Less Travelled* books were written over a twenty year time span.

(1997:26) goes further as he writes, "There are no easy answers. ... Although I believe the route to finding answers is primarily through better thinking, even this is not as simple as it may seem."

This trio of *Road Less Travelled* books by Peck all focus on aspects and dimensions of spiritual growth. Peck (1997:26) asserts that the route to finding answers is primarily through better thinking. But the route to finding answers to life problems is much broader and higher than thought alone; it must encompass the whole person, body, mind and spirit. As Merton ([1958] 1987:27-28) stresses, "Spiritual life is not mental life. It is not thought alone. Nor is it, of course, a life of sensation, a life of feeling — 'feeling' and experiencing the things of the spirit, and the things of God. ... Nor does the spiritual life exclude thought and feeling. It needs both." Spiritual life is not just a life concentrated at the 'high point' of the soul, a life that is so special and holy that it excludes the mind, imagination and body. If it were almost nobody could lead it. If the spiritual life were so special and holy it would not be a life at all. If a person is to live, that life must be totally alive, body, soul, mind, heart, and spirit, making a total person. Living is not merely thinking, as thought is formed and guided by the experience context of each individual, so that each person is continually growing as new things are experienced, and old things are experienced in a new way. Life is always new and is constantly renewed.

Merton (cited in Shannon 1981:34-35) makes the point that in and through baptism every Christian has access to God and is called to know him<sup>4</sup> in contemplation. However, he says, in many cases (most cases) these seeds of contemplation and sanctity just lie dormant and bear no fruit. Shannon (1981:35) continues, "[Merton's book] *Seeds of Contemplation*<sup>5</sup> is an invitation to those thousands of Christians to bring these seeds to fruition and harvest."

In the epistle to the Romans Paul writes:

It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification. Therefore, since we are justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to his grace in which we stand (Romans 4:24b-5:2 NRSV).

The epistle to the Romans (chapters 5 to 8) then deals with the *process* of sanctification, which follows on as a 'therefore' — a consequence — after the *event* of being justified with God through the death and resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Sheldrake addresses some of the problems and issues of our 'postmodern'

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<sup>4</sup> In this dissertation an attempt has been made to use inclusive language as far as possible. In referring to God by the male pronoun common usage is adopted, and no offence is intended. The male pronoun should be seen as including both male and female faces of God.

<sup>5</sup> Note that this work *Seeds of Contemplation* is not the same as Merton ([1962] 1972), which is an extensive, later revision of the previous work and was originally published as *New Seeds of Contemplation*.

society, looking at how the Church and individuals need to look at the issues of spiritual growth (1998:5-7). Sheldrake perceives that there is a doctrinal vacuum inside and outside Christian communities, because outside the Church there is a widespread suspicion of religious dogma, and inside the Church there is no insistence that a coherent belief system is a necessity for a fruitful spiritual journey. Christian doctrines appear as irrelevant, eccentric opinions. So spirituality is seen as an intensely private, individualistic thing. There is a sense of loss, with consequent grief, for what appeared to be a spirit of optimism and certainty that prevailed at the beginning of the twentieth century, providing a stable social, religious, intellectual and moral order. The past century has brought so much progress and change, that all previous assumptions have been eroded. Postmodern theory can easily fall into the very traps it criticizes. It focuses us on the context of everything we say or do and so is highly suspicious of any way of expressing 'eternal truths' The flaw at the heart of some elements of postmodernism, paradoxically, is its often intense determination that it is impossible to explain the way the world is. This inhibits attempts to redevelop a responsible (ethical) self.

Sheldrake (1998:10-11) goes on to ask whether, from a Christian view, postmodern culture offers an opportunity for spirituality. Sheldrake argues that some theologians do not see any potential for postmodern theory to deepen faith, as they feel that postmodern theory has no spiritual depth. Christianity makes eternal, universal claims, which conflicts with the postmodern approach to the possibility of 'truth'. The conflict is over

differing viewpoints about knowledge.

It is a possibility that postmodernism offers a much-needed corrective to the tendency to believe that certain words about God are capable of saying in definitive ways *what is actually the case*. The reality is that the best that can be done is to express, haltingly, the inexpressible nature of God. The reality is that the depths of 'God' ultimately elude our grasp. Thus, the roots of contemporary spirituality are to be found in an emphasis on human experience, which, in all its variety and pain, becomes the immediate context of God's self-disclosure.

### ***1.3 The approach adopted***

#### ***1.3.1 Research Methodology***

The research methodology applied to this dissertation is based on a literature survey of theological works, psychological works, and works from the realm of business, particularly focussed on leadership and organisational issues.

Thus, this dissertation is primarily a theological study with an investigation of the practical implications of the theological discussion for the life of the Church.

#### ***1.3.2 Main Works Surveyed***

As the works listed below are described and discussed, an attempt has been made to always do this against the background of scripture to provide

the measuring stick for their evaluation. The main works surveyed include (grouped by topic addressed):

A. Issues facing the Christian Church:

- i. Griffin (1988) collects and edits postmodern visions which address some of the challenges that our, so-called, 'postmodern' society poses for spirituality. Griffin differentiates between postmodernism that is based on a direct experience of reality as divine and a form of modernism extended to its limits (which some may call postmodernism), but is just a form of relativistic nihilism. The starting point for Griffin's collection of essays is the presumption of the reality of postmodernism, and forms theories and analyses how spirituality fits into that postmodern reality.
  - Reason for selection: A recent work and so relevant commentary on issues for the church today, particularly in the area of spirituality.
  
- ii. Sheldrake (1998) also addresses the phenomenon of postmodernism, but does so by a call to bridge the historic division between love and knowledge in human relationship with God. Sheldrake (1998:xi) writes, "This will demonstrate that the doctrine of the Trinity ... is absolutely central to the coherence and cogency of any properly Christian Spirituality."
  - Reason for selection: A recent work which focuses on the need

to relate theology — in particular, Trinitarian theology — to spirituality.

iii. Leech (1997) issues a challenging call to the Christian Church to awake to, be aware of, and address appropriately, issues facing her. The title picks up the old adage, "Red skies at night, fisherman's delight; red skies in the morning, fisherman's warning"<sup>6</sup> and Leech contends that the Church is failing to heed the red skies of warning — if they are even recognised. Leech identifies trends, dangers and opportunities facing the Church and ministry into the twenty-first century.

- Reason for selection: A recent work and speaks into issues facing the church and ministry today.

iv. Sheen (1999) presents Christ-centred wisdom for the third millennium. Sheen's essays make telling points — often using a reductio ad absurdum technique — to provide strong, compelling, frequently humorous, practical wisdom and encouragement for why and how to grow closer to Christ. The collection of talks is timeless as the focus is on Christ and the kingdom of heaven.

- Reason for selection: A recent work and relevant because of

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<sup>6</sup> See also Matthew 16:3

its Christ-centred approach.

- v. Mead (1991) examines models of the Christian Church through history. Mead looks at the apostolic age; then the 'Christendom' age (from the time of the Roman Emperor Constantine to recent times; then an emerging model for the Church, which could be seen developing from the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. Mead (1996) then questions whether the Church, which may have grown comfortable in the Christendom age, has the will or initiative to change and emerge as he suggests it ought. Mead evaluates five challenges which the Church must address to truly be transformed, and asks whether the Church has the will or the time to adjust and change, but sees some areas that are of encouragement (Mead 1996:vi, x-xi).
- Reason for selection: A work that is profoundly challenging for the church, looking to what the church could and should become.
- vi. Stott (1984) critically appraises social and moral issues facing the Church under four headings: (a) Issues facing Christians in a non-Christian world; (b) Global issues; (c) Social issues; and (d) Sexual issues.
- Reason for selection: While some of Stott's work is somewhat dated as some of the issues he discusses are no longer major issues and there are other issues that have become more

prominent since Stott wrote, what is exciting about Stott's work is that his focus is outside the Church and not an introverted look at church structures, although the closing chapter takes a critical look at issues of leadership in the Church.

B. Issues of the 'self', self-identity and the quest for meaning:

- i. Fowler (1981) is a seminal work on faith development theory, extended and applied in practical ministry situations in his later works (1987, 1991) and discussed and analysed by Dykstra & Parks (1986) and by Gillespie (1988).
  - Reason for selection: Fowler's theory is used in this dissertation as a measuring rod for evaluation of spiritual growth.
- ii. Zohar & Marshall (2000) give a critical discussion of the latest thinking on spiritual intelligence (SQ). This work supplements the related works on emotional intelligence (EQ) by Goleman (1996) and Cooper & Sawaf (1997). Zohar and Marshall present an exciting extension of emotional intelligence by looking at how a situation may be adapted through the way it is dealt with — going beyond EQ which provides a tool to measure how a person responds to a situation. However, they fail to realise the full potential of their research as they fail to see its relevance in a context of faith and faith development — and actually deny that it has any relevance to

faith issues.

- Reason for selection: A recent work representing leading-edge thinking and research on processes around intelligence issues.

### C. Issues in Spirituality and Spiritual Growth

Christian Spirituality runs through many of the works consulted. Of particular relevance are:

- i. Countryman (1999) is part of a series of books being published by Darton, Longman and Todd on *Traditions of Christian Spirituality*. Countryman focuses this work on the Anglican Spiritual Tradition, and, appropriately, entitles the work *The Poetic Imagination* as he looks at some of the riches of an Anglican tradition, picking up themes from some of the great English Christian poetry that has added wealth and depth to the Anglican spiritual tradition.
  - Reason for selection: A current work reflecting on a deep spiritual tradition.
- ii. Collins (1999) focuses on spirituality in the new century and millennium and reveals the direction he adopts in his sub-title, *Christian Living in a Secular Age*. Collins examines aspects of what he sees as a secular age, in particular comparing and contrasting New Age spirituality and teaching with knowing the love of a creator God in and through mystical prayer and contemplation.

- Reason for selection: Also a recent work and reflecting on what it means to be a Christian in an alien, secular world which has a different agenda to Christian spirituality.
- iii. Jaoudi (1998) reflects on mysticism in the Christian East and West, and also draws on Hindu, Buddhist and Sufi sources.
- Reason for selection: Mysticism is not a purely Christian phenomenon, and Jaoudi's use of resources from other religions serves to enhance the discussion on Christian mysticism.
- iv. Main (1989) is a book about Christian meditation. Main founded a centre for Christian meditation in London, and provided resources to assist those he taught in their deepening pilgrimage and practice of meditation.
- Reason for selection: This book, a collection of meditations, showing how to find God in stillness through meditation and prayerful consideration.
- v. Torkington (1987 and 1995) are two of a trilogy on the inner meaning of prayer. These books trace a fictional dialogue with a hermit on the island of Calvay in the Hebrides, and, in turn, explore the inner meaning of prayer in the Franciscan and Carmelite traditions.

- Reason for selection: The dialogue technique used is of interest as one seeks how to grow further on the Christian pilgrimage, and the replies address real issues of how growth can be attained, and problems overcome, in prayer life.
- vi. Pennington (1999) discusses how to live a life centred on God through the use of the contemplative technique of centring prayer and meditative prayer using the Benedictine technique of *Lectio Divina*.
- Reason for selection: A recent work on an ancient, yet pertinent and relevant issue for today's church.
- vii. Ryder (1999) looks at various models of discipleship found in the New Testament — from the earliest writings of Paul, then in the gospels and epistles and finally in the book of Revelation. Ryder's analysis is helpful for those wanting to follow Jesus, as it shows that there are diverse ways in walking the road with him, and there is no single way that is correct for everybody.
- Reason for selection: Again, a recent work, reflecting sound biblical scholarship and lessons learnt and applied from scripture.
- viii. Cunningham (1999) presents a spiritual biographical look at Thomas Merton and his spiritual growth and development as a monk in a Trappist monastery. Merton has had a continuing influence on many

through his prolific writing. Many of Merton's books, in particular his journals, give a gripping picture of a person grappling with real life issues, and the reader is led to deal with these too, and grow as a result. Merton taught that wherever one may be, one must be an authentic person, and part of being authentic is a willingness to grow and not stagnate as the gospel is lived out in daily life.

- Reason for selection: Cunningham, in a recent work on this twentieth century monk, encapsulates much of Merton's profound, yet often disjointed, thinking.

#### D. Issues of Community and Growth in Community

Many books pick up issues of community and relationship in community in addition to those specified below.

- i. Bonhoeffer (1954) wrote on the eve of the Second World War out of his experience as head of a seminary near Stettin, Germany. The lived experience in the seminary was of a communal life in which Jesus Christ's call to discipleship was taken seriously. This book records some of Bonhoeffer's insights from that time of living a shared life with staff and students.
  - Reason for selection: Bonhoeffer provides insightful reflection on lived, shared experience and the book is refreshingly down to earth, simple and inspiring without being simplistic.

- ii. Banks (1986) gives a scholarly, scriptural analysis of what Paul understood community to mean, and the implications of being in Christian community in terms of the relationships implicit in living a life centred on God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
  - Reason for selection: Banks captures the essence of Paul's teaching on Christian community. The book is relevant as Paul is presented as a case study in spiritual growth (section 2.7.1 below) and community is a major theme of this dissertation (particularly chapter 4).
- iii. Peck ([1987] 1990) believes that, to prevent civilisation from destroying itself, there is an urgent need to build and rebuild community, as a step to spiritual survival. Peck's work describes, from practical experience, the meaning of, and the steps in, community formation and applies the principles learnt as a challenge to church and to government. Peck believes in the principles and practices he teaches, and in an effort to facilitate them founded the *Foundation for Community Encouragement*. Peck's book is the fruit of some of the research done in the foundation.
  - Reason for selection: Peck presents, not only a vision of what community can and should mean, but also describes, systematically, the steps through which community is attained.
- iv. Gish (1979) writes about the dynamics and implications of living in Christian community. Gish (1979:16-17) says the heart of concern in

trying to live in intentional community is at the root of what it means to be 'the Church', but that concern goes even deeper, examining what it really means to be a Christian, with lives lived out in full and deep commitment to Jesus and his kingdom and in commitment to our sisters and brothers. *Christian community must be the fruit of this commitment, not the focus of it.*

- Reason for selection: A practical perspective on living in intentional community.
- v. Arbuckle (1991, 1993) looks at aspects of grief in society, particularly within the Church, as people deal with (or avoid) change in church life. Arbuckle gives guidelines for the management of change within the Church, and how out of grief must emerge growth as people learn to deal with grief. Arbuckle looks at issues of leadership and change and the management of change, through allowing dissenting voices to be heard and transformed into making the end that is attained more valuable. Arbuckle examines, in the three sections of his 1991 book,
- a. an examination of the process of corporate grief.
  - b. discovering a spirituality in scripture to underpin that grief process.
  - c. practical guidelines for the fostering of Gospel communities.
- Reason for selection: This is interesting material, coming, as it

does, from a Roman Catholic perspective following on from the trauma that Catholicism often experienced in the aftermath of the Second Vatican Council, and the constructive ways needed to deal with the trauma and grief experience of many as they had to deal with sweeping change.

vi. Main (1990) describes his vision of life, lived as a community of love, in which wholeness is experienced — in one's self, with others in that community, and with the wider society in which one lives. Main addresses a number of vexing issues and dilemmas that challenge this community of love.

- Reason for selection: Main's respect for individual freedom combined with his wisdom and vision for God's truth makes this book an illumination of the way ahead for the individual in his or her deepening relationship with, and experience of, God.

vii. Vanier (1991) writes from his experience as founder of the l'Arche community for mentally handicapped persons. Vanier affirms that community should be a place of joy and celebration, becoming a place of liberation.

- Reason for selection: Vanier's work gives a number of starting points for reflection on the nature and meaning of community.

### E. Issues of Leadership and Organisation:

A number of books written for the business community are germane to this dissertation's topic. While aware that the church has, too often, fallen into a trap of following the world order, rather than challenging the world order, the works listed below, while addressing a business audience, seem to be based on sound biblical principles (even if those are not acknowledged).<sup>7</sup> Rinehart (1998:86) warns that pragmatism becomes a guiding light when the assumption is made that spiritual leadership and business leadership are alike.

- i. Two books by Wheatley ([1996] 1999, 1999) (one co-authored with Kellner-Rogers) address chaos and order, organisation and leadership issues.
  - Reason for selection: Community, and the need for community, issues challenges to the organisational integrity of the church and these works challenge to find organisation out of chaos.
- ii. Another book written for the business community is Covey<sup>8</sup> (1992), which presents many challenges to the way people live their lives

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<sup>7</sup> On a personal note - while researching for this dissertation I was employed as a management consultant, and I was struck by much of what I was reading in topics of spirituality spoke into the business situation and much of what I was reading in topics of business and leadership spoke into spirituality and community issues.

<sup>8</sup> Covey's seven habits are outlined in the Glossary (Appendix A below).

and relate to one another expressing in simple terms, without being simplistic, the ways Christians ought to be living their lives in seeking to follow Christ more closely. Covey's work has had a major impact on the way business has adopted and addressed his seven habits, and Covey's work has frequently been adopted as good sense in the management of church administration.

- Reason for selection: This book is not overtly Christian, being targeted at a business audience. However Covey is a Mormon and the habits, or principles, he describes can be, and have been, related to a pilgrim's spiritual journey. These principles encapsulate the life and teaching of Jesus. For instance, Jesus had a vision (habit 1); Jesus began his ministry knowing where, and how, it would end (habit 2); Jesus listened with empathy (habit 5).
- iii. *Issues of Servant Leadership.* This term was popularised by Greenleaf (1977) and developed further by him in a Christian context (1996). Greenleaf turns the normal value systems on their head as he describes the concept that to be a leader a person must be a servant first. Leadership happens as a consequence as people observe the servanthood of the leader. Leadership is not an authority or status position, but is earned through service. Greenleaf (1998) develops this concept further, and Rinehart (1998) and Germond (2000) apply it in a Christian context.

- Reason for selection: The leadership style of Jesus was as a servant, humbling himself to serve and lead and transform. The challenge to the church, and in particular, to its leadership, is the need to follow the lead of Jesus, setting aside authoritarian models of leadership.
- iv. Markham (1999) examines the process of working through resistance to change through relationship building. This also relates to issues of community and growth in community, spanning the gap between organisational change in the world of business and in the Christian Church. Markham's background is religious, she was involved in a Dominican community.
- Reason for selection: As leadership is changed and transformed in the church, change is inevitable, and Markham provides valuable insight to the process of managing change.

#### **1.4 Conclusion**

Having, in this chapter, defined the problem to be investigated, the approach adopted, and an outline of some of the main works consulted, the dissertation continues by looking, in chapter 2, at understanding spiritual growth, examining *what* spiritual growth is, and *why* it is needed, and looking at some illustrative cases of spiritual growth in action.

Then the dissertation looks, in chapter 3, at *how* spiritual growth is attained, examining some key aids and some obstacles to spiritual growth.

