

# Lay Driven Evangelism and Discipleship Systems

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There are two streams of disciple making which could be described as "right hand" and "left hand" evangelism; we need both hands to accomplish the work of God.

*Right hand evangelism* is church driven evangelism, involving the familiar pattern of churches, worship, evangelists, revivals, altar calls, enthusiasm, follow up, Sunday School, invitation, hospitality, etc. Right hand evangelism organizes events and programs, like worship and Sunday School, to make disciples. Evangelism is *two-step* in a right handed understanding: it is necessary to get the unchurched into the building where they will find Christ within the community of faith.

In the body of Christ, this is the *temple system*; it provides worship and most of the systemic structures which maintain the activities of the traditional church. The temple is an attractional, "come" structure that desires stability in all things. It is Troeltsch's church, Hegel's thesis, Senge's balancing loop, Rogers' pragmatic majority and Schwarz' static pole of bipolarity. It is logical, objective, left-brained, centralized, co-dependent, homogenous and tends toward scholasticism and conformity. It is visible where it operates in cycles within characteristic structures: temples, worship, priests, liturgy, logic, dogma, ethics, events, activities, programs, and governance by committee (boards, finance, personnel, property). It is the flower pot that supports the flower.

*Left hand evangelism* is a less familiar paradigm of lay driven evangelism, involving lay people going among the lost, making disciples in ongoing relationships, then mentoring their disciples to become missional servants and eventually then disciple makers. (Luke 10:2 *And he said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."*) Left hand evangelism organizes individuals to become disciple makers through relationships that become channels or means of grace, and then raise those disciples to become disciples who make disciples who make disciples (2 Tim 2:2). Disciples obey the commands of Christ in a cycle of justifying, sanctifying & prevenient grace.

In the body of Christ, this is the *discipleship system*; it provides a teleological process of spiritual growth through successive, developmental stages. The discipleship system is a dynamic "go" movement that desires growth/improvement in all things. It is Troeltsch's sect, Hegel's antithesis, Senge's reinforcing loop, Rogers' innovative minority and Schwarz' dynamic pole of bipolarity. It is emotional, subjective, right brained, relational, pluralistic, inclusive, decentralized, homophilic and tends toward enthusiasm and differentiation. When visible, it is often seen in small groups that function like spiritual families, where Jesus is Lord and people grow, operating in a social network. One aspect of a discipleship system is equipping and managing disciples in missional service, which is one of five stages in the birth and growth of spiritual children. It is the muscle for bone; both are alive.

In the mid 1950s the Latin American Mission, worried about the failure of churches to grow, studied three diverse movements that were rapidly growing in their context: Communism, Jehovah's Witnesses and Pentecostals. With the message and values of each group so different, the commonalities would reveal what was causing growth. "Each had successfully mobilized their entire constituency in continuous outreach. Latin American Mission put their findings together in a concise statement, the so-called Strachan Theorem: the successful expansion of any movement is in direct proportion to its success in mobilizing and occupying its total membership in constant propagation of its beliefs." (Richard Peace, *Small Group Evangelism - A Training Program for Reaching Out with the Gospel*, 25.) This reflects a trend beginning in the United Methodist Church: ¶126 of the **2008 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church**: "Every layperson is called to carry out the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20); every layperson is called to be missional."

Being mirror opposites in perspective, the *left hand* position is frequently contrarian in a *right handed* world. A left handed perspective renders the concerns and solutions proposed by many experts irrelevant.

# NEIL COLE : A DISCIPLESHIP SYSTEM

I believe that Neil Cole's lay driven evangelism methods and strategy for organic church planting are an excellent example of a discipleship system that could work in mainline church settings, and particularly in the United Methodist Church due to our connectional church polity and our history of *ecclesiolae en ecclesia*.

Logan, Robert E. and Neil Cole. *Raising Leaders For The Harvest*. Carol Stream, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 1995.

Cole, Neil. *Cultivating A Life For God*. Carol Stream, IL: Church Smart Resources, 1999.

**Website for Church Multiplication Associates:** <http://www.cmaresources.org/>

On Facebook: *Organic Church Movements* <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=16161960273>

"Jesus With An Iced Latte" by Steve Lawson. *Charisma*, April 2004.

