

**MORE THAN NUMBERS:**  
**Church Growth in South Korean Churches**

**Thesis for the degree of Master of Theology  
to be presented at Stellenbosch University**



**BY**

**Hyun Woo Jang**

**Study-Leader: Dr. I.A Nell**

**March 2009**

# DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

Signature: ..... Date: .....

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The church as a living organism is expected to grow. In the Great Commission in the book of Matthew 28:19-20 it is revealed that the desire of Jesus is that His church should increase. Growth therefore is an integral part of the church. There has been an incredible obsession with church growth strategies and methods that churches have never experienced before. South Korean churches have not been left out in this quest for church growth models. Church growth theories from the Fuller Seminary in America were introduced and applied between 1970 and 1980 and strongly affected many South Korean churches.

The question for discussion here is not whether the church should grow, but in what ways growth occurs and by what means. It is God's desire that his church grow. This is clearly demonstrated in scriptures. Various models have been put forward to examine the growth of the church, but as with all models, they have their limitations. This study focuses on Loren B. Mead's model of church growth and its application in Korean churches. The aim of this study is to analyze and evaluate church growth theories found and followed in South Korean churches, which have affected the church in order to provide a more valid understanding. It seems that the Korean church's failure to understand the balance between quantitative and the qualitative growth could be attributed, at least in part, to a misunderstanding of church growth theories. This study presents a desirable church growth model which promotes not only quantitative growth, but also effective and continual growth. Loren B. Mead's model of growth is introduced which deals with four different forms of growth: numerical growth, maturational growth, organic growth, and incarnational growth.

Chapter one of this study covers the background to the entire study and lays the conceptual framework of the study. Background of the Korean churches is surveyed, the aim of the study is highlighted, and the problem statement outlined, the motivation of the study introduced, and above all the hypothesis is spelt out. The methodology and the delimitation of the study are also covered in this chapter.

Chapter two presents an overview of church growth models. A working definition is offered after considering various definitions of church growth. This chapter also considers the different backgrounds of major church growth movements. A theological and biblical basis of church growth is also covered in this chapter; types of church growth and the factors that

contribute to the various types of church growth are also covered in this chapter. The chapter concludes with an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the various church growth models.

Chapter three covers the empirical study. Qualitative data collected through the means of questionnaires from three South Korean churches is analyzed; laying the foundation for further work in Chapter five.

Chapter four is an intensive study of Loren B Mead's church growth model, namely numerical growth, maturational growth, organic growth, and incarnational growth. The uniqueness of this model is also discussed in a comparative form with other church growth models.

Chapter five presents practical guidelines for South Korean churches for church growth, drawing inspiration from the literature study, the empirical data and primarily from Loren B. Mead's model of church growth "More than Numbers" outlined in his book (1993).

Chapter six forms the conclusion of the study. The major contributions of the study are highlighted and several suggestions are offered for practical applications of church growth in South Korean churches, and some suggestions for further research are also offered.

# OPSOMMING

Daar word verwag van die kerk as `n lewende organisme om te groei. In die Groot Kommisie van die boek Mattheus 28:19-20 word dit uitgelig dat die begeerte van Jesus is dat Sy kerk moet vermeerder. Groei is dus `n integrale deel van die kerk. Daar is `n merkwaardige obsessie met kerk groei strategieë en metodes soos nog nooit tevore deur kerke ervaar nie. Suid Koreaanse kerke is nie uitgelaat in hierdie soeke na kerk groei modelle nie. Kerk groei teorieë van die Fuller Seminarie in Amerika is tussen 1970 en 1980 bekendgestel en toegepas en het die Suid Koreaanse kerke beslis geaffekteer.

Die vraag onder bespreking in hierdie studie is nie of die kerk moet groei nie, maar in watter maniere hierdie groei plaasvind en deur middel van wat. Dit is God se begeerte dat Sy kerk moet groei. Dit word duidelik gedemonstreer in die Skrif. Verskeie modelle is al voorgestel om die groei van die kerk te ondersoek, maar soos met alle modelle, het hulle beperkinge. Hierdie studie fokus op Loren B. Mead se model van kerk groei en die toepassing daarvan in Koreaanse kerke. Die doel van die studie is om kerk groei teorieë wat in die Suid Koreaanse kerke gevind en gevolg word, en wat die kerk geaffekteer het, te analiseer en te evalueer sodat `n meer betroubare verstaan daarvan kan ontwikkel. Dit blyk dat die Koreaanse kerk se onvermoë om die balans tussen kwantitatiewe en kwalitatiewe groei te verstaan, ten deels toegeskryf kan word tot `n misverstand van kerk groei teorieë. Hierdie studie bied `n kerk groei model wat nie net kwantitatiewe groei bevorder nie, maar oor effektiewe en volhoubare groei. Loren B. Mead se modus van groei word bekendgestel. Dit behels vier verskillende vorme van groei: numeriese groei, maturasie groei, organiese groei en inkarnasie groei.

Hoofstuk een van die studie bied `n agtergrond tot die hele studie en lê en konseptuele raamwerk van die studie. Die agtergrond van die Koreaanse kerke word bestudeer, die doel van die studie word uitgelig, die probleemstelling word uiteengesit, die motivering van die studie word bekendgestel en die hipotese word uitgespel. Die metodologie en die delimitasie van die studie word ook in hierdie hoofstuk bespreek.

Hoofstuk twee bied `n oorsig oor kerk groei modelle. `n Werksdefinisie word gebied nadat verskeie definisies van kerk groei oorweeg is. `n Teologiese en bybelse basis vir kerk groei word ook in die hoofstuk gedek, tipes kerk groei, asook die faktore wat bydra tot die verskeie tipes kerk groei word ook bespreek. Hierdie hoofstuk sluit af met `n evaluering van die

sterkpunte en swakpunte van die verskeie kerk groei modelle.

Hoofstuk drie dek die empiriese studie. Kwantitatiewe data, wat deur middel van vraelyste verkry is van drie Suid Koreaanse kerke, word geanaliseer. Dit lê die grondslag vir verdere werk in Hoofstuk vyf.

Hoofstuk vier is `n intensiewe studie van Loren B. Mead se kerk groei model, naamlik numeriese groei, maturasie groei, organiese groei en inkarnasie groei. Die uniekheid van hierdie model word ook bespreek in `n vergelykende vorm met ander kerk groei modelle.

Hoofstuk vyf bied die praktiese riglyne vir Suid Koreaanse kerke vir kerk groei. Inspirasie hiervoor is verkry vanuit die literatuurstudie, die empiriese data en hoofsaaklik van Loren B. Mead se model van kerk groei “More than Numbers”, soos uiteengesit in sy boek (1993).

Hoofstuk ses vorm die afsluiting vir die studie. Die grootste bydraes tot die studie word uitgelig en verskeie voorstelle word gemaak vir die praktiese toepassing van kerk groei in die Suid Koreaanse kerke, asook sekere voorstelle vir verdere studie.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND DEDICATION

It is a pleasure to thank the many people who made this thesis possible.

I want to first of all thank God who gave me the opportunity and the grace during my study at the University of Stellenbosch.

It is difficult to overstate my gratitude to my promoter, Dr. I.A Nell. With his enthusiasm, his inspiration, and his great efforts to explain things clearly and simply, he helped to make my studies fun for me. Throughout my thesis-writing period, he provided encouragement, sound advice, good teaching, good company, and lots of good ideas. I would have been lost without him.

I would like to thank the many people who have supported me and my family, financially, morally, spiritually and prayerfully during the course of our stay in South Africa. Thank you all for your kind assistance.

I am indebted to my parents, my mother-in-law, my brother and his family, my sister and her family, my brother in-law and his family, and my sister-in-law and her family for providing us with both moral, financial and prayer support.

I wish to thank my wife Kwon Choon-Hee and my beloved children, Jun and You-Na for helping me get through the difficult times, and for all the emotional support they rendered to me during the course of my study, I love you so much!

I am grateful to the Mr. Evans, Maryke and Ursula for taking their precious time to edit my work from the scratch. May you continue to grow in this great service to humanity and may the Lord grant you the desires of your heart.

I wish to thank the entire Korean community in Stellenbosch for providing a loving environment for me and my family. My neighbor in Die Rand Pastor Chiroma and family deserve a mention here as well.

Worthy of mention are my friends who sincerely supported me during this study, J. Kim, B.C Go, K.H. Kim, W.Y. Kim and Y.C Jung. Space will not allow me to mention all of you, but know that you are appreciated;

Lastly, and most importantly, I wish to express my gratitude to the many friends too numerous to mention for their sacrificed to make this dream a reality. To them I dedicate this thesis.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>DECLARATION</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>OPSOMMING</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND DEDICATION</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	<b>xiv</b>

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

<b>1.1 BACKGROUND</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1.3 MOTIVATION</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.5 HYPOTHESIS</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1.6 METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1.7 LIMITATIONS</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>1.8 CONCLUSIONS</b>	<b>9</b>

## **CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF SOME CHURCH GROWTH MODELS**

<b>2.1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>2.2 DEFINITION OF CHURCH GROWTH</b>	<b>11</b>



<b>2.3</b>	<b>BACKGROUND OF THE CHURCH GROWTH MOVEMENT</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>2.4</b>	<b>THE BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS OF CHURCH GROWTH</b>	<b>16</b>
2.4.1	Biblical basis	16
2.4.2	Theological basis	17
<b>2.5</b>	<b>FACTORS OF CHURCH GROWTH</b>	<b>18</b>
2.5.1	The factors of church growth	18
<b>2.6</b>	<b>CHURCH GROWTH MODELS</b>	<b>19</b>
2.6.1	The model of Donald A. McGavran	20
2.6.1.1	The Homogeneous Unit Strategy	21
2.6.1.2	The People Movement Strategy	21
2.6.1.3	Receptivity Strategy	24
2.6.1.4	Discipling and Perfecting Strategy	24
2.6.1.5	Indigenous Church Strategy	25
2.6.2	The model of Peter C. Wagner	26
2.6.3	The model of Christian A. Swartz (NCD)	28
2.6.3.1	The Eight Quality Characteristics	29
2.6.3.2	The Minimum Strategy	31
2.6.3.3	The Biotic Principles	32
<b>2.7</b>	<b>THE EVALUATION OF CHURCH GROWTH MODELS</b>	<b>33</b>
2.7.1	The Contribution	33
2.7.2	Weaknesses and Limitations	34

## **CHAPTER THREE: THREE SOUTH KOREAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES**

<b>3.1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>3.2</b>	<b>THE INTRODUCTION AND SURVEY OF THREE CHURCHES</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>3.2.1</b>	The introduction of three churches	<b>41</b>
<b>3.2.2</b>	A survey of the three churches	<b>42</b>
<b>3.2.2.1</b>	Why do you think church growth is important?	<b>44</b>
<b>3.2.2.2</b>	What church growth model(s) do you use in your church?	<b>45</b>
<b>3.2.2.3</b>	Do you think the model(s) is effective? If so, why?	<b>45</b>
<b>3.2.2.4</b>	Do you think church growth is more than quantitative growth? If so, what do you see as the “more”?	<b>46</b>
<b>3.2.2.5</b>	Do you think there is a specific “theology” underlying the model you chose?	<b>47</b>
<b>3.2.2.6</b>	What do you see as your role as leader of the congregation in church growth?	<b>47</b>
<b>3.2.2.7</b>	What factors in society do you think help or hinder church growth?	<b>47</b>
<b>3.3</b>	<b>THE ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION OF GROWTH OF THE THREE CHURCHES</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>3.3.1</b>	The analysis of growth of the three churches	<b>48</b>
<b>3.3.2</b>	Evaluation of the growth of the three churches	<b>50</b>
<b>3.4</b>	<b>THE RESULTS AND PROBLEMS CAUSED BY NUMERICAL-CENTERED GROWTH</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>3.4.1</b>	The crisis caused by ‘growth-centered’ churches: Becoming a large-sized church and the commercialization of the church	<b>55</b>

<b>3.4.2</b>	<b>The problems and the harmful side effects caused by the growth-centered church</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>3.4.3</b>	<b>The ecclesiological crisis of the South Korean church on account of numerical growth-centered paradigm</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>3.5</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>68</b>

## **CHAPTER FOUR: THE CHURCH GROWTH MODEL OF LOREN B. MEAD**

<b>4.1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>4.2</b>	<b>TWO MAIN FOCUSES IN LOREN B. MEAD`S MODEL</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>4.2.1</b>	<b>The understanding of changes in church paradigms</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>4.2.1.1</b>	<b>The Apostolic paradigm era</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>4.2.1.2</b>	<b>The Christendom paradigm</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>4.2.2</b>	<b>Four types of church growth</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>4.2.2.1</b>	<b>Numerical growth</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>4.2.2.2</b>	<b>Maturational growth</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>4.2.2.3</b>	<b>Organic growth</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>4.2.2.4</b>	<b>Incarnational growth</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>4.3</b>	<b>THE DISTINCTIVENESS OF MEAD`S MODEL</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>4.4</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>84</b>

## **CHAPTER FIVE: ADJUSTED PRAXIS FOR CHURCH GROWTH IN SOUTH KOREAN CHURCHES**

<b>5.1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>5.2</b>	<b>PRACTICAL THEOLOGICAL GUIDELINES FOR CHURCH GROWTH IN SOUTH KOREAN CHURCHES</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>5.2.1</b>	Guideline 1: Church growth is important	<b>88</b>
<b>5.2.2</b>	Guideline 2: Church growth must be biblical	<b>89</b>
<b>5.2.3</b>	Guideline 3: Church growth involves numerical growth	<b>90</b>
<b>5.2.4</b>	Guideline 4: Church growth must be maturational	<b>91</b>
<b>5.2.5</b>	Guideline 5: Korean Churches must grow organically	<b>91</b>
<b>5.2.6</b>	Guideline 6: Church growth must be incarnational	<b>93</b>
<b>5.2.7</b>	Guideline 7: Korean churches must emphasize church health and not only church growth	<b>94</b>
<b>5.2.8</b>	Guideline 8: Korean churches must emphasize balanced church growth	<b>96</b>
<b>5.2.9</b>	Guideline 9: Korean churches must depend on the Holy Spirit for church growth	<b>98</b>
<b>5.2.10</b>	Guideline 10: Korean churches must study Jesus` methods of church growth	<b>99</b>
<b>5.3</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>100</b>

## **CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

<b>6.1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>6.2</b>	<b>WHAT ARE THE MAIN QUESTIONS?</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>6.3</b>	<b>WHAT ARE THE MAIN CONCLUSIONS?</b>	<b>102</b>

<b>6.3.1</b>	Church growth should never be thought of solely in terms of an increase in numbers only	<b>102</b>
<b>6.3.2</b>	Church growth operates within a specific context	<b>103</b>
<b>6.3.3</b>	Church growth is not to be practiced at the expense of church health	<b>104</b>
<b>6.3.4</b>	Church growth is ultimately the work of the Holy Spirit through the church	<b>105</b>
<b>6.3.5</b>	Church growth is a sign, not an instrument of mission	<b>105</b>
<b>6.3.6</b>	There is a fundamental difference between the growth of a church and that of a business	<b>105</b>
<b>6.3.7</b>	Balance in church growth cannot be over-emphasized	<b>105</b>
<b>6.4</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>106</b>
<b>6.5</b>	<b>SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH</b>	<b>107</b>
	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>109</b>

## **LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1: Numerical growth in church membership	<b>2</b>
Table 2: Mead's Church Growth Model	<b>93</b>

# CHAPTER 1

## *INTRODUCTION*

### **1.1 BACKGROUND**

South Korean churches<sup>1</sup> accomplished unparalleled growth after the gospel was spread by western missionaries a little over a hundred years ago. In particular, from the sixties to the nineties, it accomplished rapid growth. The number of churches increased twelve times from 1960 to 2000 and the number of believers increased fifteen times, from six hundred thousand to nine million during the same period (Lee, 1998: 182-186). One can call it the golden age of growth in the Korean church.

Certain internal and external factors contributed to the rapid growth of the South Korean church<sup>2</sup>.

Firstly, as internal factors, there were the effort and devotion within the church itself. The South Korean churches that were interested in restoration and growth were also devoted to prayer in all their various gatherings and were devoted in spreading the gospel when and whenever possible. Moreover, the Korean church was involved in vital church movements such as restoration movements, spiritual movements, movement of doubling in church members and mission movements. These kinds of church movements evoked the interest and enthusiasm of members in the Korean church. Not only these but also various programs for church growth such as bible study, prayer meetings, organizing of mission associations and programs for active parishes all contributed to church prosperity.

Secondly, there were also external factors that were connected within the context of the political, economic and social situation at that time. On the one hand, politically, from 1960 under the control of military government, people were seeking mental peace and security through the church. On the other hand, economically, people were distressed by unfair treatment in the distribution of wealth in spite of major economic growth during the last 10

---

<sup>1</sup> By South Korean churches is meant mainly the Presbyterian Church in South Korea.

<sup>2</sup> Available: <http://www.shareplaza.com/N-59>.

years. Under such circumstances, the church could readily attract people, promising them material blessing and prosperity through belief.

Socially, the people who migrated from the rural areas to the city because of rapid industrialization and urbanization became lonely and homesick and gradually looked to the church to solve that sense of alienation through fellowship. It is important to note that it was not only Christians that were going through these transformations, but also their counterparts in other contemporary religions such as Buddhism, various new religions and even pseudo-religions. Since the 1960's the difficult social, economical and political situation in Korea has brought growth in all religions.

Lastly, Church growth theories from Fuller Seminary in America were introduced and applied to and strongly influenced many South Korean churches between 1970 and 1980. With few exceptions, churches which had the most rapid growth introduced church growth theory as practical sources during that period<sup>3</sup>. Korean Churches have accomplished progressive growth year by year based on the above-mentioned contextual factors (Ro, 1995).

**Table 1: Numerical growth in church membership**

	<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of members</b>	<b>% of the total population</b>
<b>CATHOLICS</b>	1985	1 900 000	4.6
	1995	2 950 000	6.6
	2005	5 150 000	10.9
<b>BUDDISTS</b>	1985	8 100 000	19.8
	1995	10 300 000	23.2
	2005	10 726 000	22.8
<b>PROTESTANT CHRISTIANS</b>	1970	3 200 000	
	1985	6 500 000	15.9
	1995	8 760 000	19.7
	2005	8 620 000	18.3

<sup>3</sup> Available: <http://www.shareplaza.com/> N-107.



However, in the middle of the 1980's, particularly from 1984, the Korean church faced a crisis of stagnation in numerical growth. The decline started in 1993. This was evidenced in "Population Housing Total Statistics Surveys" published by the Korea Statistics Office on 25th May 2005. The report shows that Catholics had increased from 6.6% to 10.9% of the population (from 2,950,000 to 5,150,000), while Buddhists increased by only 3.9% to 22.8% of the population (about 10,726,000). Protestant Christians increased to 15.9% of the population (1970: 3,200,000 to 1985: 6,500,000) and to 19.7% (1995: 8,760,000) over the 10 years period. Amazingly, Protestant Christianity, with 8,760,000 members in 1995 representing 19.7% of the population decreased to 18.3% over the last 10 years to 8,620,000 in 2005. On the basis of these statistics, it can be noted that the Catholics had rapid growth, while Buddhism stopped growing and Protestant Christianity started to decrease during the last 10 years<sup>4</sup>.

Although many churches tried to find solutions to this crisis and stagnation, the crisis is still evident. This could be attributed to the fact that most South Korean churches have lost social sincerity and that the church is getting vague in pursuing its identity. The Korean Gallup Census in 2004 reveals that generally Koreans have a negative attitude towards religious association. The following responses serve to demonstrate this: in response to the question, "have religious organizations lost their essential nature?" 67.9% responded by saying "Yes". To the proposition, "They have more concern about extending their membership than pursuit of the truth" 76.6% answered saying "Yes". The statement, "They couldn't give people right answers about the true meaning of life" was answered "Yes" by 64.0%. "They don't treat non-religious people in mercy" was given a Yes answer by 46.1%. "They exact to many rules to obey" was given a Yes response by 49.8%. On the other hand, to the statement "believers of any religion practice love and mercy" only 7.9% answered "Yes". Christianity is not exceptional in evoking these negative opinions concerning religious believers<sup>5</sup>.

Furthermore, the Korean church imported some theories of church growth from America imprudently without constructive criticism and sufficient investigation regarding such theories. For this reason, they did not make the Korean church to be sound and ensure sustainable growth even though their theories gave some influence on the rapid growth of the Korean church (Jang, 2008:53).

---

<sup>4</sup> Available: <http://www.nso.go.kr> / cf: <http://www.shareplaza.com/> N-116.

<sup>5</sup> Available: [http://www.freeview.org/bbs/board.php?bo\\_table=g001&wr\\_id=25](http://www.freeview.org/bbs/board.php?bo_table=g001&wr_id=25)

## 1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

In this study, the problems related to the growth of the Korean church will be investigated through the following questions:

1. What is the Korean church's understanding of church growth?
  - What is the meaning of church growth and why is it important?
  - What are the elements of church growth and what types are there?
  - What are the church growth models and principles which affected the Korean church?
  - What is the contribution and limitation of these various models?
2. On which aspects of church growth is the Korean church focused?
  - What is the background to the Korean church's focus on numerical growth?
  - What are the reasons that enable the Korean church to accomplish rapid numerical growth?
  - What are the reasons that caused the Korean church to stagnate and decrease in numbers?
  - What alternative plans exist to prevent stagnation and decrease in numbers?
3. What is desirable church growth?
  - Did the Korean church's numerical growth reflect a consonant spiritual growth?
  - How did the Korean church accomplish its growth?
  - What models are more appropriate to the Korean church for promoting desirable church growth?
  - What direction should the church move towards in order to obtain desirable growth?

### 1.3 MOTIVATION

Firstly, the choice of this research study was motivated by my work experience as pastor and leader in the Korean church. I have served in the Korean church for 15 years, and during these years, one question has been of great concern: "How can my church grow and how could my station prosper?" Growing in numbers was always a burden in my heart; even though I tried several times to be free from it, I was under stress most of the time. This is because the success of one's ministry is always evaluated by the size of one's congregation (Yang, 2001:88-89). I do not object to the idea that the church needs to grow numerically. However, I am more concerned about striking a balance between the quantitative and the qualitative growth of the church.

Secondly, reading through many books on church growth in the course of my studies at Stellenbosch University have opened my eyes to a proper understanding of what church growth is all about. The most important thing, I realize, is that there is a need for the Korean church to have a scientific understanding and theological consideration on church growth. Various church growth theories were introduced and applied to the Korean church without sufficient criticism and verification. Therefore, I believe, there is a need to re-evaluate some of the church growth theories that have impacted on the Korean church over the years.

### 1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to analyze and evaluate church growth theories found and followed in South Korean churches, which have affected the church, in order to provide a more valid understanding thereof. It seems that the Korean church's failure to understand the balance between quantitative and the qualitative growth could be attributed, at least in part, to misunderstanding of church growth theories. Presenting desirable church growth models which promote not only quantitative growth, but also effective and continual qualitative growth is an additional goal of this study. In this process, I will introduce Loren Mead's growth theory which deals with four different forms of growth: **numerical growth, maturational growth, organic growth and incarnational growth.**

I want to re-evaluate existing theories on the basis of his theory and through this process present new and desirable direction for healthy church growth.

## **1.5 HYPOTHESIS**

This study is based on the premise that church growth is God's will and He is pleased with it. This is emphasized by McGavran who is regarded as the father of "Church Growth". Any church having spiritual life must grow (McGavran, 1980:13-27), however not only in numerical terms (Smith, 1984:15). Hence, this study works with the premise that healthy church growth means that both quantitative and qualitative growth must be in balance.

Generally, the Korean church focused more on numerical growth during the past few decades; even though most Korean churches would wish to deny this. Many believe that they are balanced in terms of growth. It is clearly evident that the Korean church has leaned towards numerical growth. It cannot be said, of course, that all South Korean churches aspire to grow only in numbers; nevertheless, generally the trend is to follow numerical growth (Jang, 2008:49).

I will study the general tendency of growth in the South Korean churches with above-mentioned premises. Case-studies will be used to do this. This study should help the Korean church to grow in healthy ways by presenting new directions to aspire to a balance in terms of quantitative and qualitative growth.

Lastly, I propose that Dingemans' (1996:92-93) methodology is appropriate for this study in order to provide a concrete analysis and a critical view of the actual pastoral field in Korean church.

## **1.6 METHODOLOGY**

Throughout this study, analysis, evaluation, interpretation and synthesis will be performed as the basic process of research enquiry. The research on church growth will be developed within the framework of practical theology, because "Church Growth" as a concept is deeply relevant to many churches and congregations within specific contexts and the practical situation. In other words, church growth is a practical matter rather than a theoretical one. In researching church growth studies, different times, cultures and contexts should be held in consideration at all times. This study will also be conducted using the qualitative method of research.

Dingemans (1996:92-93) provides a valuable research methodology for practical theology, which consists of four phases: descriptive phase; explanatory phase, normative phase; and strategic phase.

This four-phased methodology will be used for this study:

### **1) Description phase**

The focus here is on the analysis of the situation and the description of the practice. In order to interpret the context and situation, the contribution of social science are important. Poling & Miller (1985:66-69) mention the importance of the description of lived experience. I will use this method in the description of the realities of the church by analyzing factors impacting on church growth. In this phase reasons for growth or stagnation in South Korean churches will also be investigated.

### **2) Explanatory phase**

The focus here is to seek a critical explanation of the situation. It will lead to new theories or options. At this point, constructive, creative and critical examination should be done. This step is to expose the problems facing the church in terms of church growth. It analyses traditional church growth models, as well as contemporary dominant models of church growth.

### **3) Normative phase**

The focus here is to examine the normative backgrounds of a tradition and to examine the normative ideas of people in order to provide new direction and vision. The third step is to redefine the vision and direction which emerge from the creative imagination of phases on the basis of the nature and mission of the church in its context.

### **4) Strategic phase**

The last step aims at making suggestions and recommendations pertinent to the proposed vision, in order to improve and transform the existing praxis. In this stage, the intention is to propose suggestions and recommendations in order to lead the church towards healthy growth according to the proposed vision and direction, as well as to improve and transform its

existing practices. Poling & Miller (1985:66-69) emphasize that guidelines and specific plans for a particular community are needed in this phase.

Dingemans (1996:83) states that “in recent decades practical theologians worldwide have agreed on starting their investigations in practice itself. Practical theology has become a description of and a reflection on the “self-understanding of a particular religious tradition.” This approach moves from practice to theory, then back to practice.” In order to interpret the context correctly, the tools of the social sciences are required.

In fact, most practical theologians currently try to cooperate with social scientists in an interdisciplinary way which integrates theology and the social sciences (Dingemans, 1996:91). Thus it becomes necessary to analyze the problems of church growth by using the theories and methods of the social sciences, in addition to those of theology – this will be done in the study.

In researching church growth, case studies are very helpful (McGrath, 1994:15, 51, 69, 73). I will use some data provided by a public opinion census. Although not arranged well, these data provide some very important material and information for this research.

Various studies on church growth will also be used. This study will employ an integrative approach toward the understanding of the audience as human beings. Poling & Miller (1985:66-69) believe that experience is very important, because it provides the source for all reflection and the need for empirical theology.

## **1.7 LIMITATIONS**

This study will focus on proposing some new initiatives for church growth in the Korean church and its specific context. However, it contains some limitations and these are as follows:

First, it is impossible to deal with the whole history related to the growth of the Korean church. Therefore this study will focus only on the specific period of rapid growth as experienced in the Korean church, namely 1960-1990.

