

Advancing Missions

Global Missions
VS
Globalist Ambitions



ADVANCING MISSIONS

Global Missions vs Globalist Ambitions

Vince Ward

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Introduction

The history of God's world is “his story” of his glory. The Most High God will not share his glory with any other (Is. 42:8). He will ensure that his “name will be great among the nations” (Mal. 1:11). All the nations will come and worship before him and glorify his name (Ps. 86:9; Rev. 15:4). The pleading prayer of every fearer of God is that “all kings fall before him and all nations serve him!” (Ps. 72:11).

The story of God's glory began with a couple in a garden (Gen. 1 and 2) with the end vision of a multitude in a heavenly city. In direct opposition, the man-centred manifesto urges man to “move toward building a world community... and a city on earth for his name's sake. However, the people of God can pray confidently, “devise your strategy, but it will be thwarted; propose your plan, but it will not stand, for God is with us” (Is. 8:10, NIV). Despite man's rebellion, God's purposes will stand until all his elect are gathered into his Kingdom of glory (Ps. 145:10-12).

This cosmic rebellion of man is described in Psalm 2, where the kings of the earth and whole nations continually oppose the LORD God Almighty and his holy Law.

“Why do the nations rage and the people’s plot (יִגְדֹּל, yěh·gû) in vain?
The kings of the earth set themselves,
And the rulers take counsel together,
Against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying.
Let us burst their bonds apart
And cast away their cords from us.”
Psalm 2:1-3

The Psalmist (Psalm 2) accurately describes the nations plotting and conspiring against the anointed Messiah. Behind men is the devil, the prince of this world (John 12:31), attempting ¹ to marshal the powers within nations against the purposes of Christ, but to no avail. All those with globalist ambitions seeking to centralize power and authority do so in opposition to God. The LORD's response to their efforts shows how futile their vain strivings are (v. 4), a testament to the awe-inspiring power of God.

¹As the Apostle John writes, “the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.” (1 John 5:19)

“He who sits in heaven laughs;
The Lord holds them in derision.
Then he speaks to them in wrath,
And terrify them in his fury,
‘As for me, I have set my King
On Zion, my holy hill.’”
Psalm 2:4-6

Even while we are witnessing the rise of a global government, economy and religion prophesied in the Scriptures (Dan. 7:23-27; Rev. 13:1-8, 16-17; 17:1-18), we are also witnessing days of great harvesting in most regions around the globe. The devil in chains (Rev. 20:1-3) is furious with the advance of the gospel to all the nations (Rev. 12:12). With the evident increase of evil and lawlessness (Matt. 24:12), the father of lies is unleashing his deception upon the masses, knowing that his time is short (Rev. 12:12). We must not be outwitted by Satan nor be ignorant of his designs (2 Corinth. 2:11). Rather, we must “understand the times” we are ² presently living to persevere through the coming tribulations for the people of God (Matt. 24:21). (Rev. 12:12).

Since the global lockdowns during the pandemic, many people have become aware that there is a transnational plan underway by a minuscule number of the world's elites to consolidate power over the world's populace. Their synchronized efforts seek to enslave the masses in a scientific state dictatorship and usher us into a future world opposed to Christ. After decades of preparation, we are presently experiencing a seismic shift in how countries are governed by technocrats, in and through a planned centralized digital monetary order, and in the ecumenical religious movements converging to “save the planet.” Behind these front organizations pulling ³ the corporate and political strings are secret societies, which are clandestine groups that operate with an anti-Christ conspiracy, furthering the globalist agenda.

²Among the mighty men in David’s army, the sons of Issachar were men who had an “understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do.” (1 Chron. 12:32).

³We may be entering into a multi-polar regionalization of the world as there is a transfer of power from the former hegemony of the West (the U.S. and the EU) to the alliances in the East (China and Russia) with the Global South. The paper will not address the growing conflict between the East and West. It will primarily focus on how other factors (technocracy, corporatism, scientism) prepare the way for centralizing global governance, economy and religion. The fact that technology is being developed and distributed worldwide by anti-Christian state actors will likely lead to a nefarious use of technology to control the world.

The nefarious plans of some influential globalists, which include the consolidation of ⁴ power and the establishment of a global technocracy, pose formidable obstacles to obeying the command of Christ the King to make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:18-20). These plans involve using advanced technology and manipulating global systems to exert control over the world's population. The so-called *Fourth Industrial Revolution*, a period of rapid technological ⁵ advancement and growing global *technocracy*, a system of governance where decision-making ⁶ is in the hands of experts, presents the Church with many challenges. Still, they also provide many opportunities for the rapid expansion of the Kingdom in every sphere of society among all the nations.

While we serve Christ the King in this broken and troubled world, we must not cower in fear of the future but boldly press on with the mission given by the reigning Lord Jesus (Matt. ⁷ 28:18-20). Christ has not given us all the details of “what first must take place” (Luke 21:9) before his return. However, we have calls for endurance, faith, and wisdom (Rev. 13:10,18). The Church will be preserved as a testimony to the nations that Christ reigns now and forever.

The LORD will allow his people to pass through the fires of affliction to refine and redirect them to his mission to the world. Missions is not primarily a human initiative but God’s work through his church to accomplish his mission. Missions is God’s sending work into his world through his church and for his glory. To define the goal of global missions, we need to

⁴The Oxford Learner’s Dictionary defines a “globalist” as a person who supports the belief that economic and foreign policy should be planned on a global basis, rather than serving the interests of individual countries. “Globalist,” [oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com](https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/definition/english/globalist_1?q=globalist), https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/definition/english/globalist_1?q=globalist.

⁵This is just one of the many terms global elites use to describe the significant technological changes they anticipate will occur in the coming years.

⁶Patrick Wood, a Christian and expert on the topic, defines Technocracy as “... the science of social engineering, the scientific operation of the entire social mechanism to produce and distribute goods and services to the entire population.” Patrick Wood, “What is Technocracy,” accessed July 10, 2024, <https://leohohmann.com/2022/01/05/what-is-technocracy-and-why-does-it-matterhint-technocracy-has-everything-to-do-with-transhumanism-and-the-globalist-plan-to-transform-our-way-of-life/>.

⁷The word “mission” is comprehensive, embracing everything God sends his people into the world to do.

look at all the various aspects of mission as they contribute to fulfilling the ultimate purpose of mission - worship. As John Piper is famously quoted as saying, ⁸

Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn't. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man. When this age is over and the countless millions of the redeemed fall on their faces before the throne of God, missions will be no more. It is a temporary necessity. But worship abides forever.⁹

The great mission mobilizer and church statesman John Stott (1921-2011) once said, "We must be global Christians with a global vision because our God is a global God." The ¹⁰ responsibility to finish the task falls squarely on each generation to saturate the globe with the gospel by prioritizing where Christ is not yet named (Rom. 15:20) and permeating the world with teaching for the obedience of faith among the nations (Matt. 28:20; Rom. 16:26).

The missionary task before future generations will be radically challenged as the day of Christ's return approaches. This paper's overarching purpose is to charge the Global Church to ¹¹ stay the course in discipling the nations even in the rise of centralization of global power. The first section is a biblical exposition of globalist ambitions from ancient Babylon to modern-day Babylon. In a historical survey, I will identify many secret societies behind the front organizations pulling the levers of world power. Then, I will compare the challenges of globalist ambitions and the opportunities for global missions in education, technology, and movements.

The fruit of my work will be a proposed strategic plan and biblical framework for the discipling of the nations. This overall goal is to equip Christians to be faithful and fruitful in discipling the nations in the 21st century. I pray that Christians will be encouraged and equipped

⁸Craig Ott, Stephen J. Strauss with Timothy C. Tennent, *Encountering the Theology of Mission* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010), xv, 79-105.

⁹John Piper, *Let the Nations be Glad* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1993), 11.

¹⁰Cited by Carl Raschke, *GloboChrist: The Great Commission Takes a Postmodern Turn* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 15.

¹¹My research methodology consists of reading books and articles on the subject. Being aware that the project is very broad, I provide extensive footnotes to allow the readers to study further. As part of the practical implementation of the project, a website (<https://advancingmissions.org/>) provides all the content of the paper and many more discipleship resources. Overall, my project seeks to thoroughly address the real challenges and God-given opportunities for the global Church intent on fulfilling the Great Commission while also providing a roadmap or framework for discipling the nations.

by this study of the biblical and historical development of this Global system in light of the infallible and inerrant Word of God.

Biblical Exposition of Globalist Ambitions

Ancient Babylon

The Blessed God in three Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, always was, is and will be (Rev. 1:4). While there is no beginning for the everlasting God (Is. 40:28), the onset of history occurred when he spoke all things into being (John 1:1-3; Heb. 1:2-3). The Most High, the Creator of the heavens and earth, who is over all and through all and in all (Eph. 4:6), has a deep concern for his creation. What is his concern? Who is his concern? It is for his glory in the Church—his beloved redeemed people (Eph. 1:3-23). This story of God's glory in the Church begins with God communing with a couple in a garden (Gen. 2:4-25), and it concludes with a diverse multitude of people worshipping God in a city (Rev. 21 and 22).

Our first parents, created in God's image and likeness (Gen. 1:26-27), could walk and work freely with willing obedience, fullness of joy, and perfect peace with God. The serpent of old Satan (Rev. 20:2), a proud fallen angel, corrupted and defiled the garden when he slithered in. He tempted and deceived the woman with his cunning insinuations and lies: “Did God actually say?... you shall not die... you will be like God” (Gen. 3:1-6). The woman fell first for the lies, and the man failed to protect her from the father of lies. In a moment, the human race under Adam was separated from God and became his enemies. Henceforth, man seeks peace and unity apart from God (John 14:27, Gen. 11:1-4). ¹²

Though shame and fear filled the hearts of Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:10), the God of all grace and covenant faithfulness comforted them with the promise of a final defeat of the Devil by the Seed (offspring) who would come from the woman (Gen. 3:15). Before banishing them from the garden, God clothed the couple with skins of an animal pointing to the blood sacrifice that would take their blame and cover their shame (Gen. 3:21; Ps. 32:1; 1 John 2:2). The garden was now barred from entry. This was a mercy from the LORD God lest man eat from the tree of life and live forever in this estate of sin and misery (Gen. 3:22-24). In this sin-saturated world of

¹²Also, see Westminster Shorter Catechism Questions and Answers #13-19 and Westminster Larger Catechism Questions and Answers #21-24.

thorns and thistles for man in his work (Gen. 3:17-18) and painful labour for women in childbirth (Gen. 3:16), the LORD began to enact his plan of salvation for his people.

Sin was crouching at the door (Gen. 4:7) of their first son Cain as he grew envious of his brother Abel's offering, which won favour from the LORD (Gen. 4:4). Fratricide appeared to put an end to the godly line. However, the LORD provided another offspring, Seth (Gen. 4:25). From his generation, a people began to call upon the Lord in worship (Gen. 4:26). The line of ungodly Cain assembled to build a city and purposefully make a name for themselves (Gen. 4:17). As mankind multiplied over the face of the earth, so did the corruption of sin (Gen. 6:1).

As the thoughts and intentions of man's heart were in rebellion against him (Gen. 6:5), the LORD was grieved deeply (Gen. 6:6). His patience was spent when the "sons of God"¹³ intermarried with the wicked daughters of men (Gen. 6:2). Only one man, Noah, found grace in the eyes of the LORD (Gen. 6:8). Noah and his family (Gen. 6:9) were saved and safe on an ark floating on the water which covered the globe (Gen. 6:17-23). Since then, every time the LORD puts a rainbow in the sky, it is a remembrance of his covenant with the earth: God promised he would never judge the world by water again (Gen. 8:11-17). After this "reset" with mankind, the godly line of the promised Seed continued, and the original mandate to "be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth" (Gen. 1:28) is still in effect (Gen. 9:7).

From the genealogical "Table of Nations" (Gen. 10), we have a record of the generations of the sons of Noah. Instead of dispersing over the face of the earth (Gen. 11:4), they migrated

¹³Who are these "sons of God"? Various explanations have been suggested. It could not be "angels of God" (cf. Job 1:6) because angels do not marry (Matt. 22:29-30). It could be a godly line of Seth (Gen. 4:25-26). These unequally yoked (2 Corinth. 6:14) marriages would end the godly line leading to the promised Seed. The LORD preserves the godly line of Noah and destroys the rest of corrupted humankind. J.G. Vos, *Genesis* (Pittsburgh, PA: Crown&Covenant Publications, 2006), 123-124. Meredith Kline suggests an interesting interpretation of the "sons of the god" as "tyrannical 'divine' kings." These would be human rulers claiming divinity in defiance of the true King. Instead of acknowledging his sovereignty, they established their authority as head of a religio-politico system. They held their vassals in spiritual darkness and abject slavery. Each city-state king claimed to be a "son of the patron god or goddess" of his city, kingdom or empire. He made himself a self-proclaimed representative of a local god on earth. Meredith G. Kline, "Divine Kingship and Genesis 6:1-4," *Westminster Theological Journal* 24.2, May 1962, 187-204, accessed March 21, 2024, https://www.meredithkline.com/files/articles/Divine-Kingship-and-Genesis-6_1-4.pdf.

eastward from Ararat to Mesopotamia. They settled together in the plains of Shinar (Gen. 11:2).

¹⁴ Speaking all the same language (Gen. 11:1), they schemed up a plan to build a city with a tower “with its top in the heavens” (Gen. 11:4). Their one ambition was to usurp the fame of God and make a name for themselves.

In a collective effort to build this city and Ziggurat tower, Babel symbolized man’s ¹⁵ quest for autonomy from God as they reached the heavens in self-aggrandizement. The LORD notes this ancient “globalist” ambition as they say to themselves, “Come, let us make...” (Gen. 11:3) and “Come, let us build...” (Gen. 11:4). The LORD in heaven matches it with his trinitarian response, “Come, let us go down and confuse their languages...” (Gen. 11:7).

The Word Commentary notes the remarkable structure of an extended chiasmus¹⁶,

A “The whole earth had one language” (v 1)

B “there” (v 2)

C “each other” (v 3)

D “Come let us make bricks” (v 3)

E “let us build for ourselves” (v 4)

F “a city and a tower.”

G “the LORD came down...” (v 5)

¹⁴“...the tower was erected on “a plain in the land of Šin’âr.” This country is known from other books of the Bible (Is. 11:11 and Zech. 5:11) and is translated as “Babylonia” in the Septuagint. So, nothing keeps us from identifying the biblical building with a monument from ancient Babylon. Another tower, which was likely built in the neo-Babylonian period by Nebuchadnezzar, known as *E-temen-an-ki*, meaning the ‘House of the foundation of heaven on earth,’ a giant mountain of bricks and tiles with, on top, a temple for the god Marduk.” “Etemenanki (the “Tower of Babel”),” Livius.org, accessed March 21, 2024, <https://www.livius.org/articles/place/babylon/etemenanki/>.

¹⁵“The “Tower of Babel” (Gen. 11:1-5) might have been a ziggurat since they are to be found in all principal Mesopotamian cities.” “Ziggurat,” Encyclopedia of the Bible, accessed February 28th, 2024, <https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/encyclopedia-of-the-bible/Ziggurat-Ziggurat>. “The tower of Babel (Genesis 11) was a representative pagan architectural structure. It was probably something like the Babylonian ziggurat, a tower of concentric circles which resembled a ladder to heaven from whatever direction an observer approached. Here is the theology of Satan offered to Adam: autonomous man’s way to heaven. The tower was a link between heaven and earth, which men built, not God. The tower’s pinnacle represented the seat of power, the link between evolving man and the gods.” Gary North, *Unconditional Surrender: God’s Program for Victory* (Tyler, TX: Geneva Divinity School Press, 1983), 143.

¹⁶Gordon J. Wenham, *Word Biblical Commentary*, Vol. 1 (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1987), 235.

F¹⁷“the city and the tower”

E “which mankind had built.”

D¹⁸“Come...let us mix up” (v7)

C¹⁹“each other’s language”

B²⁰“from there” (v8)

A²¹“the language of the whole earth” (v9)

The sovereign LORD’s purposes could not be thwarted. He came down in judgment upon the city of Babel (Gen. 11:9) by dispersing each “nation” (Gen 10) according to their languages²² (Gen. 10:31). Their foiled construction plans were abandoned as the people were scattered far and wide across the world according to God’s purpose of establishing the nations. God’s providence is subsequently shown in “dividing mankind and fixing the borders of the peoples” (Deut. 32:8). “God made from one man every nation of mankind to live on the face of the earth, having determined allowed periods and boundaries of their dwelling place, that they should seek God...” (Acts 17:26-27).

¹⁷The Hebrew word בָּבֶל (*Bâbel*), which sounds like the Hebrew for “confused,” is most often translated as Babylon (Akkadian *Bab-ili*). בָּבֶל is translated 251 out of 261 times as “Babylon.” “Babylon,” Logos Bible Software digital edition. “Destroying the tower and confusing the language was God’s way of protecting his people from false leaders and teachers. After God destroyed the Tower of Babel, those who opposed God had an even harder time finding and making allies.” Rosaria Butterfield, *Five Lies of Our Anti-Christian Age* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2023), 6.

¹⁸Jerusalem Targum of 1 Chron. 1:10 “He began to be mighty upon the earth. — He began to be bold in sin, a murderer of the innocent, and a rebel before the Lord.” Clarke’s Commentary, accessed February 29th, 2024, <https://www.studydrive.net/commentaries/eng/acc/1-chronicles-1.html>.

¹⁹A. Dillmann, *Genesis* [1897], 1:350, accessed February 29, 2024, <https://www.scribd.com/document/162442190/Genesis-Critically-and-Exegetically-Expounded-Vol-1-Dillmann-1897>.

²⁰Some scholars claim that Gilgamesh is Nimrod in the Epic story of his defeat of Huwawa (YHWH?). “The Bible calls Nimrod a tyrant, and Gilgamesh was a tyrant. There was a Flood in the Bible and a flood in the Epic. Cush is mentioned in the Bible, and Kish in the Epic. Erech is mentioned in Scripture, and Uruk was Gilgamesh’s city. Gilgamesh made a trip to see the survivor of the Flood. This was more likely Ham than Noah since “Nimrod” was Ham’s grandson! Historically, Gilgamesh was of the first dynasty of Uruk....The fact that the Gilgamesh Epic also contains the Deluge story would indicate a close link with events immediately following the Flood.” Dr. David Livingston, “Who Was Nimrod?” accessed February 29, 2024, <http://davelivingston.com/nimrod.htm>.

²¹Unger, M. F., Harrison, R. K., Vos, H. F., Barber, C. J., & Unger, M. F. (1988). *The New Unger’s Bible Dictionary*. Revision of: *Unger’s Bible dictionary*, 3rd ed., Rev. and updated ed. (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1966).

²²Emil G. Hirsh, M. Seligsohn, Wilhelm Bacher, *Executive Committee of the Editorial Board*. “Nimrod”, *The Jewish Encyclopedia* (1906), accessed February 29, 2024, <https://jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/11548-nimrod>.

The tower of Babel in this ancient city of Babylon in Mesopotamia has become a synonym for man's opposition to God. In the early Sumerian name (ka-dingier-ra), Babylon means the "gate of god." In the Scriptures, Babylon is designated as the "land of Nimrod" (Micah 5:6). It was under Nimrod, the grandson of Ham and son of Cush, that this city Babylon was founded (Gen. 10:9-10).

