

The People's Church, Willow Creek, and the Church Growth Movement

by Paul Proctor

I walked through the doors of The First Baptist Church in the spring of 1995 after having been somewhat of a prodigal son for roughly 10 years. I had recently rededicated my life to Christ and wanted to once again be a part of a loving church family. As I entered and sat down to the joyful noise of a magnificent choir and orchestra praising God in song, my heart and soul were filled with wonder, excitement and great expectation. I was truly being prepared for worship.

When the preacher finished his sermon, I was spiritually refreshed and energized for the week ahead. His message had been clear, powerful, convicting, biblical and full of the Holy Spirit. Over time I grew to love this brother in Christ because of his faithfulness and passion for the gospel. After visiting the church for some months, I knew I had found a church home.

A couple of years later, the pastor invited me to lunch at a nearby country club he frequented where he mentioned in passing his desire to eventually do away with the First Baptist Church name and simply call it "The People's Church", claiming "that's what everyone called it anyway". Still taken by the man's persona, I smiled and nodded in approval as he told me of wanting to take the church in "a new direction", away from the Southern Baptist stigma that he felt had somehow hindered us in the past and move on greater things. Unfortunately, he didn't elaborate on what that "new direction" was and I mistakenly assumed that he meant toward a non-denominational identity.

In the coming weeks and months a new message began emanating from his pulpit not unlike what had been coming from, of all places, the presidential podium of Bill Clinton during the height of his scandals. A re-occurring theme of "tolerance, diversity and unity" seemed to permeate almost every sermon. It became increasingly clear to me that the pastor's "new direction" was worldly and that he was now being guided by someone or something other than God. Friction grew between the two of us over the course of time as his sermons turned away from the gospel that leads to repentance and faith in Christ to the social psychology of get-alongism. Sure, the Bible calls us to live in peace with one another, to keep and maintain healthy relationships with our brothers and sisters in Christ, but NOT at the expense of God. The pastor I once held in such high regard began reciting "group-think" platitudes like: "YOU CAN'T BE RIGHT WITH GOD AND AT ODDS WITH EVERYONE ELSE", meaning it was now time for us all to compromise our conscience and convictions for the collective. This is the "Consensus Process" at work, a 200 year-old socialist brainwashing technique known by social psychologists the world over as the "Hegelian Dialectic."

For the benefit of those who have not yet heard of the Hegelian Dialectic, let me briefly run through it as taught by Authority Research Center president, Dean Gotcher. The Hegelian Dialectic or "Consensus Process" is a 200 year-old, three-step process of "thesis, antithesis and synthesis", developed in the late 1700's by a German named Georg William Friedreich Hegel that results in what we now know as "group-think". It is a system Dean Gotcher calls "Praxis" that socialists have used for centuries to seduce, seize and control mass populations without warfare. It is also in full operation here in the United States under such names as: "Outcome Based Education", "Goals 2000", "Sustainable Development", "School To Work", "DARE" and many more. It's all about embracing "tolerance, diversity and unity" for The New World Order. To put it in layman's terms; it's brainwashing.

Here's how it works: A group gathers, and has agreed beforehand that each in attendance will ultimately surrender his or her own personal position on any given issue to the will or "consensus" of the group after *processing to consensus* through dialog. In a Christian setting, the presupposition is that the group's will determines "the will of God". The group's "facilitator", whoever that may be, mediates between sides, be they "good and evil", "for and against", "republican and democrat", "liberal and conservative", etc., whatever the case may be, often instigating heated confrontations between the opposing sides for the purpose of suggesting compromise as the perfect solution to restore and maintain the peace and the relationships of everyone involved. The resulting outcome or *consensus* is then re-introduced if necessary, at the next meeting for more "Praxis", more dialog and more compromise until another "consensus" is reached. Then the "process" repeats all over again.....and again.....and again until the facilitator's desired outcome is achieved. Over time, the convictions and concerns anyone may have had originally are processed away beyond recognition or relevance leaving one and all to accept the facilitator's pre-determined outcome as the consensus of the group. It's no longer a question of what is right or wrong, good or bad, lawful or unlawful, but rather HOW WE ALL FEEL ABOUT IT.....no absolutes, no conscience, no convictions, no laws, no Constitution, no Bible and NO GOD!!!.....only consensus....and a contrived consensus at that. Pretty slick huh? That's the Hegelian Dialectic.