Second, amongst many church growth models, only those which affected the Korean church will be included in this study. The specific focus will be on the theories of McGavran,

Wagner (both attached to Fuller Theological Seminary), and Natural Church Development (NCD)<sup>6</sup> which are presently applied in the Korean church.

Finally, I will select three South Korean churches at random that still have a tendency to pursue numerical growth to serve as examples for this study. The limited representation of such a sample could constitute a potential weakness in the reliability of the result of this study.

## **1.8 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has briefly described the background of the study, laying the foundational framework for the study. The context of Korean church growth was discussed, the aim and goal of the study was also clarified; above all the methods for the study has also been described in this chapter. The next chapter will focus on reviewing some church growth models found both in and outside Korean churches.

---

<sup>6</sup> Natural Church Development is a theory suggested by Schwarz (1996).

## CHAPTER 2

### *REVIEW OF SOME CHURCH GROWTH MODELS*

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The concept of 'church growth' has been accepted since the Second World War, and gained particular recognition after 1955 through the Mission Movement, which is one of several specific Church Growth Movements<sup>7</sup>, occurring with the Evangelical Movement (Han, 1992:55). Elmer (1981:7) rightly noted that church growth is a modern phenomenon that crosses denominational and theological lines. It knows no ethnic or regional barrier.

However, the study of church growth begins to get momentum through the work of Donald McGavran and his co-workers at the Fuller Theological Seminary School of World Missions (McGavran, [1970] 1990:xiii, Ron Jenson & Jim Stevens, 1981:9).

Hunter (1985:11-12) asserts that in 1955, Donald McGavran published *The Bridges of God* and put into orbit the modern Church Growth Movement. As hundreds of books have been published, clergy and lay people have been trained under their influence, journals have been born, and specialists have emerged - every effort committed to helping local churches to fulfill the Lord's Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20).

It is evident that church growth has been a crucial issue in local churches and denominations within the Korean context. With the development of the Church Growth Movement all over the world, various kinds of methods and strategies have been introduced and conducted to promote church growth. However, this study is not merely interested in the methods and strategies of church growth, but with new approaches that are biblically based, and a constructive criticism of the existing methods of various church growth movements.

---

<sup>7</sup> For two decades there has been a self-conscious school of thought called the Church Growth Movement. No other group of people in modern times has done more to stimulate thinking and writing within the Korean context on the subject of mission theory and methodology as have Dr. Donald A. McGavran and those associated with him in the Church Growth School. Compared to the amount of material produced by Reformed missiologists, Church Growth writers have been amazingly prolific. It is not surprising, therefore, that their ideas have found their way into almost every corner of the missionary world (Conn, 1976:44).



This chapter aims to grasp the flow in general of the concept of church growth dealing with the definition of church growth, the background of the Church Growth Movement, and the biblical and theological foundation of church growth. In addition, the types and the factors of church growth are briefly explained. Lastly, some church growth scholars and their church growth strategies and principles are surveyed.

## 2.2 DEFINITION OF CHURCH GROWTH

In the various attempts to clarify the meaning of church growth, many definitions have been formulated. The term 'church growth' has been more often used than understood. Therefore, a proper definition of 'church growth' is very important. The concept of 'church growth' comes from the conventional concept of 'mission'. In a church historical view, 'mission' means redemptive work toward the world in the power of the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit. But, according to Han (1992:56), liberal theologians, without proper understanding of the concept of 'church growth', regarded all the works of churches as 'mission'. Their concept of 'church growth' differs from the conventional concept of mission.

Wagner (1976:13-14) defines the term 'church growth' as follows:

The term *church growth* is a McGavranism. At first, McGavran attempted to phrase the insights he had developed using more traditional language such as "evangelism" or "missions", but he soon found that these terms were little more than useless. They had been defined and redefined so much that they had lost their cutting edge. When "evangelism" and "missions" came to mean everything good that Christians did individually and collectively, they then meant practically nothing.

So in order to describe, in a precise way, what he was trying to articulate, Donald McGavran took two common words and welded them together. Now, "church growth", as a technical phrase, is as independent from "church" and "growth" as "grape nuts" is from "grapes" and "nuts." Actually "church growth" means *all that is involved in bringing men and women who do not have a personal relationship to Jesus Christ into fellowship with Him and into responsible church membership* (Wagner, 1976:14).

Wagner (1987:114) insists that though the above mentioned definition of church growth is the standard functional and popular definition, it is not specific enough to discriminate the different aspects between the concepts of church growth and evangelism. Therefore, he

introduces the broadly accepted formal one that is written into the constitution of the North American Society for Church Growth:

Church growth is that discipline which investigates the nature, expansion, planting, multiplication, function, and health of Christian churches as they relate to the effective implementation of God's commission to "make disciples of all peoples" (Mt. 28:18-20). Students of church growth strive to integrate the eternal theological principles of God's word concerning the expansion of the church with the best insights of contemporary social and behavioral sciences, employing as the initial frame of reference the foundational work done by Donald McGavran.

McGavran ([1970] 1990:6) argues that church growth is God's will and God is pleased with it. Therefore the church has to grow spiritually and keep growing numerically. "The long-range goal of church growth is the discipling of *panta ta ethne* (all peoples), to the end that rivers of the water eternal and abundant life flow fast and free, to every tongue and tribe and people in all the earth" ([1970] 1990:XV).

Similarly, McGavran ([1970] 1990:6) sees church growth as "faithfulness to God". All Christians are sent to seek and redeem the lost through evangelism. God's obedient servants who seek God's will see church growth as an exercise in improving humanity. Accordingly, church growth is naturally led by believers' faithfulness to God.

On the other hand, Jenson and Stevens (1981:10) define church growth as "the balanced increase in quantity, quality, and organizational complexity of a local church". In other words, the maintenance of balance among the three elements results in healthy church growth.

If, for example, 'church growth' is conceived only as numerical increase, the only criterion to evaluate the effectiveness of promotional efforts will be "how many people come to our church" - disregarding the consideration of other aspects.

Smith (1984:19) describes church growth as follow:

What then do we mean by church growth? Church growth is that body of discovered, biblically appropriate and biblically based strategies that relate to the numerical increase and spiritual development of churches and Christians through fulfilling the

mandates of evangelizing, discipling, incorporating, and evaluating to ensure continued progress and ministry.

Smith (1984:15-19) suggests that an adequate definition of church growth includes at least eight factors:

1. An important first factor in a definition of church growth relates to the numerical increase of churches and of members in churches. Seeking numerical increase of both churches and church members is a spiritual undertaking and must always receive adequate attention.
2. Evangelism constitutes an important second factor in a definition of church growth. Church growth emphasizes winning all people and groups of people (ethnic, national, language, socio-economic, regional) on earth to faith in Christ.
3. A definition of church growth must also include the factor of the spiritual incorporation of the evangelized into local congregations of worshiping. Spiritual incorporation means the believer becomes a part of the local body of Christ as the mind and body are part of a physical organism.
4. A fourth factor in a definition of church growth relates to discipling or perfecting of believers in the congregations. Individual growth of Christians remains an important factor in church growth. In fact, any church growth methodology that does not provide for discipling believers must be classified as having defective church growth.
5. The fact that church growth ideas have been discovered in the field and do not represent some theory based on conjecture adds significance to the teachings. Church growth concepts are the fruit of careful observation and study. Any definition of church growth must include this fifth factor, that is, the discovered nature of church growth ideas.
6. Reproducibility constitutes a sixth factor in the definition of church growth. Genuine church growth requires that both Christians and churches continuously produce more Christians and more congregations. This expansion is achieved by the continuing witness of believers and the constant multiplication of congregations. Genuine church growth reproduces; only reproducing and reproducible church growth is acceptable.

7. A seventh factor in a definition of church growth relates to the use of appropriate methods. Models for these strategies are drawn not only from biblical teachings, but from sociological, anthropological, business, and many other disciplines as well. This fact does not however mean that any method that produces growth is acceptable, or that the end (growth) justifies any means that might be used. Every method must be an acceptable method.
8. Finally, an adequate definition of church growth involves the factor of continuously monitoring and evaluating the results of church growth efforts. Monitoring and evaluating processes seek to understand effectiveness in order to implement further development. Constant monitoring and evaluating for the purpose of recognizing need and achieving change is a vital part of church growth thinking.

It can be argued from the foregoing that the concept of church growth isn't simple. It will be a sheer misunderstanding to see church growth as only the increase of church members. Church growth must always be considered quantitatively and qualitatively. Furthermore the ultimate objective of church growth is to make disciples, and to expand God's kingdom by spreading the gospel effectively in word and deed.

### **2.3 BACKGROUND OF THE CHURCH GROWTH MOVEMENT**

The undisputed "father" of the Church Growth Movement is Donald McGavran. He used the term "church growth" for the first time, developed the theory, and led the Church Growth Movement (McGavran & Hunter, 1980:7).

The systematic study of church growth was introduced by McGavran in the 1950s in the USA initially and later spread world-wide from the Fuller Theological School of World Mission in the late 1960s; which later changed to School of Intercultural Studies in 2003. This movement is a quantitative revival movement through evangelizing. McGavran's motivation for the Church Growth Movement originated in the disappointing result of mission work based on his own experience. In other words, though he worked very hard he often came empty-handed out of a ripe field. He did mission work for seventeen years in central India through educational, hospital and relief work, for the upliftment of the rural society. Unfortunately, his work did not yield much fruit when compared to his labor. Later he realized that other mission fields also did not grow in spite of all the effort and enormous financial support. This led him to investigate many mission fields from different

denominations, observing what procedures God was blessing to the growth of his churches and what He was not (McGavran [1970] 1990:xiii). In 1954 he visited seven nations in Africa, studied the churches established by twenty missionary societies, and tested his insights by applying his findings to African churches in different contexts.

At last McGavran published *The bridges of God* (1955), and *How Churches Grow* (1959) based on all his insights. McGavran ([1970] 1990:ix-x) summarizes four principal points<sup>8</sup> of discussion regarding church growth and mission in his book *The Bridges of God*. Also, in his book, *How Churches Grow* (1959) McGavran deals in particular with the relationship between church growth and the population factor, the general factors of church growth, methodologies of church growth, and system and administration for church growth.

Through the above two books church growth became not only a full-scale movement but was also recognized as a practical science for world mission. His other book *Understanding Church Growth* ([1970] 1990) laid the foundation for the development of the Church Growth Movement.

McGavran, crowned the efforts of his studies with the establishment of the School of World Mission at Fuller Theological Seminary and trained many missionaries to spread the gospel effectively and help them build new churches in local areas. On the other hand, in opposition to the church growth theory of McGavran, there were critical views. In particular, critics point out the deficit of McGavran's church growth theory with regard to the problem of poor and oppressed people, justice and peace, the gap between the rich and the poor in relation to God's kingdom. Notwithstanding, his church growth theory has a tendency to place more emphasis on achieving internal church growth than solving external social problems.

---

<sup>8</sup> **The four points:** Firstly, the theological issue suggests that the central purpose of mission was to redeem unbelievers, reconcile unbelievers to God, and bring people into responsible membership in His body. Secondly, the ethical issue is one of pragmatism. He criticizes the notion of missionaries that the disciples duty is merely to focus on sowing the seed and to hand the result over to God for producing. Ultimately, negligence of the results of mission work cause lack in church growth in spite of spending a lot of human and financial resources. Thirdly, the missiological issue is McGavran's people movement theory. To lead many people to the gospel it has to be done through the encouragement of a multi-individual approach which targets members of families, extended families, clans, villages, and tribes. Therefore he applies the homogeneous unit principle. Fourthly, the procedural issue is the distinction between discipling and perfecting. Discipling brings unbelievers to Christ and perfecting is the lifelong process that follows. He pointed out that in the actual mission field, more discipling is needed rather than training for perfecting. McGavran ([1970] 1990:ix-x).

## **2.4 THE BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS OF CHURCH GROWTH**

We find in the Bible numerous references that directly or indirectly, implicitly or explicitly transmit the image of growth. Therefore, it is important to understand the biblical basis of church growth. In the Bible, God has described the church by means of images which teach eternal truths.

### **2.4.1 Biblical basis**

It is obvious from the biblical teachings that God wants church growth. The Great Commission (Matt 28:16-20) is the relevant command of God. Smith (1984:20-21) supports the biblical foundation of church growth as follows:

The direct essential command is in the verb, “make disciples” in verse 19. Three adverbial participles, “going”, “baptizing”, and “teaching” explain how to accomplish “make disciples” consisting of evangelizing and perfection. Clearly, the Great Commission implies winning, discipling, and training followers of Christ.

The Book of Acts shows the records of numerical growth with the description of outstanding growth of the New Testament churches. The group starts with the fellowship of 120 members; as times go on, it increased to around 3,000 people on the day of Pentecost. Luke records in Acts 4:4 that in spite of the hardship and the persecution, as the disciples boldly preached and prayed hard, the company increased to 5,000 men. By chapter 9, there was continuous growth in the number of churches as well as members. In Acts 9:31, the number of congregations in Judea, Samaria, and Galilee is also said to have multiplied.

Not only is church growth supported by the Bible but it is demanded by God. God’s will form the dynamic motivation in the believer’s life for church growth. We expect church growth because God promises it; we pursue church growth because God wants it.

Furthermore, the different metaphors used in the New Testament to describe the church allude to the fact that church growth is essential. The first metaphor is the body of Christ. Paul used this metaphor to describe the church. Elmer (1981:227) captures it well:

The Bible teaches that Christ is the head of the body, which is the church. Paul’s writings to the church at Ephesus and Colossae often refer to this picture. God has made Christ head over all things (Eph. 1:22). We, the members of his body, are to

grow up in all aspects into him who is the head (Eph. 4:15). Christ is also the supplier of growth to the entire body (Col. 2:19). The many members are part of that one body in Christ and of one another (Rom. 12: 5; 1 Cor. 12:12-31).

The second metaphor is the church as the building of God (1 Cor. 3:9). Boyer (1971:50) explains this concept succinctly:

Certainly the context makes the primary application to people. They [the materials] represent persons being built into the church. This is not to be understood, however, as a mere adding of another brick to the wall by getting another convert to Christ. Remember, these people are “living stone”. They themselves grow, so that the temple grows and is edified as its people grow. Thus, the minister’s work is twofold: He builds (1) by getting new people into the building, and (2) by getting those in the building to increase in stature and maturity.

The third metaphor is the Bride of Christ, (Rev. 21:9; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:23-32). The church is also described as the flock of God (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5: 2, 3). Jesus made a clear application to the flock and the shepherd in that very descriptive passage in John 10. The church is also described as the family of God (1 Pet. 2:5; 1 Tim. 3:15) In Ephesians 2:19, Paul emphasized that both Jews and Gentiles through Christ became a part of God’s family.

It is evident that pictures and metaphors of the church found in scripture are far reaching. In every instance, the church is depicted as a living organism. Even in the case of the building the church is composed of living stones.

#### **2.4.2 Theological basis**

Church growth stands on an obvious theological conviction. The theological basis of church growth is the nature of church existence in itself - the nature of church being the “body of Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4). Jesus is the head of the church, which is his body. The church is the spiritual life and the organic structure. Since the church is a living organization it can grow through cell division in itself (McGavran, [1970] 1990).

A fundamental principle is that living organisms grow. The church of Jesus Christ is primarily a living organism and secondarily an organization. Jesus Christ, the head of the church, is a living Saviour. The church includes individuals who have been made alive

spiritually as a result of the new birth (John 3:3; Eph 2:1-3) and its affairs are governed by a living book (Heb 4:12). Since the church pulsates with the life of Christ, we expect the church to grow, unless growth is inhibited by disease. There is no other choice, because living things grow. The church has grown since its birth on the day of Pentecost. It had to grow because it was alive (Jenson and Stevens, 1981:9).

## **2.5 FACTORS OF CHURCH GROWTH**

Church growth is always complex, and is achieved through the complicated interaction of various factors. Every church growth scholar has different views of the factors of church growth.

This part will deal with the factors of church growth formulated by Wagner and McGavran, and also some of the factors of church growth related to the reasons of growth and stagnation of the Korean church.

### **2.5.1 The Factors of Church Growth**

Wagner understood the factors of church growth as follows:

First, at a macroscopic level, there are the national contextual factors and the national institutional factors. This means that church growth can be promoted or obstructed depending on the national environment and circumstances. For example, the history of church growth in the USA and church growth in Africa are totally different from each other. Accordingly, the church growth of a nation is affected by its own world-view, the prevailing senses of values, population, the political and economic situation, and particularly, the traditional religion and the cultural characteristics. Denominational characteristics cannot be ignored within even the same nation. In other words, church growth can be led by denominational political features, theology, and pastoral philosophy. Generally speaking, the liberal denominations seem to stagnate or decrease but the conservative denominations tend to grow. Thus though there is a decrease of the Methodist church and the Presbyterian church in the USA, the growth of the Baptist church and the Pentecost church presents typical examples of the denominational factors.

Second, at a microscopic level, there are local contextual factors and local institutional factors. This implies that the result of church growth depends on the regional and



environmental circumstances of the local churches surrounding them. Generally, new towns with increasing populations and industrial towns with dense worker populations have high potential possibilities for church growth compared to other regions. But, in spite of good conditions in national, denominational and regional factors for church growth, one can't expect church growth unless individual local churches possess adequate factors of church growth. As local institutional factors, good leadership and the devoted laity and the comprehensive caring of new believers are needed. The most important factor of these is leadership. And it is also recorded that the spiritual maturity of the congregation, the regional position, the facilities and the programs of the church affect church growth (Wagner, 1979:18-19).

Lee (<http://www.shareplaza.com>) analyzed the important factors which are associated in the growth and stagnation of Korean churches at three different levels.

To begin with, as a cultural factor, Koreans tend to be receptive and active in religious matters. Secondly, as local church factors, the church movements such as the Evangelistic Movement, the Church Renewal Movement and various programs help Korean churches to grow. Thirdly, the contextual factors can be subdivided into three sets; the political factors, the economic factors and environmental factors related to urbanization. He argued that these contextual factors have enabled the Korean church to grow decisively.

## **2.6 CHURCH GROWTH MODELS**

There are vast numbers of strategies or methods leading to church growth under various circumstances. In particular, the Fuller Church Growth Model<sup>9</sup> and the Natural Church Development Model have affected the Korean church tremendously, and these strategies are still being applied in the Korean church today (Smith, 1984: 49).

---

<sup>9</sup> According to Gwak (2000:59-69), the proponents of the Fuller Church Growth Movement “often assume that the astronomical numerical growth of the SKCs (South Korean Churches) proves the reliability of their theories. Most churches in South Korea warmly support and accept the theories. The Fuller Church Growth Movement has greatly influenced the SKCs. Research done by the Korean conservative evangelical churches show that they particularly tend to follow the Fuller Church Growth Theory unequivocally. Many of McGavran and Wagner’s books were translated into Korean and published in Korea, and their theories have been propounded by most theological schools for evangelicals, for example, ACTS (Asian Center for Theological Studies), a seminary in Seoul, and the Institute of Church Growth in Korea. The SKCs have enthusiastically learned and practiced the movement’s theories without any critical reflection”.

It is not within the scope of this research to deal with all the strategies and methods of church growth. Accordingly, in this section, the two models: Fuller Church Growth Model and Natural Church Development Model and their growth theory, will be reviewed.

### 2.6.1 The Model of Donald A. McGavran

McGavran (McGavran & Hunter, 1980:47) contends that “the Church exists as Christ’s Body, extending its mission to all the lost, hurting, and oppressed peoples”. He described it as the reason why church growth is so important. Church growth is directly related to God’s will and God wants his church to grow. When Jesus Christ appeared to the apostles finally, Jesus said to them:

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matt. 28:18-20 NIV).

McGavran ([1970] 1990:22) sees ‘mission’ as the purpose of church growth. He is a superior missionary, at the same time a missionary strategist. He did not state that church growth is the only purpose for mission, but he regards church growth as the chief and irreplaceable purpose of mission. He also states that any church which is not concerned with growth and discipleship is really disobeying God and doing what is not pleasing to him. McGavran ([1970] 1990) expounds his church growth principles and missionary strategies<sup>10</sup> in his early work *The Bridges of God* and his masterpiece *Understanding Church Growth*. He emphasizes church growth from the angles of “Homogeneous unit”, “People movement”,

---

<sup>10</sup> Smith (1984:51) understood the difference between the terms ‘strategy’ and ‘principle’ as follows: “Confusion has arisen over the term “homogeneous principle”. I consider the homogeneous approach to be a strategy rather than a rule or principle. I am uncomfortable with Peter Wagner’s concept that the homogeneous unit approach is the nearest thing to a law in Church Growth thinking. This makes the homogeneous unit approach a principle. Principles are absolute; they stand for what should be everywhere at all times. For example, “God’s ideal for marriage is one man and one woman for life in a one-flesh relationship” is biblical principle. Although never completely reached, it remains God’s principle for marriage.”

A strategy, in contrast to a principle, is a means to an end. Strategies can be altered or set aside as situations demand. Strategies are methods used to reach goals set by principles. The homogeneous unit strategy does not teach that all churches must or should be for a particular group of people. It does approve of beginning churches targeted for a particular group in order to more effectively evangelize them.”

In this section, the term ‘strategy’ will be used instead of the term ‘principle’.

“Receptivity”, “Indigenous church”, “Making disciples” and “Perfecting.” This section will look at McGavran’s special strategies.

### **2.6.1.1 The Homogeneous Unit Strategy**

The term ‘homogeneous unit’ is very elastic. Some are linguistically, some ethnically, some economically, and some educationally different from the others. McGavran ([1970] 1990:69) says that “the homogeneous unit is simply a section of society in which all the members have some characters in common”. It is frequently a segment of a society whose common character is a culture or a language. The homogeneous unit might be a people or a caste, as in the case of Jews in the United States, Brahmins in India ([1970] 1990:70).

It takes no great acumen to see that when marked differences of color, stature, income, cleanliness, and education are presented, unbelievers understand the gospel better when it is expounded by their own kind of people. They prefer to join churches whose members look, talk, and act like themselves. The following illustration will be helpful to understand it:

Although apartheid laws in the Republic of South Africa applied to Indians as well as Africans, the differences between these dark-skinned peoples are so great that it was difficult for Indians to join African churches. Few Indians became Christians. But once a church made up of Indians started to grow, thousands of Indians became Christians in one particular denomination in a relatively short period of time (McGavran, [1970] 1990:167).

McGavran ([1970] 1990:163-165) believes that “people like to become Christians without crossing racial, linguistic, or class barriers”. He explains this strategy based on social psychological foundations. He points out that the barriers to church growth are not spiritual and theological but sociological factors. Hence he insists that cultural and social homogeneity are protected for effective mission and church growth.

### **2.6.1.2 The People Movement Strategy**

The People Movement Strategy is the strategy derived from the natural result of the homogeneous unit. It means convert people who are in homogeneous units move into Christianity in the gross. In other words, it means the convert is drawn by a chain reaction to people in a same place or a group. The term “people” implies a tribe or a caste, a clan or

lineage, or a tightly knit segment of any society. McGavran ([1970] 1990) explains that church growth can be achieved not so much through a personal way of evangelism but through massive conversion that occurs through “national movement”, namely Christians at all levels of society commence systematic mass movement to eventually develop it to the point of “national movement”. But it does not necessarily mean large numbers becoming Christians, all at the same time. Many people movements consist of a series of small groups contributing to a decision. At any one time only one group makes the decision, is instructed, and is baptized. In addition, the presumption that People Movement Christians must be nominal Christians needs to be reconsidered. Such an assumption usually stems from prejudice. People movements in themselves do not produce nominal Christians (McGavran [1970] 1990:222).

McGavran ([1970] 1980:336) suggests that at least two thirds of all converts to Christianity in Asia, Africa, and Oceania have experienced ‘people movement’. People movement growth has moreover been notable in Latin America, Europe, Asia Minor, and North Africa. McGavran has a firm belief that ‘people movement strategy’ provides quality as well as numerical growth (1980:334).

Smith (1984:68) points out the misunderstanding regarding the people movement. Misunderstanding of the people movement theory was caused by the early use of the term, *mass movements*. J. Waskom Pickett used this term in the title of his seminal book, *Christian Mass Movements in India*. His other book is *Church Growth and Group Conversion*. These terms “group conversion” and “mass movements” raised questions relating to the people movement in the individualized West.

To clarify the concept of ‘people movement’, church growth writers replaced the term “mass movement” with “people movement”. But this was not adequately effective to convey the meaning of the strategy accurately. After several changes in terminology to provide a more clear understanding of ‘people movement’, eventually the terms “multi-individual”, and “mutually interdependent” conversion were born. In the multi-individual decision pattern, each person comes to an individual choice and commitment. Personal commitment to Christ leads to salvation.

McGavran ([1970] 1980:340) defines the meaning of ‘mutually interdependent’. It implies that the people expressing the commitment are closely related to one another and take the

step in view of what the others are doing. A people movement, then, is neither a mass conversion nor a group conversion. Neither masses nor groups can be saved. A people movement is a joint expression of a series of multi-individual, mutually interdependent conversions (Smith, 1984:69). Smith adds that God leads the people movement. Human planning or enforcement can't produce a healthy people movement. Missionary strategy can, however, allow, expect, and accept such movements when they are under the control of God (Smith, 1984:70-71).

According to Smith (1984:71), in applying people movement strategies, the following steps should be observed:

1. Accept the possibility and validity of men and women jointly expressing their faith in Christ. Realize that in many cultures one would not consider making a decision without first consulting with the group.
2. Be aware of groupings, families, gangs, and other communities through which the gospel can spread. Such groups exist in nearly every society. They represent unusual possibilities for church growth.
3. Approach the recognized groups as social units. Work through the recognized leaders of the group. Adapt to the structure of their society. Speak to the individuals as members of the group.
4. Take a positive approach to communicating God's message. Attacking the existing beliefs, behaviors, and concepts most often proves fruitless. Present the message of a loving God, a saving Christ, and a leading Spirit.
5. Consider waiting on baptism until a sizable group can respond together. Care must be taken, however, that baptism not be understood as some kind of graduation. Allow time for the group to develop.
6. Provide continuing post-baptismal care. Teaching, shepherding, and guidance are imperative.

Continued research into the people movement pattern should be undertaken in order to discover additional applications in both more and less developed countries (Smith, 1984:70-71). Further research have been conducted in the 90's and beginning 2000 by people like

Robert Klack, Susan Conway, James Sundquist and Phil A. Newton, just to mentioned a few. However it is not in the scope of this study to cover their research.

### **2.6.1.3 Receptivity Strategy**

The strategy of receptivity conveys the degree of responsiveness to the preaching of the Gospel. Although one and the same Gospel is preached, responsiveness to the Gospel is revealed diversely according to different circumstances in regional, personal and living standards. This implies that the responsiveness to the Gospel is predetermined to some extent regardless of the effort and the forms of evangelism. The significant point from this strategy is that the Gospel should be preached to open-minded people preferentially with the proper mission strategies, because there is limited time, human resources and finance available to invest in the mission field (McGavran, [1970] 1990:179-192).

In short, preaching the Gospel should be more focused on the people possessing open minds to the Gospel than to people who are indifferent to it. McGavran ([1970] 1980:245-265) gives examples of circumstances which reveal high receptivity: the new settlement areas, the region with high traffic population, the country which have a high tendency towards nationalism on account of being controlled by other countries, and the society undergoing frequent cultural change.