Nimrod is called a "mighty hunter before the LORD" (Gen. 10:9) and the "first on earth to be a mighty man (1 Chron. 1:10)." His infamy has spread as he extended the kingdom ²³ throughout Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. From that land, he went into Assyria and built the cities of Nineveh, Rehoboth-Ir, Calah, and Resen (Gen. 10:10).

The meaning of his name in Hebrew (נִמְרוֹד), "rebel," "no doubt suggested to the Israelites the idea of 'rebel' ... against God." As the founder of the Babylonian kingdom (Gen. 10:8-12), ²⁴ Nimrod became the ²⁵type for a morally evil system (Is. 21:9; Jer. 50:24; 51:64; Rev. 16:19; 17:5; 18:2-3). "Nimrod is the prototype of a rebellious people, his name being interpreted as "he who ²⁶ made all people rebellious against God."²⁷

Josephus, the Jewish historian, records an oral history in his chapter on "Concerning The Tower of Babylon, and the Confusion of Tongues,"

Now it was Nimrod who excited them to such an affront and contempt of God. He was the grandson of Ham, the son of Noah, a bold man, and a great strength of hand. He

²³Flavius Josephus, "The Antiquities of the Jews," Book 1, Chapter 4.2, accessed on February 29, 2024, accessed February 29, 2024, https://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/0037-0103,_Flavius_Josephus,_The_Antiquities_Of_The_Jews,_EN.pdf.

²⁴Numa Denis Fustel de Coulanges, *The Ancient City: A Study of the Religion, Laws, and Institutions of Greece and Rome*, trans. Willard Small (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2012), 134.

²⁵Henry Morris, *The Genesis Record* (San Diego, CA: Creation-Life., 1976), 265.

²⁶Marduk was the patron deity of the city of Babylon and, by the Neo-Babylonian period, the head of the Babylonian pantheon. A widely circulated tradition, popularized by the Scottish minister Alexander Hislop in *The Two Babylons* (1853), identifies Nimrod with Marduk and traces a single "mystery religion" from Babylon through Egypt, Greece and Rome. That reconstruction is not accepted by historians of ancient Near Eastern religion, and is not relied upon here; the argument of this section rests on the biblical text alone.

²⁷There is a historical woman called *Semiramis*. She was the wife of the Assyrian king Šamši-Adad V (824-811 BC). She was called *Šammuramat*; in Greek, it is rendered as *Semiramis*. When her husband died, she acted as regent for her underage son Adad-Nirari III for three to five years. Not much is known about this historical figure except that in 787 BCE, she was still alive. She is not the same Semiramis that appears in legends dating back to Nimrod. "Semiramis," Livius.org, accessed February 29, 2024, <https://www.livius.org/articles/mythology/semiramis/>.

persuaded them not to ascribe it to God, as if through his means they were happy, but to believe that their courage procured that happiness. He also gradually changed the government into tyranny, seeing no other way of turning men from the fear of God but to bring them into a constant dependence on his power. He also said he would be revenged on God if he should have a mind to drown the world again; for that, he would build a tower too high for the waters to be able to reach! And that he would avenge himself on God for destroying their forefathers! Now the multitude were very ready to follow the determination of Nimrod, and to esteem it a piece of cowardice to submit to God; and they built a tower, neither sparing any pains, nor being in any degree negligent about the work: and, by reason of the multitude of hands employed in it, it grew very high, sooner than any one could expect; but the thickness of it was so great, and it was so strongly built, that thereby its great height seemed, upon the view, to be less than it really was. It was built of burnt brick, cemented together with mortar, made of bitumen, that it might not be liable to admit water. When God saw that they acted so madly, he did not resolve to destroy them utterly, since they were not grown wiser by the destruction of the former sinners, but he caused a tumult among them by producing in them divers languages, and causing that, through the multitude of those languages, they should not be able to understand one another. The place wherein they built the tower is now called Babylon, because of the confusion of that language which they readily understood before; for the Hebrews mean by the word Babel, confusion...”²⁸

Building monuments and cities to human pride spans from the beginning of families.

Coulange, in his volume on ancient cities, writes, “... a city was never formed by degrees, by the slow increase of men and houses. They founded a city all at once, all entirely in a day... as soon as the families.. had agreed to unite and have worship, they immediately founded the city as a sanctuary for this common worship, and thus, the foundation of a city was always a religious act.”²⁹

It is significant to note the many cities which are ascribed to Nimrod as the founder (Gen.10:10). The building of these cities under his leadership demonstrates the driving ambition which propelled Nimrod to build his empire. Nimrod is purported to have been a high priest of the “mystery religion of Babylon,” which spread out with the dispersion of the nations at ³⁰

²⁸The title “Queen of Heaven” (Jer. 7:18; 44:17-25) most likely refers to Ishtar/Astarte, the Mesopotamian goddess of love and war, whose cult was widespread in the Levant. See the standard discussion in the relevant entries of the *Anchor Bible Dictionary* or *ISBE*.

²⁹The “mystery” religion was practiced through mysterious symbols of the sun, fire, reptiles, and animals. Ralph Woodrow, *Mystery Babylon* (Ralph Woodrow Evangelistic Association, 1981), 10. Paul described the idolatry of his day as being much like it was in Babylon. “For although they knew God, they did not honour him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.” (Rom.1:21-23)

³⁰The Psalmist also points out that an image may have a human form but does not have human faculties. “The idols of the nations are silver and gold, the work of human hands. They have mouths, but do not speak; they have eyes, but do not see; they have ears, but do not hear, nor is there any breath in their mouths. Those who make them

Babel. He forced his subjects to worship him as a political and military ruler and possibly as the Babylonian god of war, Marduk.³¹

Extra-biblical legend later attached to Nimrod a wife, Semiramis, and a son, Tammuz, and made them the founders of a Mother/Child cult at the root of Babylonian religion.³² These legends are late and historically unreliable, and nothing in the argument that follows depends on them. What Scripture does attest is the thing that matters here: that the fertility and mother-goddess worship of the surrounding nations repeatedly drew Israel into syncretism, and that God named it as provocation against himself.

The pagan mother and fertility goddesses of the ancient Near East — Ashtoreth/Asherah (Judg. 2:13; 3:7), Astarte (1 Kings 11:5, 33) — stood at the centre of this rival worship. Ashteroth was Baal's counterpart (Judg. 2:12; 3:7; 1 Kings 18:19; 2 Kings 21:7). This fertility goddess became a stumbling block for God's people. The worship of the "Queen of Heaven" incited the anger of ³³ God as Jeremiah warned, "The children gather wood, the fathers kindle fire, and the women knead dough, to make cakes for the queen of heaven. And they pour out drink offerings to other gods, to provoke me to anger (Jer. 7:18)."

The child of Semiramis, Tammuz (or Dumuzi), the deity associated with mourning and fertility, was also prominent in the mythology of the gods among the pagan nations. He was

become like them, so do all who trust in them." (Ps. 135:15-18)

³¹The sin of serving and worshiping other gods was execution by stoning. "If there is any found among you... (who has) gone and served other gods and worshiped them, or the sun or the moon of the host of heaven, which I have forbidden, ... then you shall... stone that man or woman to death with stones." (Deut. 17:2-7).

³²"... infant sacrifices were regularly performed in honor of some forms of the goddess. It is recorded, for instance, that around the sacred stone which represented the goddess Astarte, hundreds of skeletons of human infants have been found... firstborn children and animals were sacrificed to her." William Schnoebelen, *Wicca: Satan's Little White Lie* (Independently published, 1990), 117-188.

³³The apostasy into idolatry in which God's people fell and continue to fall is often a mixture of the worship of the true God and mixed heathen rites with it. For example, the Israelites at Mount Sinai claimed that it was a feast unto the LORD (Ex. 32:5). They sacrificed to their gods, claiming that they brought them up out of the land of Egypt (Ex. 8) and broke loose as they ate, drank and played (Ex. 32:25,6; Acts 7:39-41). As they wandered through the wilderness with the tabernacle of God, some carried and worshiped the images of the gods Moloch and Rephan (Acts 7:42-44). After settling in the land, they adopted the gods of the surrounding nations, causing their children to pass through fire, and worshipped the sun, moon and stars (2 Kings 17:9-17). In Jeremiah's day, the people of Judah were entering the gates to "worship the LORD" (Jer. 7:2), but they were making offerings to Baal... "making cakes for the queen of heaven... pouring drink offerings to other gods." (Jer. 7:9,18).

represented as Baal in Canaan, Asshur in Assyria, and Horus in Egypt. In the prophet Ezekiel's vision, women were mourning for Tammuz (Ezek. 8:14). This suggests that the mourning ritual worship for Tammuz was practiced by Israelites, thus creating syncretism (mixing) in their worship of the true God.³⁴

The idols of the surrounding heathen nations became a snare to the chosen people of God. Isaiah mocks the stupidity of the ancient idol-maker carving a wooden god from a log: Half of it he burns in the fire, while the other half eats meat; he roasts it and is satisfied. Also, he warms himself and says, "Aha, I am warm; I have seen the fire!" And for the rest, he makes into a god, his idol, and falls down to it and worships it. He prays to it and says, "Deliver me, for you are my god!" (Is. 44:16-17).³⁵

God's people repeatedly whored after these "gods" from among the nations surrounding them. In serving the idols, they sacrificed their sons and daughters to demons (Deut. 32:17, Ps. 106:36-38, 1 Cor. 10:19-21). Even King Solomon offered such abominable sacrifices (1 Kings 11:4-8). Behind the demonic deception is the devil, the ancient serpent (Rev. 12:9; 20:2), who³⁶ is a murderer from the beginning (John 8:44).

Since the days of Nimrod, the devil has sought to prop up earthy rulers with "divine" status to subjugate the masses. Satan, the ruler of this fallen world (John 12:31), manipulates³⁷

³⁴For example, Nebuchadnezzar the Great ruled as King of Babylon from 605 to 562 BC. He demanded absolute obedience from all people spread across his vast kingdom. He erected a golden statue of himself, commanding everyone to worship his image. Those who refused to worship his statue were to be executed by being thrown into a fiery furnace. (Dan. 3)

³⁵Not all commentators agree with this designation referring to Satan. The International Bible Commentary writes, "The king is acclaimed as the morning star, son of the dawn, a phrase which equates him with a deity worshipped by the Canaanites... (The AV term 'Lucifer' also refers to daystar; it is inappropriate to the passage to think that Satan is meant)." FF Bruce (Editor), *New International Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1979), 732.

³⁶"Satan tried to secure a host of angels in order to damage God's eternal order. He was soon displaced from his station of honor for his efforts... 'And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.'" (Rev. 12:9) Gary deMar, *God and Government: A Biblical and Historical Study: Volume 1* (Powder Springs: GA, American Vision, 1990), 33-34.

³⁷J. Ridderbos, *Bible Student's Commentary: Isaiah*, trans. John Friend (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1985), 142.

³⁸Leslie F. Church (Editor), *The NIV Matthew Henry Commentary in One Volume* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992), 878.

rulers to do his bidding. The King of Babylon, for example, is spoken of by the prophet Isaiah (Is. 14:12-13) with Satan's character in view.

How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! You said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven, above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.' But you are brought down to Sheol, to the far reaches of the pit. (Is. 14:14-15)

With each subsequent "I will" statement, the king of Babylon desires to ascend and usurp the place of the Most High. While such superlative ambition and arrogant pride can be found in the hearts of men, this may also be speaking of Satan's aspirations to dethrone the Most High God. Who is this "shining one" (NET Bible) or "morning star" (NIV)? The Authorized Version translates לִלְיָן (hê·lêl') as Lucifer. This "light bearer" could be the one who rebelled against the ⁴⁰ Most High and dragged a third of the angelic hosts with him when he was thrown down to the earth (Lk 10:18; cf. Rev. 12:4, 8-10). ⁴¹

Ridderbos, in his commentary on Isaiah, provides a balanced commentary on this controversial passage.

What humiliation the king has undergone! He was like the Morning Star (also called the "son of the dawn" because the rise of the morning star coincides with the break of day),

radiant in brilliance and beauty, but now he is like a star that has fallen from the firmament.

He who brought down nations lies fallen on earth. Church fathers such as Jerome and

Tertullian took this verse to refer to the devil, hence the name Lucifer (morning star) given to him. Luther and Calvin both reject this notion as a gross error, and rightly. Still, there is an element of truth in the idea: by his self-deification Babylon's king is an imitator of the

devil and the type of the Antichrist (Dan. 11:36; 2 Thess. 2:4); therefore, his humiliation also is an example of Satan's fall from the position of power that he has usurped (cr. Lk. 10:18; Rev. 12:9). ⁴²

³⁹Mark Hitchcock, *101 Answers to Questions About the Book of Revelation* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2012), 194.

⁴⁰Sir Austen Henry Layard, *Nineveh and its Remains*, Vol. ii (London: John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1849), 440.

⁴¹Cyril Bailey (editor). *The Legacy of Rome* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1923), 245.

Just as Satan was cast down from heaven (Lk 10:18) to war against the Seed of the Woman, the kings of Babylon are seen to be the great oppressors of God's seed, his people. The oracle against this king of Babylon is fulfilled in the final fall of the last Babylonian monarch, Belshazzar (Dan. 5:30). "The Babylonian monarchy appeared to be an absolute, universal, and perpetual one, and, in these pretensions, vied with the Almighty; it is therefore very justly brought down..."⁴³

The LORD punished Babylon for her sins against God's people (Jer. 25:12; 50:18). The city of Babylon was cast down into ruins just as was foretold by the prophet Isaiah, "...and Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the splendour and pomp of the Chaldeans, will be like Sodom and Gomorrah when God overthrew them. It will never be inhabited or lived in for all generations; no Arab will pitch his tent there... (Is. 13:19-20)." Jeremiah also wrote about all the disasters that should come upon Babylon, "O LORD, you have said concerning this place that you will cut it off so that nothing shall dwell in it, neither man nor beast, and it shall be desolate forever" (Jer. 51:62).

While Babylon was destroyed by Cyrus the Great in 539 BC, by 122 BC, "The Great City" was mostly ashes. However, the religious system that originated in Babylon continued and is well represented through many religions among the nations. From the polytheistic and "mystery religions" of ancient Babylon issue the "fountainhead of false religions." Sir Austen⁴⁴ Henry Layard writes in *Nineveh and its Remains*, "Of the great antiquity of this primitive worship there is abundant evidence, and that it originated among the inhabitants of the Assyrian plains, we have the united testimony of sacred and profane history."⁴⁵

⁴²James B. Rives, *Religion in the Roman Empire* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2006), 123-135.

⁴³Two heresies are in view here. First, the gnostic heresy of Docetism taught that Christ merely seemed to "appear" in human flesh. Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Bakery Book House, 1994), 376. Second, the elements of Ebionism (Socinians) denied Jesus as the Logos (John 1:1) and falsely taught that Jesus was only a man and not the divine Son of God. A.A. Hodge, *Outlines of Theology* (Chatham, Kent: Banner of Truth, 1991), 196.

⁴⁴As with those in the desert (see earlier comments), those in the secret chambers will appear legitimate. Jesus told his audience not to believe either individual because they are all part of that massive deception surrounding the Antichrist's ascension to power (2 Thess. 2:8-12).

⁴⁵John Calvin, *A Harmony of the Synoptic Gospels* (Lafayette, IN: Calvin Publications), 474.

End Times Babylon

Nowhere was this ancient Babylonian religious system more prominent than in a future world empire, Rome. The Roman Emperors endorsed the assimilation of polytheistic pagan religion in various forms as they were found in the countries they ruled. For example, Diana ⁴⁶ was the mother/child goddess (i.e. Semiramis of Babylonia). The temple in Ephesus was dedicated to her, and she was worshiped worldwide (Acts 19:28).

The Roman Emperor was revered as a divine figure and mediator between the gods and the people. This imperial cult worship reinforced the authority and legitimacy of their dynasty. State-sponsored priests promoted ceremonies and rituals honouring the Emperor's divine status. Worship of the Emperor served as a symbol of political unity and power. The syncretization of local religious belief with the cult of the Emperor fostered a sense of cohesion among the populace.⁴⁷

During the reign of Emperor Caesar Augustus, another ruler was born. In the fullness of time, God the Father sends his one and only Son (μονογενής, monogenēs) as the Seed comes to crush the head of the serpent (Gen. 3:15). He is the Christ (Χριστός, Christos), the Anointed King of all kings. He is given an indestructible kingdom and throne upon which he reigns forever and ever (Isa. 9:7; Dan. 7:14; Lk 1:32-33; Rev.11:15). His divine nature (Col. 1:19) is found in his being the Creator (Col. 1:16) and Reconciler of all things (Col. 1:20). As Mediatorial King, the righteous Lord Jesus Christ and Light of the world (John 8:12), is given rule over all things for the benefit of his people, the Church (Eph. 1:22).

⁴⁶The identity of this "Restrainer" is likely speaking of the Holy Spirit because he possesses attributes of God (omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence and absolute holiness). Since Jesus "bound the strongman" through his death-defying resurrection (Mark 3:26-27; Rev. 20:1-3), the Spirit of God has been restraining the Satanically inspired rebellion. "God has a proper time for the lawless one's revelation just as he does for the revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ from heaven (2 Thess. 1:7). No one knows that time since it is part of the future day of the Lord (1 Thess. 2; 2 Thess 2:2,3). Until the gathering of the saints (2:1), the Spirit will continue his restraining work." Frank E. Gaebelin, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, vol 11 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1978), 325.

⁴⁷W E Vine says the Greek word for lawless(*anomos*) "is not simply that of doing what is unlawful, but of flagrant defiance of the known will of God." W.E. Vine, *Vine's Expository Dictionary of the Old and New Testament Words* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1981), 317.

In stark contrast, the adversary of Christ and his people (1 Peter 5:8), the devil, seeks to lie (John 8:44), to steal, to kill and to destroy (John 10:10). He is called the ruler of this world (John 14:30) and “god of this age” who has “blinded the minds of unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God” (2 Cor. 4:4).

The title “antichrist” (ἀντίχριστος, antichristos), as a rival to Christ, is only used by the apostle John. They are liars who deny that Jesus is the Christ and therefore deny both the Father and the Son (1 John 2:22). They are the deceivers who do not confess Jesus Christ coming in the flesh (2 John 1:7). The false professors of Jesus Christ (antichrists) have the spirit of the ⁴⁸ Antichrist operating in them (1 John 4:3). John, the apostle says many antichrists have come and will come. However, the final Antichrist is coming at the end of the age (1 John 2:18).

Jesus, in the gospels, spoke of the final days when many will fall away and betray and hate one another. (Matt. 24:10). “Many false prophets will arise and lead many astray” (Matt. ⁴⁹ 24:11). On those days, there will be an increase in lawlessness and the love for God and men will grow cold (Matt. 24:12). Evil men and imposters “will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived” (2 Tim. 3:13).