The "Hegelian Dialectic" is especially damaging to those of the faith who are compelled by the process to accept the unacceptable in order to gain the approval of the group. It is the herd mentality of humanist thinking and an abomination before God.

You see the Bible is FULL of godly men who stood alone and died fighting the heresy of the herd mentality, including Jesus Himself. Being "at odds with everyone else" is EXACTLY what got Him nailed to a cross! He said: "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (Matthew 7:13-14) This certainly doesn't bode well for pastors whose primary agenda is church growth and big numbers.

It was not a tolerant Jesus who cleared the temple in Jerusalem of moneychangers with a whip or a tolerant John the Baptist who publicly railed against King Herod for marrying his brother's wife or a tolerant Paul that stood up against Peter for alienating uncircumcised believers or tolerance that got most of the disciples beheaded or crucified in the early days of the church. Yet, here we are entering a new millennium, crossing that illustrious "Bridge To The 21st Century", as a re-invented church of tolerance, diversity and unity. As the doors are all thrown open to anyone and anything, I ask you, is the church affecting the culture or is the culture infecting the church? Who is proselytizing whom here? Look around and tell me what you see.

It wasn't long before a vulgar campaign for cash began at The People's Church as if someone was running for political office, complete with banquets, dinners, awards, lots of flattering speech, testimonials, presentations, private meetings and special attention given to the church's "big givers", (their term, not mine) all to benefit a massive new building program that would put us in a high-tech "worship center" and twelve million dollars in debt.

Today when I walk into that entertainment complex on Sunday morning where a sanctuary used to be, I see a lot of cushioned movie theater seats where pews used to be; a big multi-media projection screen where a wooden cross used to be; a half dozen choreographed entertainers performing to applause where a choir used to be; a jazz/rock band playing solos where an orchestra used to be; a young female singer leading simplistic chants before a confused audience, where a music minister used to lead great hymns of worship and praise to God and where a charming "facilitator" in a golf shirt preaches that we should all GO ALONG TO GET ALONG, where a once humble man of God in a suit and tie used to courageously proclaim the Word of God.

Just the other day I was listening to a pre-recorded radio program on the internet called "Steel On Steel" hosted by John Loeffler. He was interviewing a former teacher and expert on European history and philosophy by the name of Dean Gotcher about the "Hegelian Dialectic" or "Consensus Process" and how it is has successfully been integrated into the government, the media, the military, law enforcement, public education, colleges, seminaries and even the church to centralize everything and unify us all into the socialist mindset of global governance. The global-socialist goal is and always has been a one-world government and a one-world religion. They have used the "Hegelian Dialectic" for centuries to control large populations around the world and steer them toward a "New World Order". Near the end of the hour-long program, he casually mentioned a couple of Christian organizations that were known for seducing churches into this "Consensus Process" with "progressive" church-growth programs where compromising brings in big numbers. The temptation of such worldly fruit is obviously hard to resist, even among the most faithful of pastors. Nonetheless, doing unholy things in the name of Christ does not make them holy.

When Dean Gotcher mentioned one of those organizations as being "The Willow Creek Association", bells began ringing, lights began flashing and all of a sudden five years of confusion, contention and controversy between my pastor and me were INSTANTLY brought into complete clarity. OF COURSE! The People's Church belonged to the Willow Creek Association! Once my eyes were opened to their carnal ways through additional research, combined with all that I had learned over the years about global-socialism, I became convinced that we, (the church) had been brought into the "Consensus Process" by way of a socialistic humanist organization posing as a Christian ministry, complete with "change-agents" and "facilitators" (wolves in sheep's clothing) that I myself had encountered personally from Sunday School to Sunday worship. Apparently, THIS was the pastor's "new direction" for The First Baptist Church. It came as no surprise to later discover that Willow Creek's founder, Bill Hybels is a dear friend and personal minister to the nation's most renown socialist and "facilitator", Bill Clinton. NOW I KNOW why my pastor began sounding so "Clintonesque" in his Sunday morning sermons some three or four years ago.