Lee, Jun & Na (1983:234-235) suggests in their book *Church Growth Theory* that the Korean church growth is a good example that applied the strategy of receptivity successfully. In the early 1960's and the late 1970's, the Korean church accomplished remarkable church growth, because Korea was in an unstable social situation at that time and needed religion to bring peace and stability to the people. At that time the Korean church did not lose the chance to lead many people whose minds were wide opened to receive the Gospel. As another example, in Korea there were five years of great receptivity (1919-24) under the effort of release from the control of Japan. The church became the rallying point for the oppressed Korean people (Lee & Jun & Na, 1983:184).

### **2.6.1.4 Discipling and Perfecting Strategy**

McGavran's central strategy of Church growth theories is the "Making Disciple Movement". He regards making disciples as the core of mission based on the word of God: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and

of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19). God chose the Israelites and marked them His people: through them He had a plan to redeem the Gentiles. Therefore the son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost (Luke 19:10) (McGavran, [1970] 1990:123).

Discipling (evangelizing) was to be followed by “perfecting” (guiding towards spiritual growth and development), through the whole complex process of growth in grace that leads to spiritual maturity and ethical improvement. In other words, ‘perfecting’ implicates the stage of nursing to bring up new-born Christians to be responsible members of church as individual members of the body of Jesus Christ. Therefore the church is responsible for doing its best to nurse church members. When individual church members become mature through the process of perfection, church growth results naturally (McGavran, [1970] 1990:123).

Smith (1984:72) refers to the discipling and perfecting strategy in the same vein. Conversion in truthful faith leads to changed behaviour. The changed behaviour of Christians brings social and cultural transformation. These changes do not, however, always occur immediately. The real point of the discipling, followed by the perfecting strategy is connected with accepting believers as believers on their own statement of faith, baptizing them founded on their testimony to that faith, and then helping them to live their lives.

#### **2.6.1.5 Indigenous Church Strategy**

Smith (1984:61-67) states that the term ‘indigenous’ needs to be more clearly understood. The reason is that it is sometimes misunderstood as nationalization. Others see it as self-support to eliminate outside financial aid. Therefore the viewpoint of seeing it only as self-support or self-government is not desirable. The wider meaning of an indigenous church will not be overlooked. An indigenous church grows naturally and reproduces successfully in the culture of its members. The indications are that indigenous methods usually lead to more rapid numerical growth, more genuine expansion growth, and a more culturally relevant growth. The church is their church - not a foreign copy. Church services are in cultural forms, natural and recognizable to the members (1984:64).

The indigenous church strategy is founded on the method of mission developed by Henry Venn, Rufus Anderson, John Nevius, Roland Allen, and in more recent times by Melvin Hodges and Calvin Guy. This strategy infers that the local culture is harmonized with indigenous theology through the process of the “three-self formula” viz., ‘self-support’, ‘self-governing’ and ‘self-propagating’.

It seems that the indigenous church methodology is different from the homogeneous unit strategy. More specifically, all churches are not, and need not be homogeneous. All churches will increase their effectiveness as they move towards more indigenous patterns.

Indigenous principles are sound. They are, however, only one factor in growth or non-growth. Thus, McGavran ([1970] 1980:383) concludes:

Indigenous church principles are good, but it is a serious oversimplification to imagine that they are the only factor or even the chief factor in growth or non-growth. The tremendous role played by revival should not be overlooked. Nor can the weaknesses of the “one-by-one against the social tide” mode of conversion in tightly organized societies be forgotten. Many other factors also affect growth.

It is obvious that indigenous methods are valid, productive, and ethically acceptable for modern missionary operations, although this strategy is subject to considerable debate and in need of testing. But it is important that, correctly understood and applied, the indigenous approach is a valid strategy. This approach, like all other strategies, should not be admired, but rather used in conformity with the valid needs of the church. After the church growth movements, this indigenous method later became ‘contextualization’.

### **2.6.2 The Model of Peter C. Wagner**

Wagner, an eminent scholar of church growth theory, sees salvation as the ultimate purpose of church growth. Wagner (1976:48) states that “if your church is not growing and you would like it to grow, it will require prayer, study, hard work and - above all - faith”. In this statement, he particularly focuses on faith as a basic condition. To accomplish healthy church growth, one of the important preconditions is that the pastor and the congregation have to be eager for church growth. In addition, they all together make sacrifices for the sake of it (Wagner, 1979b:24).

Wagner insisted on the inevitability of church growth based on Jesus’ word “I will tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church” (Matthew 16:18). Interpreting the figurative expression of a mustard seed as church growth, he tries to find solutions for church growth. In his book *Church Growth and the whole Gospel* (1981), Wagner suggests a new direction for the church growth movement by acknowledging the role and responsibility of the church in the world. He also analyzes signs of healthy churches, using examples of



healthy and growing churches in his book, *Your church can grow* (1976:61). In this respect, Wagner is the scholar who studies the practical aspect of the principle of the growing church, not simply a scholar who established the theology of it. Wagner (1979b:21-24) presents seven vital signs of a healthy church.

The pastoral leadership is the first vital sign of a healthy church and represents the primary key to church growth. The pastor has to develop his spiritual gift from God through continual training and effort including active and progressive thought.

Secondly, a trained laity is another vital sign. Christians are to function as members of Christ's body; individual church members have been given a spiritual gift or gifts to serve a particular job. Therefore, to discover, develop, and use his or her spiritual gift is one of the most important obligations of a Christian. Strengthening spiritual gifts is not by itself important for bringing church growth, but it definitely is a factor of first-line priority (Wagner, 1979:b21).

Thirdly, a vital sign is that the church has to grasp the necessity and the opportunity to provide the kind of services that meet the needs of the community. A church has to meet not only the needs of its members but also the needs of newcomers; if it does, they will spread the news that their church is doing things that will appeal to outsiders. For example, providing fellowship and pastoral care, or offering Sunday school training for young children (Wagner, 1979:b22).

The fourth vital sign relates to what could be called the "internal organs" of the body of Christ. There is much possibility for church growth through the many possible ways of meeting in groups. Three basic groupings need to be considered; the largest size, which can be almost any size; the middle grouping which should be somewhere around 40 to 120; and the smallest grouping which is limited to 8 to 12 persons. No matter how members constitute fellowship groups, it is important to find the right balance for a given church in a given situation.

Fifthly, growing churches find that their members have the homogeneous characteristics in common. In other words, "it does mean that they have a program that is meeting the spiritual needs of one specific kind of people, and that there is no way one local church can do a good job of meeting the needs of all different kinds of people" (Wagner, 1979b:23).

In the sixth place, it is obvious that “making disciples” as an evangelistic process, is effective in church growth. Obviously, if a church is growing, unless the growth is all biological and transfer growth, something evangelistic is operating. But no one can say that one method is superior to others because of the diversity of evangelistic methods.

The seventh vital sign is priorities properly arranged in biblical order. Wagner (1979b:24) explains that “this involves the set previously called the ‘national institutional factor’. That is, some denominational bureaucracies have made priority decisions for their constituents that have been a definite contributing factor to church decline”.

### **2.6.3 The Model of Christian A. Schwarz (NCD)**

Recent practical-theological research has paid much attention to church development. Church development focuses on the development of missional churches, and functions primarily as a theological theory concerning the initiation and guidance of processes in the community of faith. The Natural Church Development theory (NCD) is one of the evangelistic approaches. This approach has gained much attention in the last 10 years and has been developed by the German author Christian A. Schwarz (Erwich, 2004:180).

Schwarz (1996) defines the theory “learning from nature” based on the Bible and systematized the principle through social scientific methodology. The core of this approach is that the church is not merely an organization but a living organism, in other words, self-organization. To make a scientifically significant assertion, Schwarz did his research project using a minimum of 1000 churches from 32 different countries on all six continents. He draws the conclusion that healthy church growth can be accomplished with quality characteristics (Schwarz, 2000:19-20).

The NCD model use the term “development” instead of “growth”. This means that the term “development” implies both the architectural, constructional image, and the organic image (Schwarz, 1999:221-222), and shows this model to be different from other existing models.

Schwarz (1996:14) explains that his theory is different from other existing church growth theories in three aspects. Firstly, it stresses a principle-oriented point of departure excluding merely pragmatic and a-theological approaches. Secondly, it pursues not a quantitative growth but a qualitative growth. Lastly, it does not attempt to engineer church growth but follows the natural way of church growth believing that God Himself builds the church.

He developed the Natural Church Development theory on the basis of the Bible: “I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow” (1 Corinthians 3:6-7).

With regard to the following questions: ‘How can we create the space that is needed to help the church grow?’, and ‘How can we create space for the growth automatism that God has put into the church?’, Schwarz (1996) develops his answers in five ‘building blocks’: (1) the eight quality characteristics; (2) the minimum strategy; (3) the biotic principle; (4) a new theological model, (5) the ten action steps. The first three are considered as the heart of the model.

### **2.6.3.1 The Eight Quality Characteristics**

Schwarz (1996:22-37) demonstrates eight quality characteristics of healthy churches.

The first, the key distinction, is best stated by the word “*empowerment*”. Leaders of growing churches insisted that they have to focus on empowering lay workers. That is, leaders invert the pyramid of authority so that they help lay workers to use their spiritual potential given by God. These leaders concentrate on equipping, supporting, motivating and mentoring individuals, enabling them to be faithful Christians (1996:22). They invest in discipleship and delegate work instead of taking all the work on their own shoulders. This principle is about multiplication of energy and creating and sustaining a larger network of people who can do the work. It is about mobilizing people (Erwich, 2004:182).

The second quality characteristic of “*gift-oriented ministry*” demonstrates “divine growth automatism”. The gift-oriented approach is based on the conviction that God sovereignly determines which Christians are charged with which ministries. In other words, the role of church leadership is to assist them to recognize their gifts and to involve them in appropriate ministries. Ministry work is not given on the basis of uncertain possibilities, but on the basis of Spirit-given gifts, which need to be discerned and developed. Applying this in the church will result in a larger group of people who work on the basis of their giftedness. Then as each individual serves the church with God-given gifts, they generally function less in their own human strength, and more in the power of the Holy Spirit. In this way lay workers can accomplish remarkable results in their ministries by using their gifts from God (Schwarz, 1996:24).

The third refer to the concept of “*passionate spirituality*”. Faith is not a matter of duty or rules only. The growth of a church in quality and quantity is related to a passionate spirituality. This characteristic is about an intensively experienced relationship with Jesus Christ. It is about loving Christ and experiencing this in worship, prayer, and action.

Many believers assume that church development is dependent on spiritual persuasions such as charismatic or non-charismatic, and on special spiritual practices such as liturgical prayers. But the more important point is: “Are the Christians in the church ‘on fire’? Do they live committed lives and practice their faith with joy and enthusiasm?” And also, though the church has “pure doctrine and orthodox faith”, church growth can’t be expected without contagious enthusiasm and passionate spirituality, with members living their faith and sharing it with others (Schwarz, 1996:26).

The fourth describes the significance of the “*functional structures*” of churches. Despite the vast differences in structures of churches from various denominations and cultures, those with a high quality index have particular basic elements in common. In other words, it’s the “department head principle” one of the 15 sub-principles including the quality characteristic of “functional structures”. The development of structure that promotes continual growth of the ministry is the core quality characteristic of the functional structures. Therefore Schwarz insists that church leaders are not only leading, but also training other leaders. According to Schwarz, many people feel that talking about structures is unspiritual. He points out that the serious obstacles in recognizing the importance of structure for church growth is the view that “structure” and “life” are opposites (Schwarz, 1996:28).

The fifth, which emerges from the research of Schwarz as an important characteristic in church development relates to the “*inspiring worship service*” in the church. Growing churches show a high quality of worship, not only in terms of a seeker-sensitive service. The worship can be inspiring, comforting, and challenging to people. It implies that the worship service is not an ideological service, but an active service experiencing the presence of the Holy Spirit by touching the “inner person” (Schwarz, 1996:30-31).

The sixth identifies the constant abundance of small groups as a general church growth principle. Small groups are amongst the most important factors for growth of the church in these days. The principle of “*holistic small groups*” focuses on increasing more holistic groups applying a message to daily life beyond sharing Bible messages. Through holistic

small groups, church members build each other up by serving others with their spiritual gifts. The way of accomplishing the continuous multiplication of small groups is to continuously train and develop more leaders. Discipleship becomes fleshed out in this context (Schwarz, 1996:32).

The seventh which Schwarz points out is that we should focus on “*need-oriented evangelism*.” It is the responsibility of every Christian to use his or her spiritual gift so that Christians can provide for the needs of non-Christians. The key to church growth for the local congregation is to put emphasis on confronting questions and meeting needs of non-Christians. Such a “need-oriented” approach is different from other “manipulative programs” by the lack of compensation for the needs of non-Christians (Schwarz, 1996:35).

Finally, “*loving relationships*” is also an important characteristic. Growing churches have a high score on the quality of their relationships. The climate of the relationship can be determined as a loving atmosphere in which people really live with each other by the love of Christ. Unfeigned, practical love is far more effective than other evangelistic programs. Non-Christians do not want to hear us talk about love, but they expect to experience practical love from Christians around them. Schwarz points out that by becoming more technocratic church in practicing love or having spiritualistic paradigm of love in view as a feeling are obstacles for church growth. The more technocratic a church, the more difficulties it will have in living out the Christian commandment to love (Schwarz, 1996:36). Schwarz concludes that none of the characteristics can be neglected if the particular church is to be healthy and growing. The model holds a qualitative starting point: improving the quality on the eight characteristics will have quantitative consequences. How to start working with this model? Schwarz emphasized that one needs to work with the *minimum factor*. This will lead to a specific strategy, called the minimum strategy.

#### **2.6.3.2 The Minimum Strategy**

Schwarz points out that one needs to pay attention to the weakest of the eight quality characteristics, because they can constantly block the growth of the church. He claims that by paying more attention to these weak links this will contribute to a further growth of the church. The minimum factor is not more important than the other quality characteristics; basically one has to work on all factors simultaneously, but each church can have a different minimum factor (Erwich, 2004:182).

### 2.6.3.3 The Biotic Principles

Schwarz's focus is to create a space for the growth automatisms. He introduces six 'biotic principles' - principles that create space for reproduction. He formulated these principles by observing nature. They can be explained as follows (Erwich, 2004:183):

#### 1. *Networking (structured interdependence)*

An improvement on one factor will lead to an impact on the other factors, because all the parts and segments are related to each other.

#### 2. *Multiplication*

Applied to small groups, this means that one small group should be creating more small groups as a process of reaching more people with the Gospel.

#### 3. *Conversion of energy*

This principle is about using destructive energy in productive ways.

#### 4. *Multi-usage*

In the church, leaders should make use of co-leaders. The energy invested in a person will be used in a plural way, in a group, and later by the trained co-leader in other contexts.

#### 5. *Symbiosis*

It is very important to make sure that *different* people work together. When everyone works with the gifts he or she has, this will create a high level of teamwork - people mutually enriching each other. There is no place for competition.

#### 6. *Functionality*

This is often an overlooked principle. A characteristic for all forms of life is the bearing of fruit in one way or another. The natural function of this 'fruit' is to maintain its 'kind'. In the New Testament Jesus is referring to this when he says: "A good tree will bring forth good fruit" (Matthew 7:17). In terms of church development, there are two questions to ask: (a) what is the quality of each of the eight characteristics, and (b) how are the growth and multiplication going?

## **2.7 THE EVALUATION OF CHURCH GROWTH MODELS**

Despite the numerous contributions of the church growth models, there is a need to evaluate both their methodology and strategies for a proper understanding of this study. This section will look at the strengths and the weaknesses of the various church growth models.

### **2.7.1 The Contribution**

The theory of the Church Growth Movement started by McGavran, and adjusted and supplemented by Wagner on the basis of Fuller Theological Seminary has played a very important role in terms of suggesting a new way for an academic approach and the practical application of church growth even though there are some weaknesses in methodology theologically. Above all, the movement has played an important role towards a new understanding of evangelism and mission.

Glasser (1987:55-56) insists that McGavran played an important role in developing evangelical mission theology by proposing different stresses in mission from that of the traditional concept, which focuses on individualistic soul-saving and evangelism. In other words, the evangelical mission theology of the late 1940s and early 1950s emphasize personal evangelism. But this individualistic character of evangelical Christianity was changed by the trend towards the multiplication of numerical growth by McGavran, who was the founder of the church growth movement. One of contributions is that it motivated researchers to investigate new methodologies for evangelism, and to use social science to design church growth strategies.

These movements, along with the Fuller Church Growth Model, positively utilize various skills, insights, and social sciences such as sociology, pedagogy, communication theory, organisational theory, systems theory, management theory, and marketing theory. They are thus scientific-method-oriented and tend to focus on effective growth in membership rather than on the faithfulness of ecclesiology (Gwak, 2000:65).

Consequently, the best achievement is that the theories provoked churches worldwide to increased interest in evangelism and mission and to have a new vision for worldwide evangelization. In this respect, The Fuller Church Growth Model made a great contribution to leading the Korean church toward numerical church growth through its various enthusiastic

church growth movements such as the Evangelistic Movement, the Ecumenical Movement, the Mission Movement and the Church Renewal Movement.

On the other hand, the Natural Church Development model has become popular through various publications and conferences which were held in the US and in Canadian academic institutions such as Fuller Theological Seminary, who have accepted it into their curriculum and programs. Schwarz did worldwide research on valid principles. His work offers a neat way of providing an overview evaluation of the quality of the life of the church (Erwich, 2004:184).

Mok (2000:20) states some contributions of NCD to the growth of the Korean church as follows: NCD might contribute to functions which keep the balance between quantitative growth and qualitative maturity. It has also compensated for the weaknesses of method-oriented church growth. NCD could also help the pastors who are under mental stress to maintain the numerical growth of their church, and give some psychological stability in respect of emphasizing that qualitative growth is more important than quantitative growth.

### **2.7.2 Weaknesses and Limitations**

The Fuller Church Growth Model of McGavran and Wagner, despite their popularity and contribution, are still under criticism. The limitations and weaknesses of their models are outlined as follows:

First, they have made hermeneutic mistakes in interpreting biblical context on account of the weakness of the foundational biblical theology, which tends to be partial in interpreting the Bible due to overly focusing on church growth.

According to Taber's (1983:119) assessment, the Fuller Church Growth Model stands deductively on two weak foundations. Firstly, it is a narrowed-down version of the Evangelical hermeneutic and theology. In other words, it is prejudiced in interpreting God's word by focusing only on numerical church growth. Hence Taber tends to draw the inference of one goal, viz., numerical church growth, from every biblical context, for which all else may be sacrificed. Michael Griffith (1980:145-146) accurately indicates that the Fuller theories are method-centered, program-centered, success-oriented, and lacking in theologizing.



Secondly, there is excessive pursuit of pragmatism in the model's theology. We face the widespread notion that Christians should not be pragmatic. But the practice of certain church growth movements is over-concerned with the pragmatistic implementation of Christ's great commission. And the pragmatic aspect of theology has resulted in effectiveness-centered ecclesiology.

Kenneson and Street (1997:17-21) presents some church styles that have the inclination of effectiveness-centered ecclesiology.

Contemporary church growth movements have a tendency towards effectiveness-centered ecclesiology. This inclination is based on the Fuller Church Growth Model. These are examples of effectiveness-centered ecclesiology such as the entrepreneurial church, the full-service church, the therapeutic church, the purpose-driven church, the seekers-sensitive church and the marketing-oriented church.

But there are some points of criticism to be made of the effectiveness-centered church. Gwak (2000:68) indicates some shortcomings. Some scholars question whether this ecclesiology can lead the church in the right direction. They presume that the ecclesiology can provide quick solutions, but tend to fail in proposing sustained church growth. Instead, a sound ecclesiology is recommended - one which keeps the balance between its faithfulness and its effectiveness and considers ecclesial change at a deeper level concerning the identity, vision, and direction of the church (Dietterich, [1989] 1993; Hadaway & Roozen, 1995:65; Dietterich & Ziemer, 1998 16, Webster, 1992, Dawn, 1995; Wells, 1994; Kenneson & Street, 1997)

Thirdly, it contains a possibility of danger of misleading the congregation to the wrong standard in evaluating the result of successful mission. It is pointed out that the Fuller Church Growth Model has church members who are over-interested in numerical growth which ultimately leads them to wrong perceptions regarding quantitative growth as a successful standard in mission.

Furthermore, Lesslie Newbigin ([1978] 1995:125-129) points out that the New Testament does not support McGavran's insistence upon numerical growth as the criterion of success in mission.

Some serious methodological and theological limitations can be found. Firstly, with regard to methodological concerns, one of the limitations is that we can't measure the quality of the life of the church by analysis of only some church members. This is made even more dangerous by the fact that only 30 members and a pastor receive a questionnaire. Of course, this may not be a problem in a small church but it might be in a larger church.

More recently, commentators have pointed out that Schwarz stays too much with the inherited modes of the church instead of looking for new ways of "being a church". Others contend that Schwarz uses a dualistic view of Scripture in which the biblical canon is opposed to God's word. His image of God is said to be very influential on his concept: it is a God who is transcendent and who has 'deposited' all the instruments and principles apart from Himself to such an extent that He is not needed any longer. We only need to be aware of 'growth-automatisms'. I am not sure that this is a fair and sustainable criticism. One of the main criticisms (and maybe the last critical note fits in this context) came from the side of the Church Growth Movement itself. In the *Journal of The American Society for Church Growth* (ASCG), authors like Simpson refer to the fact that Schwarz did not give credit to the Church Growth Movement from which he took so much in his own development. In fact, Simpson accuses Schwarz more or less of creating a juxtaposition between NCD and (the) Church Growth (Movement). It is a known fact that many of the characteristics Schwarz used and developed circled around, for example, the work of C. Peter Wagner (Erwich, 2004:186).

Rene Erwich (2004:186) points out that Schwarz's model does not provide us with sufficient attention to the specific context of churches. Erwich emphasizes the use of contextualization principles that reflect the relationship between the culture and the Gospel.

Erwich (2004:187) refers to Barrett's evaluation of NCD. According to her evaluation, the eight quality characteristics are not deeply enough embedded in interaction with the key themes of the Bible. Barrett points out that overlooking the key missional themes in the Bible leads to an over-emphasis on the 'how' without asking about 'what' and 'why'. In this respect, NCD needs to construct a more solid biblical basis and sound hermeneutical principles.

Mok (2000) outlines the limitations of the NCD model. First of all, because the NCD model is founded on the scientific and statistical sources it is no more than a hypothesis without the tangible and substantial results of qualitative church growth. Secondly, statistical analysis is

deficient in considering the regional characteristics. Therefore it is all the more necessary to consider cautiously whether this NCD model is relevant in the Korean church circumstances or not. Thirdly, the NCD model is criticized that it relies on an empirical approach excessively. The NCD model is supported on account of the biblical principle. It is pointed out that to understand the church on the basis of eight quality characteristics helping church growth is not in the view of biblical ecclesiology. There are inherent dangers which could lead to the simplistic conclusion that small-sized churches are good but big churches are not.

In conclusion, it can be argued that the above-mentioned church growth theories have their own strengths and weaknesses. Therefore it is not a good idea to insist that a particular principle of church growth is the indispensable principle of church growth. It is clear that thinking only in terms of a particular single principle that must be used for growth of all churches is not desirable. To keep a church growing, it is important to use the merits, to modify where necessary and to adjust for the weak points.

## CHAPTER 3

### *THREE SOUTH KOREAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES*

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The South Korean church accomplished unparalleled numerical growth, particularly from the 1960s to the 1990s. The number of churches increased twelve times, from five thousand to six million over forty years, and the number of people in the congregations increased fifteen times, from six million to nine hundred million during the same time.<sup>11</sup>

This rapid growth of the Korean church was due to the sincere faith and the cooperative effort of church members. First of all, it was caused by the passion and the hard work of pastors. Also later, after the 1960s, South Korea was in an unstable situation politically and socially for about ten years and also experienced fast economic change. At the beginning of that period, people appeared to be happy with the increase of their income. But as time went on, the desire for possessions was increasing and the conflict caused by the unequal distribution of wealth, was worsening. Eventually, rapid industrialization and urbanization caused additional psychological instability. In this situation, the economic and social instability served to promote the quantitative church growth (Ro, 1998:19-20).

From the middle of the 1990's, the South Korean church faced progressive stagnation, and eventually was on the decline. Even though there is a continuous phenomenon of new churches opening and some churches growing, the total number of the Christians is now in decrease. In addition, as the church loses social sincerity, it's critical voice is getting louder.

It is stated that the rapid growth of the South Korean church brought about many positive results in various aspects, but at the same time, the negative effects, both internally and externally, have serious implications. Regarding the question, "Is the growth of the South Korean church on the right track or not?", the South Korean church typically keeps focusing on numerical growth and external aspects rather than on qualitative growth and internal

---

<sup>11</sup> Available:

<http://www.kukinews.com/mission/article/view.asp?page=1&gCode=kmis&arcid=0920556490&code=23111111>.

concerns (Park, 2006: 173).

However, there is a need to fully evaluate the process of church growth in Korean churches. Hendriks (2004:213) rightly noted that a congregation must do theology in order to: understand their origin, their history, their identity!; understand where they are going, what makes sense; what the “New Jerusalem” (eschatology) is all about; understand their problems and shortcomings in this ongoing struggle to become what they are in Jesus Christ, and to work towards being his faithful followers. In spite of its critical reflections, the Korean church is still in pursuit of numerical, quantitative, and visible growth. This is inferred from the effort expended by pastors and seminary students in Korea to learn pragmatic skills. For example, they participate eagerly in various seminaries, such as pastoral counseling or core cell group meetings, leadership training, discipleship training, family ministry and church renewal programs. Moreover, some pastors attend workshops related to church growth in the USA and also visit institutes or mega-churches that have succeeded in church growth, to get more information. They believe that the churches that introduced these systems successfully in the USA are good models of an alternative way for renewing the South Korean churches (Gwak, 2000:46).

Although there are many positive results of numerical growth it is evident that these are outnumbered by negative evaluations of Korean church growth. At this point in time, it is important to specify that numerical church growth does not necessarily result in healthy, effective qualitative growth<sup>12</sup>.

In this chapter, on the basis of surveys of the three South Korean churches that continue to grow in spite of the generally stagnating situation, I will cautiously and critically examine and re-evaluate the principle, the direction, and the results of these three churches. Constructive criticism will then be drawn through analyzing the paradigm of Korean church growth elucidating the problems.

---

<sup>12</sup> Available: <http://www.newsmission.com/news/2008/02/12/1612.22079.html>.

## 3.2 THE INTRODUCTION AND SURVEY OF THREE CHURCHES<sup>13</sup>

This section will survey the growth of three sample churches on the assumption that South Korean churches tend to follow quantitative growth. Whilst it is necessary to survey as many churches as possible to get a more effective analysis and reliable data, considering the constraints of this case study, it is limited to three large churches that continue to grow numerically. They belong to the Presbyterian Church, the largest denomination, and are used as samples to reveal the growth tendency of South Korean churches. One reason for the choice of large churches in the sample is that large churches have a tendency to lead the numerical growth of the whole Korean church. In addition, many small churches tend to follow the way to success through accepting and applying the models of the large churches to their own churches. Another reason is the regional location of the sample churches: one of the three churches is in the middle of a new, recently built town, and others are near cities with over a thousand church members in each. It transpires that continually growing churches are gathering in the middle of new towns or near large cities. According to a recent internet news item, over three thousand small churches have been closed every year and most churches are experiencing stagnation except for a few large churches in new towns or near large cities.<sup>14</sup>

In the next section, the three churches chosen will be introduced and briefly described.