Antichrist prophets will appear performing great and deceptive miracles (Mat. 24:24) so that people will say, “Look, here is the Messiah!” (Matt. 24:23). Jesus warned his disciples to be watching for such imposters who would seek to lead even the elect astray. John Calvin writes in his Commentary on the gospels, “For we know that the false Christs... drew along with them as large bodies of men as they could collect into the recesses of the desert, or caverns, or other places of retirement, to throw off the yoke of the Roman government by force or by arms.”⁵⁰

⁴⁸Reformers such as Luther, Calvin and Knox all believed that the Pope was the AntiChrist based on the interpretation of biblical prophecies, the papacy’s claim to be the Vicar of Christ on earth and the Church’s corruption. For example, in the Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 25.6, “There is no other head of the Church but the Lord Jesus Christ. Nor can the Pope of Rome be the head hereof; but is that Antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the Church against Christ, and all that is called God.” Other Christians have speculated that the Antichrist will be the Islamic “Mahdi” (Messiah). In his book “Islamic Antichrist,” Joel Richardson believes that the Mahdi and the Antichrist may be one and the same. Joel Richardson, *Islamic Antichrist* (WinePress Media, 2019).

⁴⁹William Hendriksen, *More Than Conquerors* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1961), 162.

Before the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in power, a rebellion must take place. The unbelievers who are perishing will be deceived by Satan's counterfeit miracles and false wonders. (2 Thess 2:10) God will send a "powerful delusion" so that they will believe the lies and continue their condemnation and unrighteousness (2 Thess. 2:11). Paul says, "The mystery of lawlessness is already at work." After the Restrainer (κατέχων, katechon) (1 Thess. 2:7) is "out of the way," then the "Lawless One" will be unveiled and revealed (ἀποκαλυφθῆναι,⁵¹ apokalyphthēnai).

Paul writes in 2 Thessalonians about the time in which the "Man of Sin" or "Lawless One" (ἄνομος, anomos) will be revealed. (2 Thess. 2:8). This "son of destruction or perdition"⁵² (2 Thess. 3) aptly describes Lucifer, the Antichrist who defiantly "opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God (cf. Isaiah 14:12-14)." His rebellion against God is by the activity of Satan as he employs all his power in false signs and wonders (2 Thess. 2:10).⁵³

We can recognize the multiple parallels between the "Man of Lawlessness" and the "Beast" in the revelation to Daniel (Dan. 7) and with the apocalypse of John (Rev. 13, 17, and 19). These chapters (13,17 and 19) in Revelation are part of the second major division in the book. In chapters 12-14, the characters that arise in opposition to Christ and the church are introduced: the dragon, the beast arising out of the sea, the beast from the earth, Babylon, and the men with the mark of the beast. The following chapters describe what will happen to each of the

⁵⁰Vern S. Poythress, *The Returning King* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing), 135. **John 12:31-33**Rev. 12:10 ἐκβληθήσεται ἔξω."

⁵¹Dennis J. Prutow, *The Visions of Revelation* (Pittsburgh, PA: Westminster Evangelistic Ministries, 2014), 111.

⁵²This clearly references the ascension of the exalted Christ (Acts 19:9-11; Luke 24:50-53) and his session (Mark 16:19; Acts 7:55-56; Heb. 10:12-13). Christ reigns *now* since he has taken his seat at his Father's right hand. In this way, he is reigning in this millennium (Rev. 20). Jay Adams uses the term "realized" millennium instead of a millennium (no-millennium) as a more accurate term. Christ's reigns now for this "long period" (symbolized by a thousand years). "Realized millennialists are all post-millennial with respect to the advent of Christ." Jay Adams, *The Time is At Hand* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1974), 11.

⁵³This is the same period equivalent to forty-two months or three and a half years mentioned in other places (Rev. 11:2-3, 12:14, and 13:5).

anti-christian forces: to those who have the mark of the beast (Chapters 15 and 16), to the Harlot Babylon and the two beasts (Chapters 17 and 18), and finally, to the dragon (Chapters 20-22).⁵⁴

In the first division of the book of Revelation, Jesus Christ was revealed as the Son of Man clothed in glory (Rev. 1:13-16), reminiscent of the vision Daniel had when “One like a son of man” was given everlasting dominion (Dan. 7:13-14). Jesus declares himself as the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and end (Rev. 1:8), as the faithful witness (Rev. 1:5), the firstborn (risen) from the dead (Rev. 15), ruler of the kings of the earth (Rev. 1:5), the living one (Rev. 1:18), the Lion and the Lamb (Rev. 5:1-14), and the King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:16).

In direct opposition to Christ are the dragon (Satan) (Rev. 12:1-17), the beast (Rev. 13:1-10), and the false prophet (13:11-18; see 16:13). On God’s side are his people portrayed as a light-bearing woman (Rev. 12:1-6, 13-17). Opposing the woman is a red dragon identified as Satan, the Devil (Rev. 12:9). The many heads symbolize the multiple manifestations of a single kingdom with extensive power. With *seven* heads, he aspires “blasphemously to imitate the completeness of God.”⁵⁵

Satan attempts to destroy (devour) the “male child” (v.5) even before he is born. This “son” is an apparent reference to Christ since he is the only “one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron...” (Rev. 19:15). Dennis Prutow reminds us of Psalm 2:7-9 and God’s promise to his Son. I will surely tell of the decree of the Lord:

He said to Me, “You are My Son, Today, I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, And the very ends of the earth as Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall shatter them like earthenware.”⁵⁶

Herod the Great was satanically led (Matt. 2:1-18) to try and thwart the advent of Christ to save his people. Satan tempted Christ in the wilderness (Matt. 4:1-11; Lk 4:1-13). The child of the woman, however, was snatched up to God and his throne (Rev. 12:5). Satan now turns his⁵⁷

⁵⁴G.K.Beale, *The Book of Revelation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1999), 660.

⁵⁵Frank E. Gaebelin, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, vol 12 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981), 517.

⁵⁶Vern S. Poythress, *The Returning King* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing), 165

⁵⁷Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, 681.

great wrath (Rev.12:12) upon the woman, the followers of Christ. God protects his Bride during this time, symbolically defined as a relatively short period (1,260 days). ⁵⁸

The scene of Satan's defeat is described as a war in heaven (v.7) in which he, the great dragon and ancient serpent (v.9; cf. Gen. 3:15) and accuser of the brethren (v.10), was thrown (cast) down along with his unholy angels (v.9, cf. Luke 10:18). In GK Beale's Commentary on the Greek Text; he links Satan's fall in Rev. 12:10 with John 12:31-33 where Jesus "predicts that his being "lifted" in his death on the cross, that the inaugurated judgement of the devil is to be executed decisively: ⁵⁹ "νῦν...νῦν ὁ ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμου τούτου Ἄρτι...ὅτι ἐβλήθη ὁ κατήγων ... now the ruler of this world be cast out." "Now... the accuser has been cast down..."

The accuser of the saints no longer has any ground against them, for they have overcome him by the blood of the Lamb (Rev. 12:11). Through Christ's perfect blood, their sins are forgiven (1 John 1:9), and the verdict of "not guilty" is declared (Rom. 8:1,33). The saints are more than conquerors with this testimony of Jesus, even unto death (Rom. 8:37-39, cf. John 12:25). "The followers of the Lamb also become victors over the dragon because they participate in the 'blood of the Lamb,' the weapon that defeated Satan, and because they have confirmed their loyalty to the Lamb by their witness even to death."⁶⁰

Having failed to destroy Christ (Rev. 12:4-5), Satan seeks to destroy the followers of Christ (v.13, 17). However, the woman represented as the church, is given the ability to flee away and given a place prepared by God to be nourished for a time (v. 12:6). Despite the deceit which pours out of the Devil's mouth (12:9,15; 2 Thess. 2:9-10), the offspring of the woman will continue "to keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus (Rev. 12:17)."

Vern Poythress explains,

The earth comes with the help of the woman. The very structure of God's created world restricts and frustrates Satan's plans. Since he cannot wipe out the church through his deceit, he tries another plan: to war against the rest of her offspring. Chapter 13 shows that this war involves raising up earthly instruments of persecution.⁶¹

⁵⁸Hendriksen, *More Than Conquerors*, 176.

⁵⁹Dennis J. Prutow, *The Visions of Revelation* (Pittsburgh, PA: Westminster Evangelistic Ministries, 2014), 111.

⁶⁰Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, 688.

The dragon is seen standing on the seashore and poised to summon his helpers from the “hellish water that they presumably came from. What the dragon was described as doing in ch. 12 he does through his servants portrayed in ch. 13.” The sea is symbolic of the nations and ⁶² their government where the roaring of the peoples is compared to the roaring of the sea (Is. 17:12). “World-dominion directed against God’s people wherever and whenever it appears in history: that is the beast.”⁶³

The first beast which John saw rising out of the sea (Rev. 13:1-2) combines the features of the four beasts of Daniel (Dan. 7:1-8). Dennis Prutow explains the similarities between these two visions, The Dragon, Satan (Rev. 14), appears to call forth a beast out of the sea. Beasts of this sort represent political and governmental power manifested in worldly kingdoms. The four beasts of Daniel 7 are kingdoms and political powers. This beast bears the image of the Dragon having seven heads and ten horns. The ten horns and ten diadems indicate the pervasive power of this beast among the kingdoms of men... ⁶⁴

The dragon gave this first beast his power and authority (Rev. 13:2). John notes that one of the horns seemed to have a mortal wound. Commentator GK Beale weaves in the grand narrative of the promised Seed of the woman who would cause a mortal wound on the head of this “grand nemesis” (Gen. 3:15). The weapon of wounding was by a sword (μαχαίρης, machairēs) (Rev. 13:14). The prophet Isaiah (27:1) speaks of the LORD punishing the serpent with the hard and great and strong sword (LXX: τὴν μάχαιραν, machairan). “That Isaiah 27:1 has been echoed already in Revelation 12:3,9, points further to the conclusion reached in the

⁶¹Poythress, *The Returning King*, 165.

⁶²“The fourfold formula for humanity in 13:7 refers universally to all unredeemed people throughout the created earth and has the same all-inclusive scope in Dan. 7:14, as well as in Rev. 5:9 and 7:9, where it is used of redeemed humanity throughout the cosmos during the entire church age.” Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, 700.

⁶³John C. Lennox, *2084: Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Humanity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Reflective, 2020), 203.

⁶⁴Prutow, *The Visions of Revelation*, 113.

comments there that the beast's "death stroke" came through Christ's death and resurrection in initial fulfillment of Isaiah 27."⁶⁵

The fact that the fatal wound was healed causes the whole earth to marvel and give allegiance to the beast. The beast is the counterfeit imitation of Christ. Vern Poythress lists the many parallels between the counterfeit (Satan) and the faithful and true (Christ) (cf. Rev. 19:11). Both have crowns, ten (13:1) and many (19:12). Both have names, blasphemous (13:1) and worthy (19:12). Both have power, thrones, and authority, Christ sits on a throne of ultimate power and authority received from the Father (3:21, 5:12-13, 12:10, John 5:21-23). Both receive worship, and only one is worthy (Rev. 5:9). Both wage war against the other; one warrior is the unholy warrior (Daniel 7:1-8), and the other is the divine warrior (19:11-21). Both work signs; one works counterfeit miracles (13:13-14). The grand counterfeit is the working of Satan through the "unholy trinity," the dragon, the beast and the false prophet. ⁶⁶

This arch-enemy of Christ opposes everything about his person and work. However, simultaneously, as the dark Lucifer ("light-bringer"), he can masquerade as an angel of light. He impersonates Christ while he seeks to usurp the divine authority of Christ. However, only under the absolute sovereignty of Christ is his arch nemesis *allowed* to do all this evil. The beast rising out of the sea is *allowed* to exercise authority for forty-two months and is given authority over every tribe, people, language, and nation (Rev. 13:5,7)⁶⁷. He is *allowed* to make war on all the saints and conquer them (Rev. 13:7). The beast rising out of the earth is *allowed* to perform deceiving signs and give breath to the image of the beast.⁶⁸

⁶⁵"The 'forehead' represents ideological commitment and the 'hand' the practical outworking of that commitment... the beast's marks on the foreheads and hands of his worshipers refers to their loyal, consistent, and wholehearted commitment to him." Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, 717.

⁶⁶Rousas John Rushdoony, *Thy Kingdom Come* (Phillisburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1970), 175-176.

⁶⁷Poythress, *The Returning King*, 147.

⁶⁸Beale also concludes in his study of the *gematria* (the practice of assigning a numerical value to a name, word or phrase by reading it as a number) that "any interpretative approach that attempts to only a literal calculation of the number 666 in an endeavour to identify only one historical individual must be rejected...nevertheless, one individual can be the embodiment of evil at any particular period of history." Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, 688.

The second beast rising from the earth (Rev. 13:11) is also called the false prophet (Rev. 16:13, 19:20; 20:10), who spews out the propaganda of the first beast, thereby being a counterfeit of the truthful witness of the Holy Spirit. The lamb-like figure (Rev. 13:11) “seems quiet, gentle, harmless and helpful as he delivers his propaganda ... yet he is as dangerous as the dragon ...,”⁶⁹ deceiving the masses toward worshipping the first beast. (Rev. 13:12)

This beast performs miraculous signs (Rev. 13:13), thereby deceiving all who dwell on the earth by making them worship the image of the first beast (Rev. 13:14). Those who refuse to worship the image of the beast are executed (Rev. 13:15). The beast also *causes* “all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave”—all people regardless of socio-economic background—to be marked on the right hand or forehead. This mark denotes spiritual allegiance and ownership, both in the case of God’s seal (name) on the saints (7:2-8; 14:1; cf. Ezek. 9; Deut. 6:8) and in the case of this counterfeit mark on the slaves of the beast (14:9; 19:20; 20:4). “All⁷⁰ who do not have the mark of the beast, all who do not surrender to the humanistic social order, are refused permission to buy and sell, that is, they are objects of social, political, and economic ostracism. Every subtle and direct pressure is employed to force the true believer into conformity with the City of Man...”⁷¹

The Apostle John calls the reader of the revelation to be wise (Rev. 13:18), for the mark or stamp of the beast is his name and number. His number, 666, is to be calculated as the number of a man. (Rev. 13:18). In contrast, God’s perfection and completeness are symbolically

⁶⁹The King James Version has the name written as, “MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.” The word “mystery” (μυστήριον, *mystērion*) is used again in 17:7 with a woman and also the “beast with seven heads and ten horns that carries her.” It is further revealed to John in 17:8-18 how the “kingdom of evil will begin to be defeated; that kingdom will turn against itself and start to self-destruct even before Christ returns. The political side of the evil system will turn against the religious-economic side and destroy it... the woman here is the ‘mother’ of idolaters, which connotes her authoritative influence over and inspiration of the system of idolatry, which is an integral part of economic involvement (Jer. 27:12 LXX) calls Babylon ‘a mother who bore you for prosperity’ and who is judged.” Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, 858-859.

⁷⁰Poythress, *The Returning King*, 159.

⁷¹Ancient Babylon and Babylon the Great of the Apocalypse have many similarities. Both ruled the world (Rev. 17:18); both were exceedingly rich (Rev. 18:16); both received a prophecy of judgement (Rev. 18:17); both were great centres of commerce (Rev. 18:19); both were allied with spiritual evil (Rev. 18:23); both martyred great numbers, especially believers (Rev. 18:24); both were corrupting influence (Rev. 19:2). Just as ancient Babylon fell suddenly, so will “Babylon the Great” fall (Rev. 18:7-8).

represented as seven. The number and name of the beast, as the anti-Christ and counterfeit of Christ, falls fully short of perfection. “To identify with the beast by worshipping his image is to⁷² identify with his imperfect nature, which is symbolized by the triple six.”⁷³

The counterfeit of the bride of Christ is a woman described notoriously as the great prostitute (Rev. 17:5) and has a name on her forehead: “Mystery, Babylon the Great.” The⁷⁴ immorality of Babylon contrasts with the purity of the bride of the Lamb. “By contrast, the bride (the church) represents the worshipers of the true God. Just as Satan, the beast, and the false prophet represent a counterfeit trinity, Babylon is a counterfeit church, seducing the world to give its allegiance to the counterfeit trinity.”⁷⁵

Poythress writes that the seductive woman is called “Babylon the Great” (Rev. 17:5) because she indicates the essential unity of all manifestations of the worldly city. Babel (Gen. 11:1-9), Belshazzar’s Babylon (Dan. 5; 7:4; Jer. 50-51), imperial Rome (1 Peter 5:13), the⁷⁶

⁷²Poythress, *The Returning King*, 165. Poythress also comments in Chapter 11 on this worldly city, “The scene is the great city, the worldly city, which includes not only Sodom and Egypt of old, and not only Jerusalem, but also Rome, each of the seven cities in Asia Minor, and our modern cities today. It is the city bent on independence from God’s way, as was Babel of old (Gen. 11:1-9). The war between the two cities, the city of God (Heb. 12:22-29; 11:16) and the city of man, continues throughout history until Babel/Babylon is finally destroyed (Rev. 17-18) and the new Jerusalem comes to consummation (21:1-22:5).” Poythress, *The Returning King*, 130.

⁷³Hendriksen, *More Than Conquerors*, 202.

⁷⁴The “Beast,” the “Man of Lawlessness,” the “Antichrist,” and the “little horn” in Daniel 7:8 have been interpreted by many as the same since they all experience the same fate. The apostle Paul wrote, “the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming.” (2 Thess. 2:8-9). In the revelation to John, “the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulphur.” (Rev. 19:20) Some Early Church Fathers, such as Irenaeus and Hippolytus, did interpret the “beast” as representing the Antichrist. Hippolytus (170-235) writes, “The beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them,” because they will not give glory to Antichrist. For this is meant by the little horn that grows up. He, being now elated in heart, begins to exalt himself, and to glorify himself as God, persecuting the saints and blaspheming Christ, even as Daniel says, “I considered the horn, and, behold, in the horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things; and he opened his mouth to blaspheme God. And that horn made war against the saints, and prevailed against them until the beast was slain, and perished, and his body was given to be burned.” Hippolytus, “Treatise on Christ and Antichrist: The Extant Works and Fragments of Hippolytus,” accessed April 12, 2024, https://biblehub.com/library/hippolytus/the_extant_works_and_fragments_of_hippolytus/treatise_on_christ_and_antichrist.htm.

⁷⁵“Death and Hades are personified here, and the fact that they themselves are thrown into the lake of fire seems to mean that the experience of death, and the holding place of the dead, Hades, are both done away with in the lake of fire.” James M. Hamilton Jr., *Revelation: The Spirit Speaks to the Churches* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 379.