Then the dissertation examines, in chapter 4, why community is important and *how* it may be attained. Then chapter 5, analyses some implications of spiritual growth and community issues for ministry and for the Church and conclusions are drawn, in chapter 6, including suggestions for further research.

## Chapter 2 Understanding Spiritual Growth

### 2.1 Introduction

The *what* of spiritual growth is difficult to separate from its *why*, so the *what* and *why* are examined together, starting with the goals and purpose behind spiritual growth (section 2.2); looking at issues of the *self* in relation to spiritual growth (section 2.3); examining various faith development issues (section 2.4); examining the relationship between spiritual growth and intelligence types (section 2.5); and examining the relationship between spiritual growth and prayer (section 2.6); and concluding with some case histories illustrating spiritual growth dynamics at work: the apostle Paul (section 2.7.1); Thomas Merton (1915 - 1968), the Trappist monk who embraced silence yet spoke deeply to his day (section 2.7.2); and John of the Cross (1542 - 1591) and Teresa of Avila (1515 - 1582) whose lives were closely inter-linked as they founded the order of discalced Carmelites (OCD), and who both wrote important, profound works about the spiritual life (section 2.7.3).

### 2.2 The Goal of Spiritual Growth

Willard, in Foster & Smith ([1990] 1993:19) comments that: "Perhaps the greatest malady in the Church today is converts to Christ who are not disciples of Christ — a clear contradiction in terms. This malady affects everything in Church life and in large measure accounts for the low level of spiritual nutrients in our local congregations." In a similar vein, Nolan ([1976] 1986:3) says: "Many millions throughout the ages have venerated

the name of Jesus, but few have understood him, and fewer still have tried to put into practice what he wanted to see done." Both Willard and Nolan emphasise the need for Christian pilgrims to put into practice what Jesus 'wanted done' by trying to follow in his footsteps as his disciple<sup>9</sup>. Francis of Assisi exemplified this in his embracing of poverty as a way of following in Christ's footsteps, and regarded his receiving the *stigmata*, the marks of Christ's wounds, as a supreme gift from God and an affirmation of his attempt to follow Christ in every way. Torkington (1987:75-76) writing about Francis says that Francis embraced poverty because Jesus, in whose footprints he wanted to tread, lived a life of poverty. Francis was constantly in awe of how Jesus freely chose to empty himself of the immense heavenly wealth that was his — embracing poverty, embracing human nature. Francis was also in awe that Jesus allowed himself to be stripped naked, and nailed to a wooden cross and die in utter helplessness to demonstrate the depth of His love for all, and how Jesus continues to pour out that love in the gifts of bread and wine so that God's grace is still poured out whenever we choose to receive it.

Merton ([1962] 1972:50) writes, "The more I become identified with God, the more will I be identified with all the others who are identified with Him. His love will live in all of us. His Spirit will be our One Life, the life of

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<sup>9</sup> This does not imply taking the teachings of Jesus and making a strict legal system from them, but to walk as Jesus walked and learn to think as Jesus thought.

all of us, and the Life of God. And we shall love God with the same Love with which He loves us. This love is God Himself." The main goal of spiritual growth and spiritual development is, through God's grace, to see the world with His mind, to love the world with his love. It is not humanly possible to understand the mystery of God's saving power, but through His grace, it becomes possible to see the world with His mind. To achieve this a path of following closely in Jesus' footsteps is essential, putting on, daily, the new clothing He gives<sup>10</sup>, and letting the same mind be in the disciple that was in Christ Jesus<sup>11</sup>. The result of being committed to living and walking as Jesus did is that one deepens one's relation with God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and starts to see others with the eyes and mind of Christ and love others as Christ loved, being willing to pour out oneself for others. This commitment to growth in following Christ Jesus means that there must be perseverance, even when the going is difficult, knowing, that, even when it feels that God is absent, God is indeed present, supporting one through the difficult times.

A person needs to be living in relation with their creator, their self and with other persons. Reality is seen in the mirror of others, and so it is an instinctual act to form communities. Communities, however, don't just happen automatically, community must be created and have dynamic life

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<sup>10</sup> Compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, patience and above all, love - see Colossians 3:12-17.

<sup>11</sup> See Philipians 2:4-11.

which allows it to transform in response to stimuli for change<sup>12</sup>. Another goal of spiritual is to grow in the relationship with others in community.

### 2.3 *Dying to self and rising to a new self in Christ*

Baptism, which renounces the old ways that led to death by embracing new life in Christ, is the act in which the baptised — as they live out their baptism — proclaim and live out faith in eternal life. Through that new birth the baptised become children of the promise, God's promise of eternal life in Christ. This is a covenant relationship, and the key of that covenant is that God is faithful and will do all He has promised, as all that the baptised do and say flows from and into baptism.<sup>13</sup>

Merton ([1962] 1972:50) describes the 'living out' of our baptism, so that as we move to our deepest centre: "*One of the paradoxes of the mystical life is this: that a man cannot enter into the deepest centre of himself and pass through that centre into God, unless he is able to pass entirely out of himself and empty himself and give himself to other people in the purity of selfless love.*" Death to self is effected by the Holy Spirit working, and is not something that the *self* is able to do. What is needed is conquer the self to allow the Holy Spirit to work this work in transforming the self. Self-conquest is really surrender of the self, yet before this surrender can

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<sup>12</sup> See Jolley (1996:19). Community is discussed further in chapter 4 below.

<sup>13</sup> Refer to Brueggemann (1989:85).

happen the pilgrim must become sure of, and own, himself / herself, for until something is owned it cannot be given up<sup>14</sup>. If we accept that the creator God has made us in his own image, then it is fitting that we celebrate and rejoice in this great work that God has done. We are wonderfully made and so our task is to live out who we are in Him. We should feel free to express ourselves fully as this self-acceptance is a gentle work of love to be embraced joyfully<sup>15</sup>.

Torkington (1987:54) describes an experience of dying to self in his own experience, "I knew that as long as the power of God worked in my weakness I would be able to do anything, just as without it I would be able to do nothing." Paul describes how he was given a 'thorn in the flesh' and three times he appealed to the Lord to do something about it and received the reply, "My grace is made sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:7-8 NRSV).

Muto writes of John of the Cross giving a concrete indication of how we are to accomplish, live out, the imitation of Christ. Muto (1991:35) says, "Paradoxically, by entering into nothingness, we enter into nothing-butness — for nothing but God will satisfy our restless hearts". This paradox of entering into *nothingness* expresses the dying to self, and as a result, rising

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<sup>14</sup> See Merton ([1958] 1987:29)

<sup>15</sup> See Jolley (1996:18)

to, experiencing the new life we receive through Christ and his gracious death and resurrection for us. This entry into *nothingness* is not a nihilistic emptying, but rather an emptying of whatever may be an impediment to a full, deep relationship with God, so the entry into *nothingness* is actually a prerequisite to being filled with God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Sheldrake (1998:xii-xiii) examines the relationship between spirituality and theology and shows that it is impossible to experience self separate from an understanding of who and what God is, "While it may be said that *the* fundamental human experience is of the self or of one's own being, it may also be said that at the heart of this experience lies the Absolute." Christians name this God, who loves and reveals Himself, as the Trinity: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. The naming of God as Trinity, more than any statement of God's nature, encapsulates the depth of riches of the Christian spiritual tradition.

## 2.4 *Stages of faith*

Not Copy

It is not the purpose of this dissertation to test the following theories in any depth, but merely to apply them critically to the issues of spiritual growth. It will be shown that some of the theories differ in language and description, but, essentially, say very similar things. The work of James Fowler takes central place as the main faith-development theory.

### 2.4.1 *Faith-Development Theory according to James Fowler*

In 1981 Fowler published his theory on the stages of faith. This bridges

the gap between the psychological and moral developmental theories of Erik Erikson, Jean Piaget and Lawrence Kohlberg and the experience of development and growth in faith in a religious context, which, says Fowler (1981:xii-xiii), is not only growth in faith in a Christian context, but applies to each and every religion.

Fowler (1981:16) attempts to define faith, and sees faith as an active word — always involving a relationship with another: "The English language handicaps us when we try to speak of faith. It gives us no verb form of the word. ... The Greek verb *pistuo* and the Latin verb *credo* permitted writers and speakers to say, 'I trust, I commit myself, I rest my heart upon, I pledge allegiance.' All these paraphrases show us that faith is a *verb*; it is an active mode of being and committing, a way of moving into and giving shape to our experiences of life. They also show that faith is always *relational*; there is always *another* in faith. 'I trust *in* and am loyal *to* ...'"

Fowler describes six stages of faith development, which fall naturally into two groups of three stages. The difference between the groupings is that in the first group (stages one to three) faith is something received from an external source by the person in these stages, whereas in the second group (stages four to six) faith is something internal to — owned and identified with — the individual. The intention of identifying faith developmental stages is not to enable anybody to be elitist as they look down at others in a lower stage, or constricting, categorising as they show the steps on the journey each person faces. If anything, as any one person grows into

deeper stages, the love and compassion felt is heightened for others also making the journey. The stages, being developmental stages (not just growth stages) tend to be carried with one as one grows and develops. Thus, if a child in stage one picks up a sense that God is awesome, majestic, and remote and someone to fear, that perception may remain throughout the stages the person grows through, and so may hinder a deeper relationship with God.

Fowler (1981:119-211) describes the stages in detail. In summary, the stages are:

*Stage 1 – Intuitive-Projective Faith*<sup>16</sup>. This stage is typically found in children between ages 2 and 6 or 7. At this time the child is learning language and new tools of representing symbols, and key words that the child uses are "what?" and "why?". The child does not understand yet the relationship between cause and effect, and has a rather one-dimensional view of experiences and perceptions – lacking deductive and inductive logic. The child accepts the faith of his / her parents, uncritically. The child may pick up a 'vibe' about God, for example, if a squawking child is rebuked during a worship service, the child may 'learn' that God may come and punish the child, and so the child learns to be afraid of God. Hughes (1985:34-36) gives a graphic parable of how a false image of God

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<sup>16</sup> See Fowler (1981:122-134).

may be acquired at this stage, and affects all further development.

*Stage 2 - Mythic-Literal Faith*<sup>17</sup>. This stage is typically seen in late childhood and before puberty (but may also be seen later). In this stage the persons adopt, for themselves, the stories, beliefs and symbols of the community. Beliefs, moral rules and moral attitudes are taken with literal meaning and interpretation. The faith in this stage comprises a linear construction of meaning, taking the 'myths' literally and unable to reflect on their meaning.

*Stage 3 - Synthetic-Conventional faith*<sup>18</sup>. The onset and duration of puberty is associated with this stage. This life experience marks a revolution in physical and emotional life. The adolescent has a need for mirrors to observe physical growth and development and changes in the angularity or softness of face and changes in the curves or hardening of body. Other mirrors are also needed to see, through the eyes and ears of a few trusted others, the image of *personality* emerging and to have a sounding board for so much that is new and needing expression at this age — feelings, insights, anxieties, relationships and commitments. At this stage the phenomenon of the peer-group and peer pressure exerts a powerful influence. The person's faith, in this stage, is wider than the

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<sup>17</sup> See Fowler (1981:135-150).

<sup>18</sup> See Fowler (1981:151-173).

family, and a number of spheres demand attention. Many people never advance beyond this stage and hold onto the conventions and traditions of 'their' faith and often retreat into a huddle of like-mindedness with others in the same stage when threatened or challenged in any way. Fowler (1981:173) describes the dangers or deficiencies of this stage, "The expectations and evaluations of others can be so compellingly internalised (and sacralized) that later autonomy of judgement and action can be jeopardised". Those who never advance beyond this stage are often marked by a need to control others and external things around them. Those who remain in this stage blindly resist change, saying, 'Thus it was in the beginning, is now, and shall be forever!' Fowler's name for this stage is appropriate as it is both artificial (synthetic) and steeped in tradition (conventional).

*Stage 4 - Individuative-Reflective faith*<sup>19</sup>. It is unlikely that a person would be able to break out of the bondage of the previous stage and internalise their faith until their late teenage years, and in many cases, only much later in life, if it ever happens at all. This transition, especially when happening much later, is often experienced as a conversion. Indeed it *is* a conversion, as faith is experienced as an internal, living relationship. Fowler (1981:179) describes the two essential features of the emergence of Stage 4 as, "the critical distancing from one's previous

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<sup>19</sup> See Fowler (1981:174-183).

assumptive value system and the emergence of an executive ego." As these happen a new identity is formed, which is expressed and actualised by the shaping of a new lifestyle and a selection of new personal and group affiliations. The relevance for this dissertation is that once faith has been internalised — living within — only then is there likely to be a commitment to self-growth, to spiritual development. This takes the form — as John of the Cross expresses it — of seeking deeper *union with God*. Those newly arrived in this stage are often an embarrassment to their old friends who cannot understand what has happened to them, and also to everyone they meet, as there is a tendency to wear their new-found faith on a sleeve. The fifth and sixth stages represent a deepening of this internalised faith — a rounding off of the rough edges — but it is difficult to say when and where transitions to these stages happen.

Stage 5 - *Conjunctive faith*<sup>20</sup>. This is a stage of 'faith-knowing' and is a complex stage. Fowler (1981:184-185) reflects on some of the complexity of this stage using analogies, "The emergence of Stage 5 is something like: 'Realizing that the behaviour of light requires that it be understood both as a wave phenomenon *and* as particles of energy'; ... 'Discovering that one's parent's are remarkable people not just because they are one's parents'." In this stage it is possible to see the paradox inherent in many

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<sup>20</sup> See Fowler (1981:184-198).

things in a 'both/and' way, not just in black and white or in an 'either/or' way (which is typical of stage 4).

Stage 6 - *Universalizing faith*<sup>21</sup>. The transition to this stage becomes a disciplined, activist *incarnation* — a making real and tangible — of the imperatives of absolute love and justice of which Stage 5 has partial apprehensions. The self at Stage 6 engages in spending and being spent for the transformation of reality as experienced and known. The term used for this stage is unfortunate as it reminds one of a cheap universalism, but the stage means much more than that. It is marked by such a secure faith that there is openness to others and to other traditions, without any opportunity of compromising who one is. As the life of Thomas Merton is examined<sup>22</sup>, as an illustrative case study of spiritual growth and faith development, it is seen that towards the end of his life he became increasingly open to what he could learn from other traditions. When Merton was killed accidentally by electrocution<sup>23</sup>, he was attending a multi-faith conference near Bangkok and had just delivered an address *Marxism and Monastic Perspectives*.

How accurate and meaningful is this faith-development theory? Dykstra

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<sup>21</sup> See Fowler (1981:199-210).

<sup>22</sup> See section 2.6.2 below.

<sup>23</sup> Mott (1986:564-569) describes Merton's death. Merton plugged an electric fan into an electrical outlet, and received a shock from the defective wiring that killed him.

says in Dykstra and Parks (1986:46) that it is possible to recognise, in Fowler's descriptions, something that we know about ourselves and about others, as Fowler describes realities with which we are already familiar. Dykstra's assessment agrees with practical ministry experience. The challenge for ministry is not to assign a value to any stage but to challenge the person in his / her own individual pilgrimage of spiritual growth, and to rejoice when such growth happens.

#### *2.4.2 Other faith-development theories*

Peck ([1987] 1990:188-200) defines four stages in human spiritual life. Peck warns that he is only talking about these stages in general terms as each individual is unique and does not always fit neatly into any psychological or spiritual pigeonhole. The stages Peck defines, and the names he gives them are, in summary:

*Stage 1 - Chaotic, antisocial.* Most young children and perhaps 1 in 5 adults are in this stage, a stage of undeveloped spirituality.

*Stage 2 - Formal, institutional.* Marked by an attachment to the forms (as opposed to the essence) of religion. The vision held of God is, in this stage, as a transcendent, external being, and little or no awareness of an immanent, in-dwelling God (nor awareness that an immanent God is a possibility).

*Stage 3 - Skeptic, individual.* Generally persons in stage 3 are non-believers, yet are more spiritually developed than those content to

remain in stage 2. They are marked by an individualism that is not anti-social, and, indeed, may be deeply committed to and involved in social causes. Persons in this stage are active truth-seekers.

Stage 4 - *Mystic, communal*. Peck defines the entry to stage 4 as a conversion, and is marked by a desire to know more of the mystery of God (hence the term mystical) and is also marked by a greater awareness of the need for and commitment to community.

These stages match up closely to the first four stages as described by Fowler. (Perhaps stage three in Peck's scheme relates to the time of questioning and seeking which may lie between Fowler's third and fourth stages.) Fowler's stages five and six are excluded, but Peck quotes a comment made at a symposium ([1987] 1990:200) that Peck's fourth stage is actually only a beginning. Perhaps the growth beyond Peck's fourth stage could match to Fowler's stages five and six.

Hughes (1985:10-24) describes three stages of human development, drawing on von Hügel's work *The Mystical Element in Religion*, namely, infancy, adolescence and adulthood. Hughes asserts that religion must take into account and nurture the needs of each stage. Hughes concludes that religion must include three essential elements:

Element 1 - *institutional*. This corresponds to infancy.

Element 2 - *critical*. This corresponding to adolescence.

Element 3 - *mystical*. This corresponds to adulthood.

Hughes says that religion must include all three elements, avoiding the danger of over-emphasis of any element(s). Hughes is talking about the way organized religion (as, for example, the Christian Church) meets the needs of its members, not that any one person must have all three elements in balance. However, as Fowler points out, the growth from one stage to another is not a 'leaving-behind' of the previous stage, but a growth, carrying some of the previous stage(s) with one.

Hughes' first element is represented by Fowler's first and second stages; the second element by Fowler's third stage and the transition to the fourth stage; the third element relates to stages four to six of Fowler.

Torkington (1999:9-11) describes four developmental stages in prayer life:

Stage 1 - *Juvenile Prayer*. The person lacks confidence in God and in herself / himself, being very insecure. Often the prayers in this stage consist of set prayers that are learnt by rote.

Stage 2 - *Adolescent Prayer*. This stage follows if and when a believer, writes Torkington (1999:9), "decides to make their own the faith they have imbibed with their mother's milk." At this stage prayer is more exciting and less predictable, because there is a sense that God is calling

them to search for Him in and through a deepening prayer experience. The adolescent prayer stage is marked by fervour (which the person feels) and spiritual cocksureness (which others observe). Adolescent prayer ends when the first fervour ends, and the person is left with no awareness of the presence of the Lord. What has happened is that God has taken a new initiative to draw the person closer to himself, to lead on into adult prayer. However, says Torkington (1999:10), "It is sad to say, but the vast majority give up serious personal prayer at this point, because their most recent experience had conditioned them to associate faith with feelings, or the tangible awareness of God's Presence with His actual appearance."