As I went on to research The Willow Creek Association, I discovered that thousands upon thousands of established churches around the country were being transformed into sensory driven "seeker churches" EXACTLY like ours under the guidance and direction of this organization, all with the same tolerance, diversity and unity theme, liberal worship format, scripturally shallow teaching, heavy on the comfort and light on the conscience, equipped with huge multi-media projection screens, large sound systems, exotic music, no choir, female ministers, feelings-motivated skits, dance interpretations and heavily burdened with millions of dollars of debt from building state-of-the-art entertainment venues they call "worship centers". I think the revolving disco ball sparkling overhead at our dedication service a couple of years ago was a REAL poignant moment for me personally.

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." (1st John 2:15-17)

I have long-since worn out my welcome with certain members of the church staff by repeatedly protesting our involvement in these ecumenical movements and carnal extravaganzas beginning with the "men's movement"; that emotionally driven, highly advertised, celebrity endorsed, spiritually misguided and now financially bankrupt organization known as "Promise Keepers". The "Consensus Process" or "Hegelian Dialectic" teaches "facilitators" to isolate, intimidate and even shame their critics into silence and cooperation with "hurt feelings" as their license and authority. This too is carnal. Those seeking group acceptance and approval are powerless against it. Frankly, I'd much rather have God's acceptance and approval than the herd's. You see The Willow Creek Association always emphasizes "felt

needs", unity, harmony, peace and human relationships over everything else...Just like the United Nations. But, that's not the Gospel.

"Consensus" is all about compromising toward "group-think" not God think. It is conformity to the collective through peer-pressure. This is the very heart of the heresy. Centralization toward globalism is the reason for consensus and explains why so many big corporations have merged into government-controlled monopolies; why the two major political parties have become almost indistinguishable; why national borders have become virtually meaningless; why national sovereignty is being surrendered to the United Nations; why the Constitution is being ignored by our own president; why "The Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders" is meeting in August to christen a One World Religion and world leaders from 160 nations are meeting in September at the UN. for "The Millennium Summit" to initiate World Government, complete with its own criminal court, tax system and standing army. Unfortunately, the nasty little secret about the consensus process is that any and all issues discussed usually have a pre-determined outcome provided by the attending "facilitator". Imagine that! Conscience and compromise can NEVER co-exist. They are ALWAYS incompatible. One MUST surrender to the other for there to be unity. Consensus therefore, will ALWAYS lead it's followers away from biblical absolutes and Authority (i.e., "Thus sayeth the Lord...") to obtain the acceptance and approval of the group.

We all want to be loved don't we? Some of us are desperate to be loved. It is undoubtedly why so many have given their lives to the entertainment and film industry and made Hollywood their "Emerald City". They have been taught throughout the 20th century that if they could only be a "big star" they would be loved and accepted by everyone. The desire to BE LOVED is natural but loving those that don't agree with us is unnatural and difficult. Jesus said: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself". Yet, millions of children for over half a century listened and learned as The Wizard Of Oz told the Tin Man: "...a heart is not judged by how much you love, but by how much you are loved by others." This is consensus over conviction, covetousness over conscience and flesh over spirit, the heresy of Hollywood and the wages of Willow Creek...following the crowd and the culture in order to be loved and accepted.

"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Proverbs 14:12)

The bottom line is this; Willow Creek is a showboat, sold as a Christian cruise that in time will be remembered as another Titanic. The First Baptist Church is truly becoming "The People's Church", because that is exactly who they have chosen to follow and obey...PEOPLE. Needless to say, after 5 long and frustrating years aboard this wayward vessel, I'll be going in search of a humble fishing boat where the

waters are calm, the nets are full, the crew is faithful, and Christ is the captain, because as Paul Harvey says: "Now I know the REST of the story".

"They have not known nor understood: for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand." (Isaiah 44:18)

THE WILLOW CREEK IDEAL: SOCIALIZING THE CHURCH

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." (II Timothy 4:3-4)

I took a break from writing for a couple of months to further research the "seeker-sensitive", "church-growth" movement; that tumorous plague that has become to the Christian community what AIDS is to the homosexual community. Those who have been infected always deny it publicly believing in their hearts they are righteous and extraordinary rather than depraved, dying and delusional.