⁷⁶Poythress, *The Returning King*, 186.

seven cities of Asia (Rev. 1:11), papal Rome, and modern cities can all be rolled together, because the principle is the same. The Kingdom of God is opposed by the kingdom of this world (Rev. 11:15,8). The woman's most heinous crime is her participation in the persecution of the saints (17:6).⁷⁷

Hendriksen notes that the harlot sitting on the seven hills is pointing to the city of Rome:

The imperial city attracted to her pleasures the kings of the nations, the rulers of every domain of life: art, industry, commerce, etc. (Rev. 17:2). The apostle sees the Rome of his day, filled with vanity, luxury, and pleasure. It was the pleasure of a mad city. Even the saints were torn to pieces in its circuses for the amusement and entertainment of the public. The harlot was drunk with the blood of the saints (Rev. 17:6).⁷⁸

The proud "great city that has dominion over the kings of the earth" will see a great fall. The apostle John saw an angel of God come down from heaven and call out with a mighty voice,

Fallen, fallen is Babylon the Great! She has become a dwelling place for demons, A haunt for every unclean spirit, A haunt for every unclean and detestable beast. For all nations have drunk the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality, And the kings of the earth have committed immorality with her, And the merchants of the earth have grown rich from the power of her luxurious living... As she glorified herself and lived in luxury, So give her a like measure of torment and mourning, Since in her heart, she says, 'I sit as a queen, I am no widow, And mourning I shall never see.' For this reason, her plagues will come in a single day, Death and mourning and famine, And she will be burned up with fire; For mighty is the Lord God who has judged her. (Rev. 18: 2-3; 7-8)

Three times, the voice from heaven marks the short period Babylon will experience its devastating and total destruction, "For in a single hour your judgement has come (Rev. 18:10) and all this wealth has been laid to waste (Rev. 18:17)... she has been laid waste. (Rev. 18:19). "So will Babylon the great city be thrown down with violence and will be found no more... (Rev. 18:21)."

⁷⁷Many of these historical figures, such as Nimrod, Nebuchadnezzar, Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, Genghis Khan, Napoleon Bonaparte, Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin, and Mao Tse-tung, attempted to unite the world under their rule.

⁷⁸"The impulse that led to the deification of the Roman emperors' came from the East. The Pharaohs and the Ptolemies, Lycurgus and Lysander of Sparta, and Alexander the Great were worshiped as divinities while living and when dead." Henry Fairfield Burton, "The Worship of the Roman Emperors," *The Biblical World* 40, no. 2 (August 1912), 80-91, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3141986>.

The city of man will be brought to ruin in an hour by a final climactic war between Christ and the Anti-Christ⁷⁹. The apostle saw “the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who was sitting on the horse and against his army” (Rev. 19:11-16). The gathering to battle from the four corners of the earth (Gog and Magog) is by the working of Satan, who will be released from his prison after a thousand years of being bound (Rev. 20:2,7). The great host of the anti-Christ will “surround the camp of the saints and the beloved city” (Rev. 20:9). However, fire from heaven will come down and consume them. The devil will then be “thrown into the lake of fire and sulphur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever” (Rev. 20:10). Then all the dead will be judged by “what is written in the books, according to what they had done” (Rev. 20:12). Finally, Death and Hades will also be thrown into the lake of fire. The last enemy, Death, will⁸⁰ be defeated, having been “swallowed up in victory” (1 Cor 15:54).

To those who have conquered by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, a city awaits—the new Jerusalem. John is given a glimpse of the holy city “coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband” (Rev. 21:2). “The new Jerusalem represents the perfecting of the community and the consummation of its joy in the presence of God... It is not Babel reaching up to assault heaven in autonomous pride, but the new Jerusalem coming out of heaven as the gift and artistic product of God’s craft.”⁸¹

God and the Lamb are at the city's center (21:22-23; 22:1-5). He alone is worthy to open the seals of God’s plan of redemption, for he was slain and purchased for God’s praise

⁷⁹Eusebius, the historian, describes Constantine's vision while marching at midday to face Emperor Maxentius' forces. “He saw with his own eyes the trophy of a cross of light in the heavens, above the sun, and bearing the inscription, *In Hoc Signo Vinces*,” “In this sign, thou shalt conquer.” Timothy David Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), 43.

⁸⁰The late E.O. James (1888-1972), a former Professor of History and Philosophy at the University of London, noted that “Mithras in his original Indo-European form was the Vedic god of light and subsequently was identified with *Sol Invictus*, the invincible sun, having been equated with the Babylonian solar deity Shamash and the Hellenic Helios.” E.O. James, *The Ancient Gods: The History and Diffusion of Religion in the Ancient Near East and the Eastern Mediterranean* (Edison, NJ: Castle Books, 2004), 318.

⁸¹Patricia Turner and Charles Russell Coulter, *Dictionary of Ancient Deities* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2001), 62.

representatives from every tribe, language, people and nation, making them a kingdom and priests to reign with him in the new heaven on the new earth in the city of our God. (Rev. 5:9-10)
“Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”

“... Amen.”
Revelation 7:10,12

Historical Development of Globalist Ambitions

Secret Societies

The history of man's collective attempt to be like God (Gen. 3:5) began in the cradle of civilization in ancient Babylon. The building of a city and tower in the heavens was abandoned because God came down in judgment and confused their languages (Gen. 11:1-9). Throughout history, men have conspired to build monuments to make a name for themselves and seek their way of salvation under a one-world ruler.⁸²

A word is in order about how the historical material in this chapter is being used. The organizations surveyed below — from the Bavarian Illuminati to the Council on Foreign Relations, the Bilderberg Group and the World Economic Forum — are documented and, in most cases, openly constituted bodies whose founding dates, membership and stated aims are matters of public record. What is disputed is not their existence but their relation to one another. Mainstream historical and political scholarship generally describes them as elite policy networks whose influence is real, considerable, and largely uncoordinated; the literature surveyed here reads them instead as successive expressions of a single continuous ambition. This study does not claim to settle that historiographical question, and the theological argument does not depend on settling it. Scripture asserts that the impulse to centralize human power in opposition to God is perennial and spiritually driven (Gen. 11:4; Ps. 2:1-3; Rev. 13:7); whether the particular institutions named below are consciously linked is a matter for historians. What follows is offered as the case made by a body of literature, examined critically, rather than as established consensus.

The focal point of history is centred on the Christ who accomplished redemption and thus established his sovereign rule and reign over all things. From his humiliation on the cross, he was raised up in his resurrection, ascension and session to the highest honour. Now the name of Jesus

⁸²James George Frazer, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion*, Vol. 1 (London, UK: Macmillan and Co., 1976), 356.

has been exalted above every other name that is named (Eph.1:20; Phil. 2:9). There is now “no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12).”

The exclusive claim that Jesus *alone* is Lord was not tolerated in the polytheistic religion dominating the Roman Empire. The Emperor was a deity with a pantheon of minor deities to be worshipped. In 312, Constantine the Great is acclaimed to have conquered the Empire through⁸³ the sign of the cross, which was a vision of the sign as Chi (X) traversed by Rho (ρ) to form Ϟ, representing the first two letters of the Greek word ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ (Christos). However, it appears⁸⁴ that Constantine was still honouring Apollo (Tammuz), the sun god, minting his image on a Roman coin and inscribing the phrase *Sol Invictus* “the unconquerable sun. Apollo is the Greek⁸⁵ equivalent of the Babylonian Shammash and the Egyptian Horus.⁸⁶

With the Christianizing of the Roman Empire under Constantine, the Christian faith and mystery religions mixed. Those from a pagan background were especially drawn to the adoration of the mother goddess. “The worship of the Great Mother was... prevalent under the Roman Empire. Inscriptions prove that the two (the mother and child) received divine honours...”⁸⁷

⁸³Islam also falsely reveres Mary as an unmarried virgin, free from all sin, and who reached the level of perfection. Ergun Mehmet Caner, *Unveiling Islam: An Insider's Look at Muslim Life and Beliefs* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications 2002), 203, 213, 215. Also, see the Qur'an, Surah 3:42; 5:75 and the Hadith of Sahih Bukhari, Volume 4, Book 55, #642-643.

⁸⁴Woodrow withdrew *Babylon Mystery Religion* from publication and repudiated its central thesis in *The Babylon Connection?* (Ralph Woodrow Evangelistic Association, 1997), concluding that its Hislop-derived claims could not be substantiated.

⁸⁵Amy D. Bernstein, “A Short History of Secret Societies,” *U.S. News & World Report* special publication “Mysteries of History: Secret Societies,” May 19, 2009.

⁸⁶McGuire and Anderson, *The Babylon Code*, 170.

⁸⁷The “All-Seeing-Eye” is a symbol that various religious belief systems have used. Some connect it with the Egyptian “Eye of Horus” symbol. It is also called the “Eye of Providence,” representing divine and benevolent omniscience and omnipotence. From the Freemason sources, “... the symbol of the all-seeing eye serves as a reminder to Freemasons of the watchfulness of the Great Architect.” “Behind the Masonic Symbols: The Eye of Providence,” The Grand Lodge of Ohio, freemason.com, accessed April 11, 2024, “<https://www.freemason.com/eye-of-providence-masonic-symbol/>.” “The Eye of God became a popular theme in the art of the Late Renaissance, usually appearing surrounded by rays of light... The Eye was often depicted as contained within a triangle, with the three sides of the triangle referring to the three divine persons of the Trinity.” “The Eye of Providence: A Journey into Masonic Symbolism,” May 18, 2024, *The George Washington Masonic National Memorial*, accessed April 11, 2024, <https://gwmemorial.org/blogs/news/the-eye-of-providence>. Much speculation surrounds the Great Seal of America and the American Dollar Bill using the “All-Seeing-Eye” and pyramid symbol. S. Brent Morris seeks to “set the record straight” in a bulletin from the Masonic Service Association of North America. “The seal’s Eye of Providence and the Mason’s All Seeing Eye each express Divine Omnipotence, but they are parallel uses of a shared icon, not a single symbol.” S. Brent Morris, “Eye in the

While it was denounced in the first three centuries whenever some were found worshipping Mary as a goddess and offering cakes at her shrine, the “adoring of Mary” became official doctrine at the Council of Ephesus in 431. Over the centuries⁸⁸, many other titles have been given to Mary (“queen of heaven,” “mother of God”) and roles (“mediatrix”), which are drawn from the gods of the nations and developed from ancient Babylon’s mystery religion.”⁸⁹

The mystery religions have influenced the philosophical movement of Gnosticism, which, centuries later, influenced the belief systems of the Renaissance period. Amy Bernstein, in her article, *A Short History of Secret Societies* wrote, “Often the sources of these esoteric religions run deep—the Cabala, Gnosticism and the ancient wisdom of the Greek sage Hermes Trismegistos and the Egyptian god Thoth are all part of the esoteric soup from which secret societies draw their ideas.”⁹⁰

In their book, *The Babylon Code*, Paul McGuire and Troy Anderson wrote, “The central tenet of the mystery religions of Egypt and Babylon is the idea that man can become God—the same lie Lucifer used to deceive Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. This theology was passed down from culture to culture, beginning in ancient Babylon and reemerging in Egypt, Greece, Rome, Europe, and America via a string of secret societies.”⁹¹

Pyramid,” “Masonic Service Association of North America Short Talk Bulletin,” September 1995, accessed April 11, 2024, <https://grandlodgeofiowa.org/docs/Symbolism/EyeinthePyramid.pdf>.

⁸⁸McGuire and Anderson, *The Babylon Code*, 170.

⁸⁹Manly P. Hall, *The Secret Destiny of America* (Los Angeles, CA: Philosophical Research Society, 1958) 15, 23. “Researchers say the pyramid and the all-seeing eye are symbols of secret societies such as the Illuminati and signify its control of the New World Order. Some historians agree with Hall, saying secret societies such as the Rosicrucian Order, the Illuminati, and the Freemasons were involved in the design of America’s seal and the dollar bill. A significant number of the nation’s founders and signers of the Declaration of Independence were members of these groups.” McGuire and Anderson, *The Babylon Code*, 182.

⁹⁰Gary North, *Conspiracy: A Biblical View* (Tyler, TX: Dominion Press, 1986), xv. “The biblical view of conspiracy neither overestimates the power of conspiracies nor underestimates it. There is one conspiracy, Satan’s, and ultimately it must fail. Satan’s supernatural conspiracy is the conspiracy; all other visible conspiracies are merely out workings of this supernatural conspiracy.” Gary North, *Conspiracy: A Biblical View* (Tyler, TX: Dominion Press, 1986), 17.

⁹¹North, *Conspiracy: A Biblical View*, 2.

The most common symbol representing the hierarchical view of humanity under the “All Seeing Eye” is the pyramid. “This belief in the god-king was especially prevalent in Egypt,⁹² where the pyramid was the predominant symbol. The pharaohs possessed secret knowledge and partook in various occult rituals. In this hierarchal system of belief, the pyramid's base represents the mass of humanity, and the tip is the scientific occult elite who rule the masses.”⁹³

Manly P. Hall (1901-1990), a mystic renowned for his writing (“The Secret Teachings of All Ages”) and lecturing on esoteric and occult traditions, wrote, “The Pyramid is without a cap stone, and above its upper platform floats a triangle containing the All-Seeing Eye surrounded by rays of light... Combining the Phoenix, the pyramid, and the all-seeing eye is more than chance or coincidence... There is only one possible origin for these symbols: the secret societies which came to this country 150 years before the Revolutionary War.”⁹⁴

Before we delve into the dark world of secret societies, we must lay down some guidelines to navigate this subject, which some people may dismiss as “conspiracy theories” and are not worth researching. In Gary North’s book, *Conspiracy, A Biblical View*, he rightly concludes that *actual* conspiracies “have a model: the Satanic conspiracy against God. They rely on secrecy covered in a shell of public positioning. They promote hidden agendas. They all lose. One by one, they all lose...”⁹⁵

⁹²The Newtonwards Reformed Presbyterian Church website provides four reasons why the teaching and practice of secret societies conflict with the Word of God: “Unscriptural Secrecy, Unlawful Oaths, Unsocial Benevolence, and Unchristian fellowship,” *The Church and Secret Societies*, accessed July 3, 2024. <http://newtownards.rpc.org/the-church-and-secret-societies/>. Also, historically, Ministers of the Reformed Presbyterian have spoken out against secret societies in sermons and papers. For example, at the 1874 joint Reformed Presbyteries of Edinburgh and Glasgow, Rev. Kerr submitted a paper in which general principles stated were approved and requested to be published in a pamphlet. They agreed to “give it a cordial recommendation as containing ample evidence that the Secret Society treated are, on the whole, opposed to the principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and calculated injuriously to affect the interests of truth generally.” James Kerr, *The Principles and Practices of Secret Societies opposed to Scripture and Reason* (Glasgow, SC: George Gallic & Son, 1874), 4.

⁹³“The Constitution of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America.” Available for download at “Crown and Covenant Publications” <https://crownandcovenant.com/products/current-rpcna-constitution-pdf-download>.

⁹⁴William H. McIlhany, “Primer on the Illuminati,” *The New American*, June 12, 200, accessed April 10, 2024, <https://thenewamerican.com/us/culture/history/a-primer-on-the-illuminati/>.

⁹⁵McGuire and Anderson, *The Babylon Code*, 184 -185.

How should Christians view conspiracies? Isaiah warned God's people not to fear the conspiracies of men,

For the LORD spoke thus to me with his strong hand upon me, and warned me not to walk in the way of this people, saying: "Do not call conspiracy all that this people calls conspiracy, and do not fear what they fear, nor be in dread. But the LORD of hosts, him you shall honor as holy. Let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. (Isaiah 8:11-13)

Instead of fearing the conspiracies of clandestine societies, Christians must look to Jesus, with his disciples. He lived out his whole message publicly. "He gave His disciples no program of secret initiation, no recruiting system based on something other than the profession of faith in Christ and service to others... Every principle in His message came from the Old Testament, which was a public document in Israel." He led his disciples to live out their faith "in the ⁹⁶ open." Jesus said to them,

You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. (Matthew 5:14-16)

This organizational principle of the "public ministry" of the church directly opposes the secrecy of these societies. One distinctive of the Reformed Presbyterian Church is its opposition to secret societies. In the ⁹⁷*Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America*, which is a commentary on the *Westminster Confession of Faith* from Chapter 25, Of the Church, we read:

Christians should walk in the light. Their beliefs, purposes, manner of life, and their rules of action and conduct should be based on the Word of God and should not be concealed. Oathbound societies usually involve an improper requirement of secrecy, aims which are

⁹⁶Jim Marrs, *Rule by Secrecy* (New York, NY: Harper-Collins, 2000), 227-228.

⁹⁷In his *Handbook on Secret Societies*, Michael Bradley writes about The Rosicrucian that they "developed from various groups of alchemists, Christian Kabbalists, and rational humanists who came together in the 1500s to form a blend of mystical Christianity and enlightenment scholarship. Their mission was to "learn to know all, but keep thyself unknown." They lived by six rules: 1. To make no public profession of superior knowledge and to heal the sick free of charge; 2. To wear no special garment, but to dress according to the custom of the country in which they lived; 3. To return to the House of the Holy Spirit on a certain day each year for mutual help and instruction; 4. To seek a worthy person to succeed each member; 5. To adopt the letters R.C. as their sign and mark; 6. To keep the existence of the fraternity a secret for a period of 100 years." Michael Bradley, *Secret Societies Handbook* (China: Metro Books Gusto Company, 2004), 121-122. Interestingly, the Georgia Guidestones, whose first guideline was inscribed on the Stonehenge-styled granite stone as: "Maintain humanity under 500,000,000 in perpetual balance with nature," was signed as "RC." "Georgia Guidestones," Wikipedia, accessed April 11, 2024, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georgia_Guidestones.

immoral, intimate fellowship with unbelievers or participation in unbiblical worship. Membership in such organizations is inconsistent with a Christian profession, however good their announced purposes may be. (1 John 1:7; 1 Thess. 5:5; Matt. 5:14; 2 John 1:7-11; John 3:20-21; Eph. 5:8-14; Matt. 15:9.)⁹⁸

Also, the Covenant Sworn and Subscribed by the Synod of The Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, May 21, 1871, we read:

We reject all systems of false religion and will-worship, and with these all forms of secret oath-bound societies and orders, as ensnaring in their nature, pernicious in their tendency, and perilous to the liberties of both Church and State; and pledge ourselves to pray and labor according to our power, that whatever is contrary to godliness may be removed, and the Church beautified with universal conformity to the law and will of her Divine Head and Lord.

Just as the forefathers of the Reformed Presbyterian Church sought to understand the dangers of secret societies and ensuing conspiracies, we will trace where these modern societies originated and how they operate today behind “front organizations.” The core belief of modern globalists, rooted in mystery religions and occult societies, is that a few evil men will one day control the world. Since the days of Nimrod, the goal of a “one world order” has been the ambition of oligarchs.

William H. McIlhany, a noted author and historian, has produced decades of detailed scholarship on secret subversive societies.

Down through the ages there have been many secret societies and conspiratorial movements that had as their goals absolute rule of the world, overthrow of all existing governments, and the final destruction of all religion. It is possible with much study to trace the origins and developments of many such movements. The early anti-Christian mysticism of the Gnostics... the apostate Order of the Knights Templar, where heretical leaders imitated the Assassin’s system for the destruction of Christianity. From the 13th through the 17th centuries such groups as the Luciferians, Rosicrucians, and the Levellers continue the war against Christianity that had begun in Europe with the Templars...

⁹⁸“When we examine the founding of America, we find a strange mix of Illuminati, Masonic, and biblical beliefs. On the one hand, the Pilgrims and the Puritans came to America and entered into a covenant with God based on the one God made with the children of Israel. Large numbers of Bible-believing Christians came from England and other parts of Europe to escape religious persecution. The First Great Awakening and the biblical preaching of men like Jonathan Edwards greatly impacted the original colonies. As a result, biblical truths were embedded in the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the Declaration of Independence... At the time, many of the Founding Fathers were fervent biblical Christians, as evidenced by the unique writings of the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the Declaration of Independence. These documents echoed Christian concepts: all men are created equal, checks and balances, and the balance of power. At the same time, however, members of the Illuminati, Freemasonry, and other secret societies also strongly influenced the nation. Some Founding Fathers, including Washington, warned that the European Illuminati had infiltrated America’s Masonic lodges and were intent on creating a central bank to consolidate their financial and political power over the new nation.” McGuire and Anderson, *The Babylon Code*, 73, 186.