→ **Stage 3 - Adult Prayer.** In this stage of prayer the person learns daily to give without receiving, and to love without feeling love in return. Torkington (1999:10) describes this, "If you think about it, you will see that this is the only way a person can become a perfect lover. The love that is always returned in kind must remain for ever suspect until it receives nothing in return and yet goes on giving. This is the beginning of mystical prayer. The great spiritual writers make it quite clear that the beginner who perseveres will be stripped of all feeling and fervor, and will be given the opportunity of becoming a perfect and selfless lover." This painful period in the spiritual journey has been described as a *desert experience* or as a *Cloud of Unknowing* or as John of the Cross terms it, the *Dark Night of the Soul*.

Stage 4 - *Perfect Prayer*. The person who seeks to be a perfect follower of Christ achieves this through (i) a close identification with *the* perfect adult, Jesus, who rose from the dead emerged from the tomb; and (ii) through sharing in the experience of the fullness of love which Jesus experienced on his resurrection and showing and sharing that love with others. Torkington (1999:11) writes that the consequence of knowing God's will and love in this way is that, "you must be prepared to share in His self-sacrificial life, in His death too, and even in His descent into hell! It means literally that! Anyone can follow Christ when He is working miracles." It takes an adult to carry a cross behind Him, with Him, to Calvary.

Relating these stages to Fowler's stages, juvenile prayer may be the way of prayer in stages one to three and often spilling over into stage four. Adolescent prayer, adult prayer and perfect prayer may be closely (but not perfectly) matched to Fowler's stages four, five and six. A mark of reaching Fowler's sixth stage may be an attainment of a life of perfect prayer.

### ***2.5 Spiritual growth and intelligence***

IQ (Intelligence Quotient) is the measure of an individual's intelligence. The higher a person's IQ, the higher is their intelligence. IQ is only one aspect of intelligence.

Goleman (1996) popularised research that showed that Emotional

Intelligence (EQ) is of, at least, equal importance to IQ. EQ measures our awareness of feelings — our own and others' feelings — and enables and empowers us to react and respond appropriately — showing and feeling empathy. Goleman reflected that EQ is a prerequisite for the effective use of IQ. If one cannot feel effectively, one cannot think effectively.

Then, an array of research indicates that there is a third intelligence factor - spiritual intelligence (SQ). Zohar and Marshall (2000:3-4) contend that a full picture of human intelligence can only be complete through addressing spiritual intelligence — which addresses problems of meaning and value and enables actions to be placed in a wider, richer context of meaning, through which one decides what course of action is to be taken by appreciating the intrinsic meaning of each action. Zohar and Marshall (2000:5) expand this by looking at the differences between the different intelligence types, saying that human intelligences is greater than IQ and EQ together. Computers have a high IQ, knowing the rules and following them without mistake. Animals may have a high EQ, having an appreciation of the situation they are in and responding to it appropriately. But computers and animals fail to ask *why* the rules or situation exist, and whether these could be amended or improved upon. Both work within finite boundaries. SQ has a transformative power, allowing the boundaries to be defined and changed. Zohar and Marshall (2000:5) write, "It is in its transformative power that SQ differs mainly from EQ. As Daniel Goleman defines it, my emotional intelligence allows me to judge what situation I am in and then to behave appropriately within it. This is working *within* the

boundaries of the situation, allowing the situation to guide *me*. But my spiritual intelligence allows me to ask if I want to be in this particular situation in the first place. Would I rather change the situation, creating a better one? This is working *with* the boundaries of my situation, allowing me to guide the *situation*."

One of the many ways in which preachers have tried to describe something of the mystery of the Trinity is the illustration that one may think of God in terms of three aspects, thought (God the Father), word (God the Son) and action (God the Holy Spirit). If man (Adam) is made in God's image, then one may think of the different aspects of intelligence in a similar way, reflecting God's Triune nature: thought (IQ - the ability to think about a situation), word (EQ - the ability to react to a situation) and action (SQ - the ability to transform a situation). Just as God is one and God is three, so a man is one individual with three aspects to his intelligence.

The implications of the study by Zohar and Marshall (2000) on spiritual intelligence are highly relevant with regard to spiritual growth, because spiritual growth is inherently transformational, as the person seeks to be transformed day-by-day into the nature of Christ, knowing the mind of God and living out that knowledge. Pennington (1999:34-35) says that a life centred on God is a life filled with love. So it is a very joyful life, because knowing and living under the affirming love of God is to be filled with joy. As we see the essential beauty of all those around us and in God's creation, the love, joy and peace grow. Against the beauty of God's creation the

gashes that sin has created in human lives and on the face of the earth are a source of grief, and as we grieve we are living and seeing with God's eyes, with deep compassion. Logical little human minds can't put it all together, but as one is centred on God a revelation of the pain and suffering and compassion God sees and feels in daily life. It is not humanly possible to understand the mystery of God's saving power, but through God's grace, it becomes possible to see the world with his mind. This is a goal of spiritual growth.

While implications of the work of Zohar and Marshall for faith development and spiritual growth are enormous, they say that SQ is not about being religious (2000:8-13). In saying this Zohar and Marshall have missed the relationship between faith development and spiritual growth. This comes about because of their own faith development experience as an external, imposed structure (see above - Fowler's first three stages), not an internalised living reality (Fowler's stages four to six). So they can, and do, say: "Conventional religion is an externally imposed set of rules and beliefs. It is top-down, inherited from priests and prophets and holy books, or absorbed through the family and tradition. SQ, as described in this book, is an *internal*, innate ability of the human brain and psyche, drawing its deepest resources from the heart of the universe itself" (2000:9).

Zohar (the book is written in her voice) describes her own faith

development history<sup>24</sup>. Zohar's experience of faith is limited to Fowler's first three stages of faith given from the outside, and Zohar does not describe any deeper, internalised experience of faith. Against Zohar's limited experience of faith, not having come to a living, internalised faith at all, it is understandable why Zohar and Marshall fail to see the link between religion and spiritual intelligence.

## 2.6 *Spiritual growth and prayer* ✕

Prayer is a fruit and a grace of the deepening relationship with God and his Son, Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit. It is not in our power to pray, but God leads us to pray, firstly as a deepening of our relationship with him, and then, as a fruit of that relationship, to pray for others.

Chittister (1999:8-9) describes it well, "All life is in the hands of God. Even the desire to pray is the grace to pray. The movement to pray is the movement of God in our souls." The ability to pray depends on what space God is allowed in one's life. Prayer happens because — and only because — of God's attracting power. It is God who is the author of the pilgrim's prayer life. What the pilgrim must do is to plumb the gospels without flagging, thus creating spiritual reservoirs that take the pilgrim past every

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<sup>24</sup> Zohar (2000:21-22) describes how her grandparents practiced meaningless forms of traditional religion to impress the neighbours, and her mother saw these were meaningless rituals, yet presented them to Zohar as a set of rules to be followed without thinking about them. Zohar's mother took pills so as not to have to think too much, and then committed suicide so as not to have to think at all.

barrier in church and state with love, joy, peace and calmness in life.

Chittister (1999:8-9) describes the function of prayer, not as an act to coerce God into doing anything for the person in prayer, but to change the heart and life of the person who prays, as it becomes easier to put on the mind of Christ, allowing God's grace to break in.

### *2.7 Selected illustrations of spiritual growth*

There are many examples of dramatic, life-changing conversion experiences where the growth that the individual embarked on, as a consequence of that experience, had world-changing effects. In particular Augustine of Hippo (354 - 430) and Francis of Assisi (1181? - 1226) might have been considered suitable cases to study. Augustine's book *The Confessions of St. Augustine* may be considered *the ultimate exemplar* for all Christian biography. However the three cases examined below are examples and illustrations that span the Christian era:

- i. In the first century, the Apostle Paul experienced a dramatic conversion on the Damascus road (Acts 9:1-19) and grew into a spiritual giant, writing the bulk of the New Testament.
- ii. Thomas Merton (1915 - 1968) is a modern illustration of the dynamics of spiritual growth, which are very well documented in his own writings and in the many biographical works on him.
- iii. John of the Cross (1542 - 1591) and Teresa of Avila (1515 - 1582)

are examined together as their lives and direction of growth were closely allied. Both wrote extensively.

### *2.7.1 The Apostle Paul*

About a century before Christ the Pharisee movement was started as a noble response to the religious laxity of the time. Despite the conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees, this movement was essentially noble in its intentions. Jesus chastised the Pharisees because they so observed the *letter* of the Jewish law that they lost, or at least neglected, the *spirit* of the law. Paul was proud to be a Pharisee, as seen in this passage:

When Paul noticed that some were Sadducees and others were Pharisees, he called out in the council, 'Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. I am on trial concerning the hope of the resurrection of the dead.' When he said this, a dissension began between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the assembly was divided. (The Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, or angel, or spirit; but the Pharisees acknowledge all three) (NRSV).

As a Pharisee by birth, with his faith received from his father, Paul fits well into Fowler's third stage of spiritual growth, as a picture of extreme Jewish orthodoxy.

As a Pharisee it was perhaps inevitable that Paul would participate in the persecution of the early Christians. The first glimpse of him in scripture is in Acts 7:58-8:1, where he watches, and approves of, the stoning of the first Christian martyr, Stephen. His active persecution of the Christians continued, and he sets out for Damascus with letters of introduction to the synagogues there from the high priests in Jerusalem. On the road he

encounters Jesus and experiences a dramatic conversion. This is described in this passage:

As he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" He asked, "Who are you, Lord?" The reply came, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting<sup>25</sup>. But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do' (Acts 9:3-6 NRSV).

Coggan (1984:49) describes the way this experience not only blinded but also shattered Paul: "A seed needs time to germinate and grow. Paul needed time to think — to pray — to plan. The revelation on the Damascus road had shattered him. Gone were his pride, his confidence in his achievements, and the assurance of his moral rightness. God's love had broken all that down. But how was he to face the future?" Jesus had told him to go to Damascus, where he would be told what to do. So Paul did that, taking one step at a time, and Ananias was sent to him there, in fear and trepidation, as Paul's reputation had preceded him. Ananias went to him, greeted him as a brother, laid hands on him and Paul's sight was restored. He was baptised and regained strength<sup>26</sup>.

Ryder (1999:11) says that, after his Damascus road conversion, Paul placed allegiance to Christ ahead of external norms and customs, as he saw that

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<sup>25</sup> Ryder (1999:5) underlines the emphasis in these words that link the person of Jesus, with His body, the church, and that this was an emphasis of the early church.

<sup>26</sup> Related in Acts 9:10-19.

allegiance to Christ is the decisive factor in the eyes of God. Paul describes this:

If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead (Philippians 3:4b-11 NRSV).

When Paul, the new convert is in Jerusalem, he cannot be stopped from proclaiming his new-found faith, as recorded by Luke:

Barnabas took him, brought him to the apostles, and described for them how on the road he had seen the Lord, who had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had spoken boldly in the name of Jesus. So he went in and out among them in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord. He spoke and argued with the Hellenists; but they were attempting to kill him. When the believers learned of it, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus. Meanwhile the church throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and was built up. Living in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers (Acts 9:27-31 NRSV).

Smyth (1980:4) comments that the author of Acts (presumed to be Luke) either had a dry, deadpan humour or no sense of humour at all in the way he presents Paul's departure to Tarsus, leaving the Churches throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria in peace.

For about ten years after Paul's conversion experience there is little seen or heard of him, and he seemingly was not welcomed into the Church with open arms until Barnabas was sent to investigate what the apostles had heard about the gospel being preached in Antioch (Acts 11:22). Barnabas found Paul, and so Paul emerged from under whatever cloud the Church had kept him, and his true life's work was about to begin (Smyth 1980:9-10).

Paul's conversion experience was, literally, blinding. In some ways he had to relinquish what had gone before in what he held onto in his faith as he moved into a living relationship with Jesus Christ and entered what Fowler defines as stage four in faith development. In the approximately ten years that he was under a cloud of suspicion, he was able to integrate his new-found faith with his previous knowledge acquired by being a devout Pharisee. His growth to spiritual maturity was accelerated — through Fowler's stages five and six — by his previous faith experience, and Paul emerged to become the person — other than Jesus Christ — who has most influenced the Christian Church.

Smyth (1980:4-6) writes of Paul as mystic, but a mystic surrounded in tumult. His conversion experience on the Damascus road was a chaotic situation, as the small army he had with him stood by speechless. Paul's first incident as a Christian was to cause chaos, and he was seldom without chaos wherever he went thereafter. Paul continues to confront even today. Coggan (1984:9-10), writing of Paul as revolutionary, says that he wrote his work, not for those who felt they knew Paul for: "The study of Paul leads us

into a deeper obedience to Christ, and that results in a growing sense of unity with the apostle." Coggan targets his work at those, clergy as much as laity, who have difficulty relating to and understanding Paul, and so avoid looking at what Paul is really saying to them and to the Church.

Paul knew a deep obedience to Christ and a living relationship with him. He tried to live Jesus' words to God the Father in the garden of Gethsemane in Mark 14:36: "Not what I want, but what you want" (NRSV). Paul lives out, in his own life, the teaching of Jesus in Mark 8:34-36: "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life (NRSV)?" Paul chronicles the way he was persecuted for the sake of the gospel in 1 Corinthians 11 - 12. He describes the beatings, shipwreck, stoning he received. In 1 Corinthians 11:30 he says: "If I must boast I will boast of the things that show my weakness (NRSV)" and in 1 Corinthians 12:9-10 Paul: "I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions and calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong (NRSV)."

This attitude that Paul came to, of knowing God's power working through his weakness, is well illustrated in the 'Prayer of an unknown Confederate soldier' in Appleton (1985:119):

I asked for strength that I might achieve;  
 I was made weak that I might learn humbly to obey.  
 I asked for health that I might do greater things;  
 I was give infirmity that I might do better things.  
 I asked for riches that I might be happy;  
 I was given poverty that I might be wise.  
 I asked for power that I might have the praise of men;  
 I was given weakness that I might feel the need of God.  
 I asked for all things that I might enjoy life;  
 I was given life that I might enjoy all things.  
 I got nothing that I had asked for,  
 But everything that I had hoped for.  
 Almost despite myself my unspoken prayers were answered;  
 I am, among all men, most richly blessed.

Paul reflects the servant Christ who lives and works in him, as a person mature and secure in his faith in his saviour, Jesus Christ. Paul epitomises what Fowler's sixth stage defines. His faith is all encompassing. His roots in Pharisaism are not lost; they are included — indeed, made complete — in what he lives out as a Christian, as the apostle to the Gentiles, fulfilling what Jesus had instructed him to be, and to do, after his Damascus road conversion through Ananias. The Lord sends Ananias to Paul in Acts 9:15, saying, "Go, for he is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before Gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel (NRSV)."

### ***2.7.2 Thomas Merton (1915 - 1968)***

Thomas Merton was born in Prades, France on January 31, 1915. His parents, both artists, were his New Zealand-born father, Owen, and his mother, Ruth, from Ohio in the United States. Having moved to Long Island in the USA in 1916, and after the birth of his brother there, his mother

died, in 1921, when Thomas was six years old. Merton ([1962] 1972:16) comments, "Mother's death had made one thing evident: Father now did not have to do anything but paint. He was not tied down to any one place. He could go wherever he needed to go, to find subjects and get ideas, and I was old enough to go with him." Owen, with Thomas in tow, returned to France in 1925, and then moved to England when Thomas was 14 years old, and sent Thomas to Oakham school. While the young Merton was still at Oakham his father took ill and died from a brain tumour (June 20<sup>th</sup>, 1931). Merton's maternal grandfather had made funds available for his education and other immediate needs (Merton [1962] 1972:75-84).

Merton completed his schooling at Oakham, winning a scholarship to Clare College (Cambridge University), and continued there until 1934 and then moved to Columbia University, New York in 1935. Mott ([1984] 1986:95) describes Merton's time at Cambridge as a carefully planned disaster, while his time at Columbia was almost entirely successful. At age twenty-four, Merton graduated with a master's degree in English literature and then taught English and became a book reviewer for the *New York Times* and the *New York Herald Tribune* (Nouwen [1972] 1991:9).

Nouwen ([1972] 1991:8) describes how, while at Columbia, Merton became very interested in scholasticism, notably through the writings of Thomas Aquinas (1225 - 1274) and John Duns Scotus (1265? - 1308), and decided to convert to Catholicism, and after a time of religious instruction by Father Moore, was received into the Roman Catholic Church on November 16<sup>th</sup>,

1938.

Through a series of discussions with his friend, Bob Lax, and reading of the works of John of the Cross, Merton felt that he was being called to be a priest. He tested this vocation by an approach to the Franciscan Order. His application was rejected, and it was made clear to him, in a rather discourteous way, that he had no vocation. Merton ([1962] 1972:297-298) describes this, saying he felt he was excluded from priesthood forever, but he also comments how he prayed before going to hear the bad news that God's will must be done, and that it was done, although he was unable to see it at the time.

Merton continued teaching English from 1939 to 1941, living a semi-monastic existence. During this time he went, for a time of prayer and reflection on retreat with the Trappist (Cistercian Order) monks in Gethsemani, Kentucky. In 1941 he spent a time working with underprivileged blacks in Harlem, New York, while deciding whether to join the Trappists. When he made the decision, he gave away his clothes to the people of Harlem and set off, with only a small bag, aged twenty-six, arriving at the monastery of Our Lady of Gethsemani in Kentucky, USA, on December 10<sup>th</sup>, 1942. There he stayed until his untimely death in 1968.

In 1946<sup>27</sup> this new monk published his autobiography, *The Seven Storey Mountain*, which became a worldwide literary success, speaking tellingly into the spiritual condition of its day, reaching far beyond the monastery walls. Cunningham (1999:1-4) describes Merton's work against the measuring stick of Augustine's *Confessions*, seeing that Merton's work fulfils the stages of the genre of a spiritual autobiography: (1) giving a description of the old, self in its unredeemed, fallen state; (2) then depicting the new, redeemed self; (3) is addressed at a target audience to edify and / or convert; and (4) addresses God, who is perceived to be *the Ideal Reader*.

The success of his autobiography created problems for himself and his superiors. Suddenly people came clamouring to meet this monk, who was meant to be living out a life of enclosed solitude away from the world. His superiors tried, largely in vain, to keep him out of the limelight. His early journals are full of his run-ins with his superiors at the monastery. It is part of his attractiveness that he dwells on his struggles in relating to authority, which often seems blind and arbitrary, and in relating to God in the solitude of the monastery.

Relating Fowler's stages of faith to Merton's life is not always that easy as little is known of his early life in faith, other than that he was baptised as a child and attended some Quaker services with his mother and later with

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<sup>27</sup> Note that the date (1948 not 1946) shown in the bibliography is as printed on the flyleaf of the book.

his grandparents. There was some attempt at religious education during his time at Oakham School. Merton ([1948] 1975:73) records, "Buggy Jerwood, the school chaplain, tried to teach us trigonometry. With me, he failed. Sometimes he would try to teach us something about religion. But in this he also failed. In any case his religious teaching consisted mostly in more or less vague ethical remarks, an obscure mixture of ideals of English gentlemanliness and his favourite notions of personal hygiene." Merton ([1948] 1975:73) continues by describing the chaplain's greatest sermon — on 1 Corinthians 13 — where he interpreted 'charity' to mean good sportsmanship, and being a gentleman, and suggests that through the chapter, the word 'charity' could be substituted by the word 'gentleman'.