### 3.2.1 The introduction of three churches

#### *Church 'A'*

Church 'A' was opened in the early 1980's. To begin with there was only the pastor's family. They used a small rented shop building as their worship hall. But after 5 years, the congregation had increased to around six hundred. A new city was built around the church, which played a significant role in achieving numerical growth. Ten years after the church was opened, the congregation had increased to two thousand members. As the congregation was growing, the church had to buy land and create new facilities for various usages. Church 'A'

---

<sup>13</sup> It is generally agreed that a researcher have a responsibility not only to his research in its search for knowledge and quest for truth, but also for the subjects he depends on for his work. Due to the ethical nature of research and at the same time due to the sensitivity of mentioning names in a research like this, I would prefer not to mention the name of the churches for the purpose of confidentiality. Conventional practice and ethical codes espouse the view that various safe guards should protect the privacy and identity of research subjects.

<sup>14</sup> Available: [http://www.newspower.co.kr/sub\\_read.html?uid=11317&section=sc4](http://www.newspower.co.kr/sub_read.html?uid=11317&section=sc4).

is constantly achieving growth using the methods of the various education programs, caring programs, and a training course for evangelism, with slogans worded as the 'teaching church', 'healing church' and 'preaching church'. There are now six thousand adult members, four thousand Sunday school students and around fifty staff members are serving the church.

### ***Church 'B'***

Church 'B' was opened by a foreign missionary in the middle of the 1920's. It experienced a change in senior pastors and the worship place was moved several times. Although this church is regionally under tremendous influence of Buddhism and Confucian ideas, Church 'B' conquered all difficulties and grew numerically every year. There are now over two thousand members in the congregation. It was particularly between 2000 and 2003, at the time when the Korean Church in general was experiencing widespread stagnation, that Church 'B' achieved rapid numerical growth. At that same time, Church 'B' sent twenty families to foreign countries as missionaries. This church spends over 30% of the church income on supporting missionaries and evangelists. It also helps to support social work through various serving groups of the church. The notable thing about Church 'B' is that it is located in the middle of an area where Buddhism and Confucianism have a strong foothold.

### ***Church 'C'***

Church 'C' was started with only six members at the beginning of the 1990's. This church opened in the conventional way and it is growing continually while focusing on the 'cell church' format. The senior pastor of this church appears to have had a firm pastoral philosophy and church vision from the beginning. The present membership stands at three thousand. Analyzing the congregation by sex and age, the ratio of men to women is 4:6 and age ranges from the thirties to the fifties. In particular, membership of those in their thirties and forties increased during the time of rapid growth in late 1990's. By contrast, the teenage and children groups show the lowest numbers in the congregation. To maintain steady church growth, Church 'C' has placed emphasis on developing various programs such as festival worship services, cell worship services, worship services by theme, inner healing seminars, Bible college and various training courses. The devoted believers trained through these programs are 20-30% of the whole congregation and they are the core members of the church. Forty percent of lay members are undergoing training at present. The programs and the organizing committees responsible for bringing out the quantitative growth are 'the

evangelical revival assembly’, ‘the assembly for training sponsors’, and ‘cell groups’. As caring programs for new believers, there are special educational courses lasting 5 weeks and a one day training camp.

### **3.2.2 A survey of the three churches**

A more concrete analysis of the three chosen churches will be made through the seven questions presented below. The seven questions relate to what the understanding of church growth is, what kinds of church growth models and strategies individual churches use, what specific ‘theology’ or ‘pastoral philosophy’ underlies the models they chose, what the role of leadership in church growth is, and what social factors help or hinder church growth.

The following questionnaire for the survey was given to the pastors of three Presbyterian Churches:

1. Why do you think church growth is important?
2. What church growth model(s) do you use in your church?
3. Do you think the model(s) is effective? If so, why?
4. Do you think church growth is more than quantitative growth? If so, what do you see as the “more”?
5. Do you think there is a specific “theology” underlying the model you chose?
6. How do you see your role as leader of the congregation in church growth?
7. What factors in society do you think help or hinder church growth?

In the following section, the growth of each church will be reviewed through the answers to the research method. A research method must be chosen based on the specific task and context. Therefore, a qualitative approach was chosen for this research. Qualitative research can mean many different things, involving a wide range of methods contrasting models. Denzin and Lincoln (2000:10), in contrasting quantitative and qualitative methods of research, pointed out:

Both qualitative and quantitative researchers are concerned with the individual’s point of view. However, qualitative investigators think they can get closer to the actor’s



perspective through detailed interviewing and observation. They argue that quantitative researchers are seldom able to capture their subject's perspectives because they have to rely on more remote, inferential, empirical methods and materials.

Given the context of Korean churches, a qualitative approach is best able to get facts from respondents. Mouton (1996:26) describes the research process as a journey with four main dimensions:

The traveler, who has a certain motive or reason for undertaking the journey and has certain resources at his/her disposal. Next is the destination, which terminates the journey, having accomplished its motive. Then there is the route, which is defined by the destination in relation to the point of departure and the appropriate mode of travel or transport. He further argued that the same elements are present in scientific inquiry - the scientist (traveler) who conducts research for various reasons also has a certain motive in addition to certain resources, including people, time, finance and infrastructure at his/her disposal. The research objective or overall goal is producing valid and truthful knowledge (the destination). Then there is the phenomenon or aspect of the social world to be investigated (or terrain to be traversed) and lastly, the methodologies to be employed or the route and appropriate modes of transportation.

Conversely, it can be argued that methodology is an important factor in every research inquiry. However, the overriding rule is clear - the methodology used must be appropriate for the task at hand. Mouton (1996:40) further stress that at the methodical and technical level, most researchers accept that quantitative and qualitative tools are compatible and that the choice for their inclusion in a particular project is determined by the specific research problem. Mason (2002:vii) is of the opinion that qualitative research faces new opportunities in a social world that is increasingly thought to be complex and multi-dimensional, and where the particularly qualitative strengths of understanding context, diversity, nuance and process might potentially be very highly valued. Qualitative research is exciting and important. It is a highly rewarding activity because it engages us with things that matter, in ways that matter. Through qualitative research this study was able to explore a wide array of dimensions of the social world, including the texture and weave of everyday life, particularly as it affects church growth among Korean churches. Qualitative research has a capacity to constitute

compelling arguments about how things work in a particular context. In sharp contrast with quantitative research, a dominant feature of qualitative research is its diversity. Denzin and Lincoln (1994:ix) write:

It did not take us long to discover that the field of qualitative research is far from a unified set of principles promulgated by networked groups of scholars. In fact, we have discovered that the field of qualitative research is defined primarily by a series of essential tensions, contractions and hesitations. These tensions work back and forth among competing definitions and conceptions of the field.

Qualitative research therefore is not a single entity, but an umbrella term which encompasses enormous variety. Given the context of Korean churches and the nature of qualitative research, it guided this study to choose a qualitative methodology. The qualitative approach, using a focus group, was conducted among the different churches. The respondents were between the age of 20 and 50. The various responses from the different churches are outlined below.

### **3.2.2.1 Why do you think church growth is important?**

Church 'A' takes the stand that church growth is important in terms of making disciples of every nation, based on Matthew 28:18-19. Church 'A' sees that the way to keep growing is by making disciples.

Church 'B' believes that it has a good chance to extend its ministry by way of church growth. Once people come to church as part of numerical growth, these people grow enough spiritually to be involved in the work of the church. Their vital activities in the church generate opportunities to change the existing system. In other words, as the church grows, there are more and more possibilities of using human and material resources to do good works through the church. Therefore they see church growth as significant in both numerical and qualitative terms.

But Church 'C' takes a different stand insisting that the church is not merely a system or an organization, but that it is a living life of Jesus Christ. The living creatures have to keep growing. Without growth, it is considered to be dead. Church 'C' emphasized church growth by presenting the examples of the rapid growth of the early church. Church 'C' sees the continual fruit bearing of life as the sign of a growing church. In brief, the three churches

agree that church growth is what pleases God and is in accordance with God's command. Hence they take the same position that church growth is an absolute mission from God.

### **3.2.2.2 What church growth model(s) do you use in your church?**

It is not easy to accurately classify the church models and strategies used by each church because most churches are using mixed styles of church growth models and strategies. But one can assume what church model they use by observing the direction of ministry and the programs practiced by each church. In these terms, it seems that churches 'A' and 'B' operate on the basis of the 'making disciples' model. They also actively use various kinds of programs such as 'the week of Mobilizing Church Members', 'the Evangelical Training Course', 'the New Life Training Course', 'the Evangelical Restoration Assembly', and 'the Testimony Assembly'. In contrast, Church 'C' tends to pursue the Natural Church Development Model. Therefore, they strategically use the "Cell Church Model<sup>15</sup>" as one way of achieving the Natural Church Development Model.

### **3.2.2.3 Do you think the model(s) is effective? If so, why?**

Churches 'A' and 'B' both stand firmly by the model of 'discipleship training' through systematic education and training. As a result of discipleship training, many faithful lay believers devote themselves to serving their churches. In regional districts where there is a

---

<sup>15</sup> (Hong, 2004:105). In both the mega-church and multiplication models, it is the small group that plays a key role in growth. Since the 1990's, the cell church model has attracted many church leaders' attention as a new model for church growth and renewal. David Yong Gi Cho used the term 'home-cell group' and popularized this ministry (cf. Cho Yong Gi, 1997) *Successful Home Cell Groups* (Seoul: Seoul Loges Co). Main stream scholars agree that David Yong Gi Cho is the pioneer of the cell movements (Comiskey, 1998). However, Ralph Neighbour and others have theorized on the cell-church model. Neighbour maintains that the cell-church model is a new model for church growth and an alternative for the future ministry of the church. He emphasizes that the earlier traditional and programme-centred ministry structure cannot be equipped for the coming age of revival (Neighbour, 2000).

This model was developed from two contexts: the mega-church phenomenon; and the experience of Christianity's suppression. The cell-church model has something in common with the mega-Church model in that both take small groups seriously. The difference between the two is in that each cell functions as a church in the cell-church model. In a cell-group church, the cell is the church. All functions of the church (e.g. worship, fellowship, and nurture) are integrated within the cells, aiming to evangelize small groups. The cells are prevented from becoming inwardly focused. Each cell is expected to multiply within 12 to 18 months by winning people to Christ. If a cell functions for a long time without multiplying or planting another cell, the cell is deemed unhealthy (Khong, 2000, p. 37). The cell-church is modeled on the house community in the early church. One of the noteworthy models of the cell-church model is G-12. Each cell group consists of 12 members, following the number of Jesus' twelve disciples. Each group is expected to multiply into another G-12 group. Today the G-12 model is impacting many churches around the world (Hong, 2004:101-113).

highly mobile population, in two churches particularly, church members do not settle easily in their churches. Even though it was difficult to apply the model of discipleship training in this situation, it played a decisive role in settling down church members and it led to church growth. The most important course of this model is the Bible study course.

Various kinds of Bible study programs help to establish the basis of belief. Such programs aim to empower lay believers to become effective workers through training and education in gradually deepening stages of faith, and in so doing to equip individual church members and develop them as God's servants. These two churches focus on making disciples of every nation so that their dominating policy of church work is to spend human and material resources on overseas mission and domestic evangelism.

Church 'C' is growing by applying the cell church model, following the principle of natural growth. Church 'C' believes that the cell church model is a good way to recover the model of the early church that experienced true worship and sincere love in the Christian community and it is expected to be an effective way for church growth. The cell church model is successful in terms of ease of access to isolated individuals and families living in urbanized and industrialized societies. Church 'C' believes that the activated small groups are the core of active church growth and a world-wide trend.

#### **3.2.2.4 Do you think church growth is more than quantitative growth? If so, what do you see as the "more"?**

Churches 'A', 'B' and 'C' have the shared opinion that church growth is more than quantitative growth and, they believe, the true meaning of church growth is to achieve numerical and qualitative growth at the same time. There is, however, a small difference of opinion among them. Even though 'A' and 'B' churches follow the discipleship model, they see that numerical growth comes first through various evangelical strategies and then qualitative growth follows. Church 'B' states that it faced the ceiling of church growth when the number of its congregation increased to one thousand. On account of this, church 'B' became more interested in the maturity of the church than in numerical growth. Church 'C' takes a slightly different stand in that they believe a healthy church precedes quantitative growth. Thus, church 'C' insists that healthy church growth through the maturity of the church naturally leads to numerical growth.

In this respect, churches 'A' and 'B' try to develop the mission work more energetically,

namely the evangelical work and the welfare work for the regional community, and in so doing, lead more people to the church. On the other hand, church 'C' focuses more on education and recovery of spiritual power and building up of relationships among church members to insure the maturity of the church.

#### **3.2.2.5 Do you think there is a specific “theology” underlying the model you chose?**

Churches 'A' and 'B' believe that mission comes before other church work, saying “the only reason for church growth is to do mission work.” Therefore, both churches have sent more than twenty families abroad into the mission field. They believe that preaching the Gospel is the absolute mission of the church and they expect the results. The emphasis of church 'C' is taken from the example of the Jerusalem church in Acts. That church's growth was accomplished in quantitative and qualitative aspects at the same time.

#### **3.2.2.6 What do you see as your role as leader of the congregation in church growth?**

Church 'A' believes that the church leader is to be like a ship's captain. In his role, above all, he needs speedy and accurate judgment and strong charismatic leadership. Church 'B' sees a leader as the head of a family. The leader has the responsibility of taking care of the congregation like a father of a family and furthermore he needs a self-sacrificing spirit to preach the Gospel with passion for world mission and salvation. Church 'C' considers a leader as a coordinator who gives good motivation about why the church grows, and a direct and accurate direction in which the church is to go. In other words, he has the responsibility of leading spiritual flow and keeping a balance between numerical growth and qualitative growth. There is little difference of opinion about the role of church leaders: they share the same opinion that leaders have the responsibility to give continual motivation to their congregations with zeal to get good results after setting a goal and pursuing it. In the end, they believe, church leaders have responsibility for both quantitative and qualitative growth.

#### **3.2.2.7 What factors in society do you think help or hinder church growth?**

In the case of Church 'A', it achieved rapid growth because of the new town recently built near it. As new apartments were built, the new church members who moved from other churches increased the numbers of church 'A'. Continuous welfare work for the community such as the running of a therapy centre, hospice, a library, feeding ministry, and beauty treatment services, played a big role in giving a better image of the church to the community.

This acted as a catalyst for quantitative growth.

Church 'B' is located on a property within the vicinity of a big city, which is under the strong influence of Confucianism and Buddhism. The community is very hostile to Christianity. In the event of someone converting to Christianity, he or she has to endure severe persecution from the family. In the case of church 'B', the influence of Confucianism in respecting the elderly played an important part in increasing the size of communities. Even though other religions counteracted church growth, it was helpful for church growth to keep a good relationship between the church and the community by taking part in welfare work for the elderly.

Church 'C' points out that economical prosperity and social stability are two factors that can hinder church growth. But inversely, it confesses that economical prosperity and social stability can become important factors to grow church.

### **3.3 THE ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION OF GROWTH OF THE THREE CHURCHES**

As already mentioned, there is a growing sense of crisis in the Korean church. This sense of crisis is not only from concern regarding the stagnation of quantitative growth. Beyond this, the South Korean church is losing social sincerity.<sup>16</sup> At present, the South Korean church can not take a step forward without accurately understanding the recent crisis and doing reflective evaluation thereof. Therefore in this section, the critical analysis and evaluation of the three sample churches will be done in the light of the church growth models studied in Chapter 2. The general tendency of church growth, the problems of and reasons for the South Korean church growth will be drawn on the basis of the results of the analysis.

#### **3.3.1 The analysis of growth of the three churches**

Church 'A' was started at the time when the South Korean churches had reached the peak of rapid growth and church 'B' was opened by a foreign missionary. From the start and up to the present it is continuing to grow with a passion for mission. For both churches, it was the passion of the senior pastor and the devotion of the church members that brought about church growth. Church 'A' devoted all its energy to achieve the goal of evangelism through planning various strategies. Church 'A' sees evangelism as the ultimate goal of a church,

---

<sup>16</sup> Available: <http://www.shareplaza.com>. No 137.

hence they practiced the movement of doubling church members by means of “the total evangelism week” or “the evangelical commandos”, and awarding a prize at the end of every year to the person who led the most people to the church. The slogan of church ‘B’ is “only growth, only mission, only belief”, and the whole congregation is encouraged to believe that the only reason for church growth is mission.

On account of this, most programs practiced by these two churches are focused on numerical growth. For example, the methods of the revival movement, Bible study, disciple training course and prayer meetings were originally begun to train believers in spiritual and quality aspects. The Bible study and the disciple training programs practiced for training congregations were activated and they were helpful not only for strengthening believers, but also to motivate church members for mission work and evangelism. As a result, churches ‘A’ and ‘B’ experienced numerical growth every year.

The common positive aspect of numerical growth of these two churches is described below: It is estimated that both churches are trying to pursue quantitative growth with characteristic evangelical strategies and use the regional and cultural property for evangelism well. It is not that the personality of the senior pastor has nothing to do with church growth. Speaking of the senior pastor’s personality of both churches, they are firstly obedient with a single-minded devotion; secondly, unshakable with a firm target; thirdly, investigate with a sharp insight; fourthly, flexible to change the evangelical strategy through cool-headed evaluation; fifthly, tend to have an optimistic view regarding faith. From these viewpoints, the factors that affect church growth are not national or denominational factors connected with the political situation or theological problems, but just regional or situational factors. So it seems that church growth was influenced by many regional or situational factors: setting up a new town around the church, the style of leadership, the involvement of devoted lay persons, the way of caring for new church members, church facilities and various church programs.

Churches ‘A’ and ‘B’ both stand on the basis of both McGavran’s theory regarding the purpose of church growth as to strengthen the mission, and also Wagner’s theory with the view that the ultimate aim of church growth is salvation. It is evaluated that the church growth model of McGavran tends to follow numerical growth. However, it must not be overlooked that there is a passion for salvation on the other side of McGavran’s model, clearly expressing that God wants to look for the lost and He calls all nations back to Him. Therefore every believer has to be on fire for salvation. It is a pity that both churches see

mission as the numerical and quantitative growth of individual churches.

Church 'C' has grown since they started, opening in the traditional church way. Ever since 2000, the problems of pursuing quantitative growth were grasped and the cell church model, based on a natural church growth theory, was chosen. At an early stage, it was difficult to change the church model from the conventional structure to a cell model, but after making the change, there was outstanding numerical growth. The change consisted of establishing cell groups and vitalized lay persons helped to activate ministries.

These three churches experienced an increase in their congregations and the financial stability was sufficient to meet the needs of satellite institutions such as the educational centre, the mission centre, the welfare centre and a prayer house. They have grown very fast in a short time in their community. One of the reasons for the rapid growth is horizontal migration among churches on account of the setting up of new towns around the churches. The church members involved in horizontal migration prefer to choose a big church. In this, the congregations and church leaders were proud of their success in quantitative and qualitative growth.

### **3.3.2 Evaluation of the growth of the three churches**

It is true that most church leaders and believers see church growth in terms of quantitative terms. There is no exception in the cases of the sample churches. They achieved many results through numerical growth. For example, the extension of ministries to various fields, enlarging chapels or the building of new institutions with abundant finance, the sending of many missionaries to foreign countries, and the dispatching of short term mission teams to overseas countries every year. In this process of quantitative growth, the South Korean church failed to see the other side of church growth while it indulged in its self-contentment.

Churches 'A', 'B' and 'C' take a slightly different stance regarding church growth. Churches 'A' and 'B' believe that numerical growth can lead to qualitative growth naturally. Therefore church 'B' pursues quantitative growth in the belief that qualitative growth will follow. From this point of view, it is an undeniable fact that they are more interested in increasing their congregations, keeping their finances stable, becoming famous in size and character even though they insist that they have a balanced church growth. Church 'C' provides an example of how the excessive extension of cell groups and the strategy of program centered activities, such as the Week of Mobilizing Church Members, the Evangelical Training Course, and the



New Life Training Course resulted in harmful side effects concurrently with numerical growth. Related to the cell church model, the Theology Committee and the Heresy Measures Committee in the Presbyterian Church held a seminar on May in 2008. At this seminar it was pointed out that the cell model is non-biblical and it needs to be scrutinized. As the awareness took place of the importance of small groups in the recent South Korean church, not only the Alpha course and the cell model, but also the House Church and the G-12 model were introduced and applied. But disregarding the critical analysis, and without allowing enough time to consider it, it was applied, resulting in many problems, shaking the foundations of ecclesiology. Many churches accepted these kinds of models to bring about growth: they were temporarily successful in church growth, but eventually the problems became apparent in the churches which applied church growth models without sufficiently considering their own situations.<sup>17</sup>

It was also pointed out that the church growth models, including the small groups started with the hope of qualitative growth, but became another program promoting numerical growth on account of the excessive artificial management. As a result, it turned out that each of the three sample churches tended to focus on quantitative growth.

In this respect, I refer to an article entitled, “*The pastoral paradigm of the South Korean church as judged from the view-point of the science of religion and society*”, written by W K Lee (1998), a professor at the theological seminary of the Methodist Church. Lee asserts that there are surely common pastoral paradigms which have led the mainstream of Korean churches and which were chosen by many Korean church leaders in spite of the diverse characteristics of different denominations, churches, times and church leaders. The common pastoral paradigms of the South Korean church mentioned above are closely connected to the rapid growth of the whole Korean church, not merely related to the growth of the three sample churches. Therefore, in this section, the character of church growth of the South Korean church will be studied on the basis of the common pastoral paradigms of the Korean church.

Lee divides the pastoral paradigm of the South Korean church into four characteristics.<sup>18</sup> Firstly, it has the ‘growth-centered’ character of pastoral philosophy, which is one of the important values of most Korean pastors. Church growth has been the biggest issue of South

---

<sup>17</sup> Available: <http://www.gpcw.net/zbx/articles/11799>.

<sup>18</sup> Available: <http://www.shareplaza.com>. No 111.

Korean churches since the 1960's. Every church, every denomination, strived to achieve quantitative growth according to an annual growth target. The church growth theory which was popular in the 1970's and 1980's particularly affected Korean churches in mapping out a church growth strategy, and pursuing it. For a while, a considerable number of leaders of large churches who has succeeded in getting rapid growth, accepted the church growth theory, and applied it to their churches. It is estimated that most of the large church leaders whose churches accomplished rapid growth after the 1960's, studied the church growth theories and applied them in their own churches.

By way of explanation, the detailed items of church growth principles were applied to South Korean churches in the following way: the pastors' firm faith for church growth, the participation of devoted lay preachers, the hope of achieving a mega church, the unity of church members, the recovery of homogeneity of the church, an efficient way of preaching the Gospel, and a practical use of material and human resources.

Overseas mission work can be understood to follow the same lines of church growth: it reflects the same intention to extend church growth overseas by dispatching missionaries to foreign countries to build churches in actual mission fields and train native church leaders. Generally, to the same extent that the overseas mission tends to be vitalized, the domestic mission is confronted limitation.

Secondly, another characteristic of the pastoral paradigm of the Korean church is 'belief-centered' which focuses on belief only, not action. So far, South Korean churches have thoroughly emphasized 'faith training'. This was considered as the standard for the faithful Christian, namely to attend church eagerly, read the Bible and pray earnestly, preach the Gospel zealously and to bring their offering willingly. Pastors encourage church members to actively attend every public worship service, prayer meeting, Bible study and disciple training school. As a result, various Bible study programs have been activated in the church. These Bible study programs help to motivate church members in faith training and preaching the Gospel. Personal prayer time is emphasized as well. The content of sermons is mostly about vertical faith related to God's word to strengthen personal faith. Hence the pastoral paradigm of the South Korean church has 'vertical faith central' characteristics.

Thirdly, the paradigm of the South Korean church is that of an 'individual church-centered church'. The term 'church-centered' implies that every faithful good work has to be done

within the boundary of the church. In other words, it was assumed that the standard of personal faith depended on how much members are involved in church activities and displaying a spirit of service and allegiance to the Lord. It led to the slogan of ‘gathering church’ and led church leaders try to encourage believers to be more involved in the good works of the church. The church-centered belief pattern which focuses on ‘church building’ and a ‘preferential system’ is deeply related to the numerical growth of a church. It brought about eagerness to extend the satellite institutions to accommodate increasing numbers of people coming to church.

This consciousness also bore the ‘individual own church-centered’ characteristic. The term ‘individual own church-centered’ means that the church is more interested in internal matters, the congregation putting priority on maintaining and extending their own church. Hence, in making a budget, more funds would be spent on their own churches to provide access to human and material resources. From another point of view, due to the influence of Confucianism predominating in Korean culture, the South Korean church has a tendency towards a self-centered way of thinking. In terms of cultural effects, Korean culture emphasizes homogeneous groups such as the family which results in a strong unity among members of the group. Accordingly, the South Korean church seems to adhere to the principle of ‘my church’, without being concerned about being part of the one body of Jesus Christ. The ‘individual church-centered mind’ motivated church members to achieve rapid growth.

At present, many Korean churches have a tendency towards self-centered thinking and they pursue growth and development using all kinds of human and material resources. It is submitted that, in a positive way, this spirit has brought about many positive results: the strength of personal faith and church growth using the methods of the Doubling Movement, the Restoration Movement, program development, Bible study and prayer meetings.

Fourthly, the last characteristic is of an excessively ‘organization-centered’ church. It can’t be denied that the church really needs a systematic organization as every other group does. It is, however, no exaggeration to say that the Christian church is the most systematic organization when compared to other religious groups. South Korean churches have created many different kinds of organizations, and led activities on the basis of these systematic organizations. They organized the mission association by age, and caused church members to serve the church and the community and preach the Gospel competitively. They also encouraged church members to become involved in ‘Bible groups’, ‘prayer meetings’,

‘fellowship meetings’ and to attend neighbourhood small groups. These systematic organizations contributed to the growth of faith, loyalty to the church and to evangelism.

One of the well organized systems is the Sunday school. The purpose of Sunday school is to teach children the point of worship, education, and fellowship. There are also various types of committees which play important roles in planning and conducting the main events and programs of the church. There is a tendency for significant church issues to be dependent on the strength of character of the leaders and a few core members of the church. So it is evident that the system in the South Korean churches has an authoritative structure and most programs of the church are led by the small core number of people who are longstanding members.

In summary, up to now South Korean churches have pursued the pastoral paradigms of ‘growth-centered’, ‘belief-centered’, ‘individual church-centered’, and ‘organization-centered’. It is not denied that these pastoral paradigms, with the four characteristics mentioned above, are closely connected with the numerical growth of the South Korean church. These paradigms also brought about both the negative and the positive outcomes of church growth simultaneously. On the one hand there are some positive sides to numerical growth such as building up the individual believer’s faith, strengthening the unity among church members and extending ministries to various fields internally and externally through well organized church systems. On the other hand, many negative results were brought about as well. Therefore, in the next section, the negative results will be dealt with in more detail.