The UN sponsored, government protected disease called political correctness entered the bloodstream of Christendom sometime ago and is quickly becoming the accepted norm in churches across America thanks to organizations like Willow Creek and Saddleback who serve as public bathhouses for the PC infected where it is casually acquired and transmitted through the abominable practice of TDU (tolerance, diversity and unity); a forbidden form of carnal indulgence that liberals teach as "love", but is in fact an abominable lie with hideous consequences. PC ought to stand for poisonous candy; the sugar cube of socialists that was made fashionable in the 60's by flower children who didn't seem to care that it was laced with a virus that attacks and weakens the conscience and severely compromises, if not corrupts altogether the soul of a person who claims to love God.

Today's carriers of this Christian-flavored humanism are currently taking over mainstream denominations by flaunting a fluffy and flowery Disney World doctrine of feelings and emotion while living in utter denial of the ancient wisdom and power found in the Great Physician's own medical manual for mankind.

".....Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." (II Timothy 3:5-7)

When first infected, an individual shows little or no visual signs of the disease and goes about daily life as if they were perfectly healthy. However, as time goes by, symptoms begin to surface that drive them to various clinics, conferences and counseling sessions seeking the fashionable remedies, theories, strategies and techniques of social psychologists, marketing specialists and motivational speakers

who peddle pantheistic potions and think-positive notions to the "enlightened" for healthy profits and praise.

These hapless victims of a re-invented religion are won through flattery, seduction, covetousness and attrition as their church sanctuaries are slowly converted into temples of doom where the PC gospel is eventually published as holy writ by an unaccountable leadership who privately profits from preaching propaganda. Its carriers do not really believe in the Word of God but rather in the consensus of popular opinion and the sensual gratification of personal experience. Theirs is a selective morality, powered by adrenaline, that never infringes on anyone else's self-esteem or sensitivities yet provides a colorful and charming Christ-like costume suitable for the endtimes masquerade called Apostasy.

"Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord." (Jeremiah 17:5)

Instead of accepting God's way as Holy and the world's way as sinful, they busy themselves endeavoring to make everyone else at church exactly like them through the micromanaging and peer pressure of accountability groups while re-defining for those outside the church what being a Christian really is.... A codependent, hypersensitive, emotionally fragile composite of compliance, complexity and contradiction with a fossilized happy face and a tolerance for anything and everything but intolerance.

You'll know that your church is becoming "seeker-sensitive" when the worship service begins to resemble an Amway convention run by pod people in polo shirts whose savior looks more like Bill Clinton with sunglasses and a saxophone than the Son of God hanging from a lonely cross for the sins of the world.

"And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (II Thessalonians 2: 11-12)

CONVERTING CHRISTIANITY

One of the most damning aspects of Willow Creek and the whole Church Growth Movement is the hypocrisy that makes up its very foundation and operation. Having its members sign covenants, (which is expressly forbidden by Holy Scripture), saying they will not criticize or complain about the church or its leadership is not just socialism ("tyranny with a smile"), but a coup de tat of the church and its Divine mission. Willow Creek was formed, as are its member churches by surveying the lost and unchurched in each of their respective communities to gather a consensus of what those specific people DO NOT LIKE ABOUT CHURCH that one may be built and/or designed to suit them. So, the Children of God are to essentially shut up while the inmates run the asylum for the hierarchy! I think the appropriate word here would be subterfuge.

The Willow Creek Association through its member churches have in effect silenced the Body Of Christ and provided pagans, new-agers, atheists, socialists, communists, Marxists, humanists, homosexuals, feminists and liberals in general thousands of sterilized venues where they can come and present their "felt needs" to those with open arms and open minds.

By creating a politically correct environment for them to work in the UN can now steer Christians and their new church of tolerance, diversity and unity right into global governance. (Just like socialists have already done with the federal government, public education, the media, military, law enforcement and business community.) This is just another of the many shrewd ways the UN is successfully conquering our country through attrition. It's the Gramsci strategy at work.

By meeting the so-called "felt needs" of the godless, THEIR voices are heard, THEIR philosophies are made known, THEIR music is played, THEIR religion is taught, THEIR ideologies are discussed and THEIR agenda is carried out virtually unopposed in the corridors, classrooms and worship centers of every "seeker sensitive" church in America. Bottom line is; the REAL students here are the silent, submissive, ignorant, gullible, compromised and compliant Christians who are held at bay by global socialists surreptitiously destroying our religious heritage through the church growth movement.