Oakham's public school approach gave Merton an insight on philosophers like Plato and perhaps channelled and trained an already inquisitive, inquiring mind in skills that would stand Merton in good stead in later years. The ethos of the public school was likely to have been formative of peer pressure groups forming, so being clearly in stage 3 of Fowler's stages of faith.

When Merton made a commitment of faith and converted to Catholicism, his conversion was initially a cerebral decision, but as he experienced his baptism<sup>28</sup> into the Catholic Church with its exorcism and statement of

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<sup>28</sup> Merton describes this as a conditional baptism ([1948] 1975:223) with the priest pouring water on his head and naming him Thomas, saying, "If thou be not already baptised".

faith, and its following confession, his heart was filled with faith, replacing the legion of demons that had dwelt there before. Thus, he entered Fowler's fourth stage of faith.

Merton, following the publication of *The Seven Storey Mountain*, established himself, says Palmer, in Wakefield (1983:264-265), "as a leading contemplative and prophetic voice of the twentieth-century Church. The range and depth of Merton's search is indicated by the diverse categories into which his writings fall. There are personal journals (e.g. *The Sign of Jonas*); devotional meditations (e.g. *New Seeds of Contemplation*); theological essays (e.g. *The Ascent to Truth*)". There were many more books<sup>29</sup> in many categories. For a monk having taken vows of silence he was a prolific writer, and part of the attractiveness and success of his books is that he reveals himself, warts and all, as he wrestles with issues for himself, and so leads the reader on a journey with him. Perhaps when Merton walked through the gates of Gethsemani he took his greatest problem with him — himself. The mature Merton was a very different person, seeming to be more at rest in himself and with the monastic authorities. He had certainly progressed in terms of Fowler's stages to the sixth and final stage by his death, as evidenced by the place in which he died, attending a multi-faith conference on the monastic life in Bangkok.

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<sup>29</sup> Mott (1984:655-658) lists over 80 books - excluding articles and essays - and there have been more books published, Merton's personal journals, since Mott published his bibliography.

Palmer, in Wakefield (1983:265), says, "No matter how widely Merton reached in his spiritual search, he remained grounded in his personal experience of God in Christ. For Merton the spiritual search is deeply inwards, towards the Christ in each of us who is also our True Self."

### ***2.7.3 John of the Cross (1542-1591) & Teresa of Avila (1515-1582)***

Torkington (1995:53-54) writes, "Saint John of the Cross and Saint Teresa of Avila are a powerful combination — they were both made Doctors of the Church, because they were totally orthodox and safe guides who detailed in two unique but complementary ways, the purification or the purgatory on earth that takes place on the mystic way. They show in different ways how God works through presence and absence, through light and darkness, through death and resurrection, to purge away everything that prevents a person from entering into an ever fuller union with Himself."

Little is known of the early life of John of the Cross, other than that his father's wealthy family disowned him when he married beneath his station, and so poverty was a part of life, particularly when John's father died soon after his birth. John was educated in a catechism school, and went on for four years at the Jesuit College (1559-1563). He entered the Carmelite Order at the monastery of Santa Ana in Medina del Campo, Spain in 1563. He attended classes at the Carmelite College and at the University of Salamanca, studying theology at the university for the academic year 1567-68, but exact details of his study curricula and courses has been lost. John was ordained priest in the spring of 1567. Some months later, in September

1567, John went to his home town, Medina del Campo, and celebrated mass there for the first time. It was on this occasion that he (then aged twenty-five) met Teresa (then aged fifty-two), who told him of her plans to reform the Carmelite Order, and sounded him out about his helping her to bring this reform to the friars of the order<sup>30</sup>.

Thompson (in Wakefield (1983:374-375)) gives an outline of Teresa's life. Teresa, was born in 1515 in Avila, Spain, and entered the Carmelite convent there in c. 1535. She lived under the relaxed, 'mitigated' rule. In 1555 she experienced a second conversion (See Kavanaugh & Rodriguez (1976:20-21)), after which her inner life as a mystic really began. In 1559 she experienced a vision of having her heart pierced by Christ with a spear. After this she motivated for a return, a reform, back to the strict rule. She founded St. Joseph's in Avila in 1562, and wrote a number of works on prayer to assist her sisters. After her meeting with John of the Cross in 1567, she began to found another seventeen discalced<sup>31</sup> houses, working closely with John of the Cross. Her most important work on prayer is *The Interior Castle*<sup>32</sup>.

John founded fifteen discalced houses. He wrote a number of works, the

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<sup>30</sup> See Kavanaugh & Rodriguez (1963:15-26).

<sup>31</sup> The new order she effectively founded was called 'discalced' which means literally 'without shoes' which was part of their discipline of living the reformed rule.

<sup>32</sup> In Rodrigues & Kavanaugh (1980:263-452).

most notable of which (written while prisoner of those hostile to the reform that Teresa and John were establishing) were a number of poems and commentaries on them, *The Spiritual Canticle*, *The Ascent of Mount Carmel* and *The Dark Night of the Soul*.

In relation to Fowler's stages of faith, we can only really pick up the spiritual growth in faith of Teresa and John when they are already in and getting beyond the fourth stage. Their works have spoken so deeply to so many because they show the attractiveness of a mature spiritual faith in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and give detailed analyses of some of the steps to attain such deep faith, such union with God — reflected in Fowler's terminology as attaining stage six.

## **2.8 Conclusion**

This chapter has examined spiritual growth, looking at *what* it is and *why* it is necessary, through defining the goal of spiritual growth; examining the need to die to self and rise to new life in Christ; examining faith-development theories and the need for the pilgrim to have progressed in the spiritual journey before real spiritual growth can happen; examining the relationship between spiritual growth and intelligence, particularly *emotional* (Goleman (1996)) and *spiritual* (Zohar & Marshall (2000)) intelligence; looking at the place of prayer in spiritual growth; and examining some sample cases of spiritual growth.

The dissertation moves, in chapter 3, to examining *how* spiritual growth is achieved, including some aids and obstacles to spiritual growth.

## Chapter 3 How Spiritual Growth is attained

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter examines *how* spiritual growth is attained, by enquiring what the key to spiritual growth is; looking at some of the tools and disciplines of the spiritual life (section 3.3) which include: prayer (section 3.3.1); a rule of life (section 3.3.2); *Lectio Divina* and other forms of scriptural meditation (section 3.3.3); self-examination and the keeping of a personal journal (section 3.3.4); spiritual direction (section 3.3.5); and centring prayer and the use of the rosary (section 3.3.6). The chapter then closes by looking at possible obstacles to spiritual growth (section 3.4).

### 3.2 The key to Spiritual Growth

The key to spiritual growth is commitment and discipline. Spiritual growth is not something attained by human effort, but in, and through, abiding in God - with commitment to take the journey, with perseverance, wherever that journey may lead, and whatever trials might be encountered along the way. In John 15:5 Jesus says: "I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing (NRSV)." Perseverance, even when the journey is difficult, is essential<sup>33</sup>, relying on that promise of Jesus and faith in him and abiding in

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<sup>33</sup> See section 3.3 below.

him, and so seeing the fruit that Jesus brings.

Part of the wisdom of the rule of Benedict is that he expresses a need to live life in balance. There is a creative tension inherent in the three-way vows that Benedictine religious takes of *obedience*, *stability* and *conversatio morum*. The third element defies easy translation from the original Latin, meaning a willingness to live out and allow change in one's life. The tension is between staying in the same place, in terms of *stability*, and needing to move and grow and change in terms of *conversatio morum*, and *obedience* may feed either the staying or the going.

Two dynamics are essential elements accompanying an individual pilgrim's personal spiritual growth. Firstly, spiritual growth needs to happen in the context of community<sup>34</sup>. Secondly, spiritual growth needs to happen in the context of theology, of an understanding of God's immanence and transcendence as growth is measured in and through a deepening of the pilgrim's relationship with God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Spiritual growth is facilitated by the use of appropriate tools or aids, or spiritual disciplines. Some of these disciplines to aid and measure spiritual growth are described below.

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<sup>34</sup> The dynamics and relevance of community are examined in chapter 4 below. The ministry implications for spiritual growth and community are discussed in chapter 5.

### ***3.3 Tools and Disciplines of the Spiritual Life***

Tools to aid spiritual growth should be seen as *just* tools - means to an end. A danger arises when the tool is seen as an end in itself. The end should always be growth in and towards Christ, and the tool should merely aid that growth and union with Christ. If, and when, an aid becomes an end in itself, it draws away from the true end, taking the place of Jesus Christ, and becomes idolatry — a God in itself.

#### ***3.3.1 Prayer***

There are at least as many types and styles of prayer as there are people to pray them, because each person is a unique individual. Not only are there many prayer styles, many find that what worked for them previously does not work now, and this may represent growth, so their needs are different to what they were before. Also, many experience a cycle in their prayer lives. A tool is used, then discarded because it seems no longer useful, then suddenly takes on a new significance and meaning. Parmisano (1986:34-35) expresses this about his use of the rosary describing its use as an enduring aid to prayer. Parmisano tells how he used it frequently but then stopped, feeling he had grown out of it. Then he returned to it, grew back into it and finds it extremely fruitful in his prayer life. Parmisano (1986:35) declares, "I've been able to return with a love that's new, fresh, mature."

Chittister (1999:23-24) reflects that it is impossible to teach another to pray, and considers that life does that. While it is possible to learn prayer

forms, it only happens, when life drags us into it, kicking and screaming sometimes, that the function and purpose of prayer is learnt<sup>35</sup>. Chittister continues that she discovered that the only way to learn to pray was to do it, and continue doing it for a very long time. Chittister says those two simple statements taught her enough about prayer to last a lifetime as they show the importance of regular prayer and that real contemplative prayer only starts where formal, corporate prayer ends. So prayer is not only a technique to be learnt but is an attitude of mind and a quality of soul experienced as a dimension of the daily round of a life of prayer.

There is a progression in prayer, which happens naturally, from *lectio*<sup>36</sup> (the reading of scripture) to *meditatio* (the action of the mind and senses in digesting the meaning of the scriptures for the pilgrim praying at that moment), to *oratio* (the consequent praise and worship as the pilgrim responds to God and his word), to *contemplatio* (the active attitude of mind, but passive activity of mind, as the pilgrim basks in God's light and presence)<sup>37</sup>.

### 3.3.2 A Rule of Life

A rule of life is usually associated with monastic orders, where the founder

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<sup>35</sup> To illustrate this, the motion picture *Shadowlands* chronicles the relationship between Cambridge professor C. S. Lewis (1898 - 1963) and American, Joy Grenfell, who is seriously ill, and C. S. Lewis, returns to his colleagues after a hospital visit and says, "I pray out of my need and it doesn't change God, it changes me."

<sup>36</sup> *Lectio Divina* is discussed below as a tool for spiritual growth.

<sup>37</sup> Refer to Wakefield (1983:261).

defined a rule to define what the monks or nuns must do in their day, in terms of the balance that should be kept between, for example: corporate prayer<sup>38</sup> and the forms that takes (for example praying the various daily offices); private prayer; work; and recreation. It is called a rule as it regulates the lives of those who adopt it and live it. Perhaps the best known of these is the Rule of Benedict<sup>39</sup>, although it is neither the earliest nor the only rule drawn up for monastic orders.

Groups associated with, but outside, monastic communities<sup>40</sup> may adopt a rule of life as a group, which would include times of reflection<sup>41</sup>, and commitments to pray for, and perhaps support financially, the parent order or house.

Where a pilgrim has a vision for personal spiritual growth, it may be beneficial to set out and discipline oneself to keep a personal rule of life, defining times for prayer (whatever forms those may take at the present stage of the journey), work, family time and recreation time. Evaluation of

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<sup>38</sup> Prayer with the body of other believers. This may be a physical coming together or an awareness that others are praying alongside the pilgrim.

<sup>39</sup> See Fry 1981:156-297.

<sup>40</sup> Such group would include Franciscan Tertiaries (lay — that is, not in religious community — members of the Third Order of St. Francis) and, a group in South Africa, Associates of the Order of Holy Cross (a New York-based Anglican Benedictine order, with a South African house in Grahamstown).

<sup>41</sup> Such reflection may be preparatory to a time of confession, or, as in my personal situation, an annual report of my personal observance of my rule of life to the director of the Associates of Holy Cross, of which I am part.

the way this rule is kept could form a basis for reflection in a personal journal and / or discussion with a spiritual director. The pilgrim's spiritual director would normally be consulted in the definition and subsequent revision of the pilgrim's personal rule of life. As the pilgrim experiences personal growth the rule of life may need amendment to change the ratios of time allocated to the various areas of life.

### ***3.3.3 Lectio Divina and other forms of scriptural meditation***

Benedict, in his Rule (Fry 1981:249), said that the enemy of the soul was idleness, so the brothers should have times set aside for manual labour and prayerful reading<sup>42</sup> (*Lectio Divina*) and (Fry 1981:251) says that in Lent a book from the library should be read through. The thrust of *Lectio Divina* is in the prayerful reading of Scripture, but can also be applied to other Christian reading matter.

Salvail (1996:29) says that *Lectio Divina* is a sacred and divine reading, yet more than reading. *Lectio Divina* is not a study of scripture, that is too intellectual an approach. Kirby (in Salvail 1996:9) describes *Lectio Divina* as closer to listening to God than reading about him, closer to tasting that the Lord is good (Psalm 34:8) than coming to an intellectual understanding of the Lord. *Lectio Divina* begins with a hunger and thirst for God and it is a

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<sup>42</sup> Fry (1981:95) records that there were seven prayer periods in the day during which there were readings from the psalms and other short scripture passages and another four hours daily were devoted to *Lectio Divina*.

process of allowing God to speak to the pilgrim's heart in and through passages of scripture. Salvail (1996:13) says that *Lectio Divina* is "an experience of attentive listening to the Lord who speaks to us in our hearts."

There are many other ways of allowing scripture to speak. For example Ignatius of Loyola describes a method of active, imaginative meditation, where the pilgrim reads a passage of scripture — a scene or event, often from one of the gospels — and imagines himself / herself in the scene and watching and participating as the scene unfolds. Then having spent time doing that, the pilgrim reflects on what they felt and learnt from the imagination, and examines, perhaps with the help of a spiritual director, the ways in which the pilgrim reacted to the event. What may be of significance is whether the pilgrim imagined playing a passive or active role in the scene and why this role was adopted.

### ***3.3.4 Self-examination and Journal-keeping***

Puhl (1951:15-23) translates the exercise written by Ignatius of Loyola (1491 - 1556) for the *Examination of Conscience*. While few people would be willing or able to perform this exactly in the way set down in the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius, the principle of self-examination is sound. When combined with keeping a spiritual journal or prayer-diary, self-examination is one of the tools whereby a person can evaluate and observe their own personal growth along the spiritual journey.

A journal is not the same as a diary, which is a systematic listing of events, used on a daily basis, to plan time into the future and to have a record of when and where events happened. A journal may record the same events as a diary, but goes further in being an analytical tool recording and examining the significance of events and relationships for the pilgrim keeping the journal on their spiritual journey.

O'Connor (1982:31-63) explains the relevance for the pilgrim to keep a journal and some guidelines on how best to do this, and what pitfalls to avoid.

The keeping of a prayer journal enables the pilgrim to record feelings about events in daily life or responses to readings of scripture — perhaps in *Lectio Divina* or some other method of responding to scripture — (see Broyles 1988:21-49) or feelings about relationships or any other experiences in the pilgrim's life. A benefit of a prayer journal is found in the spiritual direction relationship where the pilgrim's record of the prayer walk facilitates frank and open discussion, and aids the pilgrim in remembering and identifying ways in which God may have moved or spoken.

### ***3.3.5 Spiritual Direction***

Spiritual Direction, the process whereby a pilgrim is assisted in the spiritual journey by a series of regular discussions with a wiser, more experienced advisor, is a common phenomenon in most monastic environments.

In some traditions spiritual direction lost some of its effectiveness, being reduced to sacramental confession only. Spiritual direction may, at times, also include sacramental confession, and the direction relationship should always have the confidentiality of the confessional. Some other church traditions and denominations have a suspicion of sacramental confession, and because of the association between spiritual direction and sacramental confession, have thrown the baby out with the bath water and rejected both. In an attempt to make spiritual direction more palatable, it has often been renamed, with terms such as 'soul friend' (e.g. Leech (1977)). The spiritual direction relationship with the director is not the same as a counselling relationship, although, at times, the director may assist the pilgrim in walking through problem areas and issues. Part of the skill of the spiritual director should include the ability to recognise where there is a need to refer the pilgrim to a counsellor.

Lonsdale (in Byrne (1990:54)) says that personal spiritual guidance remains a relatively rare occurrence, and perhaps an expensive luxury, some may say. This may be because it is seen to have little value or the pilgrim may be too embarrassed by their perceived ineptitude at prayer to want to expose herself / himself to criticism or derision. The plethora of books available on spiritual development in various forms may indicate that there is a growing interest in finding spiritual guides - even if these guides are in book form rather than another person, face to face.

### ***3.3.6 Centring Prayer and the Rosary***

This technique of knowing and practising the presence of God is an old Christian tradition. Brother Lawrence (in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century) wrote about it in his classic work (Blaiklock 1981). The Eastern Church has a long tradition of the use of the *Jesus Prayer* or merely repeating the name of Jesus slowly and so coming to know his presence within. Pennington (1999) picks up that tradition and resurrects it. The use, simply, of the name of Jesus, facilitates a true consciousness of the presence of God, in Jesus Christ, and to know and live that consciousness as perpetual prayer.

The rosary may be used as an accompanying tool. As the beads are fingered, the tactile sensation assists in focussing the prayer and avoiding distractions, so leading and facilitating a deeper contemplative awareness of the presence of God.

### ***3.4 Obstacles to Spiritual Growth***

Paul in Ephesians 6:10-11 wrote: "Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. Put on the whole armour of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil (NRSV)." While not wanting to over-emphasise the efforts and abilities of the devil, as that may give an easy excuse to back away from spiritual growth, yet there is a reality to what Paul wrote of in Ephesians 6. The pilgrim, committed to personal spiritual growth will encounter obstacles along the way, and it is important to stand firm in the Lord and in the strength of his power. If the pilgrim is committed to spiritual growth, the Lord is their strong support and ally,

and so there is a real need to persevere through any difficulties encountered along the way.

John of the Cross, in his *Dark Night of the Soul* (see Kavanaugh & Rodrigues 1979:295-389) speaks of the journey a soul must make when God seems absent, afar off, and the fruits of the perseverance through that difficult time.