[http://www.disciplewalk.com/files/Jesus\\_with\\_an\\_iced\\_latte\\_article\\_by\\_steve\\_lawson\\_full\\_text.pdf](http://www.disciplewalk.com/files/Jesus_with_an_iced_latte_article_by_steve_lawson_full_text.pdf)

Neil Cole's Story of Moths and Cockroaches

[http://www.disciplewalk.com/files/Neil\\_Cole\\_s\\_Story\\_of\\_Moths\\_and\\_Cockroaches.pdf](http://www.disciplewalk.com/files/Neil_Cole_s_Story_of_Moths_and_Cockroaches.pdf)

The Story of John the Satanist - [http://www.disciplewalk.com/files/A\\_Story\\_from\\_Neil\\_Cole\\_about\\_John.pdf](http://www.disciplewalk.com/files/A_Story_from_Neil_Cole_about_John.pdf)

Two different paradigms: disciple making networks (Neil Cole) vs. the megachurch (Ed Young)

*Coming and Going: Two leaders. One mission. Two very different strategies; a Leadership interview | posted 11/24/2008.* Leadership Journal. <http://www.christianitytoday.com/le/2008/fall/11.34.html>

Training: *Organic Church Planting Greenhouse* with Neil Cole: [www.cmaresources.org/greenhouse/](http://www.cmaresources.org/greenhouse/)

## **Disciplewalk resources:**

JUMP Group brochure: [http://www.disciplewalk.com/files/JUMP\\_LTG\\_5\\_9\\_10.pdf](http://www.disciplewalk.com/files/JUMP_LTG_5_9_10.pdf)

Methodology: Seminar Three [http://www.disciplewalk.com/files/Seminar\\_Three\\_Decision.pdf](http://www.disciplewalk.com/files/Seminar_Three_Decision.pdf)

From Neil Cole, *The History of Church Multiplication Associates* (October 2008):

<http://www.cmaresources.org/about/history>

A pivotal year in CMA's history was 1995. It was the beginning of a two-year drought for church planting. This drought brought some of the most fruitful changes and advances in strategic development, which would bear much fruit in the years to come. It was during this year we introduced the Leadership Farm Systems, and published *Raising Leaders for the Harvest* and Life Transformation Groups (LTG) cards. Within a single year of the LTG cards being published, word had spread. LTGs were found on nearly every continent of the globe...

Also in 1999, CMAResources, our training ministry, was born with its first publication of Neil Cole's book *Cultivating a Life for God* (April 1999). The first printing was sold out before year end. Today almost 30,000 copies have been sold. As we began to share our learning, it seemed wise, to hold a weekend "retreat" that would overview the organic church planting process for our burgeoning group. In the year 2000, a new form of training and farming of church planters was birthed-- the *Organic Church Planter's Greenhouse*...

Every year we have increased the number of Greenhouse trainings and Greenhouse trainers. This year (2008) we will average a Greenhouse every week and touch a minimum of 3,000 people with this training, spanning 12 different countries as well as many states in a single year.

# FARMING THE NEIGHBORHOOD

## **The First Wave: Yoido Full Gospel Church** ([http://www.disciplewalk.com/parable\\_broom.html](http://www.disciplewalk.com/parable_broom.html))

Hurston, Karen. *Growing The World's Largest Church*. Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1994.

Cho, David Yonggi. *Successful Home Cell Groups*. Gainesville, FL: Bridge-Logos, 1981.

*Evangelism at Yoido has an explicit territorial, geographical emphasis. Geographical districts of cell networks mimic the old parish system. Evangelism focuses on the immediate geographical neighborhood of the cell leader. The Korean term for cell leader is literally ku-yok jang which means "leader in one's small geographical territory or area." ... The cell group identifies needs within the lives of specific people in their micro-mission field and sets goals; the cell group then visits and prays for and with specific people in their neighborhood.... Cell groups focus on ministering to their neighbors in micro-mission fields; they solve small, local human problems through building helpful relationships first horizontally between neighbors and then vertically between those neighbors and Jesus Christ.* ([http://www.disciplewalk.com/files/Ch\\_Two\\_Discipleship\\_Systems.pdf](http://www.disciplewalk.com/files/Ch_Two_Discipleship_Systems.pdf))

## **The First Wave Interpreted Worldwide** ([http://www.disciplewalk.com/parable\\_army.html](http://www.disciplewalk.com/parable_army.html))

Neighbour, Ralph W., Jr. *Where Do We Go From Here? A Guidebook For The Cell Group Church*. Tenth Anniversary Edition. Houston, TX: Touch Publications, 2000.

Beckham, William A. *The Second Reformation: Reshaping The Church For The Twenty-First Century*. Houston, TX: Touch Publications, 1997.

George, Carl F. *Prepare Your Church For The Future*. Grand Rapids, MI: Revell, 1991.

## **The Second Wave: South American Innovations**

Comiskey, Joel. *Groups Of Twelve: A New Way To Mobilize Leaders And Multiply Groups In Your Church*. Houston, TX: Touch Publications, 1999.

Comiskey, Joel. *Leadership Explosion*. Houston, TX: Touch Publications, 2000.

Comiskey, Joel. *Reap The Harvest*. Houston, TX: Touch Publications, 1999.

## **The Third Wave: American Cellish Churches**

Warren, Rick. *The Purpose Driven Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995.