But its OK cause we're having a GREAT TIME at a GREAT CHURCH, with GREAT PROGRAMS and GREAT MUSIC, in a GREAT WORSHIP CENTER, with a GREAT PASTOR, that tells GREAT STORIES and GREAT JOKES, to a GREAT CROWD before a GREAT GOD! Consequently, the only sinner in a "seeker-sensitive" church is the party-pooper who disrupts the "unity" of the "unequally yoked" by criticizing the UN¹'s doctrine of "tolerance and diversity".

Here's what the Bible has to say about tolerance:

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." (1st John 2:15)

Here's what Jesus says about diversity:

"I am the way and the truth and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me." (John 14:6)

Here's what He says about unity:

"Suppose ye that I come to bring peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division." (Luke 12:51)

It should therefore come as no surprise to anyone that at the UN's meeting in September called "The Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders" they:

1. All but banned evangelical Christians from attending.
2. Condemned Christianity from the podium as the first order of business.
3. Spent the rest of the time fighting among themselves for the best seats in the house.
4. Agreed to nothing. (So much for "World Peace" and the UN's PC gospel of tolerance, diversity and unity.)

There is absolutely no fear or reverence of God in a seeker-sensitive church because Jesus is your party pal. He's a guy you can hang around when you want to, talk to when you want to, listen to when you want to, ignore when you want to, embarrass when you want to, cry on his shoulder when you want to or joke about when you want to. You can even tell Him to shut up if you want to. FEAR? OBEY? Come on! He's a bud! The nation of Israel used to fall to the ground trembling in fear at the presence of Almighty God. People that realized who Jesus Christ was during his earthy ministry also fell down before Him in tears, shame and remorse, but not at a "seeker friendly" church. LET¹S PARTY DUDE! cause GOD ROCKS !

In my quest to find a new church home, I accidentally sat in on another "seeker-sensitive" service last Sunday morning at a Baptist church only a few miles away from The People's Church, the one I wrote about a couple of months ago. As you might guess, I have managed to earn somewhat of a reputation locally for the controversy of my convictions and compositions. Fortunately, no one at this particular church knew me when my friend and I walked in SO, believe it or not we were invited to sit right up on the front row by the man I would later discover was the church's pastor. (See God DOES have a sense of humor.)

We suspected it might be a seeker-sensitized church when we first pulled into the parking lot because I saw "guest parking" signs all along the building. Because there was not a multi-million dollar "worship center" on the property I thought I should at least give them the benefit of the doubt. (FYI: I did hear later that one was on the way) Please keep in mind that none of these superficial things I mention are necessarily bad in and of themselves. They're just simply trademarks and symbols of the product for sale inside. You see; it's all about eye candy for the consumer, the marketing of comfort, convenience, excitement and aesthetic appeal. They didn't as yet, have the Wal-Mart style greeters shaking hands with everyone at the doors as is common for Willow Creek churches, but the taped music playing inside was really thumping as we searched for a couple of empty chairs. (The absence of church pews is another sign)

It wasn't long before the church's rock band counted off the first number and buddy let me tell you THE GOOD TIMES ROLLED! We had everything but an open bar, including some congregational choreography (line dancing, for you rednecks) that would make even Bob Fosse proud!

When it came time for the pastor to head for the acrylic podium, (another trademark), he jumped up and ran onstage sliding across the hardwood floor coming to a stop in front of a laughing and applauding choir. Yes they still had a choir at this church. The pastor had obviously not yet done away with them as did mine at The People's Church. I heard it caused a lot of heartache when he quietly called them all together for a special meeting to inform them that their ministry was no longer needed because of the new music and singers the church would be acquiring. It seems that part of the transformational process into a full-blown seeker-sensitive church is the eventual elimination of the choir. I guess it's just one of those churchy things that the target audience (the one's surveyed) really don't care for. You see, the Willow Creek way is to maximize the entertainment value of the service by providing the audience with the best young and attractive singers and performers available to give them more bang for the buck. Anyway as the choir laughed hysterically at this young pastor's comical antics onstage, I thought to myself, "If they only knew."