Torkington (1987:74) describes prayer beyond the beginnings as a painful exorcism, which is why many persons who start on the journey run away when the going gets tough. Torkington (1987:74) also says that to persevere through the difficult times is the certain way to sanctity as one learns for oneself to be open to God's action as never before. To persevere through difficult times leads to growth to new depths and heights in the spiritual journey. In terms of Fowler's stages of faith development<sup>43</sup>, many who persevere through the darkness — which often occurs during the fourth stage — will often emerge, grow into the fifth stage after persevering through their difficulties.

It is a reality that as a pilgrim seeks to grow, there will be obstacles to overcome. It is not helpful to chronicle all the difficulties that may be

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<sup>43</sup> Refer to section 2.4.1 above.

encountered<sup>44</sup>. What is important is that the pilgrim perseveres and endures on the journey, for the testing of the pilgrim results in endurance, as James writes:

My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing. If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you. But ask in faith, never doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind; for the doubter, being double-minded and unstable in every way, must not expect to receive anything from the Lord (James 1:2-7 NRSV).

### 3.5 Conclusion

Having looked, in chapters 2 and 3 at some of the dynamics of spiritual growth of an individual Christian pilgrim seeking to draw ever closer to God, this personal growth must be seen against community, for Jesus gave a dual commandment to his disciples:

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' (Matthew 22:37-39 NRSV)."

Merton ([1962] 1972:50) wrote, expressing the essence of Jesus' commandments to the disciples, loving God (in the mystical life) and

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<sup>44</sup> John Bunyan's classic novel (1676) *The Pilgrim's Progress: from this world to that which is to come* illustrates some of the difficulties that the pilgrim encounters on his Christian journey.

emptying oneself and giving oneself to others in selfless love:

*One of the paradoxes of the mystical life is this: a man cannot enter into the deepest center of himself and pass through that center into God, unless he is able to pass entirely out of himself and empty himself and give himself to other people in the purity of selfless love.*

So, chapter 4, which follows, examines the dynamics of community, its formation and relevance.

## Chapter 4 The importance of Community

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter examines community through describing some background issues around community (section 4.2) and looking at what community is (section 4.3) which encompasses examining the biblical foundations of community (section 4.3.1); and what the goals of community are (section 4.3.2). The chapter closes by examining some of the dynamics of how community can be achieved (section 4.4).

### 4.2 Background to 'Community'

The Biblical central vision of world history is the unity of creation — all creation is one. This signifies harmony and security for all of God's creation. In the faith community of Israel the unifying affirmation is that every person in Israel is Abraham's child<sup>45</sup>. Isaiah 51:2 expresses this:

Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you; for he was but one when I called him, but I blessed him and made him many (NRSV).

Paul continues and extends this to the Christian Church, by saying, "If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise (Galatians 3:29 NRSV)." Israel has a vision of all people drawn into community centred on the will of her God (see Isaiah 2:2-4), a vision that

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<sup>45</sup> See Brueggemann ([1976] 1982:15).

was often hidden and lost as the community of Israel looked ever-inward and movements focussed on their purity as God's chosen people. The New Testament Church saw all persons being drawn together into a single community under the lordship and fellowship of Jesus (see Matthew 28:16-20; John 12:32; Acts 2:1-11)<sup>46</sup>. Brueggemann ([1976] 1982:15) emphatically states, "As if those visions were not sweeping enough, the most staggering expression of the vision is that *all persons are children of a single family, members of a single tribe, heirs of a single hope, and bearers of a single destiny, namely, the care and management of all God's creation.*"

Religion is a social phenomenon, so there is a confusion of thought when a person may decide that the Church is a barrier to their relationship with God, because of the implication that others block God's grace, whereas, in reality, God's grace is mediated by others. Jesus taught that the love of God is totally inseparable from the love of neighbour (see Matthew 22:38-39)<sup>47</sup>. When Jesus taught his disciples to pray (Matt 6:9-13) he taught them to say, 'Our Father', not 'My Father'; 'our daily bread', not 'my daily bread'. If God is indeed 'Our Father' then Christians are his family, and Christianity should be seen as an experience of social relationships<sup>48</sup>.

Leech (1997:10) writes that the predicament the Church faces is centered

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<sup>46</sup> The Pharisee movement was one illustration of this happening in the life of Israel.

<sup>47</sup> Refer to Sheen (1999:47).

<sup>48</sup> This is one aspect of Christianity and is not more or less important than other aspects.

on the notion of 'self': "The idea of self is in turmoil and confusion" as the self does not float freely but only exists in relationships, and because many of the structures of relationship have become decayed there is a strong sense of a loss of identity or of alienation from others.

The Celtic Church in the sixth and seventh centuries AD was particularly committed to community. Mitton (1996:36-37) discusses the three main reasons for this commitment to community life. Firstly, the Celtic Church was influenced by the structures of the pre-Christian society, which formed into mutual support communities, primitive *welfare states*. Christianity could readily adopt this model of community. Secondly, the Celtic Church, despite climatic and geographic separation from the deserts of Egypt, was strongly influenced by the *Desert Fathers and Mothers*. Some of their guiding principles and disciplines (such as prayer, fasting, simplicity, evangelism and spiritual warfare) could easily be translated into Celtic Christian community life. Thirdly, the Celtic Church had a profound love for, and faith in, the Trinity. Their vision of the Trinity was Father, Son and Holy Spirit existing in a relationship of perfect community. So the Celtic Church discerned that she needed to live out and express this community life to mirror the community in the God who is Three.

#### 4.3 *What 'Community' is*

The word 'community' has become devalued in meaning. Its two stems 'comm', meaning 'with' or 'together'; and 'unity', meaning 'as one' or 'bonded' }

together<sup>49</sup>. The correct sense of 'community' is living and sharing life together at deep, meaningful levels and not merely living in the same geographic area, with no contact other than when meeting casually in a shop or bus stop. Part of the fault of the devaluation of the meaning of the word 'community' relates to the Christendom Paradigm<sup>50</sup>, where the Church arranged itself into parochial groupings, and as, for so many in today's society, the parish church is peripheral to their lives, there is no bonding in true community in these parochial areas. The devaluation of the word 'community' means that people believe community is happening as long as community members are nice and pleasant to one another, appearing on the surface to be getting along, avoiding conflicts rather than resolving them<sup>51</sup>.

When God's love is allowed to infiltrate the lives of individuals and the community they are part of, and the individuals are centred on the fire of God's love, community is real and attractive to others. It is community that reveals the truth, power and love of being 'other'-centred, God-centred<sup>52</sup>. God's Love is central to community. Jesus instructed his disciples to love one another:

I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that

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<sup>49</sup> These are not dictionary etymologies but my own interpretation.

<sup>50</sup> See below, section 5.1.1.

<sup>51</sup> See Peck ([1987] 1990:86-90), and discussed further below in section 4.3.

<sup>52</sup> See Main (1988:81).

you are my disciples, if you have love for one another (John 13:34-35 NRSV).

Paul, writing to the church in Corinth, writes a rebuke because there are divisions in the community<sup>53</sup>, and then describes why the different parts of the body need one another, are indispensable to one another:

If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable (1 Corinthians 12:17-22 NRSV).

Paul's discussion of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, in relation to building up the body, and the body being one unit, working together, for works of ministry, extends from chapters 12 to 14 of First Corinthians, and Paul interrupts to emphasise:

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not

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<sup>53</sup> 1 Corinthians 1:10-13 reads: "Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same purpose. For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters. What I mean is that each of you says, "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Cephas," or "I belong to Christ." Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? (NRSV)"

have love, I gain nothing. Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends (1 Corinthians 13:1-8a NRSV).

Jesus instructed the disciples to love one another, and Paul warns that without love nothing makes sense, particularly in the context of a community of believers. It is as the world observes a loving community that the world will see something that is lacking in its own life experience and so be drawn to the community and to Christ<sup>54</sup>. In this way, to use biblical imagery, a community is light to the world and is yeast in the dough.

#### 4.3.1 *The Biblical Basis for Community*

The Greek word *κοινωνία* (koinonia) is usually translated as fellowship (as in Acts 2:42, 1 Corinthians 1:9, 1 John 1:5). It may also be translated as: 'shared life' or 'having and holding things in common' or 'community' or 'communion'.

Hume (1988:15-19) writes, "The Greek word 'koinonia' is now part of the common language of theologians around the world. It represents a reality as old as the Church itself - because it expresses its inmost mystery."

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<sup>54</sup> So much of what passes for evangelism — if it happens at all — instead of being outreach, is an 'in-drag', a drawing of others to join 'my church'. If communities show the love of Christ others will flock to seek that love, and the community can experience astonishing increase in similar ways to the early church as described in Acts 2:37-47.

Jesus Christ's prayer and will is that Christians should be one (see John 17:20-22)<sup>55</sup>; thus the dissension and schism that often exist within the Christian Church are at total variance with this. The communion that the baptised have with each other follows from their each being united with the Trinity — in community with God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit<sup>56</sup>. Hume (1988:19) continues, "The one-ness of the Trinity, with its diversity of persons, is of course the perfect communion / *koinonia*."

Benedict addresses his Rule to the *strong* kind of monks — the '*cenobites*'<sup>57</sup> — monks living in community under an abbot and a rule (Fry 1981:169-170).

Paul, in his epistles, uses many metaphorical images for community<sup>58</sup>. The use of illustrative images is a characteristically Jewish way of making a telling point<sup>59</sup>. One of Paul's images for the community that is the Church is

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<sup>55</sup> Paul expands the theme of unity in the body of Christ in Ephesians chapter 4.

<sup>56</sup> A person presenting themselves for baptism is asked whether there is belief and trust in each of Father, Son and Holy Spirit (one by one) and the response to each question is, "I believe and trust in him".

<sup>57</sup> Fry (1981:169 footnote to point 1.2 of the Rule of Benedict) says that the Latin word *cenobitarum*: "is derived from the Greek *koinos bios*, which means, literally: 'common life'."

<sup>58</sup> Banks (1980:52-70) discusses some of these metaphors and the way Paul uses them.

<sup>59</sup> To see this well illustrated there is no need look further than the gospels with Jesus' use of parables — often superficial images — to teach deep spiritual truths.

of a building, with Christ as the cornerstone<sup>60</sup>, and Paul refers to himself as master-builder in charge of operations<sup>61</sup>. Paul also refers to the interdependence of the members of the community and their growth to maturity in community<sup>62</sup>. Paul also describes the community as a special building, the Temple, emphasising the relationship of the community with God through the Holy Spirit, and in consequence, the need for the community to be holy and giving whole-hearted service to God<sup>63</sup>.

Banks (1980:53) describes some of the other metaphors Paul uses for community from agriculture, with the community described as a field, or a grafting<sup>64</sup>, or a planting<sup>65</sup>. Analogies lack the dynamic elements of relationships and so, to reinforce the imagery, and overcome some of the inadequacies of a single metaphor, Paul linked metaphors, so that the deficiencies of one image are supplemented by another image<sup>66</sup>.

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<sup>60</sup> The image of the cornerstone is also to be found in Psalm 118:22, which is quoted by Jesus in the context of the parable of the tenants, in the synoptic gospels (Matthew 21:42, Mark 12:10, Luke 20:17). Jesus' use of this image is not used directly in relation to community (as Paul's images of Christ as the cornerstone are).

<sup>61</sup> See Galatians 2:18; 1 Corinthians 3:10-14; 2 Corinthians 10:8, 12:19, 13:10; Romans 15:20.

<sup>62</sup> See 1 Corinthians 14:5, 12, 26; Romans 14:19; Colossians 2:7; Ephesians 4:16.

<sup>63</sup> See 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 2 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:21-22.

<sup>64</sup> This image ties in with Jesus' teaching in John 15, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. ... Abide in me as I abide in you. ... I am the vine and you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing (NRSV)."

<sup>65</sup> See 1 Corinthians 3:9, Romans 11:17-24, Colossians 2:7, Ephesians 3:17.

<sup>66</sup> For example, in 2 Corinthians 9:10, Colossians 2:7, 19, Ephesians 2:19-22, 3:17 and 4:12-16.

Paul has an affinity for two metaphors above the others he uses. He describes community as a living organism, as a body<sup>67</sup> and as a family. Paul bases his family relationship on the relationship between the head, God the Father, and his children, those who are members of that divine family through the redeeming work of Jesus Christ<sup>68</sup>. We, as Christians, receive adoption, through Christ, as God's children, and so can cry intimately to God, "Abba! Father!"<sup>69</sup>. The basis for the family image runs very strongly through the Old Testament where Israel had a reverence for the God of their patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and saw the nation as one family under God.

Christians are called to grow in the likeness of Christ, and as they do so, to be the living body of Christ, the community of the redeemed. The need for spiritual growth and the need for community are intimately interrelated. Peggy Gish<sup>70</sup> describes the effect of beginning to understand and live community on her spiritual life — the Church became more real and alive to her as she was challenged to examine and deepen her faith and commitment to God. People need to be in relationship with self, the Creator and with

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<sup>67</sup> For example, in 1 Corinthians 12, which is a letter written to a community which needed correction, Paul uses the imagery of the parts of the body each playing its role, and no single part can be excluded without weakening and damaging the whole body. Paul also emphasises, in Ephesians 4, the need for unity in the body.

<sup>68</sup> See 1 Thessalonians 1:10 and Galatians 4:4-5.

<sup>69</sup> Galatians 4:6.

<sup>70</sup> In her introduction to her husband's book Gish (1979:11).

others to be fully human, Needing each other to mirror reality it become instinctive to form communities. But community is not a given and must be created and empowered with dynamic life which allows for change and reformation. So community relationships need to be free to reflect and to challenge. If this is not so, the community will stagnate and die<sup>71</sup>. Freeman<sup>72</sup> writes that Main believed that a community of love was lived out in and through meditation, and to follow the way of meditation requires others to journey alongside. Meditation is solitary and personally challenging, but it transforms isolated components of a crowd into members of a community.

#### *4.3.2 The Goal of Community*

Merton ([1962] 1972:50) wrote, "The more I become identified with God, the more will I be identified with all the others who are identified with Him. His love will live in all of us. His Spirit will be our One Life, the life of all of us, and the Life of God. And we shall love God with the same Love with which He loves us. This love is God Himself."

Vanier (1991:57) quotes Henri Nouwen as saying that community is not an act of human will but an obedient response to the reality of being united. The reality is that true community happens, not because its members hold

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<sup>71</sup> See Jolley (1996:19).

<sup>72</sup> In his introduction to Main (1990:x).

it together, but that it is held together. Community does not suppress individual differences but rather allows these differences to interact synergistically, the whole being more than the sum of its parts. Vanier (1991:60) shows that the more community deepens, the weaker and more sensitive its members become. Although growing trust in one another results in greater strength, this does not disperse the fragility and sensitivity which are at the root of the new grace, through growing dependency on others, being experienced in community. Vanier (1991:60) continues: "Love makes us weak and vulnerable, because it breaks down the barriers and protective armours we have built around ourselves."

Vanier (1991:96) defines the mission of Christian community:

Jesus' whole message is one of life-giving. He came to give life and to give it abundantly. He came to take away all the blockages that prevent the flow of life. The glory of God, wrote Irenaeus in the second century, is people fully alive, fully living. Jesus came to announce good news to the poor, freedom to the oppressed and imprisoned, and sight to the blind. He came to liberate, to open up new doors and avenues; he came to take away guilt, to heal, make whole and to save. And he asks his disciples to continue this mission of life-giving, of fecundity and liberation. *That is the mission of every Christian community* (emphasis mine).

Peck ([1987] 1990:59) says: 'If we are going to use the word (community) meaningfully we must restrict it to a group of individuals who have learned how to communicate honestly with each other, whose relationships go deeper than their masks of composure, and who have developed some significant commitment to "rejoice together, mourn together," and to "delight in each other, make others' condition our own."

Rinehart (1998:74-77) states that the aim and priority of the early, apostolic church was the same as that of Christ — to build a holy community. So the early church kept her focus in the right place — on the head of the body, that is, on Jesus Christ — and did not build a top-heavy hierarchical organisation. Regrettably this priority did not remain for long, and the church became a rigid hierarchy, losing its focus on community and, often, its focus on Christ as the head.

The goal of the church must be to restore Jesus' vision and priority of community. The goal of such community must be for community members to live 'shared lives' at a profound level, not just being nice and sweet to everyone at a superficial level. In such community a place for healing and growth is experienced. As members stumble and fall in their individual spiritual pilgrimage, others will help them to their feet and support them — not judge them. In this community its members will live out 1 John 4:21 - "Those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also (NRSV)."

#### ***4.4 The attainment of Community***

Peck ([1987] 1990:86-106) describes, from his experience in the *Foundation for Community Encouragement*, four states or stages that a group of people typically move through in the establishment of true community. In outline these are:

1. The first state is named *Pseudocommunity*<sup>73</sup>. The first response of a group seeking to form community is to try and fake it, by attempting to be instant community and being nice to one another and avoiding any disagreements. It never succeeds and is a pretence<sup>74</sup>. The basic pretence is the denial of individual differences, so each person acts as if they have the same beliefs and values as everyone else. The proverbial observer from Mars would look at this and say the people look different on the outside, but on the inside they are all the same. A mark of pseudocommunity is that conflict is avoided, rather than, as in true community, being resolved.
  
2. The second state is *Chaos*<sup>75</sup>. It is usually centred on well-intentioned attempts to heal and convert others to a different viewpoint or position. These attempts are usually misguided. In general, people resist change, and chaos erupts as each party attempts to heal and convert every other in the group. This is an important part of community development, as it is much healthier

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<sup>73</sup> Described in Peck ([1987] 1990:86-90).

<sup>74</sup> It is an unfortunate phenomenon in Christian church congregations that, while appearing superficially nice to one another, members will virulently attack another behind his / her back, so that onlookers can say, 'See how those Christians hate one another!' I was involved in a congregation some years ago where we discovered people who had been sitting alongside each other for over 30 years, and greeting one another each week, but did not even know one another's names!

<sup>75</sup> Described in Peck ([1987] 1990:90-94).

to have the differences out in the open rather than denied, as in pseudocommunity<sup>76</sup>.

The struggle is uncreative and unconstructive and uncomfortable. So, it is unpleasant, and needs to be moved through as rapidly as possible. It appears to be degeneration from the comfortableness of pseudocommunity, but as the group moves to the next stage, emptiness, some group members will start to share some of their own brokenness, failures, sins and fears. The pretence of having everything together in their lives is dropped. Sometimes the group will hear this confession, but may hurt the person who has been vulnerable by brushing it aside. When the group accepts one another, warts and all, there is healing of the differences and the next stage is entered.