Warren, Rick. *The Purpose Driven Life*.

The "seven step philosophy" is Willow Creek's original discipleship system, and the discipleship system is the engine that drives the growth in worship attendance. The steps are:

1. *Build a Relationship*
2. *Share a Verbal Witness*
3. *Invite to a Seeker Service*
4. *Become Part of New Community*
5. *Participate in a Small Group*
6. *Serve in the Body of Christ*
7. *Steward Financial Resources*

([http://www.disciplewalk.com/files/Lecture\\_Unit\\_5\\_Willow\\_Creek.pdf](http://www.disciplewalk.com/files/Lecture_Unit_5_Willow_Creek.pdf))

Willow Creek's 2007 critique and analysis of their discipleship system: [www.revealnow.com](http://www.revealnow.com)

# FORAGING IN UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUPS

## **CPM a.k.a. Church Planting Movements**

The fourth wave of cell church innovation is a Church Planting Movement strategy rather than a church growth strategy. In the fourth wave, as in the New Testament, all energy is invested in disciple-making and no energy is wasted on creating an institutional church or rebuilding the Temple. More aptly named a “disciple multiplication movement,” fourth wave churches begin small, remain small, and continually spin off new small churches rather than grow one larger church. As seen in the Church Planting Movements, I believe they are demonstrably the most effective system of evangelism in the world, and particularly in the hostile 10/40 window.

The brochure that outlined the new foreign missions paradigm for Southern Baptists in 1999:

David Garrison, *Church Planting Movements*

[http://www.churchplantingmovements.com/images/stories/CPM\\_Profiles/cpm\\_booklet\\_standard\\_english.pdf](http://www.churchplantingmovements.com/images/stories/CPM_Profiles/cpm_booklet_standard_english.pdf)

The video: *Church Planting Movements* was produced by the International Mission Board's David Walker in 1998. <http://www.imb.org/main/downloads/embedvideos.asp?flashvars=mvid=2109&mvidext=flv>

The book: Garrison, David. *Church Planting Movements: How God Is Redeeming A Lost World*. Midlothian, VA: WIGTake Resources, 2004.

Training as a Strategy Coordinator: OMS (One Mission Society, Greenwood, IN)

Village Church Planting Program: <http://www.onemissionsociety.org/omm/intoafrica>

Disciplewalk resources:

[http://www.disciplewalk.com/files/Lecture\\_Unit\\_6\\_Introduction.pdf](http://www.disciplewalk.com/files/Lecture_Unit_6_Introduction.pdf)

[http://www.disciplewalk.com/files/Lecture\\_Unit\\_6\\_My\\_Experience\\_with\\_CPMs.pdf](http://www.disciplewalk.com/files/Lecture_Unit_6_My_Experience_with_CPMs.pdf)

The church multiplication movement strategy is rapidly planting indigenous churches under similar conditions in China without flashy public worship considered a requirement for growth in the United States. Southern Baptist Mission Executive, David Garrison: (Quotes in italics are from David Garrison, “Chapter 2: CPMs Up Close; A Region in China,” in *Church Planting Movements*.)

*In his initial survey, the strategy coordinator found three local house churches made up of about 85 Han Chinese Christians. The membership was primarily elderly and had been slowly declining for years with no vision or prospects for growth. Over the next four years, by God’s grace, the strategy coordinator helped the gospel take fresh root among this people group and sweep rapidly across the Yanyin region.*

*Aware of the enormous cultural and linguistic barriers that separated him from the people of Yanyin, the missionary began by mobilizing Chinese Christian co-laborers from across Asia. Then, partnering these ethnic Chinese church planters with a small team of local believers, the group planted six new churches in 1994. The following year, 17 more were begun. The next year, 50 more were started. By 1997, just three years after starting, the number of churches had risen to 195 and had spread throughout the region, taking root in each of the five people groups.*

*At this point the movement was spreading so rapidly that the strategy coordinator felt he could safely exit the work without diminishing its momentum. The next year, in his absence, the movement nearly tripled as the total number of churches grew to 550 with more than 55,000 believers. The discipleship system practiced in homes continued to produce believers in the absence of open, public worship or an institutional church.*

# SYNTHESIS: DISCIPLESHIP SYSTEMS

I love the way that the Apostle Paul identifies the church as the "body of Christ" in 1 Corinthians 12. When we unpack the meaning of this chapter with our understanding of biology, we see that the body is a system of specialized subsystems, each of which does a particular task to keep the whole system healthy. So your body has a cardio-vascular system, a digestive system, a movement system (muscle/bone), a control system (brain/nerves), a sensory system (eyes, smell, touch, taste, feel), a cleansing system (liver/kidneys) and even a garbage hauling system (lymph nodes). They work in your body even if you don't understand them or even know they exist.