You must understand that most people at a "seeker-sensitive" church have no idea what is being planned for them. Frankly, it is quite common to find very few staff members at a seeker church that even know who or what Willow Creek is, much less who is behind the entire church growth movement. The slow, subtle and steady transformation of a traditional church into a "seeker-friendly" church is often planned and executed behind closed doors using slick promotion, humanist marketing strategies, slight of hand techniques and even propaganda. When friends write me telling of disturbing things they're noticing at their church, some will ask if it is possible that their church has become a member of The Willow Creek Association. I must tell you it is a sad duty to have to report back to them with the bad news.

When that "worship service" was finally over last Sunday and we drove away, I asked myself, "I wonder if these folks would act like this if Jesus Christ suddenly appeared before them?" Something tells me that if the Lord had walked into that room it would have become deathly quiet, after a few screams of course. The band would probably call it a night. The preacher would instantly grow up and stop acting like a sophomore in gym class. The congregation and choir would 86 the Richard Simmons Review and everyone would get right with God while falling to their faces in fear and repentance, trembling before the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction" (Proverbs 1:7)

There's absolutely nothing wrong with neighborhood kids running, jumping, screaming, playing and dancing around outside. But you know as well as I do if they all came inside YOUR father's house, especially on a Sunday, he would demand that every one of them be on their best behavior out of reverence and respect. I can assure you it is no different with our Father in Heaven. His desire is that we

"Worship Him in Spirit and in Truth", not turn our churches into playpens for bored and aging adolescents who are looking for cheap thrills and a place to party.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."
(Matthew 7:21-23)

AN EARTHLY KINGDOM

It becomes increasingly difficult for well-meaning Christians who support the church growth movement to taste the poison in the candy they consume after having acquired such a sweet tooth for it through habitual exposure and indulgence. It has been my experience that these sugar addicts who so passionately defend the seeker-service almost always overlook and/or minimize it's humanist origin, diabolical doctrine, unholy alliances and closed-door tactics. By contrast, I have yet to hear of a single conservative congregation that openly voted to join the Willow Creek Association and pay consultants those astronomical fees to re-invent their church. Most of us simply learn from alternative sources that our once conservative church now belongs to a liberal organization that is in partnership with the federal government and United Nations promoting humanist values and ecumenical ideologies through already implemented programs we know little or nothing about. As strange as it may seem, staffers outside the senior leadership circle of CGM churches don't even know enough about Willow Creek to answer the most basic of questions from concerned members. That in itself should alarm anyone whose church belongs to Willow Creek or Saddleback.

Because each church that embraces the seeker-sensitive formula is at a different stage of transformation, it is impossible to accurately assess the whole movement by simply observing the people and progress of a single congregation or staff. One has to thoroughly research the origin, background, philosophy and agenda of those leading the movement to properly evaluate it. In addition, it must be studied outside and away from Willow Creek and Saddleback's own propaganda and pitchmen in order to ascertain it's true agenda. Even then, without the discernment of the Holy Spirit, all of the research in the world won't make a blind man see.

Those who shoot from the hip to passionately defend Willow Creek and Saddleback are often frustrated rock musicians and performers who have spent a lifetime seeking their own glory. When they become a Christian, instead of giving up their lusts and worldly pursuits for the cause of Christ they instinctively begin searching for some way to graft their talents and tastes into the church in order to gain notoriety, credibility, gratification and the support of fellow believers. They deceive themselves into believing that just because they do it, enjoy it and it draws a crowd, it must be holy and therefore suitable for service. Again, these are well meaning

folks who simply confuse faith with feelings. And as many of us know, our emotions can be VERY deceiving and self-destructive. Essentially they try to link their carnal world to their Christian life to legitimize it before the eyes of men as if a good performance was a true affirmation of faith in Christ. Liberals in particular have a hard time grasping the idea that faith is not an emotion and spiritual gifts are not talents. They have yet to understand that God chooses to glorify Himself not through our strengths, (talents, abilities, wealth, education, influence, etc.), but rather through our weakness. Why, because OUR strengths and talents glorify us, not God. (Ref: 1st Corinthians 1)

Using our talents and abilities to accomplish even the most honorable of goals and charitable ventures for the most part glorifies the flesh. However, when we forsake OUR strengths and yield to God's strength, He then empowers us through His Holy Spirit to accomplish those miracles in life that our human strengths never could. That's how mountains are moved, seas are parted, arks are built, Goliath was defeated, Lazarus was raised, demons are cast out and souls are saved unto eternal life. The Apostle Paul addressed this issue in the 3rd chapter of Philippians for those with the courage and faith to read it. This little known spiritual truth is so discerned and empowering that those outside the faith cannot understand nor comprehend it.