3. The third state is *Emptiness*<sup>77</sup>. There are two ways out of chaos: organisation and community, and only community is an effective way. In the discomfort of chaos, a participant may try to restore order by 'getting organised' in some way, but this does not lead

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<sup>76</sup> In some church groups chaos erupts when a new pastor takes over a congregation, and often the pastor is evicted as the disruptive influence and so the pseudocommunity can settle back in its comfort zones. Another is that the pseudocommunity insulates itself against the new pastor and the changes that may be thrust upon them, by networking among themselves, and excluding the pastor from the loop.

<sup>77</sup> Described in Peck ([1987] 1990:94-103).

forward and avoids the problems of chaos. Emptiness is the most crucial part of community-formation, as, without emerging through it, true, living community cannot be attained. Emptiness is the stage in which group members empty themselves of barriers to communication.

4. The fourth state is *Community*<sup>78</sup>. When the group is open and empty, in a sense 'dead to self'<sup>79</sup>, community happens.

Peck is writing out of his experience at running experimental community building workshops. The communities formed need not have any existence beyond the life of the workshop, although some do. Jolley, writing from a monastic experience, says that we should seek communities that will love us and challenge us to deeper integration. In and through the way these communities model persistent self-denial, death to self, the pilgrim becoming part of that community is led into mature relationships, fulfilling all that makes us human, in Christ Jesus<sup>80</sup>.

It may be easy for the Christian Church to dismiss Peck's experience as being experimental and false because of the controlled, false environment.

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<sup>78</sup> Described in Peck ([1987] 1990:103-106).

<sup>79</sup> Just as for spiritual growth to happen the individual has to die to self (see section 2.3 above), so to the group and its members must die to self, and die to what separates them, and rise to new life.

<sup>80</sup> See Jolley (1996:20-21).

It may be equally easy to dismiss Jolley's vision as being idealistic, needing a monastic climate to work. Jolley (1996:20) remarks, "I believe that with this powerful model of loving community Jesus is challenging the monastic life, *in fact the whole Church*, to a new vision and a fresh ascetism (emphasis mine)."

Community, and the need for community, is seldom high on the agenda of the Christian Church. Perhaps it needs to be given a higher priority, recapturing some of the life and vision of the early church described in Acts 2:37-47, where the believers congregated together in the Temple daily, but then spent time in community, devoting themselves to fellowship (koinonia) in their homes, sharing meals together<sup>81</sup>.

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

Having examined what community is, the goals of community, and how community can be attained in this chapter, the next chapter examines some implications for ministry arising from chapters 2 and 3 (regarding spiritual growth) and chapter 4 (regarding community).

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<sup>81</sup> This is explored further below in section 5.3.

## Chapter 5    Implications of Spiritual Growth and Community for ministry

### *5.1 Introduction*

After some introductory remarks, this chapter examines some of the implications for ministry resulting from what has been examined above regarding spiritual growth (chapters 2 & 3) and community (chapter 4) through looking at issues for the Christian Church in Society (section 5.2) through examining: historical models of the church (section 5.2.1); an emerging model of what the church could become (section 5.2.2); implications of this emerging model for the formation (an re-formation) of the laity (section 5.2.3); implications for the reformation of the clergy (section 5.2.4); and the process involved in managing these changes.

The chapter then closes by looking at the need for leadership that is itself transformed, and will then effect transformation (section 5.3); and the need for transforming communities (section 5.4).

Leech (1997:164) writes, "The future of Christian community in the twenty-first century depends to a large extent on the quality, authenticity and power of its liturgical life, its worship, its corporate life of penitence,

lament, praise and glory. All Christian life begins in liturgy<sup>82</sup>, in the act of worship. As the Athanasian Creed puts it: 'And the Catholic faith is this: that we worship...'" Liturgical worship is, in essence, a counter-cultural action and a sacred action, stretching our human capacity almost to breaking point as it expresses the finite capacity for the infinite. Leech (1997:164) says, "Over many centuries in the West, our sense of the power, wonder and mystery of the liturgy has been eroded. Yet I believe there can be no deep renewal of Christian life which does not rediscover the central place of liturgy." Leech (1997:165) then affirms that from its very beginnings the Christian community worshipped, and the book of Revelation is an account of the paeans of worship and praise of the community of the redeemed, saved by the slaughtered Lamb depicted in chapter 5. Leech continues, "What we do find there is the theological framework within which the early Christians saw themselves in relation to God and the world. This can be summarised as the solidarity of the body of Christ, the dying and rising in baptism, the feeding on Christ in the Eucharist, and the anticipation of the life of heaven."

Worship must be at the heart of any Christian community's life in Christ, and at the heart of any individual's quest for spiritual growth. Leech's

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<sup>82</sup> Liturgy may be formalised by being set down in books, but may also be informal, yet following a readily identified pattern of penitence, praise, prayer, exposition of scripture and gathering round the Lord's table to participate in the breaking of bread and the pouring out of wine in memory of what Christ did for us.

assertion<sup>83</sup> is challenging that there can be no deep renewal of Christian life where there is no worship. This is a similar challenge to that faced by Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross<sup>84</sup> who called their community back to the basics, the essence of their life together.

This chapter looks at some issues the Church must face to enable community formation to happen and to facilitate the spiritual growth of individuals, looking firstly at the role of the Christian Church in society, then at the need for transforming leadership to empower the people of God and so to transform community life.

## *5.2 Issues for the Christian Church in society*

Some analysts feel we live in an age called 'postmodernism'. Griffin (1988:ix) suggests that because the term *postmodern* has become so widespread, there may be a stronger *anti-modern* sentiment than ever before, and that *modernity* can only be overcome by moving beyond it rather than by some attempt to return to it. And then, almost in the same breath, Griffin (1988:2) says, "Modern spirituality began as a dualistic, supernaturalistic spirituality, and ended as a pseudo- or antispirituality; postmodernity involves a return to a genuine spirituality that incorporates elements from premodern spiritualities (emphasis mine)."

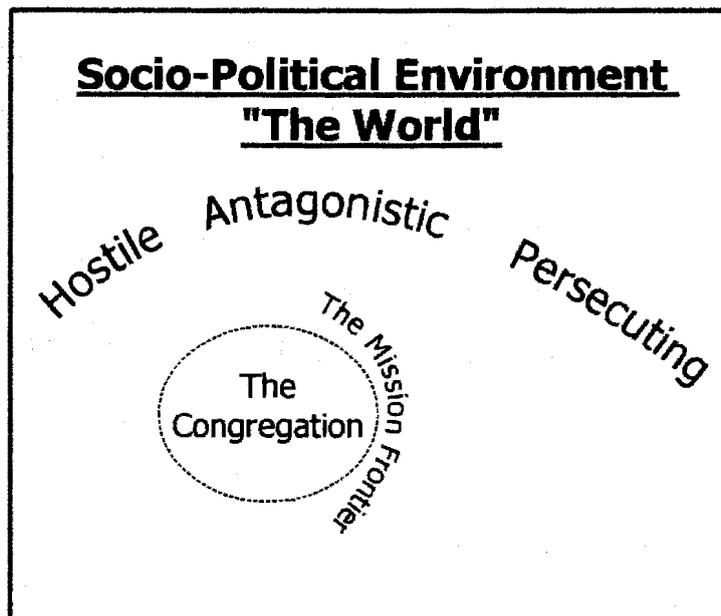
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<sup>83</sup> Quoted above, Leech (1997:164).

<sup>84</sup> See section 2.7.3 above

### 5.2.1 Historical Models of the Church

Mead (1991:8-29) describes the challenge to the Church today by referring to the various ages or paradigms of the Church. The first age of the Church — the 'Apostolic Paradigm' — is shown in diagram form below:<sup>85</sup>



Mead (1991:9-13) describes the way the early Church, this Apostolic paradigm, functioned. There was a clear separation between those 'called out' (*ekklesia*) of the world and those in the world. This 'called-out' community lived out the teachings of Jesus, in his power and values. This community had to be sure of what they believed in, secure in their knowledge of having life eternal and growing in that faith. In terms of the faith-development theory of James Fowler, they would have had to have

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<sup>85</sup> Source Mead (1991:13) - modified

been moving and growing through stages four to six in their faith pilgrimage, because the world outside was often hostile and persecuting, and if being a member of the Church meant one's life was at risk, it was only a living faith that would have enabled these early Christians to continue in their faith. Each member of that community was at risk, and each member of that community lived out being witnesses to the world, carrying to that world the good news of healing, love and salvation.

Attractive and ideal as this paradigm may seem, from a distance of nearly two millennia, it was not "a Pollyanna community", as Mead describes it (1991:10). Mead (1991:10) continues, "The epistles of the New Testament describe peoples and groups that experienced fractures and conflict, anger and division, as well as peace and joy." The reality, and it has been a problematic reality through the ages, is that being a Christian does not somehow prevent that Christian from continuing being a sinner, continually in need of a saviour and salvation.

In addition, many of these communities deviated from the road as many heresies became prevalent, because the Church was in a doctrinally undefined state. Walker ([1918] 1970:51-53) describes the Gnostic heresy as based on a special mystical, supernatural knowledge (*gnosis*), and defined Christ as an image or theory of a higher, saving knowledge. Walker ([1918] 1970:108) describes how the Arian heresy — which saw Christ as neither fully God nor fully man — had many adherents. These and other heresies were problematic and schismatic for the Church in the Apostolic Age. The

move to the next age, the Christendom Age, enabled the Church to clearly define its doctrines, notably through the affirmations of the Nicene Creed adopted in 325AD.

From the time of the Roman Emperor Constantine, the Church became almost synonymous with the state (in a process from about 313 AD), and the second age or paradigm of the Church — the 'Christendom Age' — was entered, modelled as in the diagram overleaf<sup>86</sup>.

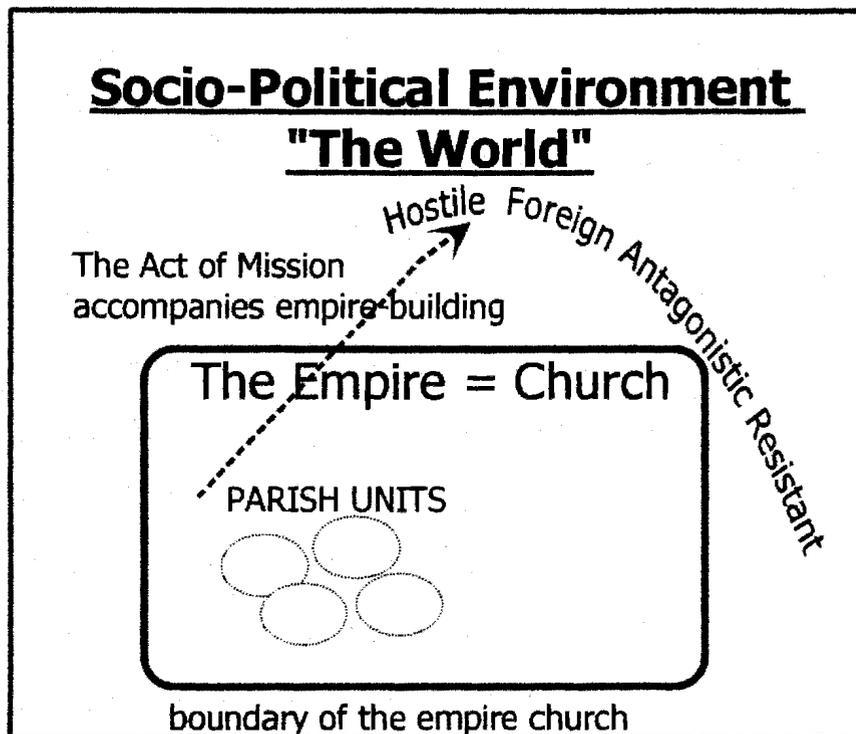
Mead (1991:13-24) describes the process of development of this stage, as by law, the Church became identified with, and almost synonymous with, the empire. The critical change was that the immediate environment for the church was no longer hostile and persecuting; there was no longer a separation between church and the world. The implication of this was that the member of the church (congregation) was no longer at the mission frontier, and membership of the church became a right and privilege of birth, which meant that faith need no longer be a living vibrant thing, as faith was not an issue. This led to a 'tradition' of being a Christian, marked by Fowler's third stage of faith development<sup>87</sup>. There were Christians who moved into stage four to six, but these were the exception rather than the norm, as it had been in the Apostolic Age.

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<sup>86</sup> Source - Mead (1991:19) - modified

<sup>87</sup> Fowler's stages are described in section 2.4.1 above.

The mission-field was removed in distance and mission-work accompanied



imperial conquests, and was closely allied with government foreign policies. This was true, not only of the Roman Empire, but also of the empire-building of Spain, Portugal, Holland and England - Roman Catholic and Protestant. Mead writes (1991:15), "Imperialism, bad as we now see much of it to have been, was seen as identical with the mission of the church. 'Onward Christian soldiers,' the marching song of nineteenth century imperialism, expresses the sentiment perfectly. If it embarrasses us today, it is because the Christendom Paradigm no longer works for us."

In the Christendom Paradigm, the Church community was no longer an embattled, threatened group of believers supporting one another in their hostile environment, but became organised in geographic groupings (parochial areas) as parishes. By definition, the church community became

synonymous with everybody who was part of that geographic parish. Many bewail the breakdown of the parish structure – with the flow from rural environments to the cities as the city is the place where an income can be easily earned – seeing this as the cause of a loss of community. It is questionable whether community really existed in these parish structures at all. Feudalism was the prominent social and economic system from the 11<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> centuries in much of Europe. The king allocated land to a hierarchy of lords and barons in exchange for services rendered – usually in their provision of soldiers when called upon. These lords, in turn, lent out land, on similar terms, to the local serfs and peasants, so the focus of community was not in and through the Christian parish, but through the landlord-tenant relationship. Because few Christians had a living faith and so Christianity largely operated at the level of myth and superstition, the need to love God and neighbour was largely lost, and along with this was largely lost the sense of a need for community.

The lay person had a responsibility as a Christian and citizen. These involved paying taxes to support the state and to be obedient to the authority structures (within church and state). Dulles ([1978] 1987:34) describes the church as a visible institution, bound by a constitution and set of rules, binding on its people.

There has always been a tension in the relationship between Church and State. Mitton (1996:4-5) expresses it well, comparing the tension that existed between church and state in the sixth century, where the mostly

Christian, but collapsing, Roman Empire, existed alongside the Roman Church which was flourishing. After becoming part of the establishment in the time of Constantine, the Church became inclined to assume the values of the earthly kingdom not those of the kingdom of God. In contrast, in the Christian East many were reacting to the worldliness and nominalism they saw in the Church and moved out into the deserts, setting up oases of spiritual life, the first expression of monasticism in the Church. In their calling to the desert the monks and nuns relived the experience of Jesus after his baptism in the Jordan and his being sent, by the Spirit, to be tempted in the hostile wilderness for forty days and nights, to enter into a fierce contest with Satan. The hermits and communities waged spiritual warfare against the forces of evil, praying for the spiritual survival of the Church that they saw as being corrupted by its nominalism and worldliness.

Mead (1991:17) writes, "In spite of the flaws we see in it now, the Christendom Paradigm had inner consistency. It made sense of life, though at a cost of oversimplifying it. But for the Christian, it cut the nerve of personal involvement ... A major difficulty of the Christendom Paradigm was its assumption that there was *one answer, one way.*"

As Church history is scanned, particularly in the period of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, and is examined against this paradigm, there is a very real possibility that the reformers were actually protesting against the model itself — but this manifested as a questioning of the assumptions and rules within the institution of the church — and so addressed the

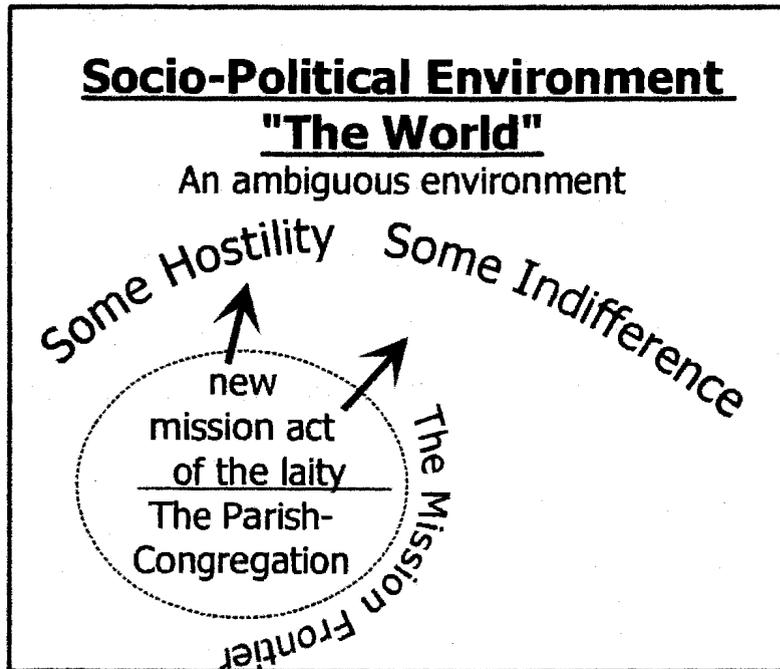
symptoms rather than the root issues and cause of the problem. The various reform movements resulted in different manifestations of the Christendom Paradigm, in, for instance, the Lutheran, Anglican and various Calvinist Churches. By providing a correction for what manifested as theological differences, the Reformers created another church institution, with its own set of binding rules, rather than reforming the underlying model of the institution<sup>88</sup>.

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<sup>88</sup> Perhaps the Catholic Reformation (of which Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross - see section 2.7.3 above - were part) was a truer reflection in a call to return to basics, although in the case of Teresa and John, these basics were how they lived out their monastic rule rather than the basics of what the Church had been in the Apostolic Paradigm.

### 5.2.2 Emerging model of what the Church could become

Mead (1991:26-27) describes what the emerging model of the Church could be, and is becoming — diagrammed below<sup>89</sup>:



The discussion of this emerging paradigm of the Church continues from the discussion above. Mead (1991:18) says that relics of the Christendom Paradigm are all around us, but it is a model that, largely, fails to work any longer. Mead discusses the ways this Christendom Paradigm has ceased to work (1991:20-25). The world has become separate from the Church, and it

<sup>89</sup> Source - Mead (1991:26) - modified

is no longer possible to assume that every person one encounters is a Christian, and so *congregation* has become a separate entity from the *parish*, and in tandem with this, there is a return to a feature of the apostolic paradigm, where the mission frontier is rediscovered, being to the people encountered by the Christian in daily life.

Mead (1991:25) writes, "The crisis for congregations, Christians and those who care about the Gospel is that the outlines of the new paradigm are not clear. ... It may be that the new paradigm may never become as compelling as either the Apostolic or Christendom versions. The new paradigm may call for more diversity than we are used to or comfortable with."

The new paradigm has far-reaching implications for the laity, the clergy and for church structures, and indeed for the whole way that Church services and ministry are conducted and approached. These implications<sup>90</sup> are often disturbing as comfortable rules, roles and attitudes are changed, often with resulting discomfort and a sense of grieving and loss.