### **3.4 THE RESULTS AND PROBLEMS CAUSED BY NUMERICAL-CENTERED GROWTH**

South Korean churches accomplished rapid growth during the last several decades as the result of focusing on numerical growth. The most outstanding negative consequence is the appearance of ‘growth-centered’ churches on account of the zealousness for rapid growth. In this section the crisis caused by ‘growth-centered’ churches will first be studied, and then the harmful side affects and the problems will be considered. The crises caused by growth-centered churches are the emergence of mega-churches and the commercialization of the church. The problems and the negative effects followed by the South Korean church becoming fat but not growing. They caused the extreme phenomenon of becoming a big church or a small church, the tendency toward material superiority in the church, the church-

centered paradigm and the weakness of the social sincerity of the church.<sup>19</sup>

### **3.4.1 The crises caused by ‘growth-centered’ churches: Becoming a large-sized church and the commercialization of the church**

The most outstanding result of church growth is the appearance of mega churches. With regard to this, Y G Hong (2003:239), who is the president of the Institute for Church Growth in Korea, states that “the dynamism of the Korean Church today has become a significant element in Korean society. The Korean Church can be characterized by rapid church growth and the emergence of mega-churches, and these attract the locus of scholarly investigation”. The central focus of many Korean pastors on building mega-churches; success in ministry is synonymous to the size of one’s congregation. A Korean economic newspaper recently reported that there are about thirteen mega churches with over one million members in their congregations and three hundred large churches with over one thousand members in South Korea. It is a testimony to the reality that South Korea has the biggest Presbyterian Church and the biggest Methodist church in the world, and that twenty three of the fifty biggest churches in the world are in South Korea (Kim, 1995:325).

According to research and investigations by the Institute for Church Growth in Korea, in 1999, it was estimated that there were nearly 400 large churches and 15 mega-churches. The exceptional characteristic of Korean mega-churches, namely, that it is not easy to build such a huge church organization which thousands of people who voluntarily attend, has been the object of academic interest, independent of any value judgment regarding the phenomenon. Most large churches and mega-churches are in the centre of Seoul, the capital of South Korea, or the surrounding metropolitan areas (Hong, 2003:239).

It has to be recognized that the emergence of Korean mega-churches had amazing results in terms of numerical growth, and positive effects emerged in many respects. Hong discusses the positive out-comes brought by the appearance of Korean mega-churches in his article ‘*Encounter with Modernity: The “Mcdonaldization” and “Charismatization” of Korean Mega-churches*’ (Hong, 2003). He states that the churches contributed to the development of modernization of the Korean society. For example, the use of technology, education, the training in administrative skills, social mobility, and the use of women in lay leadership. Korean mega-churches should be understood in the unique historical and cultural context of

---

<sup>19</sup> Available: <http://www.cry.or.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=277>.

Korea. At that time, Korean society experienced widespread disorder on account of the Korean wars. Rapid urbanization and industrialization, and the timing and introduction of Protestantism influenced the birth of the Korean mega-churches. Under these influences, Korean mega-churches have embraced the process of modernization. As a result, the Korean churches introduced new institutional systems, which in turn have provoked religious enthusiasm.

He adds that some of the reasons that the Korean mega-churches became vitalized and developed may be found in their position of ambivalence toward modernity. On the one hand, Korean mega-churches are rejecting modern rational influences. On the other hand, by accepting the modern values and structures, the Korean mega-churches have developed effective modern institutions. Many problems have been caused by social modernization.

One strong characteristic of modernity's effect on the Korean mega-churches is the "McDonaldization" of the churches. The term "McDonaldization" is of course derived from the American hamburger chain and is now claimed to be the world's largest restaurant franchise. "McDonaldization" is a symbolic word for the modern rationalizing social process in our contemporary world. It is not difficult to see how this kind of rationality now controls many people's lives at almost every point: the Korean mega-churches are no exception. Rationalized systems are not only tolerated but growing, and are not just seen as a means to an end but an end in themselves. Although "McDonaldization" does not represent the whole impact of modernity, it seems to be a key determinant. Without having accepted a rationalized mind-set, the emergence of mega-churches as institutional forms would have been impossible. Modernity is a normative order whose overarching moral rationale and imperative is summarized by the word "progress". It cannot be denied that the acceptance of the value of progress has had a great impact on the quantitative growth of the Korean mega-churches. Progress, in this context, is related to a calculability that is about size and quantity, which are two of the characteristics of the "McDonaldization" process. They imply that "bigger is best" in modern Korean society. This approach demands visible results.

Korean mega-churches have been greatly influenced by the trend of the North American enterprise culture, both in socio-economic development and church theology. Rapid modernization, along with the priority of the government for economic development, have influenced the preference for what is big and encouraged local "churchism" in Korea, by which churches had to compete against one another to achieve a larger slice of the religious

market share in an uncertain society.

Korean mega-churches have been influenced by American rational calculability so that they have adapted "church growth theology" into their modern cultural and social context. The same theological influence has encouraged the use of high technology and strategies for church growth. This has led many church leaders and Koreans to believe that it is the big church that is beautiful. Many Korean pastors, stimulated by the mega-church model, sought to work for the exponential growth of the church.

As indicated above, in spite of the concerned atmosphere of becoming mega-churches, South Korean churches still tend to pursue the ideal of becoming a large church.<sup>20</sup> At the present time, critical reconsideration of church growth is urgently needed to achieve the ongoing and healthy growth of the South Korean church.

Rhee (1995:279) critically points out that the Mega-Church Movement in Korea stands on a weak theological basis. It is not right to say that all mega-churches in South Korea are on the wrong track. But it is obvious that generally South Korean churches tried to make large churches outwardly in secular and artificial ways. The mega-churches showing off their external magnificence without the strong basis of God's word and the faithful behaviour of loving neighbours represent the serious state of the South Korean church. The emergence of mega-churches is criticized in terms concerning all churches in Korea. Os Guinness (1993) argues that the mega-churches and the Church Growth Movement virtually flirt with modernity, which is contrary to the Gospel (cf Gwak, 2000:68). Even though the negative side of the mega-church was known, most evangelical groups in South Korea accepted and applied in the Korean situation, the technical methodologies of growth models used by mega-churches in the USA. It is clearly evident that the various church growth models from the USA affected the making of mega-churches in Korea. In other words, the influence of church models introduced from the USA, led to the Korean pastors' change in perception of the church essence. In the end it brought about the birth of Korean mega-churches and close adherence to the formal and external issues, rather than to the spiritual and essential concerns.<sup>21</sup>

It appears that another methodology used by Korean churches to increase numbers is a

---

<sup>20</sup> Available: <https://cttv.christiantoday.co.kr/view.htm?id=171180>.

<sup>21</sup> Available: <https://cttv.christiantoday.co.kr/view.htm?id=149379>.

'marketing strategy' of enterprise. In this regard, it seems that Korean mega-churches were influenced by the commercialism and the pragmatism of the USA. Marketing strategies for church growth is elucidated as follow:

The first step of a marketing strategy is to select a target audience and the next is to survey the taste and the needs of the target audience so that they can easily access goods to purchase. Once the marketing strategy is explained and applied to church growth, churches try to do their best to provide good services to make people comfortable to access the church and to give them a good impression. For example, there are the most advanced sound facilities, audio-visual facilities, and convenient usage of computer and fax machines, child care services and convenient parking areas. On the other hand, the church has to be sensitively be aware of the peoples' needs in general pastoral care through providing active worship, educational programs and various devotional events (Webster, 1992:13-14).

### **3.4.2 The problems and the harmful side effects caused by the growth-centered church**

Firstly, the ambience of making large churches as a trend brought about stratification among churches. Actually, church growth was achieved solely in city churches. There has been a constant increase in the number of churches, and congregations of individual churches in cities. But in rural areas the opposite prevails. Besides creating differential levels between city and rural churches, the extreme phenomenon of becoming a large church or a small church appears and can occur even within the same city.

This extreme phenomenon was caused by horizontal migration of people who move from a small church to a large church, and by the materialistic, commercial, selfish church growth strategies of large churches, making it difficult for small churches to survive. It also created a sense of incongruity among churches when it resulted in pastors serving large churches becoming proud and self conceited, and pastors serving small churches feeling a sense of inferiority and frustration.<sup>22</sup>

Secondly, the church growth focus on quantitative growth bore growth-centered values and it was combined with the principle of achievement that led to the value of material superiority and materialism. For example, it was considered to be successful when the church growth increased as measured by the high number of the congregation, the high budget of the church

---

<sup>22</sup> Available: <http://www.kspress.co.kr> 2006/11/29.



and the large size of the church building and other facilities. In other words, it became the standard of a successful ministry and a good church model if there were material resources such as a large budget and human resources that included a large congregation and church hall and satellite institutions. The social level and the amount of offering money were important evaluative standards of individual members. Church growth that was evaluated by quantitative standards caused changes of church identity.

Since the 1960's, the South Korean church started to be particularly interested in the numerical aspect. As the interest in economic growth grew, the reason for this phenomenon was not only rapid social change but also the tendency of evaluating everything from a numerical point of view as a successful standard. In the end it emerged that they prefer quantitative things rather than qualitative attributes and prefer the external and perfunctory value rather than the internal and essential value. The excessive effort exerted to achieve the goal measured by numbers, generally caused significant losses.<sup>23</sup>

In terms of concern about this tendency of church growth, some people insist that the South Korean church has to reconsider church growth. There is even an emphatic assertion saying that "the church can survive only when the 'growth-centered' paradigm is stopped". The Church Growth Movement that started with pure intentions went in the wrong direction of material evaluation. Eventually it led to the loss of the essence and value of church growth.<sup>24</sup>

This was manifest in the lack of importance given to the church as the model of a loving community, to how much spiritual and moral power the church leaders have, and to how much congregations practice love with passion for the Gospel, and for serving people. Gradually in the South Korean church, the number of the established congregations, the size of church buildings and the amount of offering money became as a new measurement of successful growth.

Thirdly, whilst church growth implies the increase of churches, the rapid increase of churches caused unavoidable and severe competition among churches and denominations. The South Korean church faced the reality that, without making a serious effort to secure church members, they would lose the competition and would even be in a situation that could prove a threat to the survival of the church. Most churches are affected by the size of the

---

<sup>23</sup> Available: <http://www.shareplaza.com>. No 64.

<sup>24</sup> Available: <http://www.usaamen.net/bbs/zboard.php?id=ssq27&no=32>.

congregation because the more registered church members there are the more power or influence the church has. Hence there are scrambles for securing church members among denominations and churches and this has led to deep complications and feuds through mutual slander.

Moreover, this emphasis on securing church members without stopping at anything to obtain the goal can bring about loss of identity and loss of prestige. For example, it is unacceptable to spread the Gospel in such a perverse way, like touting, to entice people away from the church they are attending, and influence them to join another church. Typically, large churches enabled scattered people to come to their church by providing a fleet of buses for church members. This way of spreading the Gospel caused the poor churches to get poorer and the rich churches to get richer. The small churches around the large church suffer loss on account of the influence of the large church. Many small churches near a large church were faced with a threat to their survival. Such are the cracks which can ultimately destroy the unity of Christian community.<sup>25</sup>

Anonymous Christians tend to crowd into large churches. They typically come to church and leave quietly after attending a worship service without any commitment to serving the church or interacting with other church members. A definite weak point of a large church is that the concept of a loving community and pastoral caring are weakened on account of the excessive systematization, institutionalization and bureaucratization of the church. *Koinonia*, one of the functions of the church, will gradually disappear, because these people habitually attend church every Sunday without meeting other church members while remaining self-orientated in their goals. Eventually, there will remain only big mechanical churches running with an impersonal system and regime.

Fourthly, the growth-centered paradigm caused conflict and disagreement in overseas mission fields. Although the overseas mission, being an extension of church growth as an alternative proposal to the stagnation of the church, presents the passion for the Gospel and the maturity of church, it continues to experience many problems. In this regard, Christian newspapers report the evaluation of South Korean missions in terms of the negative and the positive viewpoints. A Christian newspaper<sup>26</sup> carries an article with a positive view saying, "Don't judge the materialism of Korean missions. Numerical growth will bring out

---

<sup>25</sup> Available: <https://cttv.christiantoday.co.kr/view.htm?id=149379>.

<sup>26</sup> Available: <http://www.christiantoday.co.kr/view.htm?id=148897>.

qualitative growth. No quantitative growth, no qualitative growth”. By contrast, in a negative view, reports say that competitive overseas missions caused lots of conflicts in foreign mission fields among denominations. There have been big conflicts between natives and missionaries because of the one-way enforcement of belief, lacking the understanding of the culture and religion of the people. Therefore it rather brought about the result of increasing hostility to Christianity. In this way, although the South Korean church achieved many positive goals through numerical growth, it cannot be denied that immature quantitative growth led to lots of negative results.

Fifthly, the growth-centered church is deficient in the responsibility of loving its neighbours and it pays little attention to taking on the role of being a light shining in a dark world and the salt of our community. Society and the church are in an interactive relationship as a society is getting secular and materialistic, the church cannot avoid being affected by it, but should not follow the form of the world because the church has an innate function and mission from God to carry out. Society expects the church to be particularly involved in charitable works and social service, but actually, there are few churches with staff specifically in charge of social services or social work, and moreover, there are not many church members interested in social welfare. Ancillary buildings or institutional centers used for social work are rare. Generally, it is estimated that the annual budget of most churches is very low.

Sixthly, the growth-centered church brought out the positive results in terms of forming a strong unity and the sense of belonging among church members. But, the balance between large churches and small churches was disturbed through the emergence of mega-churches. It is a reality that the mega-churches which have adequate human resources and sufficient financial support, are getting bigger. On the contrary, small churches, lacking support, are facing serious crises because individual churches are only interested in the growth of their own churches. It is estimated that 70% of churches of the total of South Korean churches cannot support themselves<sup>27</sup>

Many internet newspapers currently carry related articles as follows: ‘Small churches are needed for the healthy growth of the South Korean church’; ‘The 5% large churches of the total Korean church destroyed the 95% of small churches’; ‘There is no hope for the South

---

<sup>27</sup> Available: [http://www.newspower.co.kr/sub\\_read.html?uid=11317&section=sc4](http://www.newspower.co.kr/sub_read.html?uid=11317&section=sc4).

Korean church without any effort being made to build up small independent churches'.<sup>28</sup>

One of the serious effects of the mega-churches has been to provoke relative inferiority and frustration in the leaders of small churches for over several decades. Even though the paradigm of large churches is not applicable to small churches, it is the trend of many small churches to apply the church growth model uncritically in their churches to the extent so that they are in trouble rather than achieving church growth.

Seventhly, various programs and the church system enabled church members to be actively involved in church work. On the one hand, the excessive strengthening of the church system generated competitive and discordant structures among denominations. On the other hand, it must be pointed out that there are some undemocratic elements in the structure and administration of individual churches. The church system is bureaucratic and hierarchic. Authoritarianism is the conventional production of the South Korean church structure. An example is the way that the senior pastors of large churches exercise their absolute power. It is not an overstatement to say that the church is one of the representative organizations which promote the existence of inequality and distinction in sex, age and social rank. To sum up, the extreme central paradigm system of the South Korean church has resulted in predominantly negative results.

Lastly, commercialization of the church, caused by the growth-centered church focus, has resulted in the loss of the essence of the church through laying excessive emphasis on meeting peoples' needs and demands. Thus the Korean church seems to lean over backwards to comply with the peoples' interests and needs in arranging worship, sermon and pastoral programs in order to attract more people.

Church growth in itself does not deserve blame. All living beings constantly pursue growth. In this sense the church has to keep growing as an organic body. It must be recognized that many negative outcomes of numerical growth are closely related to the recent quantitative and qualitative crises of the Korean church. Of course, the church growth is affected by the political, economic and social situation of a country. But one has to be careful not to attribute the recent crisis of the Korean church solely to the external reasons. One must not overlook the many internal church problems that caused the weakness of social credibility of the church giving rise to disbelief and discontent in the community. At the start of the Korean

---

<sup>28</sup> Available: <http://www.kspress.co.kr/kidokkyobo/editorial/detail.htm?aid=1183085907>.

mission, the Korean church won credibility from society and took a role of leading Korean society by means of the medical service and educational work rendered by foreign missionaries. Moreover, the introduction of the Nevius method made evangelical ministry more vitalized. It emphasized the need for natives to carry on the evangelistic work, Bible study classes and emphasized the church's self-determination. After its rapid growth, the Korean church was assimilated into modernism and secularism uncritically, without pursuing the mission of the church that had led the society in a direction consistent with Christian values and ideals. Eventually, it faced serious moral problems (Rhee, 1995:276-281).

With regard to the loss of credibility of the Korean church in society, Gwak proposed three main reasons as follows: "Three reasons can be presented for the loss of the SKCs' credibility: the Churches' secularization; their silence on social and political issues; and ecclesiological problems" (Gwak, 2000:133). It is postulated that "South Korean churches failed to manage the image of the church". Hence it is obvious that South Korean churches are now confronting the crisis of being alienated from society because they are not capable of performing the mission and the essence of the church.<sup>29</sup>

### **3.4.3 The ecclesiological crisis of the South Korean church on account of numerical growth-centered paradigm**

The South Korean church neglected to set the appropriate and healthy ecclesiology while being infatuated into complacency during the rapid growth period. The South Korean church tends to do its best, using all ways and means, to achieve numerical growth, which is only one of various aspects of church growth.

Gwak (2000:166) pointed out that the South Korean church made a mistake to simply copy growth models of the USA uncritically and introduce them even though the South Korean churches were in a different situation from the USA's churches. According to the study by the conservative evangelical churches, it was pointed out that the South Korean church tends to follow the Fuller Church Growth Model in particular. As a result, the essence and mission of the church was overlooked and quantitative growth became the standard of successful church growth and pastoral ministry. Therefore, regardless of congregation size, their one and only

---

<sup>29</sup> Available:

[http://www.protest2002.org/bbs/view.php?id=news\\_4&page=1&sn1=&divpage=1&sn=off&ss=on&sc=on&select\\_arrange=headnum&desc=asc&no=129](http://www.protest2002.org/bbs/view.php?id=news_4&page=1&sn1=&divpage=1&sn=off&ss=on&sc=on&select_arrange=headnum&desc=asc&no=129).

target was to grow the church numerically. Now the South Korean church faces stagnation of church growth despite having accomplished temporary success in the aspect of numerical growth.

Gwak (2000:4) asserts in his dissertation, *“Ecclesiology and membership trends in the South Korean Churches,”* that the recent decline in numerical growth is the result of the dominant ecclesiology. He points out that there is a need to investigate the dominant ecclesiology through examining the reasons for rapid growth during the thirty years, from 1960 to 1990, with regard to an ecclesiological point of view. He insists that the basic problems with which the Korean church is confronted are not the visible decline or the stagnation of church growth, but the distortion of ecclesiology affected by secularization and modernization. Gwak (2000:165-166) discusses the distortion of ecclesiology of the South Korean church as follows:

1. An effectiveness-oriented ecclesiology has emerged, which neglects its faithfulness. The SKCs have focused on success and numerical growth. The churches have accommodated the indigenous Shamanistic tradition, modernism, capitalism, materialism, pragmatism and modern technology, and have attempted to pander to human need.
2. An excessively individualistic tendency has appeared: Korean Christianity has reduced the status of the prophetic influence of the church in modern society.
3. Loss of Christian unity has occurred due to excessive competition and conflict among neighbour churches for increasing membership, and group egoism, expressed as denominationalism, separatism, sectionalism, provincialism and nationalism.

The above distortion of ecclesiology in the SKCs can be called ecclesial pathologies, which correspond with social pathologies. Such ecclesial pathologies have most certainly made the SKCs lose their credibility to society and even their numerical membership (2000:49, 165-166).

Many church leaders and the pastors of the South Korean church attempted to revive and grow the Korean church with various systems and strategies, but there was much left to be desired for critical reflection and improvement in the ecclesiology of the South Korean church. For reasons cited above, the South Korean church lacked an understanding of the

essential mission and identity of the church and the Gospel which led to unhealthy church growth. At present the South Korean church is reconsidering the following questions seriously: “What is church?” or “What is supposed to be done as a church?”; “How can the church grow in the right way?” Guder (1994:146-153) criticizes the Fuller Church Growth Model in particular, as it deeply affected the South Korean Church which accepts and supports ecclesiocentric and anthropocentric ecclesiology as it is understood and applied in the narrow view that the essence and mission of the church is the Gospel and salvation.

At the moment, more than ever before, the South Korean church is in the need of a clearer understanding of ecclesiology by resolving problems that are rooted deeply in the church, and thereby to restoring the social credibility of Christianity, which could lead to desirable and healthy church growth. Therefore, in this section there will be a study of the practical ecclesiology recommended by Gwak, who deals with the church in terms of the relationship between the world and the Gospel, and to reach the position of an adequate recognition of ecclesiology.

A practical ecclesiology does not concentrate on a more general formulation of ecclesiology or dogma which is dealt within the category of the Systematic Theology, but on the particular reality of the South Korean church in its specific context. A practical ecclesiology stresses not only the active relationship between God’s praxis (mission) and the church’s praxis (mission), but also the Kingdom of God (Gospel), the church and the world (culture). This relationship means that a practical ecclesiology seeks for a balanced ecclesiological model to enable a particular community of belief to be more faithful to God’s mission and more effective in its life and practice in a changing situation. There is a desperate need for the South Korean church to find an ecclesiology which is appropriate in the theological, biblical and situational aspects, and to develop it (Gwak, 2000:47,84,173).

Gwak (2000:139-140) presents several hermeneutical keys which are helpful when facing problems of the South Korean church on the basis of a practical ecclesiology.

These include: the church in the light of God's kingdom; a new community as the body of Christ; the missionary church; the church in the world, but not of it, *ecclesia crucis*; the holistic church growth theory; faithfulness and effectiveness in ecclesiology; and various theories and perspectives for investigating the reality of the church. These hermeneutical keys are used not only as tools to analyze different qualities of the church’s spirituality, vitality,

and growth in the past, but also for proposing alternatives to remedy the problems it is currently facing.

It is expected that these hermeneutical keys will enable the South Korean church to seek balanced and healthy church growth. Gwak (2000:173-174) also suggests that we need to understand accurately the concepts and terms in the following paragraph:

Theology and the social sciences; theology as *habitus* and *scientia*; practical theology and other theological disciplines, academia and ecclesia; theory and practice; God's praxis (mission) and the church's praxis (mission); the one, holy, catholic, apostolic church and a particular church; the nature and mission of the church and the identity, vision and mission of a particular church; the formation of the community of faith (inner-dimension of church mission) and its engagement with society (outer-dimension of church mission); the reformation of the church and that of the world, effective functioning of church ministry, such as worship, preaching, teaching, fellowship and service and effective structuring, church transformation and church development.

In this regard, J.K. Eun, recognizing the crisis of ecclesiological problems of the South Korean church, published two books; *Theological Ecclesiology* (2006) and *Practical Ecclesiology* (2006). He suggests alternative proposals to solve recent ecclesiological problems. In his book, *Theological Ecclesiology*, he explains hermeneutical formulas in three forms of paradigms: Institutional Paradigm, Spiritual Faith Paradigm and Transformative Paradigm to reveal the essence and identity of the church as a community of God's people.

The first, the Institutional Paradigm, has to do with the critical point of overlooking the revelation of God. The second is the Spiritual Faith Paradigm which involves the limitation at the point of being broken off from history. The third paradigm, the Transformative Paradigm, is corrective and complementary through overcoming the conflicting points between the first paradigm and the second paradigm. The Transformative Paradigm receives the institutionalization of the first form and Spiritual Faith of the second form. The church referred to in this third paradigm means a community of God's people living together under eschatological expectation.

Eun believes that the church in the world is connected with God's Kingdom in terms of history - the eschatological viewpoint. In this respect, he explains three structures existing in



the world: God's Kingdom, history, and the church. It is insisted that based on this structure, the church has to be and instrument of change in the community, in so doing changing the whole of history by getting involved and becoming the center of the community. The church is responsible for the world. In other words, God's Kingdom exists in actual clean political decisions and performing processes of the church. Then God's reign is revealed in the appropriate way by pursuing profit on the basis of honest business morality and living. God's existence is proved when Christians change all aspects of the society.

In his book, *Practical Ecclesiology*, Eun defines Practical Ecclesiology as the theological discussion and the theological interpretation of all praxis of the church, which is the community of God's people. He explains that if Theological Ecclesiology is considered as the one providing the basis for the argument of the church's identity, Practical Ecclesiology, which is not totally separated from Theological Ecclesiology, provides the basis for the argument of practice; the church as representing God's people in ontological insight.

The church, which has identity without praxis, easily stays in the theoretical and abstract stage. In contrast, praxis without the church's identity, tends to be reduced to behaviourism because these two ecclesiologies are deeply related each other. He points out that the recent ecclesiological crisis of the South Korean church is caused by the severance of complementary relations between Theological Ecclesiology, which seeks the church's identity, and Practical Ecclesiology, focusing on the practical mission of the church.

He asserts that the role of Practical Ecclesiology has been performed through proclamation (*Kerygma*), worship (*Leiturgia*), sacrament, diakonia, (*Didache*), (*Koinonia*), (*Mission*), and has to be re-formed into the existing style of the community of God's people. Thus, the church does not only mean big chapel buildings, systems or organizations, but rather the community of God's people who are willing to live their lives following His teaching. Therefore, once proclamation (*Kerygma*), worship (*Leiturgia*), sacrament, diakonia, (*Didache*), (*Koinonia*), (*Mission*) are regarded as the existing style of the community of God's people, the important target to make healthy churches is not to strive for numerical growth or to prefer big churches, but to restore the living pattern and existing style of the early church's Christians.

He suggests three reform measures in particular to change the practical paradigm of the South Korean church. Firstly, it has to abandon the growth syndrome, the marketing directive

structure, and the program-centered structure. Secondly, it is necessary that the worship service-centered structure laying down unification of leadership that existed for a long time be changed into the communal structure of God's people. Lastly, it is demanded that the church paradigm, which is the pastor, ecclesiastical authority, system-centeredness is abolished and changed into the community-centered pastoral system. The South Korean church is in need of coping effectively with the ecclesiological problems to achieve continual and desirable church growth. This development of an ecclesiological model suitable for the specific and concrete situation of the South Korean church is urgently required.

### 3.5 CONCLUSION

Through the previous analysis and evaluation (sections 3.3; 3.4), it is recognized that South Korean churches attached too much importance to quantitative growth. It is recognized that the recent crisis of the South Korean church is not only due to the fact of the quantitative decrease or stagnation, but also to the reality that the qualitative growth of the South Korean church is insufficient and falling rapidly behind the rapid numerical growth.

Juan Carlos Ortiz (1975:5), the author of *Disciple*, describes his experience of church growth. While he was serving the church, the number of the congregation multiplied three times over two years. He served the church passionately working over sixteen hours a day for church growth. At that time he was sure that his church was in the right and healthy way of growing and often he was invited by other denominational churches as a speaker to address the community on the subject of church growth. As time went on, he realized by the light of the Holy Spirit in the middle of a devotional time that something was wrong. Ortiz (1975:5) witnesses the spiritual enlightenment as follows:

The Holy Spirit began to break me down. The first thing He said was, "You are promoting the gospel the same way Coca-Cola sells Coke, the same way Reader's Digest sells books and magazines. You are using all the human tricks you learned in school. But where is My finger in all of this?" I didn't know what to say. Then the Lord told me a second thing, "You are not growing", He said. "You think you are, because you've gone from 200 to 600. But you're not growing - you're just getting fat".

He admitted that the early growth of his church was like a "fattening" process and explained the difference between "growing" and "fattening" as metaphors of church growth. It is

proposed that the recent situation of the South Korean church is similar to that of Juan Carlos Ortiz's church. In other words, the South Korean church is suffering from severe obesity. To keep a healthy body, sufficient nutrition is required, and enough rest and appropriate exercise are necessary. If we suppose that the church is a body, the body of the South Korean church has become so fat that it has lost its balance and the ability of control.<sup>30</sup>

In reality, what is clear is that church growth is what God wants. In this respect, the South Korean church has to keep growing in balanced quantitative and qualitative increase. At present, an appropriate church model, satisfying these points, is needed. The South Korean church must also do its best to establish and develop the desirable ecclesiology, which is the basis of the essence and mission of the church, while considering its specific changing context.