Many of these earlier movements, however, have left very fragmentary evidence, so it is not possible to trace from 1100-1700 any continuing organizational structure which was engaged in a controlled plot for world rule.⁹⁹

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the spiritual battle in the Western world was waged between the kingdom ambitions of godly Christian immigrants and the Satanic secular-humanist ambitions of secret societies. In the early 1600s, the Pilgrims and Puritans came to America to build a biblical foundation for a new society based upon biblical freedom. Members of occult societies also came from London to the New World and founded the Jamestown Colony under the name “The Virginia Company.”¹⁰⁰

Jim Marrs, a famous author on secret societies, writes, “The colony was strictly a business venture.. a firm formed in 1606 by secret society members including Sir Francis Bacon, who might rightfully be viewed as the founder of modern America.” Francis Bacon, a member¹⁰¹ of Britain’s Parliament, is known as the “founder of English Freemasonry” and the “guiding light of the Rosicrucian Order.”¹⁰²

⁹⁹Beginning in the 1750s, the Rothchild Empire made fortunes by funding countries at war and controlling the government’s money supply. With those scruples, they funded both sides of wars in a quest for a one-world government. Michael Bradley, *Secret Societies Handbook* (China: Metro Books Gusto Company, 2004), 64.

¹⁰⁰Bradley, *Secret Societies Handbook*, 64.

¹⁰¹Vernon Stauffer, *The Bavarian Illuminati in America: The New England Conspiracy Scare* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2006; orig. pub. 1918), 207-208.

¹⁰²Weishaupt was educated by the Jesuits. The Jesuits are more than a Catholic religious order. Count von Hoensbroech (1852-1923), a German Noble and ex-Jesuit, wrote “Fourteen Years a Jesuit.” In this book, he concludes that “the Jesuit Order, therefore, stands before us as the embodiment of a system which aims at temporal political domination through temporal political means, embellished by religion, which assigns to the head of the Catholic religion - the Roman Pope - the role of a temporal overlord and under the shelter of the Pope-King, and using him as an instrument, desires itself to attain the dominion of the whole world.” Count von Hoensbroech, *Fourteen years a Jesuit* (Louisville, KY: Bank of Wisdom, Reproduced in electronic form 2000), 430. This Jesuit Oath can be found in a book called *Subterranean Rome* by Carlos Didier, translated from the French and published in New York in 1843. Among many terrible things, the oath is to “plant the seeds of jealousy and hatred between communities, provinces, states that were at peace, and incite them to deeds of blood, involving them in war with each other, and to create revolutions and civil wars in countries that were independent and prosperous, cultivating the arts and the sciences and enjoying the blessings of peace. To take sides with the combatants and to act secretly with your brother Jesuit, who might be engaged on the other side, but openly opposed to that with which you might be connected, only that the Church might be the gainer in the end, in the conditions fixed in the treaties for peace and that the end justifies the means.” At the end, the Superior concludes with the charge, “Go ye, then, into all the world and take possession of all lands in the name of the Pope. He who will not accept him as the Vicar of Jesus and his Vice-regent on earth, let him be accursed and exterminated.” Niall Kilkenny, “Jesuit Extreme Oath of Induction”. Accessed June 17, 2024, <https://www.reformation.org/jesuit-oath.html>.

The year America was founded in 1776 was also when the infamous Bavarian Illuminati was formed. This well-researched secret society was founded by Adam Weishaupt on May 1,¹⁰³ 1776, in Bavaria, Germany. Michael Bradley, in his *Secret Societies Handbook*, writes,

Weishaupt was studying the anti-Christian doctrines, astrology, medicine, and the occult. He was also influenced by the secret rule of the Pythagoreans who believe that men and women should pool their belongings (later to become the basic philosophy of Communism). He also studied the Masons (and was later to ally with them). On May 1, 1776, under the direction of the newly formed House of Rothchild¹⁰⁴, he formed the secret Order of the Illuminati (“enlightened ones”), the name said to be derived from Luciferian teachings (Lucifer means “Bearer of Light”). He started with five members. The organization copied the hierarchical structure of the Jesuits and the Freemasons and ever since, the Illuminati has used a variety of tactics to motivate, blackmail, and manipulate people in the name of enlightenment, freedom, and emancipation in order to maintain power.¹⁰⁵

Weishaupt created the *Bavarian Illuminati* organization and promoted Enlightenment ideas to subvert and destroy the political and religious class ultimately. Seizing the opportunity to build a hierarchical structure through his connections with the Masons, he laid the foundation of an “Association...which, in time, should govern the world... the express aim of which was to abolish Christianity and overturn all civil government.”¹⁰⁶

Professor Emeritus Michael Barkun, in his U.S. News & World Report article “The Bizarre Legacy of the Bavarian Illuminati,” wrote, “Utilizing organizational models taken from both the Jesuits¹⁰⁷ and the Masons, Weishaupt created a secular organization whose aim was to

¹⁰³Michael Barkun, “The Bizarre Legacy of the Bavarian Illuminati: Two Centuries After Their Demise, Conspiracy Theorists Still Fear Them,” *U.S. News & World Report* special publication “Mysteries of History: Secret Societies,” May 19, 2009.

¹⁰⁴Stauffer, *The Bavarian Illuminati in America*, 142–228

¹⁰⁵Vernon Stauffer wrote in this book, *The Bavarian Illuminati in America*, how they infiltrated Freemasonry. “The Society of the Illuminati, springing up at a time and professing itself to be a higher order of Freemasonry, availed itself of the secrecy, solemnity, and mysticism of Masonry, of its system of correspondence, to teach and propagate doctrines calculated to undermine and destroy all human happiness and virtue... Thus God’s being was derided, while government was pronounced a curse, civil society an apostasy of the race, the possession of private property a robbery, chastity and natural affection groundless prejudices, and adultery, assassination, poisoning and other infernal crimes not only lawful but even virtuous. To crown it all, the principle that the end justifies the means was made to define the sphere of action for the members of the order.” Stauffer, *The Bavarian Illuminati in America*, 142–228

¹⁰⁶Devra Newberger Speregen and Debra Mostow Zakarin, *Secret Societies: The Truth Revealed* (Plain City, OH: Media Source, 2013), 10.

¹⁰⁷Speregen and Zakarin also claim that Illuminati was “instrumental in the French Revolution, World Wars I and II, and to this day is still known as Illuminati.” Speregen and Zakarin, *Secret Societies*, 64.

free the world “from all established religious and political authority... An elaborate apparatus of secrecy and ritual was designed not only to protect the organization from state penetration but also to mould its members into an elite class capable of achieving Weishaupt’s grandiose objective.”¹⁰⁸

Another one of Weishaupt’s associates was a merchant known only as Kolmer. Kolmer learned the esoteric knowledge of Egypt and Persia and “preached a secret doctrine based on an ancient form of Gnosticism... that had used the word ‘Illuminated’ prior to the third century.” Kolmer had gained esoteric knowledge from a French court magician named Cagliostro, whom he met on the island of Malta, a Knights Templar stronghold. Kolmer passed these secrets on to Weishaupt.¹⁰⁹

Devra Newberger Speregen and Debra Mostow Zakarin wrote in the special publication *Secret Societies: The Truth Revealed*, “Bavarian authorities discovered more revealing documents in Weishaupt’s home about controlling all facets of Freemasonry,¹¹⁰ overthrowing European monarchies, and putting an end to the Catholic Church.” One of the documents stated this bold plan: “It is necessary to establish a universal regime and empire over the whole world.”¹¹¹

In 1784, at the height of its growing influence, one of the Illuminati’s messengers was reportedly struck by lightning on his way to Paris. Highly confidential documents were found on his dead body. One was entitled “The Original Shift in Days of Illumination.” “It described the

¹⁰⁸Stauffer, *The Bavarian Illuminati in America*, 175–83.

¹⁰⁹For example, the Russian Revolution in 1917, which led to the spread of Communism, was based on Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels’s 1848 publication of *The Communist Manifesto*. If one compares Adam Weishaupt’s *The Illuminati Manifesto*, published approximately six decades before *The Communist Manifesto*, one will see that the *Communist Manifesto* is little more than a copy of *The Illuminati Manifesto*. McGuire and Anderson, *The Babylon Code*, 135.

¹¹⁰William H. McIlhenny, “Primer on the Illuminati,” *The New American*, (June 12, 2009), accessed June 17, 2024, <https://thenewamerican.com/us/culture/history/a-primer-on-the-illuminati/>

¹¹¹Manly P. Hall, *The Secret Destiny of America* (Los Angeles: Philosophical Research Society, 1944), 44.

Illuminati's ultimate goal for a 'New World Order through Revolution.' It also spoke of the French Revolution (which hadn't happened yet)."¹¹²

One of the reasons there is so much knowledge of the secret plans of the Bavarian Illuminati is that, in 1786, police found several books and more than two hundred letters that had passed between Weishaupt and an associate. "Here was the complete range of evidence the authorities had long waited for... By the admissions of its leaders, the system of the Illuminati had the appearance of an organization devoted to the overthrow of religion and the state, a band of poisoners and forgers, and an association of men of disgusting morals and depraved tastes. The publication of these documents amounted to nothing less than a sensation."¹¹³

Not long after, the Bavarian monarch issued an order banning all secret societies. While Weishaupt lost his professorship and was banished from the Bavarian states, the society spread by secret Illuminati chapters. By 1815, the Illuminati had extended its influence throughout Europe and America. Reportedly, they formed the *League of the Just*, which commissioned Karl Marx to write *The Communist Manifesto*. Following the publication of the *Manifesto*, the *League of Just* changed its name to the *Communist League*. "This inaugurated the era of communist¹¹⁴ subversion, infiltration, and control of governments across the globe."¹¹⁵

Manly P. Hall wrote in *The Secret Destiny of America* that both *The Communist Manifesto* and *The Illuminati Manifesto* are blueprints for a world socialist state ruled by the elite.

This flows from Plato's Republic, a Socratic dialogue concerning the ideal city-state. This political system, Plato asserted, should be like Atlantis, the legendary ancient civilization overseen by ten philosopher-kings. Plato wrote about Atlantis in Timaeus and Critias, though most historians consider Atlantis to be a fictional island... Atlantis, therefore, is the archetype or the pattern of proper government, which existed in ancient days but was destroyed by the selfishness and ignorance of men... [The king of Atlantis

¹¹²McGuire and Anderson, *The Babylon Code*, 225.

¹¹³Skull and Bones, founded in 1832, also known as The Order or the Brotherhood of Death, is an undergraduate senior secret society at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut.

¹¹⁴John Coleman, *The Illuminati in America, 1776-2008* (Carson City, NV: World International Review, 2008), 9,31.

¹¹⁵Quoted in Richard N. Rhoades, *Lady Liberty: The Ancient Goddess of America* (Bloomington, IN: iUniverse, 2013), 123–24.

was] descended of a divine race; that is, he belonged to the Order of the Illumined; for those who come to a state of wisdom then belong to the family of the heroes—perfected human beings.”¹¹⁶

Some suggest that there is strong evidence that the actual Illuminati family bloodline exists and comprises the ruling class of our world. “Within the secrets of ‘Mystery, Babylon’ is a Satanic system of economics that has enabled Lucifer’s followers to accumulate the world’s wealth at a level no ordinary person could ever achieve.”¹¹⁷ In his book, *The Illuminati in America, 1776–2008*, former MI6 intelligence agent John Coleman wrote that Adam Weishaupt was a “mere servant of the Rothschilds” and that the Illuminati is composed of twelve other families that are part of a “political society” and “secret government” that use the organization’s “great secrecy” to “methodically advance its agenda to create a global government, economic system, and religion.” Coleman wrote, “The Skull and Bones Order”¹¹⁸ is “controlled by thirteen

¹¹⁶Heads of state have also exposed the secret societies in their work in subverting governments. George Washington, “It was not my intention to doubt that the Doctrines of the Illuminati and principles of Jacobinism had not spread in the United States. On the contrary, no one is more truly satisfied of this fact than I am...” “Freemasonry,” Wikiquote, accessed July 12, 2024, <http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/freemasonry>. Abraham Lincoln, “I see in the near future a crisis approaching that unnerves me and causes me to tremble for the safety of my country. As a result of the war corporations have been enthroned and an era of corruption in high places will follow, and the money power of the country will endeavor to prolong its reign by working upon the prejudice of the people until all wealth is aggregated in a few hands and the republic is destroyed.” “Talk: Abraham Lincoln,” Wikiquote.org, accessed July 12, 2024, http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Talk:Abraham_Lincoln. Winston Churchill, “From the days of Spartacus-Weishaupt to those of Karl Marx, and down to Trotsky (Russia), Bela Kun (Hungary), Rosa Luxembourg (Germany), and Emma Goldman (United States), this worldwide conspiracy for the overthrow of civilisation and for the reconstitution of society on the basis of arrested development, of envious malevolence, and impossible equality, has been steadily growing. It played, as a modern writer, Mrs. Webster, has so ably shown, a definitely recognisable part in the tragedy of the French Revolution. It has been the mainspring of every subversive movement during the Nineteenth Century; and now at last this band of extraordinary personalities from the underworld of the great cities of Europe and America have gripped the Russian people by the hair of their heads and have become practically the undisputed masters of that enormous empire.” “Conspiracy,” wikiquote.org, accessed July 12, 2024, <http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/conspiracy>. John F. Kennedy, “The very word ‘secrecy’ is repugnant in a free and open society; and we are as a people inherently and historically opposed to secret societies, to secret oaths and to secret proceedings.” “John F. Kennedy: Presidential Library and Museum,” [jfklibrary.org](http://www.jfklibrary.org/archives/other-resources/john-f-kennedy-speeches/american-newspaper-publishers-association-19610427), accessed July 12, 2024. <https://www.jfklibrary.org/archives/other-resources/john-f-kennedy-speeches/american-newspaper-publishers-association-19610427>.

¹¹⁷Timothy Dwight, *The Duty of Americans at the Present Crisis, Illustrated in a Discourse, Preached on the Fourth of July, 1798* (New Haven, CT: Thomas and Samuel Green, 1798), 20–21.

¹¹⁸The Hegelian dialectic is a philosophical concept developed by the German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel in the early 19th century. It is a method of argumentation involving a three-step process of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. The “Thesis” is the starting point or the initial idea or position. The “Antithesis” is the thesis’s opposing or contradictory idea or position. It challenges or negates the thesis. Then, the “Synthesis”. This is the resolution or reconciliation of the thesis and antithesis. The synthesis from the dialectical process becomes the new thesis, leading to further development and evolution. Karl Marx adapted the Hegelian dialectic into his materialist conception of history, emphasizing the role of economic and social factors in shaping historical development. Marx’s version of the dialectic is often referred to as dialectical materialism. David A. Noebel, *Understanding the*

families, all members of the Order of Illuminati... These families have, since 1785, held the destiny of the United States in their hands... According to Coleman, the Illuminati, since its creation in the late eighteenth century, has “operated behind the scenes, instigating many revolutions and wars as part of a long-term plan to consolidate the world's wealth and power.”¹¹⁹

Joseph Willard, president of Harvard (1781-1804), wrote,

...there is sufficient evidence that a number of societies, of the Illuminati, have been established, in this land of Gospel light and Civil liberty, which were first organized from the grand Society, in France. They are doubtless, secretly striving to undermine all our ancient institutions, civil and sacred. These societies are closely leagued with those of the same Order, in Europe; they have all the same object in view. The enemies of all order are seeking our ruin. Should infidelity generally prevail, our independence would fall of course. Our republican government would be annihilated...¹²⁰

Near the end of the 19th Century, Timothy Dwight IV, president¹²¹ of Yale University (1886–1898) and the grandson of preacher Jonathan Edwards (father of the First Great Awakening) described the Illuminati in a sermon entitled *The Duty of Americans at the Present Crisis*. The Illuminati is a “higher order of Masons” having a “malignant” impact on government and religion in America and Europe. He said that the Illuminati doctrine struck at the “root of all human happiness and virtue” and had declared “murder, butchery in war” justifiable “if necessary for their purposes...” and were “... rapidly spreading throughout the world, to engage mankind in an open professed war against God.” Again, he encourages the saints, “Is it that we may change our holy worship into a dance of Jacobin frenzy, and that we may behold a trumpet impersonating a Goddess on the altars of Jehovah? It is that we may see the Bible cast into a bonfire... and our children... uniting in the mob, chanting mockeries against God... Shall our

Times (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1994), 139.

¹¹⁹Antony C. Sutton, *America's Secret Establishment: An Introduction to the Order of Skull & Bones* (Walterville, OR: TrineDay, 2004), 115, 212. Antony Sutton was Educated at the Universities of London, Gottingen and California. He was a former research Fellow at the Hoover institution, Stanford University, and economics professor at California State University of Los Angeles.

¹²⁰Greg Stewart, “Ordo Ab Chao, Symbols and Symbolism” *Freemason Information*, October 25, 2016, accessed on April 13, 2024, <https://freemasoninformation.com/symbolism/ordo-ab-chao-symbols-and-symbolism/>.

¹²¹Des Griffin, *Fourth Reich of the Rich* (Colton, OR:Emissary Publications, 1998), 71,72.

sons become the disciples of Voltaire and the dragoons of Marat, or our daughters the concubines of the Illuminati?”¹²²

Writer Antony Sutton (1925-2002), British-American writer, researcher, economist, and professor, wrote in his book *America's Secret Establishment* that secret societies manipulate levers of power through a framework known as the Hegelian dialectic process¹²³, the notion that “conflict creates history.” Sutton wrote, “The synthesis sought by the Establishment is called the “New World Order... Without controlled conflict, this New World Order will not come about... This explains why the international bankers backed the Nazis, the Soviet Union, North Korea, and North Vietnam, ad nauseam, against the United States. This ‘conflict’ built profits while pushing the world ever closer to a one-world government. The process continues today.”¹²⁴

Secret societies and globalist organizations employ this dialectic Hegelian strategy. For example, Freemasonry uses the Latin *ordo ab chao* (Order out of Chaos) to describe the movement and transformation from chaos to order, “darkness to light.”¹²⁵ Albert Pike, a Grand Commander of the Supreme Council of the Scottish Freemasons, wrote,

We shall unleash the nihilists and the atheists and we shall provoke a great social cataclysm which in all its horror will show clearly to all nations the effect of absolute atheism; the origins of savagery and of most bloody turmoil. Then everywhere, the people will be forced to defend themselves against the world minority of the world revolutionaries and will exterminate those destroyers of civilization and the multitudes disillusioned with Christianity whose spirits will be from that moment without direction

¹²²According to their website (<https://www.cfr.org/>) the Council of Foreign Relations (CFR) was founded in 1921 as an American think tank specializing in U.S. foreign policy and international relations. It is an independent and nonpartisan nonprofit organization based in New York City. Its membership has included senior politicians, numerous secretaries of state, CIA directors, bankers, lawyers, professors, corporate directors and CEOs, and senior media figures.