### ***5.2.3 Implications for the formation and re-formation of the Laity***

Mead (1991:35-37) records how, in the 1960s, lay people in congregations understood what was expected of them, and describes a lay leader saying that his job was to back up and support his pastor, and ensure that

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<sup>90</sup> Looked at in more detail in the following sections.

congregation finances were managed correctly. Many lay people, to this day, see their role in similar terms. As the emerging paradigm emerges the laity often receive mixed messages. Lay persons are told to support their local congregation with time, money and talents, and always there seems to be a sustained pressure for the people of God to be more and more involved in church activities and duties. At the same time, the lay Christian is taught that their ministry is out there in the world, *outside* the congregation context. Yet no visible acknowledgement is given when such ministry does happen, the only recognition that is earned is when the church activities and duties are done satisfactorily.

In the time of the Christendom Paradigm there was no visible need for formation of the laity. As this paradigm collapses, the need for formation of the laity becomes seen as an escalating priority, and many programs for the formation of lay persons were invented. There is an increasing need for ever more intentional lay-formation structures provided for, and by, the future Church. Local congregations will need to fit their formational structures into their local situation, but there needs to be an understanding of the strategic importance of this lay training. Lay training is needed for entry into a congregation (which may be accompanied by baptism and/or confirmation, but going far beyond mere catechetical

teaching<sup>91</sup>) as well as ongoing formational training, some of which will be tailored for specific ministry needs. Many of these needs will revolve around life-crises in people's lives, as these crisis situations are turned into growth stimuli. In the context of community, these crises provide an opportunity for the members of the community to render support to the person in crisis, thus providing growth for the community and for the individuals in it<sup>92</sup>.

Neighbour (1990) provides an interesting model, where a newcomer to Christianity is assigned to the shepherding, mentoring<sup>93</sup> of a more advanced member, who walks alongside, guiding, leading and forming the newcomer and integrating him or her into the life of the congregation.

#### ***5.2.4 Implications for the re-formation of the Clergy***

Most clergy, certainly those with longer service, grew up and lived out their vocation in the Christendom Paradigm. The emerging model causes such clergy to experience a loss of role clarity. Mead (1991:34) says that this

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<sup>91</sup> Catechetical training is usually provided for entry into a denominational structure, but there also needs to be training provided for entry into a local congregation (which may differ if such entry is also entry into the denominational structure).

<sup>92</sup> See Mead 1991:49-53.

<sup>93</sup> This is different to the process known as 'Spiritual Direction', where the pilgrim chooses a suitable director to walk with them, usually because the pilgrim feels a need for this relation to enable and equip along the journey. In the shepherding model a major difference is that the shepherd is assigned to walk alongside the pilgrim, and the event and choice are not the pilgrim's own.

loss of role clarity is the cause of much stress and burnout among clergy, who, with their deep faith and commitment levels, are forced into a state of insecurity as their leadership roles and models are eroded.

Mead (1991:53-54) describes how, through the age of the Christendom Paradigm, a distorted power system was erected in the churches built on clericalism, with the church seen as a sheltered employment system for clergy. Thus, the clergy face huge changes — more changes than any other group in the church. In the emerging church the laity are the ones who cross the mission frontier, and many clergy have difficulty dealing with a new lay authority and what seems a role-reversal. For many clergy, who were comfortable in a high-status and low-stress occupation, the shift to a low-status and high-stress profession is unsettling and threatening. There is a need for clergy who will develop and train others for ministry, rather than keeping all ministries under their control. A process where an increasing percentage of clergy are serving a local congregation on a part-time basis, and supporting themselves through other full-time work, indicates a degree of letting go of the need to control all ministry.

Mead (1991:54) affirms that clergy are a key resource for the emerging Church, being needed to set the foundations for new structures that will equip lay members for renewed and restored ministries. The role of the clergy is vital in providing training and keeping the community focussed on its vision and direction.

### 5.2.5 Managing the Change

Mead (1991:36-37) describes the trauma that lay Christians often feel as the cherished things of their past worship and ministry are changed — liturgical forms, hymns, ministry patterns. Neither clergy nor laity are clear about what is meant when *the priesthood of all believers*<sup>94</sup> is proclaimed, as lay persons, who do hear this and attempt to take it seriously, find that the ordained ministers do not make space for these ministries to be exercised. There is a great need for the process of change to be managed effectively, to avoid traumatising and alienating clergy or laity.

Change is part of life. Cardinal Newman once said, "To live is to change; to live well is to have changed often."<sup>95</sup> In the transition from the Christendom Paradigm to the emerging, future Church, there remains an emphasis on mission, but the structures for mission have to be totally reworked.

Mead (1991:59) says, "The church upside down has not changed its heart. Its focus is still mission, but the mission location has changed. ... The leaders in this mission are the laity." The laity forms the first-line

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<sup>94</sup> For example, 1 Peter 2:9 proclaims: "You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, ... in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." (NRSV)

<sup>95</sup> Quoted in Greenleaf (1998:34).

resources for mission and provide training to other lay members, with clergy merely playing a support role.

The key to managing the change necessary is that there must be a shared vision<sup>96</sup>, goal and understanding of why change is necessary. Arbuckle (1993) and Markham (1999) both deal with the leadership necessary to take dissent from being a negative, obstructive reaction and make dissent into a constructive building of a shared vision.

### *5.3 The need for transformed and transforming leadership*

Bishop Brian Germond in an '*Ad Clerum*' letter to the clergy of the Johannesburg (Anglican) diocese dated July 2000, contrasts Charismatic and Machiavellian leaders, describing:

- i. the Charismatic leader as having a powerful vision and an ability to communicate that vision to others so as to inspire and empower them to service and sacrifice towards that vision; and
- ii. the Machiavellian leader as having less vision and being concerned with wielding power to achieve their ends, and thus are not above manipulation and emotional blackmail.

Germond writes that it is easy to see which of these styles our Lord would

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<sup>96</sup> Proverbs 29:18 puts it succinctly: "Where there is no vision the people perish." (my paraphrase.)

fit into, and sadly, how many fall into the trap of Machiavellian leadership, and that we are often better at discerning Machiavellian behaviour in others (and condemning them for it) while avoiding seeing it in ourselves.

Germond continues:

All too often what we say and do is shaped more by the prevailing values around us than by Kingdom values. We need to think and pray deeply about our understanding of leadership and desire for power, authority and status. Above all we need to pray that as leaders we are icons of Christ, making him visible to others; leading rather than misleading and exercising authority that does not stifle Jesus.

Germond's use of the term 'Charismatic leader' is interesting as so often — too often — clergy who experienced charismatic renewal in themselves and in their pastoral charges often used this renewal as a licence to become manipulative, Machiavellian leaders, but claiming to be charismatic. These are perhaps the people who Jesus warned:

Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will know them by their fruits. "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many deeds of power in your name?' Then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; go away from me, you evildoers' (Matthew 7:19-23 NRSV).

The term 'charismatic leader' should actually mean someone whose leadership is empowered and enriched through the various gifts they and others round them receive, and that their ministry should bear fruit as Galatians 5:22-23 says, "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (NRSV)."

Paul breaks his discussion of the spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians chapters 12 to 14 to say,

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way (1 Corinthians 13:1-5 NRSV).

The mark of the charismatic leader is that he / she bears fruit in his / her own life, and above all show the love of Christ shining through her / him.

Greenleaf (1996:33) sees a mark of inadequate religious leadership in the extent that churches and church-related organisations readily take on commercial consultants, and the use by these consultants of gimmicks to make things happen. Greenleaf reflects that if this is a valid judgement on his part, it would account for the church's failure to exert a healing influence in two pervasive problem areas, the problems of the alienation of persons and the failure of institutions to serve, and the use of consultants and gimmicks reflects a lack of clarity about what the church's mission is, and the implications of the church's mission. The analogy of a system as a machine has led to a mechanistic approach to organisations and even reduces individuals to machines. What was a good analogy has become a

guiding principle<sup>97</sup>. Has the church also become guilty of thinking of itself as a machine / mechanistic organisation?

Is it possible that the Church has lost its way as the disciples felt they were lost in the boat in the storm?

On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side." And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?" And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him (Mark 4:35-41 NRSV)?"

Germond (2000) spoke of one of the new buzz words of this new millennium being an African Renaissance. Of this, he said:

I do not think it is possible for us, as Christians, to think of renaissance — rebirth — without thinking of Him who spoke of our need to be born again; a renaissance, not in terms of economics or politics, but a rebirth by water and the Spirit. Africa is in trouble and African renaissance means that the healing of our continent lies with us as Africans. But I suggest that unless this rebirth is at heart a spiritual rebirth, it is no rebirth at all. If our African renaissance is not born of God there will be no lasting transformation and we will, in the end, have nothing new to offer the world. ...

If the African renaissance is, indeed, to be a 'spiritual blaze' then the

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<sup>97</sup> See Wheatley (1999:3-15).

church must lead the way. And that can only happen if we, the Church, first and foremost take Jesus seriously. ... We pray, 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name; your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.' If we truly mean what we pray, then each time we pray those words we are saying, 'Here am I, Lord, make your kingdom come in my life; make your kingdom visible in the world through me'. ... We cannot make God's Kingdom visible unless we become a people formed and shaped more by the truth of that Kingdom than by the values and visions of our world. ... We are called to be holy even as our God is holy. And the impact of holy lives is beyond our wildest imagining.

Mitton (1996:12-17) contrasts the authoritarian model and the servant <sup>A</sup> model of ministry:

Celtic bishops were ministers of their flocks; Roman bishops were monarchs of their dioceses. Celtic clergymen said, 'Do as I do,' and hoped to be followed; Roman clergymen said, 'Do as I say,' and expected to be obeyed. ... (Aidan) was a man who had an infectious holiness which, far from making him remote and otherworldly, enabled him to mix with all kinds of people and understand their world. They could believe in his message because he was a person whose lifestyle was transparently attractive to all who were seeking God. In Aidan we see the lifestyle of the Beatitudes very attractively displayed. ... In the church today, we need many small and fragile protest movements, led by people who are prepared to swim against the tide. It is my impression that the Spirit of God is calling us to once again consider the Celtic Church as our model of authenticity and simplicity, not so much to put the church right, but rather that the church can be freed to once again joyfully and confidently live a beatitude lifestyle in our very confused world. In the coming years many who are wearied by the pressures and demands of our restless world will find themselves washed up on such islands, where they can be reminded of another world which in its simplicity is full of abundant life.

Germond (2000) concluded his Episcopal charge by saying:

In Christ we are God's gift to the world; God's blessing in a broken world. God blesses us that we might be a blessing to others. If we truly dream of an African renaissance - a rebirth of God - then we must make it happen; we must make it visible. And it begins with us.

And so I dream of a church  
 where the eucharist is the centre of life,  
 and servanthood the centre of mission;  
 where the servant Lord is truly known in the breaking of the bread;  
 with service flowing from worship,  
 and where everyone understands why worship is called a service.

The thrust of these thoughts is clear, the Church must reinvent itself — experience a renaissance — in terms of its models of ministry. The prevalent model of ministry is an authoritarian model; this needs to change to a servant ministry. It is the practice in the episcopal Churches, with a three-fold ordering of ministers, bishop, priest, deacon, to ordain ministers first as deacon — a ministry of serving based on the deacons in the early Church serving at table — and only later to ordain them as priest. Too often the model of priesthood is modelled on the priestly ministry defined in the Old Testament. It is all too easy to lose the scriptural imperative of the 'priesthood of all believers' as some few are ordained / *set apart* — but not *set above* — for a priestly ministry. This is visible in many churches where a print of Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper* is prominently displayed, and priestly ministry is modelled on Jesus presiding at that first '*Last Supper*' and few churches display an image of what immediately preceded that — Jesus kneeling at his disciples' feet and washing and serving them.

Peterson (1992:111) says that the primary task of pastors is teaching people to pray and praying for them yet many treat prayer as a mere ceremonial gesture. Peterson (1992:112) continues, "We are looking for a way out, or back, to live into what I am learning to call a life of vocational

holiness. Contemplation is the way." He emphasises the urgency of the need to set out on this way, by putting one foot in front of the other with resolution and perseverance because there is an appalling level of what he terms 'soul-wreckage' among those who work with souls. He discusses the risk of temptations that all Christians, but particularly the pastors and other Christian workers, are exposed to. Central to the risk is pride. Peterson (1992:113) says, "This vocation-exacerbated pride usually originates in a hairline split between personal faith and public ministry. In our personal faith we believe that God has created, saved, and blessed us. In our ministerial vocation we embark on a career of creating, saving, and blessing on behalf of God." It is always God who creates, saves and blesses, but the work of ministry is in drawing people to the God who does these marvellous things through His grace.

#### § 5.4 *The need for transforming communities*

The Celtic Church was a model of community life that was non-exclusive and so seemed extremely attractive to a society that was confused and broken. As we enter the new century and millennium a Church is needed, which models a Spirit-inspired community where people are free to become fully human. If the principles of the community life of the ancient Celtic Church are examined and sensitively adapted for the communities of today, then not only will true *koinonia* be developed in the Church of today, but also the

evangelistic task before the Church will flow much more freely, and the Church will truly become the resource for the healing needed in the community of nations<sup>98</sup>.

Pastors of congregations have seen the need of the congregations for individual nurture to facilitate spiritual growth, and have responded in an almost conditioned response. Many churches provide courses for baptism preparation, confirmation preparation, marriage preparation, so what is more natural than to produce (or find) more courses to try to meet the need of the congregation<sup>99</sup>? Neighbour sees the churches which adopt this approach as being a roadblock, and names them *Program-based design churches*<sup>100</sup>. The issue is not the quality or effectiveness of the program material, it is that church-life is centred around these courses or programs and community is never created, nor are the needs of all the people met, as relatively small percentages participate and few show long-term fruit in their own spiritual lives. Another factor is that most established churches have such an investment in buildings, and to justify the ongoing time, money and effort in maintaining the fabric of the church the presentation of courses provides further justification for having the buildings.

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<sup>98</sup> See Mitton (1996:40) - from his study of the Celtic Church and its commitment to community.

<sup>99</sup> One such course is the *Alpha Course* developed by Holy Trinity Church, Brompton, England. As one drives the streets of our South African cities, banners advertising the *Alpha Course* are frequently seen. When some other course gains favour, its banners will become omnipresent.

<sup>100</sup> See Neighbour (1990:38-58).

Some pastors<sup>101</sup> saw deeper than just the need for facilitating individual growth. They saw:

- huge congregations assembling for worship where the sheer weight of numbers and the implications for building ever bigger buildings was sometimes resolved by rationing how often people were allowed to attend services;
- relatively low effectiveness of the various programs offered;
- the individual worshipper being lost in a sea of people, and so no depth of relationship being built; and
- an inability to build or achieve community.

In response to these issues, the pastors<sup>102</sup> evaluated the whole way the church functioned and operated, and sought a total revision in terms of their vision for ministry, in particular the building of community and equipping the people of God, so that the church would be transformed and ultimately, the society around the church would be transformed.

These pastors had also seen the relative failure of small groups of various kinds in many churches (where it may have been possible for community-building to happen), and recognised that the failure of these groups was

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<sup>101</sup> Such as Paul Yonggi Cho (in Seoul, Korea) and Ralph W. Neighbour, Jr. (in Singapore).

<sup>102</sup> Some of these pastors worked in cooperation with one another, but others came to similar conclusions and made similar changes working in isolation.

largely because they were regarded as 'optional extras' in the life of the church.

So they came to a radical reform of their understanding of what the Church should be, partly through an examination of the early church as described in Acts, and in many ways what they came to was a model similar to that seen in Acts 2:37-47, where 'the church' was the small group<sup>103</sup>, in which community could and should be formed. While centralised Sunday worship happens, this takes the form of a coming together in *Celebration*<sup>104</sup>, with normal church events, like teaching and breaking bread together, happening when the groups meet in homes. The main thrust of the church and its energies was in and through the formation of cells, where the numbers were contained (maximum 12 persons) so that the group dynamics avoided the impersonality of a massive congregation, and allowed community formation. As this happened, the results seen were astonishing. Where there had been large numbers of people previously, the accelerated growth in numbers through these living cells, which attracted large numbers of new converts, was enormous, and the process of transforming the church and transforming the society around it had begun in earnest.

The ability to form community depends on the society context in which it

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<sup>103</sup> Neighbour (1990) and Stockstill (1998) show this as they name the churches *Cell Group Churches* as distinct from churches that have cells or home groups attached.

<sup>104</sup> Echoing Acts 2:46, central worship with the small group meeting in their homes.

happens. It may be more difficult to form community in large metropolitan cities, but the church must play a role in *generating* community. Then too, the church in today's society has an important role to play in *supporting* community<sup>105</sup>.

The model that Neighbour and others adopted through these *Cell Group Churches* is an exciting new development, but cannot be transplanted directly into any situation. For example, in the Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Anglican traditions, there is an emphasis (some would say over-emphasis) on the celebration of Holy Communion, which requires an ordained priest to consecrate the elements of bread and wine. This is an issue, but need not be an insurmountable problem. If the emerging paradigm of the church<sup>106</sup> is taken seriously, and transformed leadership happens effectively, the people of God will be transformed in and through community, to be a truly apostolic people, reaching out to the world around them, and living out the Great Commission: "And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:18-20 NRSV)."

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<sup>105</sup> See Mead (1996:59-61).

<sup>106</sup> See above, section 5.2.2.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

This chapter has examined some issues facing the Christian Church, looking at historical models of the church to point the way forward to what the church can become, and the implications of this in terms of clergy and laity re-formation, and the leadership required to bring about such re-formation or trans-formation. Having examined the implications for ministry of the need to nurture spiritual growth and, in parallel, to foster and build community, the threads of this dissertation are drawn to a conclusion in the following chapter.

## Chapter 6 Conclusion

### 6.1 Introduction

This dissertation set out to address issues around:

- (a) Spiritual growth as a solution to the phenomenon of loss of 'soul' in contemporary society.
- (b) The need to regain a sense of 'shared life' in community as an extension of individual spiritual growth.
- (c) The implications for ministry of the issues of individual spiritual growth and growth in community.

This chapter closes the dissertation, pulling together the threads of the dissertation through: revisiting the problem (section 6.2); revisiting the solutions suggested, (section 6.3) particularly through: exploring issues raised on spiritual growth (section 6.3.1); looking at issues around community and community formation (section 6.3.2); looking at the need for 'death to self' in both spiritual growth and community (section 6.3.3); and looking at leadership issues discussed in the dissertation (section 6.3.4). The chapter then concludes by describing some ideas for further research and study (section 6.4).

### 6.2 The problem revisited

This dissertation set out to examine solutions to the phenomenon in the modern world which may be termed 'loss of soul' (Moore [1992] 1994:xvi).