You see, Satan tempted Jesus for 40 days in the desert trying to get Him to use His own strength, power and influence to gratify, glorify and ultimately save Himself. Instead, Jesus chose to deny Himself and humbly become weak in the flesh to the glory of God the Father thereby applying the Almighty's power and strength necessary to live a sinless life and perform great works. By becoming weak in the flesh, He became strong in the Spirit in complete obedience and humility before God the Father.

God expects no less of those who profess Christ. Unfortunately, applying one's own strengths, talents and resources to grow the church is not only a key concept and marketing strategy of Willow Creek and Saddleback, but is an integral part of CGM's modus operandi.

The church growth movement is also about building a kingdom on Earth through those church/government partnerships I mentioned earlier. The goal is to make these mega-churches the very focal point of every community around the globe where social programs can easily be implemented and managed, like government agencies and tools of the state. How soon we Christians forget Jesus telling Pilate before his flogging and crucifixion: "My kingdom is not of this world". It therefore leads one to the next logical question. Who are Willow Creek and Saddleback building this kingdom for, the coming antichrist?

Could we actually be witnessing the birth of the Apostasy? I think those who truly know the Lord Jesus Christ and have studied carefully the books of Daniel and Revelation with a healthy Christian worldview have very legitimate suspicions about the church growth movement.

As we see all of this wealth, power and influence coming together in a vast merger of government and religion under the direction of the UN, I would ask you to look at the temptation of Christ as described in Luke 4:1-13. Focus for a moment, if you will on what Satan said to Jesus in the second of the three temptations in verses 5-7.

"And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine."

Notice who it is that gives men great power and glory on Earth and what is required of them to obtain it. More importantly, notice that Jesus never disputes Satan's claim. Furthermore, if Satan did not have the authority to give such power and glory on Earth, it would not even be a temptation. I suspect some are getting chills right now especially those of you who support the church growth movement of Saddleback and Willow Creek.

"Beware lest anyone spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." (Colossians 2:8)

AN UNHOLY ALLIANCE

Twice this week I have stumbled onto articles heralding the new partnership between church and state now being manifested in the form of government-sponsored faith-based organizations where social programs can be carried out by Uncle Sam's newest federal agency, the church.

Now that a REAL born-again Christian is on his way to the White House, many religious conservatives are mindlessly celebrating the utopian belief that God will now be able to effectively govern these United States HIS WAY with HIS CANDIDATE, George W. Bush through church/government partnerships. Well I have news for you God-fearing republicans. The great commission given us by Jesus Christ WAS NOT "Go ye therefore into government service and implement social programs in my name. That's Jesse Jackson's religion. What Jesus DID SAY was: "Go ye therefore into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15) Furthermore, scripture is explicit about not forming unholy alliances, which is exactly what is happening here. It's one thing to give a cup of cold water to a stranger in the name of Christ and quite another to chain oneself to the enemy for humanitarian causes.

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?"

for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." (2nd Corinthians 6:14-17)

The church is supposed to send it's own OUT into the world to proclaim the gospel of Christ, not bring the world into a reinvented, government approved church to receive social services and government benefits. If you doubt there is connection between today's mainline denominations and the United Nations then proceed to the UN's own web site and view for yourself the DPI/NGO membership list. (Department of Information/Non-governmental organizations) On that list you will find, among other Christian organizations the Southern Baptist Convention and Christian Life Commission. After you view the list take a look at the criteria and responsibilities of its members.

As I alluded to in "An Earthly Kingdom", we do not live in a Christian world, nor are we governed by godly men. Those who profess faith in Christ are essentially foreign missionaries in enemy territory to be about the preaching of the good news of Jesus Christ, not going into business with politicians, bankers and globalists to carry out the UN's global agenda. Not only is this partnership idea from the UN but participating churches and Christian organizations are required to sterilize their environments of any and all references to, symbols of, and discussions about YOUR Christian faith and are instead to disseminate THEIR propaganda, implement THEIR programs and pursue THEIR goals. Under such guidelines Willow Creek churches are already well on their way toward UN compliance and government service. In addition, churches that are incorporated with a 501C3 status are already in partnership with the federal government and thereby bound to UN treaties, guidelines and directives.