¹²³Stanley Monteith, *Brotherhood of Darkness* (Anomalous Publishing, 2009), 21–23.

¹²⁴Carroll Quigley, *The Anglo-American Establishment* (San Pedro, CA: GSG, 1981), ix, 4–6, 38, 134–35, 303.

¹²⁵According to Daniel Estulin, in his book, *The True Story of the Bilderberg group*, the “Bilderberg is a medium, a means, of bringing together [representatives] of financial institutions which are the world’s most powerful and predatory financial interests of the times... It is that combination that represents the worst of humanity... The concept is a One-World Company, Ltd., made up of corporations that have a lot more power than any government on the planet. We’ve seen in recent years that elected presidents... have very little to do with the actual course of history. You can talk about foreign policy or national policy, but these policies have very little to do with how the world is run. It’s global policy that matters and that global policy is not run by presidents and prime ministers. It’s run by people far above the government level and the Bilderberg Group is just one of the nodes of these above-government level organizations whose objective is through consensus to reach an understanding of how the world is going to be run on behalf of the aristocracy.” Daniel Estulin, *The True Story of the Bilderberg Group* (Walterville, OR: TrineDay, 2005), 5.

and leadership and anxious for an ideal, but without knowledge where to send its adoration, will receive the true light through the universal manifestation of the pure doctrine of Lucifer brought finally out into public view. A manifestation which will result from a general reactionary movement which will follow the destruction of Christianity and Atheism; both conquered and exterminated at the same time.”¹²⁶

Cecil John Rhodes, a South African diamond-mining tycoon who established the Rhodes scholarships at Oxford University, played a vital role in the effort to create a world government. In Stanley Monteith’s book, *Brotherhood of Darkness*, he argues that Rhodes has “done more to unite the world than any other man in history.” He could not live to realize his vision, so he used his fortune to establish the Rhodes Trust, which has indoctrinated thousands of men, including President Bill Clinton, “in socialism and world government...” Today, these former Rhodes scholars wield enormous influence as they work on multinational corporations, national banks, all levels of government and media, the U.S. Supreme Court, in ranking military positions and the most influential institutions of the Council on Foreign Relations¹²⁷ and the Tri-Lateral Commission.¹²⁸

The Round Table Group is today's major force behind the “global governance” movement. In his book, *The Anglo-American Establishment*, Carroll Quigley wrote that Rhodes and his fellow “imperial federalists” formed The Round Table Group with the support of the Rothschild family. It became one of the “most important forces in the formulation and execution of British imperial and foreign policy,” creating the League of Nations, which would later

¹²⁶According to their website (<https://www.trilateral.org/>) the Trilateral Commission is a Non-governmental, non-partisan discussion group founded by David Rockefeller to foster closer cooperation among North America, Western Europe, and Japan. The co-founder of The Trilateral Commission (along with David Rockefeller), Polish American diplomat and political scientist Zbigniew Brzezinski, wrote in this book *Between Two Ages: American’s Role in the Technetronic Era*, “Another threat, less overt but no less basic, confronts liberal democracy. More directly linked to the impact of technology, it involves the gradual appearance of a more controlled and directed society. Such a society would be dominated by an elite whose claim to political power would rest on allegedly superior scientific know-how. Unhindered by the restraints of traditional liberal values, this elite would not hesitate to achieve its political ends by using the latest modern techniques for influencing public behavior and keeping society under close surveillance and control. Under such circumstances, the scientific and technological momentum of the country would not be reversed but would feed on the situation it exploits.” Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Between Two Ages: American’s Role in the Technetronic Era* (New York, NY: Viking Press, 1970), 96.

¹²⁷According to their website (<https://www.bohemianclub.com/>), the Bohemian Club, founded in 1872, is a private gentlemen’s club whose Bohemian Grove encampment began in 1878. In mid-July each year for two weeks, the Bohemian Grove hosts a more than two-week encampment of some of the most prominent men in the world.

¹²⁸Monteith, *Brotherhood of Darkness*, 21–23., 66.

develop into the United Nations. The Round Table Group was a key influence on British policy regarding Palestine from 1917 to 1945. It was an essential influence on the policy of appeasement toward Germany from 1920 to 1940 and “played a considerable role in the Second World War.”¹²⁹ Stanley Monteith writes, “There were three other people with Cecil Rhodes when he created his secret society in 1891....We know that at least two were Masons, and the other was deeply involved in the occult and theosophy. And out of that little group of four men came a series of secret societies that culminated in what we have today: the Council on Foreign Relations, the Bilderberg Group,¹³⁰ the Trilateral Commission¹³¹, Skull and Bones, and Bohemian Grove.¹³² A large number of these secret societies are all working together for a common goal—a one-world government, a one-world financial system, and certainly a one- world religion—and they are all intent upon destroying Christianity.”¹³³

John Coleman wrote about the coordinated efforts of the globalists in his book, *The Conspirator’s Hierarchy: The Committee of the 300*. This could be called a conspiracy of the Establishment¹³⁴ against the people:

This was the start of what was to become the Eastern Liberal Establishments... It was also the beginning of the spiritual conflict that has bedevilled the United States ever since the number of the Brethren established themselves in the American colonies in New

¹²⁹“Establishment: this is the key word. The oddity of the thesis lies here: the conspiracy is the Establishment. It is not like the conspiracy of the Bolsheviks against the Czar's establishment. Everyone understands that sort of conspiracy: a rag-tag band of vicious outsiders who plot to capture the seats of authoritarian power for themselves. Now, what we are facing is a successful conspiracy of the American Establishment against the Constitution of the United States and against everyone who was intended by the Constitution's authors to be protected by that Constitution. Operationally speaking, there is a secret constitution in the shadow of the official one, and the elite governs in terms of it. This is a conspiracy of insiders against outsiders, not the other way around. It is a conspiracy of super-rich and super-powerful insiders who quietly captured the seats of power in the name of the "true outsiders," the downtrodden masses. It is a conspiracy of the well-connected against the disorganized and disconnected. In other words, there are conspiracies, and then there are Conspiracies!” North, *Conspiracy*, 10-11.

¹³⁰Coleman, *The Illuminati in America*, 21-22.

¹³¹Sutton, *America’s Secret Establishment: An Introduction to the Order of Skull & Bones*, 80.

¹³²Estulin, *The True Story of the Bilderberg Group*, xxv.

¹³³According to their website (<https://www.chathamhouse.org/>), The Chatham House, the Royal Institute of International Affairs, is a British think tank “to help governments and societies build a sustainably secure, prosperous, and just world.”

¹³⁴The bestseller *The Creature from Jekyll Island: A Second Look at the Federal Reserve* exposes the Federal Reserve, which was created at a secret meeting on Jekyll Island and runs as an independent cartel for its own profit and the enslavement of the debtor. G. Edward Griffin, *The Creature from Jekyll Island: A Second Look at the Federal Reserve*, 5th Edition (New York, NY: American Media, 2010).

England. They were members of the Rite of Swedenborg, Gnostic, Rosicrucian, Unitarians, and Humanists. Almost three hundred years later, the most important of these families was the Rockefellers who owned and controlled the Rockefeller Standard-Oil dynasty. It was this network that was used by the '300' to ensure to usher in the Fabian Socialist new deal via Roosevelt.¹³⁵

Front Organizations

Families sponsoring the *Illuminati* Order contributed to the creation of other secretive societies and front organizations. In *America's Secret Establishment*, Antony C. Sutton traces the families, bloodlines, and backdoor business dealings of the "Establishment" in America and Europe. "Finally, in conclusion, we can trace the foundation of three secret societies, in fact, the most influential three secret societies that we know about, to universities," Sutton wrote. "The Illuminati was founded at the University of Ingolstadt. The Group was founded at All Souls College, Oxford University in England, and The Order [of Skull and Bones] was founded at Yale University in the United States. The paradox is that institutions supposedly devoted to the search for truth and freedom have given birth to institutions devoted to world enslavement."¹³⁶

One of the most potent and highly secretive organizations is the Bilderberg Group. In recent years, it has garnered media attention and controversy as some of the most influential individuals in the world, including bankers, economists, politicians, and government officials. In *The True Story of the Bilderberg Group*, award-winning investigative journalist and author Daniel Estulin claims that the Bilderberg Group has become a "shadow world government."

Members of this organization come and go, but the system itself has not changed in the decades since it was first created in 1954. You can even go further back in time to its roots in all the secret organizations. It is a self-perpetuating system, a virtual spiderweb of interlocking financial, political, economic, and industry interests. Now, what's important to understand is that organizations such as the Bilderberg Group, the Trilateral Commission, the Council on Foreign Relations, and Bohemian Grove are not the seats of power; they're the conduits of power.¹³⁷

¹³⁵ According to the website (<https://www.clubofrome.org>), The Club of Rome, founded in 1968, is a nonprofit, informal organization of intellectuals and business leaders whose goal is to discuss pressing global issues critically.

¹³⁶ David Rothkopf, *Superclass: The Global Power Elite and the World They Are Making* (New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008), xvii-xxvii.

¹³⁷ In his book, *The Most Dangerous Secret Societies*, James Jackson lists some of the goals of these globalists: "1. A One World Government with a singular currency, singular police/military force and absolute and unquestionable authority. This is the singular strand that connects all groups we have discussed to date. 2. The abolition of national identity, as tantamount to the formation of a singular world-state... 5. To cause, by means of limited wars in advanced countries, and starvation and diseases in the Third World countries, the death of three billion people by the

This power structure has many facets, front groups, and interlocking power centers, also including the Royal Institute of International Affairs,¹³⁸ World Trade Organization, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Federal Reserve,¹³⁹ Round Table, Trilateral Commission, Club of Rome,¹⁴⁰ Bohemian Grove, Yale University's "Skull and Bones," and many more.

In *Superclass*, *Foreign Policy* magazine editor David Ross reveals how six thousand to seven thousand people, the world's "superclass – the most powerful of the world's most powerful people," can exert an enormous influence over the world of politics and government. Rothkopf wrote,

A global elite has emerged over the past several decades that has vastly more power than any other group on the planet... each of the members of this super class has the ability to regularly influence the lives of millions of people in multiple countries worldwide. Each actively exercises this power, and the options amplify it through the development of relationships with others in this class... That such a group exists is indisputable.¹⁴¹

In his book, the *Illuminati in America (1776-2008)*, former MI6 intelligence agent John Coleman brings us to the present, "Today, secret instructions given to members of Skull and Bones are carried out in panelled boardrooms of the Committee of 300¹⁴² banks, insurance companies and large corporations, instructions that originated in the Council on Foreign

year 2050. 8. To cause a total collapse of the world's economies, engendering political chaos... 10. To give the fullest support to supranational institutions such as the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Bank of International Settlements, the World Court, making local institutions less effective, by gradually phasing them out or bringing them under the mantle of the UN. 11. To penetrate and subvert all governments, and work from within them to destroy the sovereign integrity of the nations represented by them..." James Jackson, *The World's Most Dangerous Secret Societies* (Make Profits Easy, 2015), 78-79.

¹³⁸Coleman, *The Illuminati in America*, 27.

¹³⁹Marrs, *Rule by Secrecy*, 242.

¹⁴⁰H. G. Wells, *The Open Conspiracy: Blue Prints for a World Revolution* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Doran, 1928), 24-25.

¹⁴¹HG Wells was a proponent of a new world order in which an international government would impose its will on other governments, all for their good. "Wells knew that those who defend the kingdom of God in history would eventually recognize the threat posed by a humanistic one-world order. It might take time, but resistance would come. Christianity therefore had to be challenged, undermined, and destroyed... The issue here is the new world order. Jesus Christ inaugurated a New World Order. His followers call it the New Covenant. No other world order will ever replace it. But there are rival orders and would-be orders. They have their spokesmen." North, *Conspiracy: A Biblical View*, xii-xiv.

¹⁴²Wells, *The Open Conspiracy*, iii, 11,37.

Relations (CFR)...”¹⁴³ The Illuminati, often identified as the “original Marxist-Leninist group,” is far more powerful than it was in the late eighteenth century. Its goals continue to be “nothing less than the abolition of all government, private property, inheritance, nationalism, the family unit, and organized religion.”¹⁴⁴

The state must have power to achieve this comprehensive goal. Herbert George Wells, a socialist and libertarian, understood what was required to attain a one-world state. The visionary's price is the surrender of national sovereignty to a new world political order.

It is absurd to dream of peace and worldwide progress without that much control... Such a forward stride in human life, the first stride in a mighty continuing advance, an advance to which no limit appears, is now materially possible. The opportunity is offered to mankind. But there is no certainty, no material necessity, that it should ever be taken. It will not be taken by mankind inadvertently. It can only be taken through such an organization of will and energy to take it as this world has never seen before.¹⁴⁵

In the 1940 book, the *New World Order*, HG Wells¹⁴⁶ advocated for the unification of the nations to end war and bring peace. In his book, he provides a “guidebook on world control and management” laying out a plan for globalists: “On the political side, it is plain that our lives must be given to the advancement of that union.”¹⁴⁷ In the new millennia, the globalist ambitions for a union of the nations have not changed. Mark Corner’s essay for the Federal Trust in Brussels wrote, “The Global Union will require the formation of appropriate level bodies, such as a World Commission, World Court of Justice and World Parliament...”¹⁴⁸

Immanuel Kant, the German philosopher, envisioned the formation of an “international state (*civitas gentium*), which would continue to grow until it embraced all the peoples of the

¹⁴³Mark Corner, “Towards a Global Sharing of Sovereignty,” *Federal Trust for Education & Research*, August 2008, accessed on April 13, 2024, http://fedtrust.co.uk/up-content/uploads/2014/12/Essay44_Corner.pdf.

¹⁴⁴Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace* (1795), 105, cited in Catherine Lu, “World Government” in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, ed. Edward N. Zalta, Winter 2016, accessed on April 13, 2024, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/worldgovernment>, italics original.

¹⁴⁵Kant, *Perpetual Peace* (1795), 113-114.

¹⁴⁶Albert Einstein, “Towards a World Government,” *Out of My Later Years* (New York, NY: Philosophical Library, 1956), 146.

¹⁴⁷George W. Blount, *Peace Through World Government* (Durham, NC: Moore Publishing Company, 1974), 30.

¹⁴⁸Blount, *Peace through World Government*, 30.

earth.”¹⁴⁹ However, he thought that a federal union of free and independent states “is still to be preferred to an amalgamation of the separate nations under a single power which has overruled the rest and created a universal monarchy.” His reason was that “... the laws progressively lose their impact as the government increases its range, and a soulless despotism, after crushing the germs of goodness, will finally lapse into anarchy.” Kant thought that a “universal despotism” would end “in the graveyard of freedom.”¹⁵⁰

In the aftermath of World War II, Albert Einstein wrote: “A world government must be created which is able to solve conflicts between nations by judicial decision. This government must be based on a clear-cut constitution which is approved by the government and nations and which gives it the sole disposition of offensive weapons.”¹⁵¹ Winston Churchill, Prime Minister of England during World War II, is recorded as saying, “The creation of an authoritative world order is the ultimate aim toward which we must strive.”¹⁵² Charles De Gaulle, who led the Free French Forces, said, “Nations must unite in a world government or perish.”¹⁵³

¹⁴⁹On the website of the Club of Rome, they summarize the classic 1972 book called “Limits of Growth: A Report for the Club of Rome’s Project on the Predicament of Mankind.” “The book contains a message of hope, as well: Man can create a society in which he can live indefinitely on earth if he imposes limits on himself and his production of material goods to achieve a state of global equilibrium with population and production in carefully selected balance.” Donella H. Meadows, Dennis L. Meadows, Jørgen Randers, William Behrens III, “The Limits of Growth,” accessed July 9, 2024, <https://www.clubofrome.org/publication/the-limits-to-growth/>.

¹⁵⁰The global governance that the globalists envision is only possible if a regional heads exist. The efforts of globalists to form ten regional governments may be pointing to the reference of the ten kingdom represented by ten “toes” (Dan. 2:41) and the “ten horns” and “the rulers” (Dan. 7:24, cf. Rev. 17:12). The Club of Rome issued a report entitled “Regionalized and Adaptive Model of the Global World System: Dividing the World into 10 Kingdoms,” HistoryHeist.com, accessed July 12, 2024, <https://historyheist.com/the-club-of-rome-issues-a-report-entitled-regionalized-and-adaptive-model-of-the-global-world-system-dividing-the-world-into-10-kingdoms/>.

¹⁵¹Henry Kissinger, “Henry Kissinger on the Assembly of a New World Order,” Wall Street Journal, August 29, 2014, accessed July 12, 2024, <http://online.wsj.com/articles/henry-kissinger-on-the-assembly-of-a-new-world-order-1409328075>. Many heads of state have used the phrase “New World Order” over decades. On September 11, 1990, President George Bush delivered a speech to Congress. “A new partnership of nations has begun. We stand today at a unique and extraordinary moment. The crisis in the Persian Gulf, as grave as it is, also offers a rare opportunity to move toward a historic period of cooperation. Out of these troubled times, our fifth objective - a new world order - can emerge: a new era, freer from the threat of terror, stronger in the pursuit of justice, and more secure in the quest for peace. An era in which the nations of the world, east and west, north and south, can prosper and live in harmony.” It is noteworthy that there have been many “Bonesmen” in the Bush Family, in more recent history, George H. Bush and George W. Bush, “List of Skull and Bones Members,” Wikipedia.org, accessed July 12, 2024, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Skull_and_Bones_members.

¹⁵²Joel Kotkin, *The New Class Conflict* (Candor, NY: Telos Press, 2014), 1-3.

¹⁵³Stefania Vitali, James B. Glattfelder, and Stefano Battiston, “The Network of Global Corporate Control,” *Plos One*, October 26, 2011, <http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.002>

In the 1970s, the Club of Rome,¹⁵⁴ a global think tank of about 100 powerful and wealthy individuals and 35 national associations, released a study that revealed the club's plan to divide the world into ten political and economic regions.¹⁵⁵ In a Wall Street Journal article about his book *World Order*, Henry Kissinger seemed to confirm his strategy, saying a “world order of states” should be “our inspiration.” “But progress toward it must be sustained through a series of intermediary stages.”¹⁵⁶

The phrase itself requires care. In conventional diplomatic usage “new world order” denotes no more than a reordering of international relations after a major rupture — Bush used it of the post-Cold War settlement, Kissinger of the fracturing of that same settlement two decades later — and its recurrence across administrations is not by itself evidence of a shared programme. What is striking is not the phrase but the substance it increasingly names: the steady transfer of decisions once made within nations to bodies that answer to no electorate. That transfer is observable whether or not anyone intends it as a plan.

In the *New Class Conflict*, Kotkin explores this ever-growing power invested in “ever fewer hands,” which threatens “to erode much of the traditional ... institutions,” Kotkin wrote. “Together they threaten to create a new social order that in some ways more closely resembles feudal structures – with its often unassailable barriers to mobility – then the chaotic emergence of industrial capitalism... In this sense, the new class order represents the apotheosis of economic centralization, as well as a growing alliance between ultra-wealthy and the instruments of state power. This is reflected, and glaringly so, in finance.”¹⁵⁷

A 2011 study by the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology found that “a very small core group of banks and giant corporations dominate the global economic system. The researchers

¹⁵⁴Catherine Austin Fits, “Financial Coup d’état,” *Solari Report*, August 8, 2011, <https://solari.com/blog/financial-coup-detat>.