It does not mean that all church models used by the South Korean church and the results of church growth are wrong, but considering the results critically, it cannot be overlooked that many negative outcomes appeared. At present, it is necessary that South Korean churches should look for a desirable church growth paradigm, which is suitable for the changing time and the specific situation of the South Korean church. To achieve this goal, it is necessary to develop the strong points of the existing church models and to improve the weak points. The next chapter will focus on the analysis of Loren B. Mead's church growth model.

---

<sup>30</sup> Available: <http://blog.chosun.com/blog.log.view.screen?blogId=42639&logId=3037280>.

## CHAPTER 4

### *THE CHURCH GROWTH MODEL OF LOREN B. MEAD*

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

As indicated in chapter one, the South Korean church has faced many impediments on account of the negative results of church growth which leaned toward quantitative growth. Moreover the most serious point is that the Korean churches still retain the tendency of focusing on numerical growth in spite of many harmful side-effects caused by it. This situation prevents the Korean church from moving forward towards balanced church growth. It is not unwarranted to say that numerical growth is very significant in church growth. It takes for granted that churches have to grow as the parts of the body of Jesus Christ. But the aspect of numerical growth is not a concept in its own or an essential point, but a part of the whole concept of church growth. First of all, to accomplish healthy church growth, it is necessary to accurately understand the various aspects of church growth and the change of the growth paradigm of the South Korean church.

Therefore, in this chapter, the church growth model proposed by Loren B. Mead is dealt with as an alternative model for Korean churches to adopt for sound growth. Loren B. Mead has spent much time studying Christian congregations. He is a Founder member and President emeritus of the Alban Institute.<sup>31</sup> He advocates the importance of the local congregation

---

<sup>31</sup> The Alban Institute, founded in 1974, is a precious asset for American congregations, which try to challenge a changing society. It plays an important role as a vanguard to provide knowledge and experience regarding congregational vitality and positive trends, regardless of denominations and faith traditions. Until the 1980s, this Institute focused on using a short-term problem solving approach. It attempted to grow the effective ecclesiological structures of the church through adapting the language of theories borrowed from the social sciences (Dietterich, 1991:37-40). In the 1990s, however, the Institute affected the American church in a transformational way. The Alban Institute is one of many Institutes seeking for the healthy and balanced church growth and theology of the American church, and so to lead church reformation by providing constructive help.<sup>31</sup> Mead and the Alban Institute pay attention especially to the congregation (Mead, 1991: 2): “the congregation is at a critical point of change”.

The Alban Institute emphasizes that each congregation has its own personality and various methods and patterns of growth. It has been worked together with peoples from various ministries, denominational leaders and congregations by helping one another and exchanging information through communication. It also serves congregations by supplying them with publications, consultations and educational programs. The institute offers a unique blend of practical ‘how-to’s’, research findings, and explains concepts to help clergy, laity, and denominational executives to give

concerned with the future of American religion. He served the congregation with counseling, lecturing and lots of writing<sup>32</sup> (Mead, 1991:1).

## **4.2 TWO MAIN FOCUSES IN LOREN B. MEAD'S MODEL**

Loren B. Mead have suggested an alternative model for church growth and his proposed model includes various aspects of church growth which can be distinguished from the previous models which have been proposed by other scholars as discussed in chapter two. In this section, Mead's model for achieving a healthy church growth will be dealt with focusing on two aspects namely, paradigm shift and various perspectives of church growth. The former aspect focuses on the transition of the paradigm in the church history and four types of church growth will be proposed in the latter aspect.

### **4.2.1 The understanding of changes in church paradigms<sup>33</sup>**

In *The Once and Future Church* by Mead (1991:5), he concisely describes the challenges faced in relation to the mission of the church today. First, we are confronted with the basic change of how to understand the mission of the church. Second, local congregations are now asked to be involved in supporting the mission of the church actively and on the front-line. Third, institutional structures and forms developed to support one vision of our mission are rapidly collapsing (Mead, 1991:5).

In the light of these challenges, in order to comprehend the mission of the church and the true nature of congregations, one needs to understand the paradigm shift and historical situation of the early church. Because according to the change of paradigm, the relationship and roles of congregations were changed, authority was moved, new structures were created and new direction was presented. There was a time of disorder when the paradigm was changed. Nevertheless the focus of the church is always to accomplish the mission of God. To

---

effective sense of the ministry of the church (Dietterich, 1991:34).

<sup>32</sup> *The whole truth about everything related to the church in twelve pages, if you don't count the introduction and the conclusion (1988) Critical Moment of Ministry(1988), The Once and Future Church(1991), More Than Numbers (1993), and Transforming Congregations for the Future (1994).*

<sup>33</sup> According to Mead (1991:31), changes of paradigm are "by definition, matters of perception, feeling, world view, consciousness; they are not external changes like the leveling of a mountain. As a result, one of the most difficult realities we deal with is the fact that two people, living side by side, may face the same phenomenon, yet their perceptions may differ radically. Even worse, one individual may see part of reality through the Christendom Paradigm and the rest of life in quite a different way. She or he may not even feel the fault line running through such behavior (Mead, 1991:31).

understand and interpret the present changes of paradigm among congregations in the right way, first of all, one needs to understand what is perceived as a paradigm shift according to current church history. In this respect, Mead (1991:6-8) deals with two paradigms that remarkably influenced the western church in church history: the “Apostolic paradigm” and the “Christendom paradigm.” He (1991:8) states that “in our own time, that second paradigm is breaking apart. It’s successor, a third paradigm, has yet to appear fully”. He believes that the new paradigm will appear with a new sense of the church mission, giving it a new clarity and focus.

For two millennia, the church has struggled with the image of itself and its image of the world outside. The church had a hard time keeping God’s double-edged commandment, namely that Christians have to love, serve and convert the world and at the same time God wants us to maintain ourselves as, in some sense, "distinct from" the world (1991:9).

Throughout the history of the church and its mission, it has been in a struggle to carry out the two sides of that commission because of the fact that the church and the world are always changing. Even though, sometimes, there is something that lasts for centuries such as an unchanging paradigm and a mind-set. However, in the course of time the things that seemingly look stable, are also changing. That has happened to us.

Twice before in our history, there had been a broad agreement about how the church interacts with the world - keeping its mission in the world. Twice before, the church has been faced with an overthrow of the old paradigm. We are still under the pressure of bearing the disintegration and disruption of the old paradigm but the new paradigm has not yet appeared (Mead, 1991:9).

#### **4.2.1.1 The Apostolic paradigm era (100-300 C)**

The first time of tumult arrived in the first generations after Jesus. It was called the time of the Apostolic paradigm. Mead believes that the Apostolic paradigm is the initial paradigm of the history of the church. Jesus collected faithful people to be sent into the world to serve the weak, the poor, the sick, the prisoner, the widow. The early church was aware of itself as a truthful congregation who were called to testify to God’s love in Christ toward the hostile world. Their tasks were to carry out God’s mercy by means of healing, caring, feeding, and spreading the Gospel. Different styles of ministries were practiced depending on different situations and environments. Take for example, the ministries of the apostle, the teacher, the

healer, the bishop, the presbyter, the deacon, to name a few (Mead, 1991:9-13).

The members of the congregation, for a long time, took it for granted that they had been called by the Lord and commanded to serve people with the Gospel. But, there came a time when they started to ask themselves, “Who are we in relationship with those people around us?”; “Why do we have to serve them?”; “Who is it that sends us to this world to love them?” They struggled with the answers as time went on. The central reality of the church was a local community, a congregation “called out” (ekklesia) of the world. It was a community that lived by the power of the God in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The influence of the faithful congregation was conveyed to the intimate non-Christian community through apostolic teaching and preaching, through fellowship itself, and through ritual acts.

So far we have observed one side of the mission of the church for which the religious community was sent into the world. But the other side of it is that by stepping into the world it is to be on the frontier of the mission. They called it “witnessing” and the life of the church as an institution was shaped by the Apostolic paradigm. After that there came a clear distinction between “inside the church” and “outside the church”.

The identity of the congregation inside the church was defined as the frontier entering to hostile world. But another point of view in defining the congregation’s life was to see that the meaning of its life was to build up its members. It was its internal task to bring about order and to set up roles and relationships through nurturing the members of the congregation in the mission. Therefore the early church could establish structures and roles in order to do that kind of mission. In the process, it was the Apostolic paradigm that played such an important role as a mind-set for giving clear understanding of its mission (Mead, 1991:12).

The “witnessing” of congregations was so valuable to bring vitality of life to the church. Through it the congregations got to perceive a clearer mission of the church. Moreover, the “witness” was helpful to nurture people who went forward into the hostile society with the strong understanding of the church’s mission, and to establish the roles of the church and the reason for establishing a relation in creating relationships with neighbouring institutions.

#### **4.2.1.2 The Christendom Paradigm (400-2000 C)**

In the beginning of the fourth century, a new paradigm, namely the “The Christendom paradigm” began to emerge. Its emergence took centuries, and was begun when the Emperor

Constantine was converted to Christianity in 313 A.D. It spread radically as Christianity became the official religion of the empire in name and law (Mead, 1991:13).

The church became identified with the empire and its existence was recognized by law. Therefore there was no separation between the world and the church. The church was protected from all hostilities by law within the empire. Mead expresses this situation in a slightly different way as follows:

Instead of the congregation being a small local group that constituted the church in that place, the understanding of the congregation had been enlarged to include everything in the Empire. The congregation was the church; the church was the Empire. There was no boundary between people on the local scene, defining one group as "church" and another as "world". The missionary frontier disappeared from the doorstep of the congregation and became, in effect, the political boundary of the society itself, far away (Mead, 1991:14).

The results of this change of paradigm are obvious. It was not necessary for members of a congregation to attend worship personally or for faithful people to be sent to the hostile world as the mission frontier. No longer was the person who preached the Gospel called to "witness" under the pressure of persecution. No longer was she or he supposed to be different from any other citizen (Mead, 1991:14). In other words, in this paradigm, "to be a citizen was to be a church member". It also meant that "religious responsibility and citizenship became synonymous" (Mays, 1999:247).

There was also the alteration of the viewpoint of the mission. Once the mission was considered as the front door of the church but now it became the empire's frontier boundary. Namely, it was believed that the two were the same thing to win souls to the Lord and to win nations to the empire. This new relationship between church and empire changed the structures and form of mission. The obligation of accepting the state church led not only to the strong structure of society, but also to a powerful empire (Mead, 1991:14).

Mead (1991:15-22) explains several important dimensions of that paradigm change.

Firstly, it brought about the unity of sacred and secular. It was not necessary to make a distinction between the church and the empire. Bishops became leaders of the whole empire that one might call secular. Secondly, the concept of mission was shifted from the viewpoint



that mission is the direct responsibility of every ordinary Christian, to another point of view recognizing that it is a far off enterprise as a foreign policy of the empire. Hence, in this paradigm, imperialism and mission were identified and they were not separable. Thirdly, under the Christendom paradigm the congregation was no longer a strong community of convinced, committed, embattled group of people within a hostile society. Instead, it became a parish, comprising a geographic region. The parish pastor was treated highly as a community chaplain, a civil servant, and local faithful person. Fourthly, the Christendom paradigm opened the way for unity between the empire and the church. To accomplish smooth management for unity, they demanded a kind of administration and cohesiveness. It was necessary that they should minimize the discord and conflicts, and to develop standard structures in the unity of administration, theology, and politics because it was believed that in Christendom, there could be only one church within one political entity. Fifthly, the religious role of the laity was obligatory. The ordinary person born into the parish automatically became a part of the community. Hence they were nurtured and educated in God's word to build up their personal faith in order to play a role as a part of the church and the empire.

Looking back on that period of the Christendom paradigm, one can see the mistakes that were made. Nevertheless, there was a consistency in the administration. Unfortunately they assumed one answer and one way which caused a major difficulty. The paradigm required uniformity, but it was never achieved. Throughout the centuries, church councils attempted to formulate a statement on various important matters of faith that would be acceptable to everyone. There were so many differences of opinion and conviction that it was impossible to form a uniform paradigm. Most important were loyalty and obedience. Christendom had to be organized into a perfect order of rank with sacred and secular powers together in a single institution<sup>34</sup> (Mead, 1991:17).

We are surrounded by the relics of the Christendom paradigm, a paradigm that has largely ceased to work. But the relics hold us hostage to the past and make it difficult to create a new paradigm that can be as compelling for the next age as the Christendom paradigm has been for the past age. The final generations of the Christendom paradigm have changed its six distinctive characteristics significantly, and all in today's churches have been deeply influenced by these changes (Mead, 1991:18).

---

<sup>34</sup> That dream remains alive today for some in the religious world and it undergirds the power of that religious-secular state, the Vatican (Mead, 1991:17).

In the middle of a changing world, it was an incongruent way of the structure, roles of the church and improper responses to the change to meet the emergency of the church. In this respect, Mead (1991:6) argues that it is necessary for the traditional western church to reinvent and rebuild the mission of the church. The reinvention of the church means (Mead, 1991:43) that “God who called the church out into the apostolic world two thousand years ago is again calling the church out, this time into a secularized world where its mission and its life must be once again redefined”. Mead is of the opinion that we are already in the early stages of a new paradigm which is similar to the Apostolic paradigm, and like the apostolic urgency of mission at the church’s front door (Mays, 1999:249).

#### **4.2.2 Four types of church growth**

The types of church growth that have been identified and classified so far from chapter two, are: biological, transfer, and conversion. MacGavran sees them as, Internal, Expansion, Extension, and Bridging Growth (McGavran, [1970] 1990:71-72). Rick Warren (2002:1) consequently noted that “churches grow warmer through fellowship. Churches grow deeper through discipleship. Churches grow stronger through worship. Churches grow broader through ministry. Churches grow larger through evangelism” (Warren, 2002:1).

However, in his book, *More than numbers* (1993), Mead explains the concept of growth from distinct viewpoints and refers to the importance of it trying to define church growth as widely as possible. Each congregation does not grow in the same ways and precedent because they were brought up from the different denominational background, theological tendency, ecclesiological characteristics, and environmental elements. In this respect, Mead classified the church growth into four types with comprehensive perspectives as follows:

##### **4.2.2.1 Numerical growth**

The first type of growth that Mead addresses is numerical growth. Even though this has been discussed by other authors, yet Mead never ignores the aspect of numerical growth when church growth is considered, because the mission of the church is focused on finding and winning people to Christ. Mead (1993:39) expresses the importance of the numbers on Church growth as follows:

Numbers are not everything, by the long shot. But they are something. The churches ignore them at their peril... A church that does not grow in numbers will die... A

congregation that does not seek its own way to bring the good news to those who do not know it violates a clear directive of our Lord.

He (1993:16) further noted that any local church that does not care about bringing outsiders into a relationship with its faith and its founder is ignoring a clear imperative of the New Testament. Similarly, McGavran (1959:15) also emphasizes the numerical approach in church growth as follows: “increase of members and congregations is absolutely essential to the world mission of the church.” McGavran and Mead agree in with respect to admitting the importance of numerical growth. But however, they cautioned that when in the process of developing the Church Growth Movement, the numerical growth became the main purpose of church growth. The Church Growth Movement has admittedly centered on numerical increase of Christians and churches (Smith, 1984:35). In the end this emphasis on numbers only resulted in the loss of the other points of church growth that needed to be dealt with, besides numerical growth. The emphasis on numerical growth has caused huge misunderstandings - limiting the concept of growth to numerical growth (Hong, 2004:109).

Mead (1993:13) comments that “there is much more to church growth than numbers of members”. It is not desirable to measure church growth merely on the basis of Sunday attendance, the size of the budget, and the number of activities, primarily the growth in numbers of active members. It is also necessary to systematically study and investigate the various elements<sup>35</sup> related to numerical growth. By so doing it is helpful to evaluate and analyze the numerical change influenced by these elements in order to improve the efficiency of ministries and to direct them for a future vision. Furthermore it may be a good basis for accomplishing desirable church growth (Mead, 1993:12-18). In this regard, Smith (1984:34) also notes that “if numbering is done to understand the situation in order to do a more effective ministry, then numbering is not only proper, it is necessary.”

In describing the numerical growth of the church, Mead highlighted three major aspects that are involved in the numerical growth. Birth and death, transfers in and out, converts and drop outs. The three aspects have both pro`s and con`s as they relate to numerical growth. Mead argued that birth and death are the most elemental. The balance between them leads to increases of membership when many children are born, and decreases during times of

---

<sup>35</sup> Those factors as follows: The three factors such as ‘birth’ and ‘transfers in’ and ‘converts’ describe the ways that membership can be increased. The other three factors such as ‘death’ and ‘transfers out’ and ‘dropouts’ indicate how membership decreases (Mead, 1993: 17-37).

widespread illness and mortality.

In short, from the above point of view, Mead's model is different from other church models in that it emphasizes more effective ministries and healthy church growth through systematically studying elements affecting numerical growth with deep interest. Mead emphasizes that numbers are not everything, by a long shot. But they are something. A church that does not grow in numbers will die, but he added that although that numerical growth is important, it is not the only kind of growth. The second type of growth is the maturational growth.

#### **4.2.2.2 Maturational growth**

Mead described maturational growth as the ability of a congregation to challenge, support and encourage each one of its members to grow in the maturity of their faith, to deepen their spiritual roots, and to broaden their religious mind. Maturational growth must be understood with respect to the maturity of each member, growth in faith and the ability to nurture and be nurtured by one another. Mead (1993:42) notes that "indeed, some congregations who are destined to experience loss of members can demonstrate some of those other kinds of growth". In that sense, he developed "maturational growth" as one of various dimensions of growth. Maturational growth means that the congregations grow up to the point of challenging, supporting, and encouraging each other to grow in mature faith, to deepen their spiritual roots, and to broaden their religious imaginations (Mead, 1993:42).

It is difficult to grasp the concept of spiritual maturity or spiritual growth. It is definitely different from "education" in the usual sense. These days, most believers in the church face a spiritual crisis in that they do not perceive the true meaning of spiritual maturity, or their responsibility followed by spiritual maturity and do not know how to reach it. In addition, the laity generally believes that this kind of field such as spiritual maturity or spiritual growth is theological and special. They consider it as a special domain that only pastors or persons with a particular gift from God can deal with (Mead, 1993:51).

The church has a responsibility to help lay persons understand the concept of spiritual maturity, to encourage and support them to grow in mature faith. Not all members of the church are devotional Christians nor are they at the same level of spiritual maturity. In other words, each member is at a different level of spiritual growth. Therefore the church has the responsibility of providing systematic training for the laity in order to lead them to spiritual

growth. Therefore, Mead (1993:52-54) insists that the process of bringing about spiritual maturity is important; that the active development of Pastoral care provides spiritual growth for congregations in conventional ways and to nurse them through discipleship training. Also in the fields of life such as “Birth”, “Marriage”, “Illness”, “Death”, especially at the significant moment of making an important decision, the church has to help enable them to grow in spiritual maturity through a deep encounter with God.

McGavran and Arn (1997:108) believe that an essential element of a growing church is to emphasize the role of lay persons in the church by educating them. They also say that “spiritual resources are an essential part of faith growth - praying, witnessing, preaching, teaching, humble reliance on the Holy Spirit. These and other spiritual resources are available to the growing Christian and the growing church” (1977:114).

As far as the importance of faith training and the education of congregations are concerned, McGavran, Arn and Mead are in agreement. But there are some differences among them in that McGavran and Arn focus on spiritual training for church growth but Mead stresses spiritual training for individual spiritual maturity. Mead highlighted areas that the church needs to focus on with regards to maturational growth, namely growth in the spirit, routine growth, dramatic growth and growth through discipline.

Churches grow better by developing members’ spiritual quality and ability to serve, by increasing the church’s capacity to carry out the functions of worship, care, influence, ministry, and evangelism, and by expanding the church’s ability to live as the Body of Christ (Smith, 1984:35). Mead concurs with Smith when he said that every congregation will need to develop itself into a training ground, capable of equipping each member with a new level of competence in education and spiritual formation. He stresses that maturational growth needs to be at the center of the schema of every congregation.

#### **4.2.2.3 Organic growth**

The third type of growth identified by Mead is the organic growth. By organic growth, Mead emphasizes that the task of the church is to build the community, fashioning the organizational compositions, developing the practices and presses that result in a dependable, stable network of human relationship in which we can grow and from which we can make a difference. Organic growth is all about interaction between frustration and hope in all congregations.

Mead draws on systems theory in order to understand the congregation as a living social system whose structures must constantly change and adapt to the inputs of members and more mature members, in order to sustain growth. Congregations are complex organisms with many different parts but processes in order as a single organism out of that complexity. Congregation members interact with one another receiving resources and giving contributions within a particular environment (Mead, 1993:63-69).

All living things grow. It's the natural thing for living organisms to do if they are healthy. Lack of growth usually indicates an unhealthy situation, possibly a disease. In the same way, since the church is a living organism, it is natural for it to grow if it is healthy. The church is not a business but a body and not an organization but an organism (Warren,<sup>36</sup> 2002:16).

Smith (1984:21) also says that “growth is normal for an organism. Healthy bodies grow; healthy churches grow”. In short, it takes for granted that the church must grow as a living organism. Just as the body is needed to be in physical balance to keep living healthily, the church also keeps healthy when it exists in a good balanced condition as the body of Christ.

In this respect, Mead describes it as the intentional creation of community, an essential goal of congregational leadership: “Organic growth is about the task of building the community, fashioning the organizational structures, developing the processes and practices that result in a dependable, stable network of human relationships in which we can grow and from which we can make a difference” (Mead, 1993:60).

Congregations as social systems have their roles, functions and purposes. Therefore, to accomplish the purposes, organic growth can be experienced through a deep understanding of congregations (Mead, 1993:67). The body of Christ is clearly illustrated by Paul in I Corinthians 12. Actually, the body is made up of different systems: respiratory, circulatory, nervous, digestive, skeletal, and so forth. The many parts functioning different roles make one perfect body through interacting with one another and when there is no problem when interacting with many parts, it is called “health” (Warren, 2002:174).

There are some “key elements”, such as “Roles”, “Norms”, “Beliefs and Values”, “Myths” and some “Processes of Congregations as social Systems”, such as “Decision Making”,

---

<sup>36</sup> Dr. Rick Warren is the founding pastor of Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, California - one of America's largest congregations. Over a half-million copies of his book, *The Purpose-Driven Church*, have been sold in 17 languages. It was also included in *100 Christian Books That Changed the Century*, which was the result of a national survey (2002: back cover).

“Communication”, “Socialization”, “Boundary Maintenance”, “Leadership Development”, and “Worship” (Mead, 1993:71-88). It means that each congregation has different gifts and talents. To grow to be a more effective organism, a good foundation could be formed with the development of the talents and gifts of each member of the congregation, the laying down of healthy norms for the harmonious relationships among congregation members and the strengthening of ministries by encouraging one another. Also every social system has its values and beliefs that they consider to be worth more than others. The system reveals many problems when it is confronted with their values and beliefs. The same thing happens in the congregational situation. It is natural that many problems may be caused when their actions and beliefs do not correspond. Accordingly, it is a very significant task to be concerned about - new member ministries, leadership development and worship to resolve the problems of communication experienced by congregation members, socialization of new members in adjusting themselves into a new environment (Mead, 1993:77-81).

Mead (1993:89) says that “all congregations have potential for organic growth” and those who ignore their potential will destabilize their ability to expand growth in any other area. Leaders and pastors affected by the lack of trust by society, need courage to move forward to give energy and massive resources for the renewal of the church (Mead, 1993:103).

#### **4.2.2.4 Incarnational growth**

The last type of church growth discussed by Mead is incarnational growth. Through incarnational growth, Mead stresses that this is where the congregation grows in its ability to en flesh the community to show their faith by practicing it. In other words, incarnational growth is related to the points of how the members of the congregation can be an influence on society, or how they should change it (Mead, 1993:13). Congregations must build themselves as religious communities - as bases on which ministry is done.

As a result, over the past few decades, many people have studied the incarnational growth with big concern. On the basis of a major research<sup>37</sup> concerned with how congregations were oriented theologically - “this-worldly” and “other-worldly”, Mead (1993:91-95) explains four styles of relationship between congregations and the community.

---

<sup>37</sup> David Roozen, William McKinney, and Jackson Carroll studied the relationships between 413 congregations and community in Hartford, Connecticut. They reported some of their findings in *Varieties of Religious Presence?*(1993)

Firstly, the civic orientation is characterized by great sensitivity to the life of the community. Therefore it seems that the congregation is responsible for public life. Civic congregations are cooperative in keeping orderly processes of government and systems of law. Secondly, the activist orientation describes the congregations work as an opposed culture. Hence it focuses on correction of wrongs and protesting against unjust public policies according to their judgment. Members of an activist congregation sometimes take part in public demonstrations of their concern. Thirdly, the sanctuary orientation stands on a totally different basis from other kinds of congregations. Their most concerning point is to develop a relationship with God. Sanctuary congregations long for a triumphant life after death by enduring hardships and troubles of this present time. The outside community is not the focus of change efforts focused on making changes. Fourthly, the evangelistic orientation is in agreement with the sanctuary orientation in the respect that it is primarily connected with the eternal world. Evangelistic congregations consider their calling to lead those outside the congregation church to the Gospel as a purpose of life.

These four styles of relationships explain the diversity of the relationship between congregations and the world, but it should be remembered that these descriptions are artificial constructions. No one congregation fully fits into only one of the descriptions and every congregation is probably consisted of people or groups that share differing orientations (Mead, 1993:92-93).

Mead (1993:95) says that “it is important for congregations to be concerned about how they en flesh their values and concerns in the environment around them”. He also points out that especially the congregations of each of those types (civic, activist, and evangelistic) noted above are vulnerable to particular temptations. That is the Christendom temptation.

With the desire of congregations to make a difference in the midst of a worldly community, we expect that pursuing the incarnational growth may lead Christians into the heart of the revolutionary change happening around us. But it is pointed out that most Christians today inherit a world view of “Christendom” without a deep consideration about how the world and the church ought to be related (Mead, 1993:95).

Recently, we are tempted to rebuild Christendom. We are lead into a temptation to remake a union of church and state so that they are assimilated one with another. There are three patterns of temptation toward the Christendom paradigm. Firstly, an activist congregation is



often tempted to build Christendom of the Just Society. Secondly, the civic congregation is tempted to rebuild a religious-secular union. Lastly, evangelistic congregations move in another direction toward rebuilding Christendom. Their purpose is not only to build a religious community for the whole world, but also, social and political religious realms. It is obvious that it is impossible to build a religious realm only with personal piety or morality without much interaction with society. When we try to resist the temptation toward Christendom through refusing the way of universalizing their approach, the incarnational growth will become true. Connected with it, Mead proposes the two basic policies of a congregation to lead sound incarnational growth; the first one is “building” and another one is “sending” (Mead, 1993:96-99).

Congregations must build themselves up as religious communities. It is their priority to build up the community on the basis of God’s word and equip them sufficiently and bring them up enough to take responsibility of nurturing, healing and feeding. The values and meaning of the Gospel are revealed through the flesh of people who are nurtured and sent by the congregation. On the strong basis of a religious community, sending its people to interact with the world will lead to incarnational growth (Mead, 1993:99-101). These two tasks will not be separated and related each other. First of all, when the congregation is built up as a faithful community, more people will be sent into the world so that they are able to restore society through healing and calling with the power of the Gospel.