Sheldrake (1998:5-7) perceives that there is a doctrinal vacuum inside and outside Christian communities, because outside the Church there is a widespread suspicion of religious dogma, and inside the Church there is no insistence that a coherent belief system is a necessity for a fruitful spiritual journey. Christian doctrines appear as irrelevant, eccentric opinions. So spirituality is seen as an intensely private, individualistic thing. There is a sense of loss, with consequent grief. The problem of 'loss of soul' and the need for a fruitful spiritual journey have been addressed in this dissertation.

### ***6.3 Solution areas revisited***

Jesus gave two commandments, and the observance of them, and exploration of some of their implications are addressed in this dissertation.

Jesus' commandments are:

"The first commandment is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these (Mark 12:29-31 NRSV)."

The solution to the phenomenon of 'loss of soul' is summed up in living out these commandments. In loving God with all one's strength, heart, mind and soul, the pilgrim experiences spiritual growth (section 6.3.1 below). In loving neighbour as oneself, the pilgrim experiences community (section 6.3.2 below). There are implications for the church and ministry arising from these which have also been examined in this dissertation.

### ***6.3.1 Spiritual Growth***

Spiritual growth happens when the pilgrim loves the Lord with her / his whole being, heart, soul, mind and strength. Spiritual growth; some illustrative cases of spiritual growth; and the ways spiritual growth may be facilitated have been explored. As the pilgrim sets out on the journey of spiritual growth, problems will inevitably be encountered, and the need to persevere and endure through those has been explored, for, as James writes:

My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing. If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you. But ask in faith, never doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind; for the doubter, being double-minded and unstable in every way, must not expect to receive anything from the Lord (James 1:2-7 NRSV).

### ***6.3.2 Issues around community and community-formation***

Individual spiritual growth does not, should not, and indeed cannot, happen in isolation from the neighbour, from the community. The nature of community and community formation have been examined. So much of what passes for community in many congregations is, tragically, what Peck terms *pseudocommunity*<sup>107</sup>. Peck's study ([1987] 1990:86-106) of community reflects on the stages that he has observed groups going through to reach

community. In true community, the members share themselves with one another in deep ways, holding nothing back and wearing no masks.

The challenge for the church is to enable and allow the formation of true community to happen as members of that community are committed to individual spiritual growth and to the shared growth of every member in the community.

### *6.3.3 Death to Self in spiritual growth and in community*

Perhaps the most important aspect of personal spiritual growth is the need for the pilgrim to relive, day by day, the significance of baptism by dying to self and rising to new life in Christ Jesus, and knowing that new life at work in the pilgrim's life. It is not a process in which the pilgrim can say, as new converts may, 'I have Jesus' but a process in which the pilgrim says, 'Jesus has me'. Death to self is effected by the Holy Spirit working, and is not something that the *self* is able to do. What is needed is conquer the self to allow the Holy Spirit to work this work in transforming the self. Self-conquest is really surrender of the self, yet before this surrender can happen the pilgrim must become sure of, and own, himself / herself, for until something is owned it cannot be given up<sup>108</sup>. If we accept that the

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footnote continued

<sup>107</sup> Peck ([1987] 1990:86-90) and see section 4.3 above.

<sup>108</sup> See Merton ([1958] 1987:29) and Foster (1992:48-58).

creator God has made us in his own image, then it is fitting that we celebrate and rejoice in this great work that God has done. We are wonderfully made and so our task is to live out who we are in Him. We should feel free to express ourselves fully as this self-acceptance is a gentle work of love to be embraced joyfully<sup>109</sup>.

Dying to self is equally important for true community, which can only be achieved by leaving the safe, comfortable *pseudocommunity*<sup>110</sup> far behind. It is essential to seek communities that will love the pilgrim and challenge her / him to deeper integration. In and through the way these communities model persistent self-denial, death to self, the pilgrim becoming part of that community is led into mature relationships, fulfilling all that makes us human, in Christ Jesus<sup>111</sup>.

The need for individual spiritual growth and the need for community formation raise implications for the Christian Church. These implications relate to transformed and transforming roles of clergy and laity, in terms of leadership and models of ministry.

#### **6.3.4 Leadership**

The Church's leadership structures and methodologies and models of being

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<sup>109</sup> See Jolley (1996:18).

<sup>110</sup> Peck ([1987] 1990:86-90) and see section 4.3 above.

'the church' have been examined, highlighting issues that the Christian Church should reflect on, so that communities of pilgrims, growing on a journey together, in living communities, will transform the world and society.

Returning to the Wild West analogy of two types of churches, the *Settler Church* and the *Pioneer Church*<sup>112</sup>, there is a need for the Church to regain a vision for being a pioneer / pilgrim Church, encouraging individuals to grow in their individual pilgrimage, and growing in a true community allowing Jesus to lead from the front (not confined to policing a whole set of artificial commandments). To achieve this, the Church must re-examine and reinvent its structures and leadership styles.

In looking at the spiritual journeys of Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross<sup>113</sup>, the contribution they made was largely through calling their order back to basics. Perhaps the Church today needs also to get back to basics, to examine the life of the early Church (as depicted in Acts and through the various epistles) so that the Church and the communities in it can shout with the great multitude, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory (Revelation 19:6-7

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footnote continued

<sup>111</sup> See Jolley (1996:20-21) and section 4.3 above.

<sup>112</sup> Manning ([1986] 1996:27-41) cited in the Introduction, chapter 1, above.

<sup>113</sup> See section 2.7.3 above.

NRSV)."

The Church needs to regain a vision for community and the implications of community and community formation for the way church structures and worship happens. The establishment of true, living, loving community in the church will transform the church and the surrounding society as people come, in their droves, to find this love that they see so clearly exhibited in the church communities. In the early church, non-believers would look at the Church and say, 'Look how those Christians love one another!' That can be true again, as the Church regains a vision for transforming communities that will equip the people of God to be truly apostolic people<sup>114</sup>, going out and living out the *Great Commission* of Matthew 28:18-20, with every member being involved in mission, all the time, everywhere.

Our prayer should be that the Church may re-examine itself with the goal of recovering its true identity in, and to, the world. Our hope is that Christ will come again, and when He does, that He will find a living vibrant, healthy body. Come Lord Jesus!

#### ***6.4 In closing - areas for further research***

This dissertation has, perhaps, raised more questions than provided answers, and there are a number of areas which may provide further

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<sup>114</sup> See Mead (1996:69-80).

research opportunities, some of which are:

- the study of spiritual intelligence is new, and it may be fruitful to explore this developing study, comparing and contrasting spirituality issues with spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence;
- valuable empirical research could be done on the effects on individual congregations of intentional community formation and the maintenance of community over a period of time; and
- valuable research could be done on the relationships and tensions that occur when living Christian community attempts to recapture some of the apostolic vision of the Church and remould itself in the ways described in Mead (1991:26-27).

## Appendix A – Glossary of Terms and Meanings

Term	Meaning
Carmelite	See below - Discalced Carmelites
Catharsis	See below - Purgation / Purgatory
Christian Community	The Greek word <i>κοινωνία</i> ( <i>koinonia</i> ) in the New Testament is usually translated by 'community', 'communion' or 'fellowship' <sup>115</sup> (e.g. Acts 2:42) <sup>116</sup> . The sense of <i>koinonia</i> is living a shared life (cf. Hebrews 2:14). The sense of living a shared life in Hebrews 2:14 is that Jesus shared in our flesh and blood — shared in our human nature — and in doing so, through his death, destroyed the power of death over us. Peck ([1987] 1990:59) says: 'If we are going to use the word (community) meaningfully we must restrict it to a group of individuals who have learned how to communicate honestly with each other, whose relationships go deeper than their masks of composure, and who have developed some significant commitment to "rejoice together, mourn together" and to "delight in each other

<sup>115</sup> The New Bible Dictionary (R. P. Martin in Douglas (1962:223)), under the article 'Communion' says: "In the NT the basic term, translated variously as 'communion', 'fellowship', 'communicate', 'partake', 'contribution', 'common' (in the sense of the Latin *communis*) stems from the Greek root *koin-*. There are two adjectives, *koinonos* (found 10 times) and *syn-koinonos* (found 4 times), which are used as nouns also; and two verbs *koinoneo* (8 times) and *syn-koinoneo* (3 times); and the noun *koinonia* (20 times). ... The fundamental connotation of the root *koin-* is that of sharing in something ...." The article discusses the inflexions in meaning of 'having a share', 'giving a share' and 'sharing'.

<sup>116</sup> Acts 2:42 — "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers." (NRSV)

Term	Meaning
Christian Community (continued)	together, mourn together," and to "delight in each other, make others' condition our own." See the entry 'Stages of Community Formation' below.
Christian spirituality	Wakefield (1983:362) sees Christian spirituality as concerning and embracing the whole of life. So Christian spirituality is not just for the inner life, but encompasses body, mind and soul, and is directed to living out both commandments of Christ - to love God and love neighbour.
Consciousness	Waldron (1994:144) defines it as: "A person's awareness, intuition, a perception, with a person's function of reflection as its achievement."
Contemplation	Unlike meditation, where the mind reflects on a point of scripture or other text, contemplation is more of a passive devotion, a basking in the presence of God: the pilgrim looking at him and being aware of Him looking back.
Covenant	A covenant is a binding agreement entered into, between God and his people. A covenant is initiated by God and is marked by a promise (what God will do for his people) and a sign. For example, God's covenant with Noah was that God would never again destroy the earth with a flood, and the sign of that is a rainbow (see Genesis 9:8-17). The New Covenant is that salvation and forgiveness are available through faith in Jesus Christ, and the sign of the New Covenant is the resurrection of Jesus (see Hebrews 8:6-13).

Term	Meaning
Covey's Seven Habits of Highly Effective People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Covey (1992:65-94) Habit 1 - Be Proactive - Principles of Personal Vision</li> <li>• Covey (1992:95-144) Habit 2 - Begin with the End in Mind - Principles of Personal Leadership</li> <li>• Covey (1992:145-182) Habit 3 - Put First Things First - Principles of Personal Management</li> <li>• Covey (1992:204-234) Habit 4 - Think Win/Win - Principles of Interpersonal Leadership</li> <li>• Covey (1992:235-260) Habit 5 - Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood - Principles of Empathic Communication</li> <li>• Covey (1992:261-284) Habit 6 - Synergise - Principles of Creative Cooperation</li> <li>• Covey (1992:287-307) Habit 7 - Sharpen the Saw - Principles of Balanced Self-Renewal</li> </ul>
Discalced Carmelites, Order of	<p>(OCD) - The Carmelite order was probably established c. 1155 by St. Berthold who settled on Mount Carmel with other hermits. The rule of the order was relaxed significantly, and when Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross reformed it, the order they refounded became known as the Discalced (literally - without shoes) Carmelites.</p>
Ego	<p>The centre of consciousness that, in the first part of a person's life, is dominant. A person's work, in the second part of life, is to foster the ego's realisation of the Self. (See Waldron 1994:144)</p>

<b>Term</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Emotional Intelligence (EQ)	<p>Goleman (1996:43) shows that Emotional Intelligence has five main areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Knowing one's own emotions</li> <li>2. Managing emotions so that reactions are appropriate</li> <li>3. Motivating oneself by marshalling emotions</li> <li>4. Recognising emotions in others, a fundamental people skill</li> <li>5. Developing the skills to handle relationships</li> </ol>
Faith	<p>Wakefield gives a definition of Christian faith (1983:145):</p> <p>Christian faith involves an assertion of the truth of what is believed (the faith); a personal experience of that faith (trust in God); a kind of loving that flows from it (faith in action); and a constancy of approach (faithfulness).</p> <p>Dykstra and Parks describe the central features of faith as being (1986:49):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Faith is a human activity - not something that a person <i>has</i> but a way of <i>being and doing</i>.</li> <li>2. The activity of faith occurs through relationships.</li> <li>3. These relationships are marked by trust and loyalty.</li> <li>4. Faith has an object of faith. Faith is <i>in</i> something or someone.</li> <li>5. Faith relationships are with others and with the 'gods' in which those others also trust.</li> <li>6. 'Our world' is shaped through these trust and loyalty relationships.</li> <li>7. The core activity defining faith is 'world-shaping' or 'meaning-making'.</li> </ol>
Faith (continued)	

Term	Meaning
<i>Hesychasm</i>	<p>Derived from the Greek word <i>hesychia</i> meaning quiet or stillness. Wakefield (1983:189-190) gives differing meanings of the term:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The way of inner prayer, as taught and practised in the Eastern Christian Church from the fourth century, as the seeking of the kingdom within oneself and sometimes practised by a hermit or recluse rather than a religious living in community.</li> <li>2. It also denotes the use of the Jesus Prayer, which may be reduced to a single prayer word, the name of <i>Jesus</i>.</li> </ol>
Individuation	<p>This is the process of realising that there is a psychic reality, and through that realisation grow to an awareness of the Self. (See Waldron 1994:145)</p>
Jesus Prayer	<p>A prayer word or phrase, repeated rhythmically. The usual form of this is: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me." (See Wakefield 1983:223-224.)</p>
Koinonia	<p>See Christian Community above.</p>
<i>Lectio Divina</i>	<p>Literally translated means 'prayerful reading'. Wakefield (1983:261) describes <i>Lectio Divina</i> as a non-methodical method of meditation, in which the mind applies itself to scripture, through meditation (<i>meditatio</i>) and then giving rise to prayer (<i>oratio</i>).</p>
Meditation	<p>An active working through a passage of scripture, a point of doctrine, or some other sacred text, to let the passage speak to the pilgrim and change, convert and heal.</p>

Term	Meaning
Modernism / Modernity	Griffin (1988:x) says <i>modernism</i> is a "worldview that has developed out of the seventeenth century Galilean-Cartesian-Baconian-Newtonian science and <i>modernity</i> in the sense of the world order that both conditioned and was conditioned by this worldview." Modernism has / had some destructive features — it made coercive power the basis of all change, and sees nature materialistically. Initially modernism was theistic, but became atheistic. (See Griffin 1988:144-147) Modernism was marked by a radical individualism, seeing little need for God in the worldview.
Mysticism	Not only a Christian phenomenon, but in Christianity mysticism is ultimately summed up by a person seeking, finding and living out union with God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (See Wakefield 1983:272-274)
Postmodernism / Postmodernity	Sheldrake (1998:6-8) attempts to pin down these terms that, he writes, are notoriously slippery. Postmodernism is a reflection of a loss of an arrogant self-sufficiency in society, rejecting the intellectual optimism of modernity. So-called 'new age' religion — which denies some of the basic doctrines of Christianity, such as sin — is a fruit of postmodernism. Postmodernism recognises that <i>truth</i> is culturally conditioned and so morally flawed, and it is an easy step to reject religious structures that proclaim an absolute truth.

Term	Meaning
Prayer	<p>A standard catechetical definition may be: "Prayer is responding to <i>God</i>, by thought and by deeds, with or without words."</p> <p>David Torkington (1987:44) explains, "Prayer is <i>trying</i> to have a conversation with <i>God</i>, <i>trying</i> to be open to <i>God</i>, <i>trying</i> to listen to Him, <i>trying</i> to raise the heart and mind heavenward. It's all in the trying. This is the very essence of prayer."</p> <p>Augustine (quoted in Foster 1992:1) wrote: "<i>True, whole prayer is nothing but love.</i>"</p>
Purgation / Purgatory	<p>Wakefield (1983:79) says that catharsis, purgation or spiritual purification refers to the ways a person is cleansed and released from impediments to a quest for closer union with <i>God</i>.</p> <p>Torkington (1995:53) says that the mystic way is about the purification from the sin and selfishness that keeps <i>God</i> out. Torkington (1995:53) continues, "Purgatory is just the traditional word used to describe the pain involved when a selfish person undergoes the personal purification involved in becoming selfless."</p>

Term	Meaning
Rosary	A rosary consists of a circular string of beads, joined at a medallion, with a pendant consisting of a few beads and (usually) a crucifix at its end. The rosary ring consists of 5 sets of ten beads (decades) separated by a space and a single (often larger) bead. It is used in prayer, as the beads are slipped through the fingers, a prayer is said at each bead of the decade, perhaps the Jesus Prayer or the Lord's Prayer. When the single beads present themselves, usually a different prayer, perhaps a 'Hail Mary' or the Gloria, is said.
Self	The regulating centre of personality – the archetype of wholeness. For the Western, Christian person the Self is Christ. (See Waldron 1994:146)
Shadow	Waldron (1994:146) defines the shadow (a Jungian, psychological term, "Unconscious characteristics or traits of the personality which the ego tends to reject, deny or ignore. ... Consciously integrating the shadow into our life is one of the main tasks of individuation, a task which leads to an increase of energy." Waldron (1994:35-36) comments that Jung used the analogy of painting to illustrate the idea of the shadow, as no painting exists without light and shadow, for it is in the interplay between light and shadow that beauty emerges. Jung relates this to the emerging beauty of the human soul in the play between opposites that are within every person.

Term	Meaning
Spiritual direction	A process whereby a pilgrim has a series of regular discussions about the prayer journey, over a period of months or years, with a more experienced guide to walk alongside the pilgrim, assisting in discerning where and how God is at work in the pilgrim's life.
Spiritual growth	In the epistle to the Romans Paul writes of the <i>event</i> of justification, becoming one in Christ as the pilgrim repents and turns to Christ. Paul writes of the <i>process</i> of sanctification, which happens as a consequence of being justified. The Christian pilgrim must grow in his / her faith for the rest of his / her life, or stagnate and die.
Spiritual Intelligence (SQ)	Unlike IQ, raw intelligence, which computers have, and EQ, Emotional Intelligence, which animals have, SQ is uniquely human and is used to seek for meaning, vision and value; SQ gives the ability to discriminate and enables humans to alter situations.
Spirituality	Spirituality is not confined to any one religion, but in the context of this dissertation, see the definition under <i>Christian spirituality</i> .
Stages of Community Formation	Peck ([1987] 1990) defines four stages to the attainment of community. These are named: Stage 1 - Pseudocommunity - Peck ([1987] 1990:86-90) Stage 2 - Chaos - Peck ([1987] 1990:90-94) Stage 3 - Emptiness - Peck ([1987] 1990:94-103) Stage 4 - Community - Peck ([1987] 1990:103-106)

Term	Meaning
Stages of Faith Development	Fowler (1981:119-211) (see also section 2.4.1 above) describes the stages in detail. The stages are named:  <i>Stage 1 – Intuitive-Projective Faith.</i> <i>Stage 2 - Mythic-Literal Faith.</i> <i>Stage 3 - Synthetic-Conventional faith.</i> <i>Stage 4 - Individuative-Reflective faith.</i> <i>Stage 5 - Conjunctive faith.</i> <i>Stage 6 - Universalizing faith.</i>
Trappist	Monastic order of the Cistercians of the Strict Observance (OCSO). The name Trappist derives from the Cistercian abbey of <i>la Trappe</i> in France.

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