Your church has a discipleship system; bodies are born with all their parts. But most churches don't understand it or even know it exists. But when you know of its existence, you will begin to notice it at work ... people just seemingly naturally doing what needs to be done to make disciples. Of course, if we know what a discipleship system is in the body of Christ, we can strengthen and enhance its effectiveness. If we don't know what it is, we can obstruct and harm its health in a church system. Left handed evangelism helps us recognize and help the laity who are a part of this system to do what needs doing in the church to make disciples.

Kueker, David O. *Diagnosis, Dialogue, and Decision: A Threefold Process of Revitalization For the Illinois Great Rivers Conference* (Pasadena, CA: Doctor of Ministry Project, School of Theology, Fuller Theological Seminary, 2008; available online at [www.disciplewalk.com](http://www.disciplewalk.com))

Other Resources: <http://www.createspace.com/3434819>  
<http://www.ascendinggrace.org>  
<http://www.greenhouseSTL.org>

Visual Parables:

Temple & Discipleship Systems: [http://www.disciplewalk.com/parable\\_coffee\\_cup.html](http://www.disciplewalk.com/parable_coffee_cup.html)  
Stages of growth of a disciple: [http://www.disciplewalk.com/parable\\_hunger.html](http://www.disciplewalk.com/parable_hunger.html)  
The Orphanage: [http://www.disciplewalk.com/parable\\_Orphanage\\_M.html](http://www.disciplewalk.com/parable_Orphanage_M.html)  
A proposed innovation: [http://www.disciplewalk.com/parable\\_stainless\\_steel\\_church.html](http://www.disciplewalk.com/parable_stainless_steel_church.html)  
Why change is so difficult: [http://www.disciplewalk.com/parable\\_light\\_bulb\\_2.html](http://www.disciplewalk.com/parable_light_bulb_2.html)

Two Examples of Decentralized, Unstructured Neighborhood Ministry:

Frazee, Randy. *Making Room For Life*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004.

Frazee, Randy. *The Connecting Church: Beyond Small Groups to Authentic Community*

Frazee, Randy, with Ken Dean. *The Connecting Church*. CCN Broadcast:

[http://www.ccnonline.net/programming/event/evt\\_25oct05.htm](http://www.ccnonline.net/programming/event/evt_25oct05.htm)

<http://www.leestrobels.com/videoserver/video.php?clip=CCNT1103>

<http://www.leestrobels.com/videoserver/video.php?clip=CCNT1107>

Josh Hunt, *Give Friday Nights To Jesus*, <http://www.joshhunt.com/friday.html>

A Prophecy of Doom:

Barna Associate Thom Black, *Revolution* - [http://www.disciplewalk.com/Barna\\_Revolution.html](http://www.disciplewalk.com/Barna_Revolution.html)

Training: *Disciple Making 101*, online class through [www.beadisciple.com](http://www.beadisciple.com).

# RESEARCH ON CHURCH SYSTEMS

The following authors are listed in order of their relevance to this discussion. The books listed are representative other works by the same authors are also very useful to the discussion.

Rogers, Everett M. *Diffusion Of Innovations*. 4th ed. New York: Free Press, 1995.

Moore, Geoffrey A. *Crossing The Chasm: Marketing And Selling High-Tech Products To Mainstream Customers*. Rev. ed. New York: Harper Business, 1991.

Putnam, Robert D. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse And Revival Of American Community*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000.

Senge, Peter. *The Fifth Discipline: The Art And Practice Of The Learning Organization*. New York: Doubleday, 1990.

Stark, Rodney. *The Rise of Christianity: How the Obscure, Marginal Jesus Movement Became the Dominant Religious Force in the Western World in a Few Centuries*, HarperOne, 1997.

Stark, Rodney. *Cities Of God: The Real Story Of How Christianity Became An Urban Movement And Conquered Rome*. New York: HarperCollins, 2006.

Friedman, Edwin H. *Generation To Generation: Family Process In Church And Synagogue*. New York: Guilford Publications, Inc., 1985.

Steinke, Peter L. *How Your Church Family Works: Understanding Congregations as Emotional Systems*.

Peck, M. Scott. *The Different Drum: Community Making And Peace*. New York: Touchstone, 1988.

Ogden, Greg. *Transforming Discipleship: Making Disciples A Few At A Time*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003.

Arn, Win and Charles Arn. *The Master's Plan For Making Disciples*. Pasadena, CA: Church Growth Press, 1982.

Miller, Craig Kennet. *NextChurch.Now: Creating New Faith Communities*. Nashville, TN: Discipleship Resources, 2000.

Schwarz, Christian A. *Natural Church Development: A Guide To Eight Essential Qualities Of Healthy Churches*. St. Charles, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 1996.