If there is a danger to the church’s incarnational growth, it is that we have been unwilling to put in the energy to build up the religious community that alone can ground incarnational growth. Mead (1993:101) points out that “the church of the late twentieth century is in danger of focusing so hard on sending an outreach that it neglects to restore and repair the community which alone has the power to restore and send”. In every community, the congregations of churches have a responsibility to respond to the social and community needs. But above all it has to be the first to learn new ways of cooperating in the ministry. Mead concluded by emphasizing that growth of any kind begins with the congregation.

### **4.3 THE DISTINCTIVENESS OF MEAD’S MODEL**

Mead’s model of church growth as discussed above have a certain uniqueness when compared to other church growth models. The first uniqueness is found in his numerical growth model. Mead did not underestimate the importance of the numerical growth, but he

cautioned that numbers are not everything. This means that church growth must not just focus on numerical growth, even though numerical growth is important. The church must not let numerical growth gets all the attention, but rather the church must seek a balance. Secondly, Mead emphasizes holistic growth for the church. He argued that the members must be helped to growth spiritually, emotionally, socially and mentally. If the church is to influence the world, the members must be equipped to do so in words and in deeds. The church must help people to grow spiritually in the conditions of modern life. They have a larger and much more complex set of life transitions to deal with. If the emphasis is just on numbers, holistic growth may not be possible. Thirdly, Mead's church growth model offers a tool for evaluating church growth from all angles - not just numerical. This will help many pastors who are focusing on numerical growth. Most churches evaluate growth in terms of numbers ignoring the other aspects of growth; this will be discussed fully in chapter five. Fourthly Mead's model is unique as it helps sets agenda for the church. If the church is to grow holistically, a curriculum must be provided, and the members must be given the forum to growth in all dimensions. Therefore understanding Mead's model will help any growing church set an agenda for growth. Mead model differs from other models in chapter two because it sets out clearly that church growth is not just the responsibility of the pastor, rather it is a joint responsibility between the pastors, other church leaders and the Holy Spirit.

#### **4.4 CONCLUSION**

The model proposed by Loren B. Mead, which has been suggested as an alternative model for the growth of the Korean Church, can be subdivided into four types: Numerical, Maturational, Organic, and Incarnational growth.

In brief, it can be underlined that numerical growth is not merely interested in increasing the numbers of congregations but, concerned about growing the devotional people as faithful Christians. Therefore it is necessary to systematically study the elements that affect the quantitative growth of the South Korean church to help create more effective church ministries. Church growth is explained firstly in terms of maturational growth. On the basis of continuous spiritual growth, successful growth is attained through training the devotional laity rather than focusing on training pastors or leaders. Hence more active and vital church growth can be expected by the maturational growth of the congregations. Organic growth is the concept that sees the church as a living organization of Jesus Christ. As our organic body is kept healthy through cooperatively interaction with other parts of the body, organic growth

is accomplished by congregations establishing organic networks providing intimate cooperation of church members. Lastly, with incarnational growth, it is understood that language and spirit of the Gospel becomes real in society or the world through the actions of Christians. The value of incarnational growth lies in considering how the congregations play an important role to give influence of the Gospel in relationship with the society. The reason why the Korean church could not promote the healthy growth is that most of the existing churches have put priority on numerical growth in spite of the other aspects of church growth. On the basis of Mead's model, desirable church growth can be understood in the comprehensive dimension of maturational, organic, and incarnational growth including numerical growth as well. Also, it is kept in mind that the four types of growth proposed by Mead are not separable and only one of them is not emphasized on account of close relevance one another.

At the time of the Apostolic paradigm, the church was made up of strong local groups or congregations. The members were taught and encouraged to take the bible stories and the good news of Jesus to their hostile environment. The roles and relationships varied according to local conditions, but every effort was made to keep contact with congregations elsewhere. After 500 A.D. the Christendom paradigm, the second form of the church, came into being. The church flourished at first, but gradually declined to the present day. During this period the church developed a new way of relating to its environment. Outside the empire, the world was considered pagan so the mission was carried beyond the boundaries of the empire, but as the missionary frontier became the same as the empire's frontier it meant that a citizen of the Empire was also a church person.

Whereas the local congregation had previously been known for its high commitment and training in the faith it had now become an institution of society and government. These institutions supposedly supported the faith and religious institutions. The result was that mission became the responsibility of the professionals. The third formation of the church has begun but its formation is not yet complete. As in the first church in the book of Acts, individual members are taking it upon themselves to reach out to the mission frontier although exactly where that frontier is, is not clear yet. It is possible that the new paradigm may never reach the heights of either the Apostolic or the Christendom versions. It may be that believers will need to make use of unaccustomed ways with which we are not familiar or like using. It cannot be denied that the forms and structures, the roles and relationships of the

churches handed down to us, were formed by paradigms that are not workable in today's world. We must remember the ways of understanding how to be a church and to be in mission. As with any other great historical facts, we cannot forget them. Nor can we forget that the same God who called the church out into the Apostolic world two thousand years ago, is again calling the church into a secularized world. The mission of the church and its life has to be redefined once again. The internal life of the church has always worked in cooperation with the world that surrounded it while it worked out its self-understanding. The roles and relationships in its institutions are shaped by its sense of mission which is the driving force behind its life. The church has been heroic and sacrificial in the support of those carrying out the mission whenever the sense of mission has been clear and compelling.

Mead (1991:28) believes that the new paradigm of the church emerged in the late of twenty century, but it is vague and unclear. Hence the congregations are experiencing the disorder between following the old paradigm still ruling over them and an experimenting with an emerging new one. But it is obvious that the Christendom paradigm began losing its power centuries ago. The Christendom paradigm is now rapidly fading (Mead, 1991:84). Now our task is to consider a critical reflection of the old paradigm and, to study and carefully observe the appearance of a new paradigm. The South Korean church must study the new paradigm and see how it can better fit into its context of church growth; the church must seek to move forward to healthy church growth with the strong recognition of the essence and mission of the church. The front door of the church must become a door into mission.

Perhaps we underestimated the problems that stood in the way. Perhaps we underestimated the power of the opposition. Perhaps we were naive. I have a feeling that one of our most powerful idols is "My New Idea," "The New Program," or even "The New System". Martin Marty once told me that my work with congregations had reminded him "that there are no big deals any more" (Mead, 1994:88).

Similarly, in his book *Transforming Congregations for the Future* (1994), Mead emphasizes that we have to be more concerned about congregational transformation not merely about numerical increase. A transformed congregation has power to strengthen and train its members' discipleship by providing four functional roles: *koinonia*, *kerygma*, *didache*, and *diakonia*. *Koinonia* means building a community; *kerygma*, implies the proclamation of God's Word through scripture, preaching, and the sacraments; *didache*, means teaching sacred stories and standards; and *diakonia*, means discovering and developing gifts of service.

Every step in church growth should make possible for the believer to move to the next step. From the step of discipleship, congregation members need to be changed into taking the step of apostleship, displaying God's love and grace in the world. The church must accomplish its God's given mission in every step. The remarkable point is that a transformed congregation serves as a powerful centre that promotes healthy church growth. The next chapter will propose a guideline for Korean churches using Mead's model of church growth.

## CHAPTER 5

### ***ADJUSTED PRAXIS FOR CHURCH GROWTH IN SOUTH KOREAN CHURCHES***

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

As evidenced in chapter two, there are numerous books, articles and journals on the subject of church growth. Pastors and church leaders are bombarded on a daily basis with a large array of resources and models that promise rapid and massive church growth. Korean churches are not left out in this quest for instant church growth models as indicated in chapter three. This has resulted in churches being more concerned about making Christianity to sound acceptable and inclusive, rather than really understanding what exactly the message of Christianity is all about. Many Korean churches seem to assume that they know all they need to know about church growth; all that remains is for them to make the church attractive and relevant so the “un-churched” will attend and share the assumption they know. In relation to the literature study in chapter two and the empirical data in chapter three, this chapter aims at formulating a proposed model for church growth within the context of Korean churches, following the Loren B Mead’s model and gleaning from other resources to create a balanced model that will reflect the central focus of church growth.

#### **5.2 PRACTICAL THEOLOGICAL GUIDELINES FOR CHURCH GROWTH IN SOUTH KOREAN CHURCHES**

##### ***5.2.1 Guideline 1: Church growth is important***

As indicated in chapter three, all the respondents accept the fact that church growth is important. Some see it as a means of making disciples of all nations as commanded by Christ in Matthew 28:18-19. Other respondents believe that church growth is important because it is a means of expansion of the churches’ ministry. As the church grows, there are more possibilities of using human and material resources to do good works through the church. Hence church growth is important both numerically and qualitatively. While others insist that church growth is important, because the church is not just an organization but also an

organism and as an organism, it must grow. Consequently, McGavran echoed that church growth is directly related to God's will and God wants his church to grow (1980:47). Not only is church growth supported by the Bible, it is also demanded by God. Church growth is important because God promises it; therefore, we engage in church growth because God wants it.

### ***5.2.2 Guideline 2: Church growth must be biblical***

The scriptures and the literature study clearly points out that the church is expected to grow. Ephesians 4:5 shows us that church growth is a command not an option. It is supposed to be a natural process in the church. However, the biblical theological understanding of church growth must be rooted in the fact that ultimate church growth is in the hands of God. "I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow" (1 Cor. 3:6 NIV). God is the one that causes growth; therefore He must get the glory. If the church grows spiritually and numerically it is not because of what we did; it is because of what God did when we allowed Him to use us. Any church growth that is not based on this foundation is built on a shaky foundation. While growth is certainly a gift from God (Acts 2:47), it is a gift that should be expected as the first fruits of the future and as evidence of the power of the Spirit. Throughout the New Testament, there are various references that implicitly or explicitly transmit the image of growth (Matt. 5:16; Mark 1:17; Luke 8:5-8; John 8:12; 1 Pet. 2:2). Churches in Korea must have a biblical theological understanding of church growth, as indicated above.

Korean churches must come to terms with the fact that there is an underlying difference between growth of the church and that of a business. The former is the result of the effective work of faith; the latter, of the efficiency of applied science, of technology. The growth of a business is the result of sound marketing analysis, planning, promotion, effective controls and supervision. But the church is entirely different. It is a community of faith. Its mission needs to be seen as the efficacious work of faith in the horizon of God's eschatological kingdom. It must be evaluated therefore, not on the basis of its recent institutional success, but on the basis of the future of God's kingdom. The idea of growth is therefore basic to the experience and missional expectancy of the first Christians and to the biblical theology of mission. Equally important is the multidimensional nature of church growth as clearly discussed by Mead.

Church growth must always see the church's responsibility in biblical perspective and must seek a vision of the plan of God.

### **5.2.3 *Guideline 3: Church growth involves numerical growth***

Following the ascension of Jesus, the remaining eleven of his primary disciples and other followers gathered together in an upper room to pray (Acts 1:21-13). When the day of Pentecost came, the writer of Acts records that the Holy Spirit descended on the followers of Christ (Acts 2:1-3). When this incredible and supernatural event took place, it attracted quite a crowd and gave the apostle Peter a dramatic opportunity to stand up publicly to declare the gospel message. Following his sermon, the writer of Acts reports that about 3,000 souls were incorporated into the New Jerusalem church. This is a clear reminder that the church must grow numerically. Similarly, Mead (1999:16) articulates that on the basis of sheer survival, as well as a scriptural imperative, every congregation must develop a strategy to acquire new members. Any congregation that is not growing numerically is dying. However, it must be clear that the numerical dimension of church growth is only one of the different dimensions among many in the process of church growth. Mead (1999) further points out that numbers are not everything. But it is something. The churches ignore it at their peril. A church that does not grow in numbers will die; a church that does not live out active hospitality violates the church's traditions. A congregation that does not seek its own way to bring the good news to those who do not know it violates a clear directive of our Lord.

Church growth must not be conceived only as numerical increase. As indicated in chapter three, many of the respondents feel that the only criterion to evaluate the effects in church growth will be on how many people come to the church. It must be emphasized that growth relates to the numerical increase of churches and of the members in churches. Seeking numerical increase of both churches and church members is a spiritual undertaking and must always be received with adequate attention, just as portrayed by the early church. However, it will be a precipitous misapprehension to see church growth only as the swell of church members. Ellul, articulates that when we reduce truth to formulas or success to size, we are far along the road of idolatry and the worship of technique (Ellul 1977:viii).

It is must be noted that not all congregations have the same opportunities for numerical growth. There are a host of variables affecting this, and it might well be the case that for some congregations there is simply no hope for numerical growth at all. There are just too many



things, including demographics and location, working against them. When we think of numerical growth, we are looking for growth with integrity. If our focus becomes purely on numbers, we run the risk of forgetting who we are called to be and of resorting to various types of manipulation (Percy, 2003:22-23).

#### **5.2.4 *Guideline 4: Church growth must be maturational***

It must be understood that although numerical growth is important to church growth, it is not the only kind of growth needed for the church. That is why Mead offers another facet of church growth that is crucial for the Korean churches. By maturational growth, Mead pointed out clearly that every member of the congregation must be able to defy, maintain and persuade each other to grow in the maturity of their faith, to intensify their spiritual roots, and to enlarge their religious imaginations. Maturational growth is the growth and development of every member's understanding of his/her faith and context as a church member. One of the most important ways the Korean church can understand what might be an indicator of maturational growth is to help each church address the following question: How, as a community and a congregation, is the church growing in her faith? Korean churches must emphasize maturational growth because of its importance in church growth. This growth is in the stature and maturity of each member, the growth in faith and in the ability to nurture and be nurtured.

Without lives that are completely committed to Christ and to spirituality, our participation in church growth will lack authenticity. Eugene Peterson reminds us that "the Christian community is interested in spirituality because it is interested in living. We give careful attention to spirituality because we know, from experience, how easy it is to get interested in ideas of God and projects for God and gradually lose interest in the living God, deadening our lives with the ideas and projects" (Peterson, 2005:31). Korean churches must therefore, not only emphasize numbers, but must also nurture the existing members to become mature in their faith. The Great Commission in Matthew 28 gives a balanced approach that is helpful in church growth: we are not only to go and make disciples, but we must also teach them to obey all things. This is where maturational growth takes place. Korean churches must grow in maturity, helping individual families grow in spiritual awareness, discernment and wisdom.

#### **5.2.5 *Guideline 5: Korean Churches must grow organically***

Organic growth is essential in every church, especially among Korean churches. This is

growth of the congregation as a functioning community, able to maintain itself as a living organism, and an institution that can engage the other institutions of society. Korean churches must grow organically. This implies that churches must show cohesive growth within the entire congregation as it learns to work together and function as a whole. Avery and Gilson (1999:7) concurs that health growth and sustainable community arise organically from who and what people are, paced in stages appropriate to the capacities to change of those involved. If there is this understanding of organic church growth, it will foster unity and combat petty jealousy between smaller churches and mega churches. Mead further emphasizes that organic growth is about the task of building the community, fashioning the organizational structures, developing the practices and processes that result in a dependable, stable network of human relationships in which we can grow. Organic growth is the designation given to the internal development of the community of faith, or the strengthening of the system of relationships between its members (Costas, 1983:162). Korean churches must try to strike the balance between growth and numbers. Maturation or mission must be matched by the growth of a strong and effective organization, able to make decisions and carry them out over time.

Therefore, for organic growth to be effective in Korean churches, emphasis must be placed on a gift-oriented ministry approach. The gift-oriented approach reflects the conviction that sovereignty determines which Christian should best assume which ministry. The role of church leadership is to help its members to identify their gifts and to integrate them into appropriate ministries. When Christians serve in their area of giftedness, they generally function less in their own strength and more in the power of the Holy Spirit. These ordinary people can accomplish the extraordinary. The discovery and use of spiritual gifts is the only way to live the reformation watchword of the “priesthood of all believers” and this will promote organic growth. Of all the variables associated with a gift-oriented ministry, the issue of “lay training” has the greatest correlation to church growth. The goal of church leaders in Korean churches must be to prepare God’s people for the work of service so that the body of Christ may be built up (Eph. 4:11-12). Leaders equip God’s people to serve the community by doing good works. Paul sees the church as a living organism: the body of Christ (Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:12-17; Eph. 4:13-16; Col. 1:18). Christians are dependent on each other’s gifts. All Christians are called to be ministers (2 Tim 1:9). We are called into ministry (1 Pet. 2:9-10); we are gifted for the ministry (1 Pet. 4:10); authorized for ministry (Eph. 4:11-17); commanded to minister (Mt. 20:26-28); needed for ministry (1 Cor. 12:27). There will be rewards (Col. 3:23-24). The list of spiritual gifts in Romans 12:6-8 are given to build the

body. Peter Wagner says that the spiritual gift of faith was a common denominator found in the pastors of growing churches (Wagner, 1970:265-269). Therefore, Korean churches must have faith in mobilizing and equipping the laity for ministry. All should be encouraged to use their gifts in the local church for the church to grow organically. If emphasis is only put on numbers, many Christians will only come to church on Sundays, and they will never be equipped to put their gifts into practice.

When organic growth is healthy, the growth in numbers and the spiritual maturity of church members is a natural by-product. Biblical teachings set the stage for healthy organic growth. Korean churches must take note of the following indicators of healthy organic growth in a local church:

1. A strong emphasis on prayer;
2. An obvious ministry of the Holy spirit;
3. Biblical balance;
4. Individual and organic reproduction;
5. A high level of lay mobilization;
6. Qualitative and quantitative growth of the membership; and
7. Healthy body life, which will be evidenced through a loving, caring fellowship among members.

Therefore, Organic growth is an important part of church growth that must not be neglected in a healthy church. A strong emphasis must be placed on people being mobilized in their areas of giftedness.

#### **5.2.6 *Guideline 6: Church growth must be incarnational***

Incarnational growth is another facet of growth that is often neglected among Korean churches. For church growth to be holistic in Korean churches, incarnational growth must be incorporated. Incarnational growth is the growth and development of the church's identity and presentation of the church's core values in the world. It is how the church lives its faith. This kind of growth is in the ability to take the meaning and values of the faith story and

make them real in the world and society outside the congregation. The congregation must grow in its ability to en flesh in the community what the faith is all about. Many Korean church members are often not able to contend their faith, due to the greater emphasis that has been placed on numerical growth at the expense of holistic growth. Therefore, Korean churches must equip members to function as a religious community as a basis from which ministry is done. Korean churches must not just be interested in numbers, but rather build people and send them out to function in their community as witnesses. Mead argues that growth of any kind begins with a congregation.

Mead`s church growth models can be summarized for the use of Korean churches in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Summary of Mead`s church growth model**

Type of growth	Expected result
Numerical	Larger church membership
Organic	Strong internal structure, effective functioning, organization and processes
Incarnational	Enhanced cultural influence, living the faith in service and witness to others
Maturational	Increased personal Christ-likeness, growth in discipleship, faith, hope and love

**5.2.7 Guideline 7: Korean churches must emphasize church health not only church growth**

Korean churches must understand that focusing on church growth alone is wrong. Warren (2002:17) says that “the key issue for churches in the twenty-first century will be church health, not church growth.” He added ... “When congregations are healthy, they grow the way God intends ... If your church is genuinely healthy, you won’t have to worry about it growing.”

Therefore, Korean churches, in addition to maintaining the four different types of growth as outlined by Mead, must also seek to maintain church health. Macchia (2001:23) developed ten characteristics of a healthy church which I believe will also be relevant to Korean churches:

1. empowering God's presence,
2. God-exalting worship,
3. spiritual disciples,
4. a learning and growing community,
5. a commitment to loving and caring relationships,
6. servant-leadership development,
7. an outward focus,
8. wise administration and accountability,
9. networking with the body of Christ, and
10. stewardship and generosity.

Similarly from the study of the book of Acts, Powers (2002) developed a list of another nine principles of church health, some of which overlap with Macchia's characteristics:

1. the entreating principle (Acts 1:14) – a praying church,
2. the empowering principle (Acts 2:4) – leaders equipping people to find and use their spiritual gifts,
3. the evangelizing principle (Acts 2:40-42) – the purpose of power was proclamation,
4. the enriching principle (Acts 2:42) – enriched through the Word of God,
5. the encouraging principle (Acts 2:42) – people involved in koinonia,
6. the exalting principle (Acts 2:46-7) – the worship of God,

7. the ensemble principle (Acts 2:32) – the gathering and unity of the church,
8. the example principle (Acts 6:2-4) – Leaders exemplifying health to church members,  
and
9. the expanding principle (Acts 6:1, 7; 1:8) – growth follows naturally from health.<sup>38</sup>

Consequently, Randy Millwood (2002), in his study of the Gospels and Acts developed six vital signs of a healthy church: 1) one task: disciple-making, 2) one strategy: servant-leadership, 3) one vehicle: small groups, 4) one atmosphere: community, 5) one authority: Jesus, and 6) one function: worship.<sup>39</sup> These characteristics are very crucial for Korean churches - this is because of the incessant rivalry and power tussle that is always found between the senior minister and the younger minister, leadership succession battles, and many more carnal practices that are found among / in Korean churches. If the emphasis had been on church health and not just numerical growth, these carnal practices could have been minimized to a certain level. In his book, *Body Life*, Ray Stedman made a short reference to the subject of church health as follows:

No athlete spends all his time running races or playing the game for which he is trained; he must also spend many hours keeping himself in shape and developing his skills to a high degree. So it is with the body of Christ. The work of the ministry will never be properly done by a weak and unhealthy church, torn with internal pains, wracked by spiritual diseases (Stedman, 1972:106).

The Korean churches need a healthy understanding of church growth. Health must not, however, be seen as a sum of measures only, but rather as a quality of relatedness to God and His world, both a state and a process. Health is both a state and a process, both individual and communal.

### **5.2.8 Guideline 8: Korean Churches must emphasize balanced church growth**

In addition to maintaining church health, the Korean church must also seek to have a balanced church growth because authentic church growth must also included balanced church

---

<sup>38</sup> Larry Powers, Available: <http://www.ministriestoday.com/issues/mt399/mt3993.htm> 2 December 2002.

<sup>39</sup> Randy Millwood, Lecture Notes, Course: CECG6220 Vital Signs of a Healthy Church (New Orleans, LA: New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, February 22-25, 2002).

growth. Balance is as important for church growth as it is for any other venture. Hence Korean churches must learn to strike the balance between quantity and quality. Korean church growth models emphasize the numerical swell of members in churches and the burgeoning of congregations, which is not bad in itself. The church's mission centers on finding and winning people to Christ and gathering them into churches. Church growth does not, however, as most Korean churches believe, restrict its concern to numerical increase only. Smith (1984:32) rightly notes that:

Any church or denomination that continues to grow bigger without, at the same time, growing better by expanding its base to care for the numerical increase, will face serious consequences. Balance is basic for authentic church growth. Churches must maintain balance between growing bigger, better and broader. Growing bigger involves adding members and congregations. Growing better includes increasing the church's ability to carry out its mission and care for the spiritual maturing of its members. Growing broader covers the ministry and missionary dimensions of the church's task.

He concludes that all three types of growth are imperative. No one can be neglected; none should overshadow the others.

As indicated by the empirical data, many Korean churches are struggling to strike the balance between growing bigger, broader and better. Smith's (1984:32-38) suggestions on how to maintain this balance will be useful for the Korean churches:

1. churches should grow more and more rather than just larger and larger. Every denomination must seek a balance between the larger, medium, and smaller-sized churches. Most importantly, equal dignity, honour and emphasis must be given the various sized churches and those who are called to labour in them.
2. churches must also grow better by developing members' spiritual quality and ability to serve, by increasing the church's capacity to carry out the functions of worship, care, influence, ministry, and evangelism, and by expanding the church's ability to live as the Body of Christ. The church must provide for the spiritual nurture and practical training of every member. Training in Christian service and the provision of opportunities to serve must be a vital part of efforts toward growing better.

3. churches must grow broader by ministry and missions. As the church meets its rightful responsibility in sharing the complete gospel with the entire world, that church is growing broader. In order to grow broader, Korean churches must be involved in social ministry that seeks to care for those injured by society and circumstances. Korean churches must also be involved in social action not only social ministry, they must seek to change the structures of injustice and greed that bring injury and suffering to mankind.

It is evident that achieving and maintaining a proper balance is perhaps the most demanding and challenging task for Korean churches. However, Smith's suggestions, if implemented, will help Korean churches in attaining the needed balance in church growth. Similarly, Ron Jenson and Jim Stevens emphasized the balanced increase in quantity, quality, and organizational complexity of a local church (Jenson & Stevens, 1981:10). Therefore, balance must be a basic ingredient of church growth in Korean churches. Balanced church growth will emphasize the biblical mandates for church growth in correct proportions, the infilling of the Holy Spirit, the sociological structures of society, the psychological needs of men and women, and the organizational forms taken by beginning churches. Balance must also seek to address both quality and quantity. Winter (1972:175-87) pointed out that:

The very phrase church growth implies additional dimension of emphasis beyond conversion, since it focuses not on how many raise their hands at an evangelistic service but on the incorporation of the new believer into church life . . . . The very concept of Church growth is an attempt to emphasize the quality of corporate life beyond the quantity of individual decisions.

Werning (1983:15) also argues that quantity and quality are inseparable parts of the same reality. It is vital that Christian leaders know how to measure quality and be alert to the quantitative measure of quality. A combination of quantity and quality in a church's program and attitude is critical before that church can become a vital congregation (Johnson, 1989:18).

### **5.2.9 Guideline 9: Korean churches must depend on the Holy Spirit for church growth**

As indicated above, church growth is biblical. However, its biblical nature demands that not any one method should be done independently of the Holy Spirit. The infilling of the Holy Spirit, so often spoken of in the New Testament, is an essential component of authentic church growth. One of the most wonderful verses in the New Testament is Acts 8:4. It tells of



the Christians in Jerusalem who had been filled with the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. Therefore a balanced church growth must be filled with the Holy Spirit, must use effective methods, must pray for God's blessing, must endure in the face of difficulties through the help of the Holy Spirit, and above all, it must never turn aside from efforts to seek and save the lost. To do this effectively, it will require the Korean churches to examine their theology, ecclesiology, and motives for church growth. The two basic presuppositions of church growth must be the authority of the Bible and the sovereignty of the Holy Spirit (Cotterel, 1981:13). Church growth recognizes the sovereignty of the Holy Spirit and must not offer methods that will be independent of him. Gibbs (1988:189-195) points to the fact that the Holy Spirit is integral to church growth at every phase. He argues that without the essential work of the Spirit, our witnessing will lack both credibility and endurance. Furthermore, when the church is witnessing in the Spirit's power, even the gates of hell will be forced to give way. Church growth as noted earlier, entails much more than just recruiting individuals and people to support a cause and enlist like-minded people. No individual can qualify for true church membership without a supernatural work of God taking place deep within his or her personality. This is the role of the Holy Spirit. He shows us the relevance of the gospel and takes up residence within us that we might live by the power of that message.

Therefore, divested of the power of the Spirit our church growth principles are in peril of becoming mere clichés. When God's spirit is in operation, those principles are powerfully and impressively evident.

#### ***5.2.10 Korean churches must study Jesus' methods of church growth***

The church is built upon Christ's authority. Jesus said, "I will build My Church" (Matt. 16:18) This Jesus, by whom all believers are reconciled to God through faith, is the life of the Christian church (Werning, 1983:16). If one looks to Jesus on the subject of church growth a decidedly different message is obtained to that of the one received from modern church growth experts as revealed in chapters two and three. Jesus' images of church growth do not transpose well into today's fascination with modern marketing, powerful personalities, entertaining "worship" and a full range of need-felt programs seen in many Korean churches. His image of growth point away from humanistic planning and engineering to God's hidden work of grace. Jesus drew analogies that insisted on a natural church growth process that remained a mystery to the harvester. In the parable of the growing seed, the farmer scatters the seed on the ground and miraculously, it grows. Jesus seems to relish telling us that the

growth process is out of the farmer's hand (Mark 4:27-28).