¹⁵⁵Craig R. Smith, “What Does the Bible Say about Making Money?” *Whistleblower*, November 2008.

¹⁵⁶Joseph P. Farrell, *Babylon’s Banksters: The Alchemy of Deep Physics, High Finance and Ancient Religion* (Port Townsend, WA: Feral House, 2010), 20,47,159,173.

¹⁵⁷“Sinister Sites”, *Vigilant Citizen*, accessed April 16, 2024, <https://vigilantcitizen.com/sinistersites/sinister-sites-the-eu-parliament/>.

found this core group—described as an “economic super-entity”—consists of just 147 very tightly knit companies, mostly banks.”¹⁵⁸ Investment banker and former US Assistant Secretary of Housing, Catherine Austin Fitts, observed that the elite have already conducted an international political and economic takeover, a “global financial coup d’état.”¹⁵⁹

The modern credit-debit system originated in ancient Babylon. Craig R. Smith, chairman of the Swiss America Trading Corporation, an investment firm specializing, wrote in his article “What Does the Bible Say About Making Money?”:

Babylonian bankers loaned out credit (which they ‘created’ from thin air) and then charged interest or usury on top of it! Notice that credit and debit are intangibles, and can be easily manipulated by the powerful to enrich themselves at everyone else’s expense... Our whole modern banking system is patterned after the Babylonians and is based on the premise that God’s laws are not true. Therefore, bankers have the divine right to create credit as a money substitute. Sadly, most of us have given our consent to the Babylonian banking system without understanding the consequences.¹⁶⁰

Joseph P. Farrell, a theologian and author, argues that from ancient Babylon to today’s “Babylon-on-the-Hudson,” bankers have sought to usurp the money and credit-creating power of the state and “substitute a facsimile of money-as-debt.” In his book, *Babylon’s Banksters: The Alchemy of Deep Physics, High Finance and Ancient Religion*, he wrote that since ancient times, an “international money power” has sought, by a variety of means, to “usurp the money-and credit-creating power of the various states... to dominate, and to obfuscate the profound connection between that money creating power and the deep ‘alchemical physics’ that such power implies.”¹⁶¹

The reality of this elite money power structure is written in plain sight in the architecture and symbols displayed in U.S. artifacts and buildings. On the US dollar, we see the “Eye of

¹⁵⁸Thomas Horn, *Apollyon Rising 2012: The Lost Symbol Found and the Final Mystery of the Great Seal Revealed* (Crane, MO: Defender, 2009), 250-253.

¹⁵⁹McGuire and Anderson, *The Babylon Code*, 238.

¹⁶⁰The phoenix is a mystical bird that rises from the ashes. Those behind the New World Order have a motto —“Order out of Chaos”. “Order Out of Chaos: How the Elite’s Plans Were Foretold in Popular Culture,” The Vigilant Citizen, accessed April 14, 2024, <https://vigilantcitizen.com/vigilantreport/order-out-of-chaos-how-the-elites-plans-were-foretold-in-popular-culture/>.

¹⁶¹“The Occult Symbolism of the 2012 Olympics Opening and Closing Ceremonies,” Vigilant Citizen, accessed April 14, 2024, <https://vigilantcitizen.com/vigilantreport/the-occult-symbolism-of-the-2012-olympics-opening-and-closing-ceremonies/>.

Horus” or the “Eye of Providence” above the pyramid. At the bottom are the words “Novus Oreo Seclorum,” or “A New Order of the Ages.” On the right side of the dollar is an eagle, or, as some believe, a Phoenix.

Symbolism carries meaning that plain statement does not, and the wealth of certain Western globalist oligarchs is used to bring the symbolism of the ancient mystery religions into the open. For example, in 1992, a poster was made to promote the European Parliament. It is very clearly a picture of the unfinished tower of Babel with twelve inverted pentagrams over it, perhaps a reference to the twelve stars in Revelation. The caption on the poster reads, “Europe: Many Tongues, One Voice.” Years later, in 1999, the European Parliament “Louise-Weisse-Building” in Strasbourg (France) was built as a very modern-looking tower reminiscent of the unfinished tower of Babel and the attempt of man to “make a name for themselves.”¹⁶²

In Washington, DC, the U.S. Capitol was constructed as a dome, seemingly representing the womb of the goddess Isis. The Washington Monument, an obelisk, strikingly resembling the phallic symbol of Osiris...” and in New York City, “the Statue of Liberty in New York’s Harbor, which holds the Masonic ‘Torch of Enlightenment,’... originally identified as ‘the goddess Isis’ with the statue’s head formed to represent ‘the Greek Sun-god Apollo.’”¹⁶³

Astana, Kazakhstan, has been called the “Illuminati Capital.” Some describe it as a “futuristic occult capital embracing the New World Order.” In the center of the city is a sixty-meter-tall glass pyramid structure called the “Palace of Peace and Reconciliation” dedicated to unifying the world’s religions. Some of the world’s most prominent religious leaders from Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Daosism, and Shintoism have attended the Congress of World and Traditional Religions. The gatherings have been to discuss ways to bridge peaceful coexistence between the world religions.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶²“United Nations,” Accessed July 10, 2024, <https://www.un.org/en/about-us>.

¹⁶³Muller envisioned the United Nations in explicitly religious terms. He wrote that “if Christ came back to earth, his first visit would be to the United Nations to see if his dream of human oneness and brotherhood had come true,” and described UN globalism as “a kind of new religion.” Robert Muller, *New Genesis: Shaping a Global Spirituality* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1982), 19, 46-47.

¹⁶⁴Teilhard de Chardin, *The Future of Man* (New York, NY: Image Books, 2004) ,170.

The symbolism is displayed in the permanent buildings and even at the Olympic Games. At the 2012 Games in London, the occult symbolism was fully displayed during the closing ceremonies. Performers built a pyramid at the center of the stage, and they bowed down to it. Also, a bird looking like the Phoenix emerges¹⁶⁵ from what looks like a globe lit up with many lights. With the singers singing “Rule the World,” the globalist envisions their rule to emerge “from its ashes - as the New World Order.”¹⁶⁶

The United Nations (UN) world headquarters is located in New York City. Founded in 1945 as a diplomatic and political international organization, its purpose is “to maintain international peace and security, develop friendly relations among nations, achieve international cooperation, and serve as a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations.”¹⁶⁷ Occultic propagators of the “New Spirituality” and “New Agers” source the ambition for a united-world government through the United Nations.

The most influential New Age leader at the United Nations was Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955), a French Jesuit Catholic priest and evolutionary philosopher. The former Assistant Secretary General Dr. Robert Muller said that Chardin had always viewed the United Nations as the progressive institutional embodiment of his philosophy with a vision of a one-

¹⁶⁵Muller demonstrated his globalist ambitions in his out-of-print books, “The Birth of a Global Civilization” and “New Genesis: Shaping a Global Spirituality”.

¹⁶⁶Robert Muller, *My Testament to the UN* (U.S.A.: World Happiness and Cooperation, 1995), 172.

¹⁶⁷The Lucis Trust is on the UN Economic and Social Council roster. According to the Lucis Trust website, “The Baileys’ reasons for choosing the original name are not known to us, but we can only surmise that they, like the great teacher H. P. Blavatsky, for whom they had enormous respect, sought to elicit a deeper understanding of the sacrifice made by Lucifer... Alice and Foster Bailey were serious students and teachers of Theosophy, a spiritual tradition which views Lucifer as one of the solar angels, those advanced beings who Theosophy says descended (thus ‘the fall’) from Venus to our planet eons ago to bring the principle of mind to what was then animal-man. From the theosophical perspective, the descent of these solar angels was not a fall into sin or disgrace but rather an act of great sacrifice, as suggested in the name ‘Lucifer,’ which means light-bearer.” “The Esoteric Meaning of Lucifer,” Lucis Trust, accessed April 14, 2024. https://www.lucistrust.org/arcane_school/talks_and_articles/the_esoteric_meaning_lucifer.

world government.¹⁶⁸ In his book, “The Future of Man,” he wrote, “Although the form is not yet discernible, mankind tomorrow will awaken to a ‘pan-organized’ world.”¹⁶⁹

Robert Muller (1923-2010), who served with the United Nations for 40 years, was one of the most influential insiders, setting up over ten different UN agencies, especially creating the World Core Curriculum.¹⁷⁰ In his tribute to the 50th anniversary of the United Nations (1995), “My Testament to the UN”, he wrote,

The United Nations is something that the Creator, the author of all good, at every moment cherishes. No human force will ever be able to destroy the United Nations, for the United Nations is not a mere building or a mere idea; it is not a man-made creation. The United Nations is the vision-light of the Absolute Supreme, which is slowly, steadily and unerringly illuminating the ignorance, the night of our human life. The divine success and supreme progress of the United Nations is bound to become a reality. At his choice hour, the Absolute Supreme will ring His own victory bell here on Earth through the loving and serving heart of the United Nations.¹⁷¹

The underlying philosophy Muller worked from was based on the teaching laid down in the books of Alice A. Bailey and her husband, Foster Bailey, a 33rd Degree Freemason. Within the United Nations, they started a group called the “World Goodwill” and “Lucis Trust” once called “Lucifer Publishing.”¹⁷² Using “white magic,” disciples are taught esoteric meditation practices through “The Arcane Schools,” rooted in the mystical teaching of Theosophy.¹⁷³ Theosophy, founded in the late 1800s by a Satanist Luciferian occultist Helena Blavatsky, has been the primary influence in modern Theosophy.”¹⁷⁴

¹⁶⁸On their website, they write about “a plan”. “Humanity is never left without spiritual guidance or direction under the Plan... there exists an inner spiritual governance of the world led by enlightened beings.. they are known under such different names as the spiritual Hierarchy (Masters of the Wisdom), the society of Illumined Minds... or Christ and His Church”. “About World Goodwill,” Lucis Trust, accessed July 10, 2024, https://www.lucistrust.org/world_goodwill/about_wg.

¹⁶⁹Jim Duke, “The United Nations Luciferian Connection,” Jim Duke Perspective, May 7, 2017, accessed April 16, 2024, <https://jimdukeperspective.com/united-nations-luciferian-connection/>.

¹⁷⁰Jim Duke, “U.N. New Age Summit 2020,” Jim Duke Perspective, October 10, 2020, accessed April 15, 2024, <https://jimdukeperspective.com/u-n-new-age-summit-2020-podcast/>.

¹⁷¹David Sprangler, *Reflections on Christ* (Scotland, Findhorn Publications, 1981), 43-44.

¹⁷²Alice A. Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy* (New York: Lucis Trust), 404.

¹⁷³Robert Muller, *New Genesis: Shaping a Global Spirituality* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1982), xiii.

¹⁷⁴Robert Muller, *Genesis Shaping a Global Spirituality* (World Happiness and Cooperation, 1982), 126.

One of the founders of the New Age Movement and one of Bailey's disciples was David Spangler. He was once the Director of the now-defunct *Planetary Initiative*.... He was quoted as saying, "No one will enter the New World Order unless he or she will pledge to worship Lucifer... No one will enter the New Age unless he will take a Luciferian initiation."¹⁷⁵ He writes words of utter blasphemy in his book *Reflections on Christ*,

Lucifer prepares man in all ways for the experience of Christhood and the Christ prepares man for the experience of God. Jesus said, as the Christ, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life.' No man goes to the Father but through me.' This is true. The avenue out of microscopic limitation into macroscopic wholeness, universal consciousness and attunement is through the Christ. But the light that reveals to us the presence of Christ, the light that reveals to us the path to Christ comes from Lucifer. He is the light giver. He is aptly of a greater consciousness. He is present when that dawn is realized. He stands no longer as the tester or the tempter but as the great initiator, the one who hands the soul over to the Christ and from the Christ on into even greater realms.¹⁷⁶

The World Goodwill organization has said openly, "The New World Religion must be based upon those truths which have stood the test of the ages... they are steadily taking shape in human thinking... and for them, the United Nations fights."¹⁷⁷ Muller's dream was "to get a tremendous alliance between all the major religions and the UN."¹⁷⁸ Muller was a false prophet in proclaiming that "the world's major religions, in the end, all want the same thing, even though they were born in different places and circumstances on this planet. What the world needs today is a convergence of the different religions in the search for and definition of the cosmic or divine laws which ought to regulate our behaviour on this planet. Worldwide spiritual ecumenism, expressed in new forms of religious cooperation and institutions, would probably be closest to the heart of the resurrected Christ."¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁵World Goodwill Commentary, "The United Nations: Entering the Global Age," *World Goodwill Commentary*, October 1981, no.15, 5.

¹⁷⁶"Agenda 21," Sustainable Development Goals: Knowledge Platform, accessed July 10, 2024, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/outcomedocuments/agenda21>.

¹⁷⁷"Agenda 2030," United Nations: UN 2023 Water Conference, accessed July 10, 2024, <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>.

¹⁷⁸The World Economic Forum (WEF) is an international non-governmental organization founded in 1971 by Klaus Schwab. The foundation's mission is to improve the "state of the world by engaging business, political, academic, and other leaders of society to shape global, regional, and industry agendas." "The World Economic Forum," World Economic Forum, accessed July 10, 2024, <https://www.weforum.org/>.

The United Nations is “steadily building the foundation for a New World Order” through this New World Religion.¹⁸⁰ The UN has set goals and values describing the world they are working toward. There was Agenda 21,¹⁸¹ and now, it is Agenda 2030.¹⁸² Another player that overlays with the same globalist message is the World Economic Forum (WEF).¹⁸³ The 1000-member multinational companies drive the Forum’s “Great Reset”¹⁸⁴ programs in shaping the world’s governments and civil society organizations. This “utopia” is infamously popularized on social media as “you’ll own nothing, and you’ll be happy.”¹⁸⁵

In 1992, Klaus Schwab and the World Economic Forum began a “Global Leaders of Tomorrow” program. In 2004, it was rebranded as the Forum for Young Global Leaders. The overall goal is to train future leaders of emerging global societies. “The Forum of Young Global Leaders accelerates the impact of a diverse community of responsible leaders across borders and

¹⁷⁹Writer and speaker Michael Rectenwald investigates “The Great Reset” in a six-part series. “Under the Great Reset governance model, states and favored corporations form “public-private partnerships” in control of governance. The configuration yields a corporate-state hybrid largely unaccountable to the constituents of national governments... The Great Reset, is not merely a conspiracy theory; it is an open, avowed, and planned project, and it is well underway. But because capitalism with Chinese characteristics, or corporate-socialist statism, lacks free markets and depends on the absence of free will and individual liberty, it is, ironically, ‘unsustainable,’ and doomed to fail. The question is just how much suffering and distortion will be endured until it does.” Michael Rectenwald, “The Great Reset, Part VI: Plans of a Technocratic Elite,” Mises Institute, November 2021, accessed April 20, 2024, https://mises.org/mises-wire/great-reset-part-vi-plans-technocratic-elite#footnote1_dsIqE5tO6OeK.

¹⁸⁰The phrase originates in a speculative essay by Danish MP Ida Auken, “Welcome to 2030. I own nothing, have no privacy, and life has never been better,” published on the World Economic Forum’s contributor platform in 2016 and subsequently featured in the Forum’s video “8 Predictions for the World in 2030.” The WEF has since stated that it is not an organizational policy goal. See also “You’ll own nothing. And you’ll be happy – World Economic Forum,” *Global Agenda*, December 18, 2021, accessed April 12, 2024, <https://www.globalagendamagazine.com/youll-own-nothing-and-youll-be-happy>.

¹⁸¹“Young Global Leaders,” accessed July 20, 2024, <https://www.younggloballeaders.org/>.

¹⁸²Nakai Substack, “*WEF/Young Global Leaders: The greatest conspiracies are hidden in plain sight*,” Nakadai Substack, <https://nakadai.substack.com/p/wefyoung-global-leaders>.

¹⁸³The sustainable energy and resources model is based on the idea that energy and resources are scarce. “Sustainable Development Goals,” United Nations: Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Sustainable Development, accessed July 10, 2024, <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>.

¹⁸⁴Thomas Paine, *The Political Writings of Thomas Paine: To which is Prefixed a Brief Sketch of the Author's Life* (Granville, NJ: George H. Evans, 1835), 75.

¹⁸⁵“The Bible is opposed to centralism, whether it be political (United Nations) or religious (World Council of Churches). The Tower of Babel and God’s scattering of those involved in its design were judged because of the potential corruption inherent in religious and political centralism... The symbolic purpose of the tower was an attempt by fallen man to unify all creation under a centralized governmental and religious system... Corruption and tyranny would be centralized, along with power and authority. That was the danger.” Gary deMar, *God and Government: A Biblical and Historical Study: Volume 1* (Powder Springs: GA, American Vision, 1990), 33.

sectors to shape a more inclusive and sustainable future.”¹⁸⁶ Many of the most influential business and political leaders are alums of the Young Global Leaders program.¹⁸⁷

The United Nation's seventeen Sustainable Development Goals¹⁸⁸ are the tenets they plan to build a sustainable world. They all appear to be for the good of humanity. However, discernment and wisdom are needed to understand what is behind the veil of philanthropy. Thomas Paine, the so-called *Father of the American Revolution*, wrote, “The greatest tyrannies are always perpetrated in the name of the noblest causes.”¹⁸⁹ The “noble causes” of the United Nations and World Economic Forum are using the same “playbook” as all globalists.

The World Economic Forum speaks of the “poly-crises” to “build back better” and continue to centralize power and control.¹⁹⁰ Whether the world’s problems are due to a health crisis, a climate crisis¹⁹¹, an economic crisis,¹⁹² or a geo-political crisis (war),¹⁹³ there is always a

¹⁸⁶In 2022, at the United Nations COP27 Climate Change Summit, religious leaders “gathered to repent of their alleged ‘climate’ sins and usher in what they described as a new, universal ‘Ten Commandments’.” Alex Newman, “Amid UN Climate Summit, Religious Leaders Unveil New Ten Commandments,” *The New American*, November 15, 2022, accessed April 14, 2024, <https://thenewamerican.com/world-news/un/climate-conference/amid-un-climate-summit-religious-leaders-unveil-new-ten-commandments/>.

¹⁸⁷The economic crisis is often based on the food security. It has been said that “If you want to control the people, control the food.” The rise of global agribusiness has encouraged rapid urbanization. “That history shows that United Nations (UN) treaties to ‘protect nature’—such as.. Agenda 21... are a direct (albeit stealthy) attack on private property and the sovereignty of nation-states.” Elze van Hamelen, “Dutch Farmers and Fishermen: The People Who Feed Us,” *Solari Report by Catherine Austin Fitts*, 2nd Quarter 2023 Wrap Up, accessed April 14, 2024, <https://peoplewhofeedus.solari.com/dutch-farmers-and-fishermen-the-people-who-feed-us/>.