CGM churches have been sterilizing their sanctuaries, sermons and Sunday school lessons for years to draw in unwashed consumers through politically correct doors to do what they do best...CONSUME. This, they believe, is the success of the 21st century church; a church that comes of age abandoning her "First Love" for the harlotry of compromise, consensus, consumerism and covetousness. The REAL church however, (the remnant) will have nothing to do with it. Hearing the still small voice of the Lord, they are already coming out from among them like sheep being separated from the goats. And because of their faithfulness, they will be ridiculed, harassed, persecuted and in some parts of the world even incarcerated, tortured and killed, not because of outsiders but by the betrayal of those from within the Apostate church who once called them brothers and sisters in Christ. It has happened many times before my friends and it will happen again, not because I said so, but because the Bible says so.

"...Yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me." (John 16:2-3)

This is why CMG churches avoid teaching bible prophecy even though almost 90% of prophecy has already been fulfilled. When you hear someone from your church's pulpit or Sunday school class say they don't believe Bible prophecy should be taught or discussed because it is somehow beyond our understanding you'll know you've heard from Satan himself because he knows he's doomed and doesn't want anyone talking about it. He has a kingdom to build and a One World Government/Religion to run and he needs all the help and cooperation he can get.

SIFTING THE SAINTS

I have received a lot of email over the last year from many who have heard the "still small voice" calling them out of the seeker-sensitive church-growth movement and it's thousands of Willow Creek/Saddleback churches across America. Many have shared with me heartbreaking stories of deception and betrayal by a corrupted clergy who they once considered to be brothers in Christ. I believe with all my heart that God has allowed this movement to prosper for a time that Satan may sift the brethren the way he sifted the Apostle Peter before Jesus' crucifixion that Heaven and Earth may know who belongs to Him. It is a separating of the sheep from a gathering of goats and a coming out party for the One-World Religion that will accompany a One-World Government under the guidance and direction of the United Nations.

Just this week an article in the Chicago Daily Herald was brought to my attention by one of my readers describing a recent forum held at Willow Creek Community Church in South Barrington, Illinois for the world's largest religions. It was like a reenactment of last September's pageant of pantheism called "The Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders" held at the United Nations in New York City. Included in the article was a very disturbing and yet revealing comment that confirmed much of what I've been writing all along about Willow Creek.

"All pathways to heaven and God are not the same; that's the reality," said David Staal, a spokesman for Willow Creek.

As any bible believing Christian knows, this is the opposite of what Jesus taught. It is more of the Hegelian Dialectic at work made famous by socialists for centuries and the driving force behind the New World Order...The anti-gospel.

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6)

"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. (Matthew 7:13-14)

These two scriptures are the essence of the gospel message and yet many of today's "Christians" continue to follow Willow Creek's blind guides into the global abyss seeking the emotional gratification of group acceptance. It is clear that those who remain loyal to the church-growth movement do so because it is where their friends and family are and they just can't bear to forfeit such valuable relationships for the cause of Christ. It is a travesty that the cross is so readily forsaken for the frivolity of compromised companionship. These poor souls never seem to grasp that in doing this they exchange the "Agape" love of Christ for the "Phileo" love of ecumenism. Tragically, some even convince themselves they can carry out a ministry by playing along in these "Temples of Doom" forgetting the Apostle Paul's warning to not be "unequally yoked together with unbelievers". (II Corinthians 6:14)

The fact is Willow Creek and Saddleback utilize many of Satan's carnal tools to promote the global agenda believing as socialists do, that the end justifies the means. The "church growth movement" is about growing churches and budgets instead of Christians. It is "seeker-sensitive" because it is not God sensitive. It focuses on "felt needs" instead of spiritual needs. So, rather than equipping saints to go out into the world to rescue the lost from a culture of death they employ the culture's own singers, celebrities and salesmen to seduce them into their apostasy by marketing a gospel of gratification. It is the harlotry of hedonism and the very antithesis of all that is holy.

Regardless of what the spokesman said at Willow Creek's religious forum, "...There is none other name under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12)

It is still Jesus Christ plus NOTHING.