Jesus' church growth model clearly suggests that the increase of the Kingdom cannot be manufactured by mere human strategies alone. The mustard seed reality of the Kingdom of God should be respected by Korean churches (Mark 4:30f). What the world deems small and insignificant has the potential of growing great, not because of anything we do, but because of what God will do. In the parable of the seed and soils, God is sovereign and the good seed reproduces abundantly (Mark 4:20). This is very important among Korean churches, because many small churches are judged by their numbers. As such, many of them are in the quest to grow bigger, adopt methods of growth that are sometimes not biblical. They seek to follow an entrepreneurial church growth that replaces a vision of Christ with human ambition and seeks to explain the mystery of God by man-made methodologies. Many Korean churches embrace western methodologies that emphasize that the church needs to keep up with the latest trends in music, communication, technology, architecture and leadership if they expect to compete effectively in today's market place. Churches that don't keep up with the man made methods are considered to be left behind. These are the assumptions preoccupying many Korean churches today. These are the ideas that many seminars and conferences seek to promote in many Korean churches. It has become old fashioned and almost cynically pietistic to speak about keeping our eyes on Jesus as a model of church growth among many Korean pastors. The effect of all this among Korean churches is the fact many churches are promoting Christianity without Christ.

However, Jesus' growth approach must not be interpreted as an excuse for laziness. As planters and harvesters the Korean churches are part of the process, but the actual growth remains a divine obscurity rather than a human enterprise. If Korean churches would look at Jesus, the founder and the finisher of their faith, they would not be tempted to feel that the Kingdom lies in our initiatives, methodologies and budgets alone. They would pray for people who are called by the Lord to come alongside them and participate in the labour of love for Christ and his Kingdom. Therefore, church growth planes must be flexible and subject to the Lord's will.

### **5.3 CONCLUSION**

This chapter presented a working praxis for Korean churches with the hope of achieving a balanced church growth. Many kinds of church growths are found in the world today, each

varying from people to people, from time to time, and from denomination to denomination. However, understanding the nature of church growth is impossible unless we apprehend the many different types of growth and their various stages. Mead's model has been a primal focus in this chapter; this is because of its relevant nature to the Korean church context. In his book, *The purpose Driven Church*, Rick Warren said that "the key issue for churches in the twenty-first century will be church health, not church growth....Focusing on growth alone misses the point. When congregations are healthy, they grow the way God intends. Healthy churches don't need gimmicks to grow – they grow naturally" (Warren, 2002:17). Health is not an end but a means to fulfill the purpose of life. Health is a resource for life, not the object of living. Indeed health is not the meaning of a congregation's existence, but a congregation fulfills its meaning in conditions of health and disease (Steinke, 1996: ix).

Therefore, Korean churches must not focus on numerical growth only, but must seek a healthy and a balanced church growth instead, as indicated by Mead's models and other literature in this study. The next chapter will conclude this study and offer some practical recommendations for church growth that will enhance balanced and healthy church growth in Korean churches.

# CHAPTER 6

## *CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS*

### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

The goal of this study has been to analyze and evaluate church growth theories found and followed in South Korean churches and which have affected the church, in order to provide a more valued understanding and balance between quantitative and qualitative growth. It also aimed at presenting a balanced method of church growth using Loren Mead's model of church growth. The aim of this chapter is to tie the whole process into a unity and at the same time highlight some of the contributions of this study. Similarly, this chapter intends to provide some practical recommendations for Korean churches that will enhance balance and healthy church growth among Korean churches, and to suggest topics for further research.

### **6.2 WHAT ARE THE MAIN QUESTIONS?**

The main questions that this study addressed were: What is the Korean church's understanding of Church growth?; On which aspects of church growth is the Korean church focused?; What is desirable church growth? These questions have been addressed by a literature study as well as an empirical study.

### **6.3 WHAT ARE THE MAIN CONCLUSIONS?**

#### **6.3.1 Church growth should never be thought of solely in terms of an increase in numbers only**

It is easy to focus on numerical growth because it is the easiest to quantify – to count the number of people in the pews or the number of programs offered each week. Numerical growth constitutes only one part of the measure of a church. However this study has indicated that there are other types of growth that must be put in place in order to achieve a balanced growth as desired by God. Mead noted that numerical growth gets most attention and is a concern of most congregations but it will not be a big part of the experience of many other congregations. For ministry of the twenty-first century, every congregation will need to develop into a training ground, capable of equipping each member with a new level of

competence in education and formation. Hence, along with growth in numbers, a continuing maturation and development of members must be cultivated. Numbers alone do not equal biblical church growth. The currency to use in measuring church growth should not be attendance, buildings and offerings.

### **6.3.2 Church growth operates within a specific context**

In the quest of embracing many church growth models, many Koreans accepted the various church growth models without a critical examination. It is important that each church should evaluate every model of church growth and see how it could work within her context. Elmer Towns (2004: 50) noted that “Each church must take the eternal principles of church growth and work them out in application to its context and within its resources.” Many churches in Korea today seek to embrace different church growth models without knowing its source or implications. Korean churches must ask: “How can we take the unchanging faith delivered to the saints (Jude 3) and present it effectively within their context?” Many pastors looked at the mega church leaders and simply copied their methods without reflecting on the principles behind the methods. Korean pastors need to understand that there are many different models of church growth that are effective, but the models do not suit all churches.

### **6.3.3 Church growth is not practiced at the expense of church health**

This study has revealed that church growth is biblical, but of equal importance is church health. A healthy church is a church that seeks to obey the great commission and great commandments in its setting by being based on scripture, led by visionary leaders, empowered by the spirit, having a balanced function, and effective in its organization. Health is promoted by personal activity. Health comes from measure that each person can effect. Like healthy people, congregations promote their health through responsible enlighten behavior (Steinke, 1996: vii). As we seek church growth, we must also seek church health because church health is the key to church growth. As noted earlier, Rick Warren (2002:17) pointed out that “the key issue for churches in the twenty-first century will be church health, not church growth.” In the same manner, Neil Cole argued that:

We don't care if our churches live a year, twenty years, or a hundred years. We care that while they live, they give birth. We may start a church that lasts a year, but while it lives, it births two daughter churches. That is success. We think if every church reproduces in that way, then the Kingdom of God will continue to grow. But if we

think that every church has to last forever, we will try to do everything we can to keep it alive artificially, and that is not good. We find fruitfulness most often in the small, not the large. Growing larger does not seem to be the key. Massive is not the key.<sup>40</sup>

#### **6.3.4 Church growth is ultimately the work of the Holy Spirit through the church**

No human gimmicks can make church growth the way that God desired it. Growth is certainly a gift from God (1 Cor. 3:7; Acts 2:47). Healthy churches reproduce and multiply themselves. They plant churches. Believers are trained/encouraged to disciple others who will in turn disciple others. Everything is geared toward growth in God and reproducible discipleship that can be continuously multiplied. If the church grows spiritually and numerically it is not because of what we did. It is because of what God did when we allowed Him to use us. It is not about the preacher, the elders, the deacons, the members, the sermons, the church programs; we must acknowledge the Holy Spirit. Elmer (1981: 199) reveals that:

The work of a sovereign God in the growth of His church must be seen as the ultimate factor; thus, careful understanding is needed to usurp the Holy Spirit's proper role. The Holy Spirit is always involved when revival or evangelical awakenings stir even older churches to repentance from sin and resultant renewal and growth.

Elmer (1981:199) further cites McGavran:

In summary we may say that when, driven by their own powerlessness, men turn to God and devote themselves to prayer, He pours out the Holy Spirit on them. Filled with the Holy Spirit, men sometimes experience feelings of great joy and exaltation...The gift of the Holy Spirit enables men to confess sin, make restitution, break evil habits, lead victorious lives, persuade others of available power, bring multitudes to Christ and cause the church to grow mightily.

It is all about what God does naturally when we allow him to use us. Church growth is not about what "I" or "We" do. It is about what God does. However, there must be a balance between God's part and our part. God's part must not be an excuse for laziness.

---

<sup>40</sup> Available: Neil Cole, Online <http://www.next-wave.org>

### **6.3.5 Church growth is a sign, not an instrument of mission**

A sign is something that points beyond itself; in this case the mission of God fulfilled in the proclamation and the presence of the kingdom. Multidimensional growth is a fundamental sign of the kingdom, which may open the way for the recognition of other signs. The church that is engaged in mission, that is proclaiming the gospel, out of a situation of engagement and incarnation in concrete reality, a church in the midst of which people are coming to Jesus Christ and are responding to the call of the gospel, a church that is growing from within in indigenous leadership, worship, stewardship, a church that is critically reflecting and growing in the understanding of its faith, is much more capable, qualified, and prepared to recognize the other signs of the kingdom that are manifested in history (Pannenberg, 1969:54).

### **6.3.6 There is a fundamental difference between the growth of a church and that of a business**

Church growth is not measured by buildings and programs, but by the maturity of the leaders and the members. Today's theory is that churches need to keep up with the latest trends in music, communications systems, technology, architecture, fashion etc. These are the assumptions preoccupying many in the church today. The church is a community of faith. Its mission needs to be seen as the efficacious work of faith in the horizon of God's eschatological kingdom. It must be evaluated, therefore, not on the basis of its institutional success, but on the basis of the future.

Everyone says is wonderful . . . a success . . . but does that make it wonderful or a success? No . . . You can build a building that no one says is wonderful or a success . . . but could it be wonderful and a success . . .? Yes . . .<sup>41</sup>

This clearly shows that when we reduce truth to formulas or success to size, we are far along the road of idolatry and the worship of technique. Church growth must be biblical, balanced, and healthy. Without a doubt God's view of growing his church is radically transcendent from that of the business approach.

### **6.3.7 Balance in church growth cannot be over-emphasized**

This study has pointed out clearly that churches must learn to maintain a balance as they

---

<sup>41</sup> Available: <http://www.cbc.ca/ideas>

grow bigger, broader and better. Growing bigger involves adding members to congregations. Growing better includes increasing the church's ability to carry out its mission and care for the spiritual maturing of its members. 'Growing broader' covers the ministry and missionary dimensions of the church's task (Smith, 1984:32). Church growth is traditionally spoken of in the growing-larger dimensions of numbers. This study has revealed that churches should also be growing in the community, in intimacy with the Lord, in understanding His word and ways, in strategic outreach, in interaction with the world around them, with the goal of bringing the kingdom to the world.

#### **6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It will be difficult to cover the study of church growth exhaustively in this study; however an attempt has been made to provide a biblical understanding of church growth for Korean churches, and at the same time a working praxis has been provided. In light of the study, the following recommendations are deemed fit for Korean churches:

- ✓ New church development and transformation: create a congregational based educational resource and initiative. This initiative will be designed to assist Korean congregations to develop alternative ways of initiating and promoting new church developments and transformation for churches.
- ✓ Leadership development: Korean churches must create an evangelism and missional institute for Korean pastors and congregational members to train and equip pastors for a balanced approach to church growth; they must also develop a uniform biblical standard for training church planters. Missional leaders see beyond the horizon to the heart of God; they are navigating their way into the future with the heart of God as their destination (Minatrea, 2004: 155). The scriptures, specifically the book of Acts, show that the purpose, activity, and concern of the early Christian leaders were always that the church may grow. There is an obvious need for the same attitude, spirit, and commitment in our day. Missional theology maintains that the mission of the church is the mission of God. The institute will serve as a repository of talent and knowledge for pastors and congregational leaders. The institute should provide workshops, lectures, and seminars in the balanced approach to church growth.
- ✓ Youth and young adults must be provided with leadership, they must be encouraged to form networks that will facilitate healthy church growth. Without the youth and young



adults the church will die. Youth and young adults will only stay with the church if they have a meaningful leadership role and voice, positions where they are able to see where their decisions take effect. This will eliminate competition of membership among churches.

- ✓ Korean churches must form an evaluative body for church growth movements. This body will be responsible for evaluating church growth models coming from outside of Korea and recommend their appropriateness.
- ✓ I further recommend a pulpit exchange program among pastors with the rationale of learning and sharing of ideas from one another. With this in place, it will create an awareness that we are all working for the same masters.
- ✓ Smaller churches must be encouraged by mega or bigger churches. This encouragement can be in both kind and cash. This could help the current migration of members from smaller churches to bigger churches. Furthermore, Burt and Roper's (1992:85-88) suggestions must be taken into account: Korean churches must be helping people – pastors, lay persons, denominational and judicatory executives, and seminary faculty – to understand that the small church is a unique entity and to respect that distinction. Congregations with modest sizes differ from larger churches. Secondly, we must assist individual small churches with the identity issue. A third suggestion is calls for a redefinition of “success”. Many small churches have yet to learn that they do not have to keep up with their larger cousins. They need to do what they can do, rather than to struggle with what they cannot or should no do. Fourthly, we must begin to redefine clergy success – incorporating the viewpoints of both ministers and the denominations. A host of issues arise from this topic: “climbing the ladder” of size, equitable salaries not tied to a size gradient, stroking, status, and other “benefits.”
- ✓ Finally, current church growth courses in Korean seminaries need to be re-evaluated for faithful and contextual ministries in Korea.

## **6.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

The amount of material that needs to be studied in developing a balanced church growth is beyond the scope of this study. Further research must be conducted in the following areas:

- The relationship between church growth and church health
- Historical development of church growth in Korean churches
- The role of pastors in balanced church growth
- A comparative study of church growth movements in Korea

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Avery, W.O. and Gilson, Waldkoenig, A.C. 1999. *Cooperating Congregations: Portraits of Mission Strategies*. New York: Alban Institute.
- Boyer, J.L. 1971. *For a World Like Ours*. Winona Lake, Indiana: BMH Books.
- Burt, S.E. and Roper, H.A. 1992. *Raising Small Church Esteem*. New York: Alban Institute.
- Conn, W. 1976. *Trends in Church Growth*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Costas, O.E. 1983. *A Wholistic Concept of Church Growth in Exploring Church Growth*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm B. Eerdmans.
- Cotterel, P. 1981. *Church Alive*. Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press.
- Denzin, N.K and Lincoln, Y.S. 1994. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- 2000. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Dingemans, G.D.J. 1996. Practical theology in the academy: A contemporary overview. *The Journal of Religion* 76, 82-96.
- Dietterich, P. 1991. *Approaches to church development*. Chicago: The center for Parish development.
- Dietterich, P. [1989] 1993. *Classes of changes in church organizations*. Chicago The Center for Parish Development.
- Dietterich, I.T. & Ziemer, D.A. 1998. Take time to be holy: Cultivating the missional church. *ReformedReview* 52:1, 15-28
- Dulles, A. [1976] 1988. *Models of church*. Dublin: Gill & Macmillan.
- Elull, J. 1977. *The Technological System*. France: Calman-Levy.
- Falmer, V.S. 1990. *Doing Quantitative Research*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

- Gibbs, E. 1988. "The Power Behind the Principles" in *Church Growth State of the Art* ed C. Peter Wagner. Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers.
- Glasser, A.F. 1986. Church growth at Fuller. *Missiology* 14/4, 401-420
- 1987. The evolution of Evangelical mission theology since World War II. *Evangelical Review of Theology*. 11:1, 53-64
- Griffith, M. 1980. *Shaking the sleeping beauty*. Leicester: InterVarsity Press.
- Guder, D.L. 1994. Evangelism and the debate over church growth. *Interpretation* 48, 145-155.
- Guinness, O.S. 1993. *Dining with the devil: the mega-church movement flirts with modernity*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.
- Gwak, C.D. 2000. *Ecclesiology and membership trends in the South Korean Churches*. D Th dissertation, University of Stellenbosch.
- Hadaway, C.K. & Roozen, D.A. 1993. *Church and denominational growth*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- Hendriks, H. J. 2004. *Studying Congregations in Africa*. Wellington: Lux Verbi.
- Hong, Y.G. 2003. Encounter with Modernity: The "McDonaldization" and "Charismatization" of Korean Mega-churches. *International Review of Mission* 92, 239-255.
- Hong, Y.G. 2004. Models of the Church Growth Movement. *Transformation* 21, 101-113
- Hunter, K.R. 1985. *Your church has personality*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- Johnson, D.W. 1989. *Vitality Means Church Growth*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- Kenneson, P.D. & Street, J.L. 1997. *Selling out the church: The dangers of church marketing*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- Macchaia, S. 2001. *Becoming a Healthy Church Workbook: A Dialogue, Assessment, and Planning Tool*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.
- Mason, J. 2002. *Qualitative Researching*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Mays, P. 1999. "After Christendom, What? Renewal and Discovery of Church and Mission in the West" *Missiology: An International Review*, Vol. XXVII, No. 2, April 1999.
- McGrith, J. 1994. *Community and Growth*. New York: Paulist Press.
- McGavran, D.A & Arn, W.C. 1973. *How to grow a church*. Glendale: Regal Books.
- , 1977. *Ten steps for church growth*. San Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers.
- McGavran, D.A. & Hunter G.G. 1980. *Church growth strategies that work*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- McGavran, D.A. [1955] 1981. *The bridges of God: a study in the strategy of mission*. New York: Friendship Press.
- 1959. *How churches grow*. London: World Dominion Press.
- [1970] 1980. *Understanding church growth*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing.
- [1970] 1990. *Understanding church growth*. rev. and ed. by C. P. Wagner. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing.
- 1980. *Church growth strategies that work*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- Mead, L.B. 1991. *The once and future church: Reinventing the congregation for a new mission frontier*. Washington: The Alban Institute.
- 1993. *More than numbers: The way churches grow*. Washington: The Alban Institute.
- 1994. *Transforming congregations for the future*. Washington: The Alban Institute.
- 1996. *Five challenges for the once and future church*. New York: The Alban Institute.
- Minatrea, M. 2004. *Shaped by God's Heart*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Mok, C.K. 2000. "Korean church and natural church development" NCD Symposium 2000.  
11 p 20
- Mouton, J. 1996. *Understanding Social Research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Murray, S. 2005. *Church After Christendom*. London: Paternoster Press.

- Newbigin, L. [1978] 1995. *The open secret: An introduction to theology of mission*. Rev ed  
Grand Rapids: Eerdmans
- Ortiz, J.C. 1975. *Disciple*. Illinois: Creation House.
- Osmer, R.R. 1997. Practical theology as argument, rhetoric, and conversation. *Princeton Seminary Bulletin* 18/1, 46-73.
- Patrick, M. 1999. *After Christendom, What? Renewal and Discovery of Church and Mission in the West* *Missiology* 27 no 2 Ap, p 245-258.
- Pannenberg, W. 1969. *Theology and the Kingdom of God*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press.
- Percy, H. 2003. *Your Church Can Thrive*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- Peters, G.W. 1981. *A theology of church growth*. Grand Rapids: The Zondervan Publishing House.
- Peterson, E. 2005. *Christ Plays in Ten Thousand Places*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing.
- Poling, J.N. & Miller, D.E. 1985. *Foundations for a practical theology of ministry*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- Rene, E. 2004. *Missional churches: identical global 'plants' or locally grown 'flowers'?* *Christian A. Schwartz's 'natural church development' revisited: Transformation*, Vol 21 no 3 JI 2004, p 180-191.
- Rhee, J.S. 1995. *Secularization and sanctification: A study of Karl Barth's doctrine of sanctification and its contextual application to the Korean church* PhD thesis, Vrije Universiteit.
- Ron Jenson & Jim Stevens 1981. *Dynamics of church growth*. Baker Book House.
- Ro, B.R. 1995. The Korean Church God's chosen people for evangelism, in Ro, B R & Nelson, M L (eds) *Korean Church growth explosion*. Seoul: Word of Life Press.
- Roozen, D.A. & Hadaway, C.K. 1993. *Church & denominational growth: What does and does not cause growth or decline*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.

- Schwarz, C.A. 1996. *Natural church development: A guide to eight essential qualities of healthy churches*. St. Charles: ChurchSmart Resources.
- 1999. *Paradigm shift in the church: How natural church development can transform theological thinking*. St. Charles: ChurchSmart Resources.
- Smith, E.C. 1984. *Balanced church growth*. Nashville: Broadman Press.
- Stedman, R.C. 1972. "Keeping the Body Healthy," In *Body Life: The Church Comes Alive!* Ventura, CA: Regal Books.
- Steinke, P.L. 1996. *Healthy Congregations*. Washington: The Alban Institute.
- Taber, C.B. 1983. Contextualization, in Shenk, W R (ed) *Exploring church growth*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Towns, E. 2004. "Effective Evangelism View: Church Growth effectively confronts and penetrates the culture," in Gary McIntosh, gen. ed.' *Evaluating the Church Growth Movement: Five Views*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.
- Wagner, C.P. 1976. *Your church can grow: Seven vital signs of a healthy church*. Ventura: Regal Books.
- 1979a. *Your spiritual gift can help your grow*. Ventura: Regal Books.
- 1979b. *Your church can be healthy*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- 1981. *Church growth and the whole Gospel*. New York: Harper & Row.
- 1984. *Leading your church to growth*. Ventura: Regal Books.
- 1987. *Strategies for church growth: Tools for effective mission and evangelism*. Ventura: Regal Books.
- Warren, R. 2002. *The purpose driven church: Growth without compromising your message & mission*. Paarl, SA: PurposeDriven.
- Webster, D.D. 1992. *Selling Jesus*. Illinois: Intervarsity Press.

Werning, W.J. 1983. *Vision and Strategy for Church Growth*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Bake Book House.

Winter, R. 1972. Quantity or Quality?" *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, vol. 8, no 4.

### **Korean books and Articles**

Eun, J.K. 2006. *신학적 교회론 (Theological ecclesiology)*. Seoul: Han Deul Press.

Eun, J.K. 2006. *실천적 교회론 (Practical ecclesiology)*. Seoul: Han Deul press.

Han, K.S. 1992. *교회성장학 (Church growth study)*. Seoul: Sung Kwang Press.

Jang S.B. 2008. 지역의 필요를 채워주는 교회가 됩시다. *목회와 신학* Vol. 227 p49-53. Seoul: Doo Ran No.

Kim, J.L. 1995. *바른 목회 바른 교회 (Sound pastoral and sound church)*. Seoul: The Christian literature Society of Korea.

Lee, S.H. 1998. *미래 목회 대 예언 (Critical prediction for future pastoring)*. Seoul: Gyu Jang.

Lee, J.Y. & Jun, H.J. & Na, I.S. 1983. *Church growth theology*. Seoul: Jeong Eum Press.

Min, K.B. [1982] 1993. *한국기독교회사 (A history of Korean Christianity)*. Seoul: Yean-se University Press.

Park, Y.C. 2006. *셀 교회론 (Cell eccleciology)*. Seoul: Yo Dan Press.

Ro, C.J. 1998. *한국 개신교 사회학 (Sociology of Korean Reformed Church)*. Seoul: Han ul Press.



Yang C.S. 2001. 성공주의 속에서 참된 목회란. (Pastoral theology) 목회와 신학 Vol. 142 p88-89. Seoul: Doo Ran No.

## Internet websites

한국인의 종교와 종교의식 2004. Gallup Korea [Online]. Available:

[http://www.freeview.org/bbs/board.php?bo\\_table=g001&wr\\_id=25](http://www.freeview.org/bbs/board.php?bo_table=g001&wr_id=25). [2008, 11 Feb].

한국교회 위기 질적 성숙으로 돌파하자. 2007. *KUKINEWS* [Online]. Available:

<http://www.kukinews.com/mission/article/view.asp?page=1&gCode=kmis&arcid=0920556490&code=23111111>. [2008, 5 July].

한 명의 교인 등록보다 한 명의 진정한 기독교인 길러야. 2008. *NEWSMISSION* [Online]. Available:

<http://www.newsmission.com/news/2008/02/12/1612.22079.html>. [2008, 20 Jun].

대형교회, 작은 교회 고통 강 건너 불 보듯. 2008. *NEWSPower* [Online]. Available:

[http://www.newspower.co.kr/sub\\_read.html?uid=11317&section=sc4](http://www.newspower.co.kr/sub_read.html?uid=11317&section=sc4). [2008, 11 Jun].

알파 코리아 최근 신학적 검증 논란. 2008. [Online]. Available:

<http://www.gpcw.net/zbxe/articles/11799>. [2008, 26 Jun].

종교사회학적 관점에서 본 한국교회 목회 패러다임. 2006. *SHAREPLAZA* [Online]. Available:

<http://www.shareplaza.com>. No-111 [2008, 22 May].

교회의 대형화와 기업화의 영향. 2008. [Online]. Available:

<http://www.cry.or.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=277>. [2008, 27 May].

한국교회, 이제는 약함을 통해 강해져라. 2006. [Online]. Available:

<https://cttv.christiantoday.co.kr/view.htm?id=171180>. [2008, 15 May].

교회의 외형적 대형화. 2002. *CHRISTIANDAY* [Online]. Available:

<https://cttv.christiantoday.co.kr/view.htm?id=149379>. [2008, 23 May].

한국교회 정체의 원인 분석(1) 2001. *SHAREPLAZA* [Online]. Available:

<http://www.shareplaza.com/> N-59 [2008, 12 May].

한국 개신교 희망이 있는가 2006. *SHAREPLAZA* [Online]. Available:

<http://www.shareplaza.com/> N-116 [2008, 12 May].

위기에 처한 한국 기독교 2005. *SHAREPLAZA* [Online]. Available:

<http://www.shareplaza.com/> N-104 [2008, 12 May].

교회성장과 사회복지의 상관성. 2005. *SHAREPLAZA* [Online]. Available:

<http://www.shareplaza.com/> N-107 [2008, 21 May].

한국교회의 위기와 희망. 2008. *SHAREPLAZA* [Online]. Available:

<http://www.shareplaza.com/> No-137 [2008, 22 May].

숫자놀음과 날림공사. 2002. *SHAREPLAZA* [Online]. Available:

<http://www.shareplaza.com/> No-64 [2008, 22 May].

건강한 사역을 위한 자기 진단 (3). 2006. [Online]. Available:

<http://www.usaamen.net/bbs/zboard.php?id=ssq27&no=32>. [2008, 26 May].

선교 물량주의 비판하지 말라. 2005. *CHRISTIANDAY* [Online]. Available:

<http://www.christiantoday.co.kr/view.htm?id=148897>. [2008, 4 May].

교회의 대형화와 기업화의 영향. 2008. [Online]. Available:

<http://blog.chosun.com/blog.log.view.screen?blogId=42639&logId=3037280>. [2008, 18 Jun].

작은 교회를 살리자. 2007. *KIDOKKYBO* [Online]. Available:

<http://www.kspress.co.kr/kidokkyobo/editorial/detail.htm?aid=1183085907>. [2008, 18 Jun].

교회개혁 실천연대 개신교는 왜 홀로 쇠퇴하고 있는가? 2002. [Online]. Available:

[http://www.protest2002.org/bbs/view.php?id=news\\_4&page=1&sn1=&divpage=1&sn=off&ss=on&sc=on&select\\_arrange=headnum&desc=asc&no=129](http://www.protest2002.org/bbs/view.php?id=news_4&page=1&sn1=&divpage=1&sn=off&ss=on&sc=on&select_arrange=headnum&desc=asc&no=129). [2008, 14 Jun].

한국교회를 진단한다. 2003. *NEWSNJOY* [Online]. Available:

<http://www.newsjoy.co.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=4964>. [2008, 23 March].