¹⁸⁸In 1962, the Institute for Defense Analyses commissioned a report called *The World Effectively Controlled by the United Nations*, written by Lincoln Bloomfield. In it, Bloomfield says that the goal is to bring the world of nation-states to a new one-world governance. He wrote that the most effective way to achieve one-world government is to use war, the threat of war or crisis to change people’s attitudes sufficiently for a revolution in world political affairs. Lincoln Bloomfield, “A Preliminary Survey of One Form of a Stable Military Environment,” *Freedom First Society*, February 24, 1961, accessed April 14, 2024, <https://www.freedomfirstsociety.org/reference/a-world-effectively-controlled-by-the-united-nations/>.

¹⁸⁹Many political leaders have used the term “manufactured crisis” or “never letting a serious crisis go to waste,” coined by community organizer Saul Alinsky. His book, *Rules for Radicals*, was dedicated to Lucifer as the “first radical known to man who rebelled against the establishment and did it so effectively that he at least won his kingdom.” Alinsky believed in “orderly revolution” that requires the “consent of organized groups and the power brokers of society,” Dinesh D’Souza, *America: Imagine a World Without Her* (Washington, DC: Regnery, 2014), 4, 76–87.

¹⁹⁰Adam LeBor, *Tower of Basel: The Shadowy History of the Secret Bank that Runs the World* (New York, NY: Public Affairs, 2013) 25-26, 31.

¹⁹¹“What Is Technocracy?,” *The Technocrat*, vol. 3, No. 4, 1937, accessed April 20, 2024, <https://archive.org/details/TheTechnocrat-September1937>.

solution they have already prepared.¹⁹⁴ With each crisis, they seek to consolidate power in the hands of a select few. The power largely rests in a handful of the wealthiest families, the largest fund asset management firms like Blackrock and Vanguard together with the central banks, particularly the Bank of International Settlements (BIS), the central bank for central bankers.

The Bank of International Settlements “was a creature of its time, of new multilateral institutions run by apolitical technocrats. The League of Nations, which was the forerunner of the United Nations, would defuse the world’s political crises, while the BIS would ensure financial stability... The BIS has made itself a central pillar of the global financial system... As the world’s economy lurches from crisis to crisis, financial institutions are scrutinized as never before... Yet somehow, apart from brief mentions on the financial pages, the BIS has largely managed to avoid critical scrutiny.”¹⁹⁵

These men in closed chambers seek to usher in a “New World Order” (NWO) at any cost. Christian author and speaker Patrick Wood believes that the dark horse of the NWO is not Communism, Socialism or Fascism; it is Technocracy. “Technocracy is the science of social engineering, the scientific operation of the entire social mechanism to produce and distribute goods and services to the entire population...”¹⁹⁶

Wood contends that the only logical outcome of Technocracy is scientific dictatorship, as foretold in the dystopian books by Aldous Huxley (“Brave New World”) and George Orwell (“1984”). The tentacles of Technocracy are found in all the Globalist agencies and companies.

¹⁹²Patrick Wood, *Technocracy Rising: The Trojan Horse of Global Transformation* (Mesa, AZ: Coherent Publishing, 2015), xii-xiii, 7-8, 207.

¹⁹³North, *Conspiracy: A Biblical View*, 18.

¹⁹⁴Vernon Stauffer, *The Bavarian Illuminati in America: The New England Conspiracy Scare, 1798* (Mineola, NY: Dover, 2006). On Weishaupt’s academic position and his recruitment among students and faculty, see also the standard biographical literature.

¹⁹⁵Interestingly, Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* and Orwell’s *1984* did not prophesy the same about the future. Neil Postman, in his classic book, *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business*, writes, “Orwell warns that we will be overcome by an externally imposed oppression.” However, in Huxley’s vision, no Big Brother is required to deprive people of their autonomy, maturity, and history. As he saw it, people will come to love their oppression, to adore the technologies that undo their capacities to think. What Orwell feared were those who would ban books. What Huxley feared was that there would be no reason to ban a book, for no one wanted to read one. Orwell feared those who would deprive us of information. Huxley feared those who would give us so much that we would be reduced to passivity and egoism. Orwell feared that the truth would be concealed from us. Huxley feared the truth would be drowned in a sea of irrelevance. Orwell feared we would become a captive culture. Huxley feared we would become a trivial culture...” Neil Postman, *Amusing ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the age of Show Business*, 20th Anniversary Edition (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2005), 20.

¹⁹⁶John Murray, *Principles of Conduct* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1957), 134.

Technocracy is transforming economics, government, religion and law. It rules by regulation, not by the Rule of Law, policies are dreamed up by unelected and unaccountable technocrats buried in government agencies, and regional governance structures are replacing sovereign entities... the power grab of Technocracy is seen in the castrating of the Legislative Branch by the Executive Branch, replacing laws and lawmakers with Reflexive Law and regulators, and establishing regional Councils of Governments in every state to usurp sovereignty... Technocracy will be shown to be thoroughly anti-Christian and completely intolerant of Biblical thought. This has always been the hallmark sign seen in idolatrous religions and practices! ... If we choose to ignore and do nothing about Technocracy and its perpetrators, it is most certain that it will sweep over the entire world like a giant tsunami, pressing all of mankind into a scientific dictatorship that is devoid of any human capacity for things like compassion, mercy, justice, freedom and liberty.¹⁹⁷

While there are men behind the scenes pulling the strings in global affairs, the LORD Christ is on his throne ruling all men and putting all things under his feet (Eph. 1:22, 1 Cor. 15:25; Heb. 2:8; 10:13). Men will plot and plan against the LORD's Anointed (Ps. 2) but it is the LORD's purpose that will stand (Prov. 16:9). The building of the City of Man will fail. Gary North writes, In the long run, conspiracies against God and His law must fail... This is the testimony of

the whole Bible, from Genesis to Revelation. The Bible's account of the Tower of Babel records one unsuccessful effort of the conspiracy, and it ended in the defeat of the conspirators. The cross of Calvary is the ultimate example: Satanically successful on the surface, but it led within three days to the definitive defeat in principle of Satan and his

host. Christ's resurrection definitively smashed in principle the Satanic conspiracy.

History

since Calvary is simply the outworking of that definitive victory.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁷In July 2022, the UN Human Rights Council once again reaffirmed its commitment to combating discrimination and violence on the grounds of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) and reminded all states of their obligations towards LGBT and gender-diverse people. "UN Renews crucial human rights expert mandate on sexual orientation and gender identity," International Service for Human Rights, accessed April 23, 2024, <https://ishr.ch/latest-updates/un-renews-crucial-human-rights-expert-mandate-on-sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity/>.

¹⁹⁸A men's choir from San Francisco unashamedly declares their agenda in a song: "You think we're sinful, you fight against our right, you say we all lead lives you can't respect. But you're just frightened; you think that we'll corrupt your kids if our agenda goes unchecked. Funny, just this once, you're correct. We'll convert your children, happens bit by bit... We'll convert your children — Yes, we will! Reaching one and all... We're coming for them... We're coming for your children. The gay agenda is here." "Gay men's choir performs song with lyrics 'We're coming for your children,'" Standing for Freedom Center Staff, July 8, 2021, accessed April 23, 2024, <https://www.standingforfreedom.com/2021/07/gay-mens-choir-performs-song-with-the-lyrics-were-coming-for-your-children/>.

Ultimately, man's attempts at building the city of man centralized with a world government will never succeed. The history of Babel repeats itself, and satan's conspiracies always come to naught. There is only one world government which will succeed when "the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our LORD and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever" (Rev. 11:15).

Global Challenges and Opportunities in Education

Globalist Indoctrination

The history of globalist ambitions can be seen in the intentional indoctrination of the masses. Adam Weishaupt, the founder of the Illuminati, understood that education was the gateway to influence the world. A professor of canon law at the University of Ingolstadt, he built his order largely by recruiting from among students and academics, and framed its purpose as the reform of society through the re-education of its members.¹⁹⁹

The Devil is a master educator. He seeks to capture the people's minds through his lyrics of lies. His strategy is to deceive the ignorant with his deceptive devices (2 Cor. 2:11). He will maximally use every medium to propagate his cunning untruths to the unsuspecting. He will do everything to brainwash people and lull them from any discernment so that they passively imbibe his lies.²⁰⁰ Whether through the classroom, books, or screens, the world is increasingly under the spell of Satan's subtle education of the masses.

Thinking Christians will face this challenge by educating themselves about the truth—because we are people of truth. As John Murray writes in his chapter “The Sanctity of Truth” in his book on ethics *Principles of Conduct*,

...we must not overlook more basic questions pertinent to the sanctity of truth. This sanctity requires that we not only avoid and hate all deliberate lying, but also, that thought and conviction be in accordance with truth, that not only must we refrain from uttering or signifying what we believe to be false, but that belief itself be framed in accordance with truth.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁹Further biographical information about Alex Newman can be found at the “Foundation for American Christian Education,” <https://face.net/alex-newman/>, “The New American,” <https://thenewamerican.com/author/alex-newman/>, and “Liberty Sentinel Media, Inc” <https://libertysentinel.org/alex/>.

²⁰⁰“International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education: An Evidence-Informed Approach,” United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2009, accessed July 10, 2024, <https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/ITGSE.pdf>.

²⁰¹Most of these goals carry the appearance of nobility. The particular goal that is full of convoluted and disjointed secular-humanistic terminology is Target 4.7: “By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and culture’s contribution to sustainable development.” “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all,” *United Nations Department of Economic Social Affairs: Sustainable Development*, accessed April 24, 2024, https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal4#targets_and_indicators. Global Citizenship.

When the church fails to speak what is true (Eph. 4:15), fails to be the aroma of Christ (2 Cor 2:15), fails to expose the deeds of darkness (Eph. 5:11), and fails to be the salt and light of the world (Matt. 5:13-16), we give way to the world and its agenda for global indoctrination. The warnings heralded from pulpits since the second wave of feminism and the sexual revolution in the 1960s have come true. In every way, the sexual revolution has challenged the respective roles of husband and wife (1 Cor. 3:3; Eph 5:22-33) made in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:26-27) with equal dignity and honour (Psalm 8:5).

God himself has warned that people who have ceased to honour him or give thanks to him have become “futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened” (Rom. 1:21). They claim to be wise but become fools (Rom. 1:22), they exchange the truth about God for a lie (Rom. 1:25), and they are filled with all forms of fleshly passions (Rom. 1:26-27, 29-30). Three times it is written (Rom. 1:24, 26, 28) that God gives them up “to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done” (Rom. 1:28). Such reprobate minds now dominate many global institutions, especially those in Departments of Education. They seek to shape the tender minds and hearts of young children. The targeting of children is seen in the sexual education curriculum²⁰² and even overtly in songs that are sung.²⁰³

Alex Newman,²⁰⁴ a Christian international journalist, educator and author, said in a podcast with *Geopolitics and Empire* hosted by Hrvoje Morić,

²⁰²Alex Newman, “*Education, Theosophy, War, & Crisis to Bring About World Federation*,” interview by Hrvoje Morić, *Geopolitics and Empire*, March 30, 2024, podcast, accessed April 23, 2024, <https://geopoliticsandempire.com/2024/03/30/newman-edu-theosophy-crisis-world-federation/>. In his book, *Indoctrinating Our Children to Death: Government Schools’ War on Faith, Family and Freedom—And How to Stop it*, Newman traces the history behind government education and the goals of the architects to turn Americans away from God and fundamentally transform the nation away from its Christian foundation. Alex Newman, *Indoctrinating Our Children to Death: Government Schools’ War on Faith, Family and Freedom—And How to Stop it* (Pinecrest, FL: Liberty Sentinel Press, 2024).

²⁰³A former Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations, Muller's vision for the World Core Curriculum was to create a global education framework that promotes global peace, sustainability, and the holistic development of individuals. While the World Core Curriculum has been influential in some educational settings and has been adopted by certain schools and institutions worldwide, it is not universally implemented or endorsed by all educational systems. Its adoption varies by country, region, and educational philosophy. “Biography,” *Robert Muller*, accessed July 13, 2024, <http://www.robertmuller.org/rm/R1/Biography.html>.

²⁰⁴According to their website (<https://www.unesco.org/en>) the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), founded in 1945, is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) to promote world peace and security through international cooperation in education, arts, sciences, and culture.

We are watching right now a centralization of education, unlike anything the world has ever seen, maybe clear back to the Tower of Babel... We've got the United Nations now openly calling for centralized global education standards.. They have put out international technical guidance on sexuality education²⁰⁵... We've got really an effort to indoctrinate every child on this planet into submission to an all-powerful one-world dictatorship... behind the scenes, not really getting much attention, is this effort to bring all the children of the world into this one world globalist system... If you read the 2030 Agenda Sustainable Development Goals, number four deals entirely with this issue²⁰⁶... it says all learners everywhere need to learn world citizenship... they need to understand sustainable development... They are going to promote the UN's understanding of human rights, which is radically different than the Christian understanding of human rights. God gives us rights and the government exists to protect those rights. In the UN vision, the UN and government gives us rights and they can take them away at any time... There is not one pygmy in Central Africa that they don't intend to bring into this global system... right now we are watching that architecture being built. It will take longer in some places than others, but their plan is to make sure that not one single child slips through the cracks and they make it crystal clear in their documents...²⁰⁷

Newman traces back the globalist ambitions to Robert Muller, the supposed “father of global education,” who designed the World Core Curriculum²⁰⁸ in collaboration with the United

²⁰⁵ Author and speaker James Lindsay speaks of the United Nations as a religious cult organization primarily envisioned by Robert Muller, who hoped his 2000 Ideas for a Better World in 1999 would guide the UN's global policy and global spirituality into the third millennium. “Occult Theosophy of the United Nations,” *New Discourses*, accessed April 24, 2024, <https://newdiscourses.com/2024/04/occult-theosophy-united-nations/>.

²⁰⁶ “Global citizenship is the umbrella term for social, political, environmental, and economic actions of globally minded individuals and communities on a worldwide scale... Promoting global citizenship in sustainable development will allow individuals to embrace their social responsibility to act for the benefit of all societies, not just their own. The concept of global citizenship is embedded in the Sustainable Development Goals. However, SDG 4: Insuring Inclusive and Quality Education for All and Promote Life Long Learning, which includes global citizenship as one of its targets.” “Global Citizenship,” *United Nations: Academic Impact*, accessed April 24, 2024, <https://www.un.org/en/academic-impact/global-citizenship>. The concept of global citizenship is good in recognizing all to be our neighbours in the human race; however, upon closer examination, the language reveals a very different meaning that changes the traditional definition of words to often mean the opposite. For instance, the United Nations does not have the authority to “demand equity” for so-called rights which are not given in Scripture (e.g. the “right” to murder a pre-born child or the “right” to identify with a different biological sex). “Demand Equity,” *Global Citizen*, accessed April 22, 2024, <https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/categories/demand-equity/>.

²⁰⁷ David Cloud, “The United Nations and the New Age” (Port Huron, MI: Way of Life Literature, 2021), accessed April 22, 2024, <https://www.wayoflife.org/database/unandnewage.html>.

²⁰⁸ Charlotte Thomson Iserbyt, *The Deliberate Dumbing Down of America: A Chronological Paper Trail* (Ravenna, OH: Conscience Press, 1999), ix. According to Iserbyt, this deliberate “dumbing down” of America's educational standards and curriculum is part of a larger agenda to control and manipulate the population. She believes that traditional education has been replaced with methods and content that discourage critical thinking, promote conformity, and serve the interests of a powerful elite. She outlines the influence of globalist organizations and policies on American education; the shift away from classical education and the liberal arts towards workforce training; the use of techniques like Skinnerian behaviorist methods to condition students, the role of educational reforms, standardized testing, and federal involvement in education; and the impact of educational psychology and the focus on self-esteem over academic achievement. Charlotte Thomson Iserbyt, *The Deliberate Dumbing Down of America: A Chronological Paper Trail* (Ravenna, OH: Conscience Press, 1999).

Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)²⁰⁹ to try and realize his dream of “world peace” through education based on the Theosophy of Alice Bailey.²¹⁰ He believed education should transcend cultural, religious, and national boundaries to foster unity among humanity and a sense of global citizenship.²¹¹

The first Director of UNESCO, Julian Huxley, a British evolutionary biologist, eugenicist, and internationalist, articulated the general philosophy of UNESCO, that it should be,

...scientific world humanism, global in extent and evolutionary in background.. in its education program it can stress the ultimate need for world political unity and familiarize all peoples with the implications of the transfer of full sovereignty from separate nations to a world organization. Political unification in some sort of world government will be required... Tasks for the media division of UNESCO (will be) to promote the growth of a common outlook shared by all nations and cultures...to help the emergence of a single world culture... Even though it is quite true that any radical eugenic policy will be for many years politically and psychologically impossible, it will be important for UNESCO to see that the eugenic problem is examined with the greatest care, and that the public mind is informed of the issues at stake so that much that now is unthinkable, may at least become thinkable.²¹²

In her book, "The Deliberate Dumbing Down of America," Charlotte Thomson Iserbyt contends that there has been an intentional effort by influential figures and organizations to undermine the quality of education in America. She writes in her introduction,

Much of this book contains quotes from government documents detailing the real purposes of American education: to use the schools to change America from a free, individual nation to a socialist, global “state,” just one of many socialist states which will be subservient to the United Nations Charter, not the United States Constitution; to brainwash our children, starting at birth, to reject individualism in favor of collectivism... to reject truth and absolutes in favor of tolerance, situational ethics and consensus; to reject American values in favour of internationalist values (globalism)... coordinated through United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization. Only when all children in public, private and home schools are robotized—and believe as one—will World Government be acceptable to citizens and able to be implemented without firing a

²⁰⁹In his book, *School World Order*, John Klyczek builds off of the research of Iserbyt and Sutton to explain how this system of corporatized education is being upgraded to a technocratic system through virtual technologies that program students for a globally planned economy. Klyczek describes the ulterior agenda behind the ed-tech movement: data-mining students for research and development into artificial intelligence and transhumanist biotechnologies for establishing an authoritarian, post-human society. John Klyczek, *The Technocratic Globalization of Corporatized Education* (Walterville, OR: Trine Day, 2019), ix.

²¹⁰Sutton, *America's Secret Establishment: An Introduction to the Order of Skull & Bones*, 13.

²¹¹Charles Darwin's (1809-1882) theory of evolution by natural selection has become a dogma in science classrooms around the globe.

²¹²Kevin Swanson, *Apostate: The Men Who Destroyed the Christian West*, reprint ed. (Elizabeth, CO: Generations with Vision, 2018), 162-163.

shot. The attractive-sounding “choice” proposals will enable the globalist elite to achieve their goal: the robotization (brainwashing) of all Americans in order to gain their acceptance of lifelong education and workforce training—part of the world management system to achieve a new global feudalism.²¹³

Iserbyt, whose father and grandfather were members of the Order of Skull and Bones, sent Professor Sutton the membership book, enabling him to research the infamous secret society at Yale University.²¹⁴ Antony Sutton explains how the Bonesmen took control of the U.S. education system using the Dewey system.

In education, the Dewey system was initiated and promoted by Skull and Bones members. John Dewey was an ardent statist and a believer in the Hegelian idea that the child exists to be trained to serve the State. This requires suppression of individualist tendencies and a careful spoon-feeding of approved knowledge. This “dumbing down” of American education is not easily apparent unless you have studied in both foreign and domestic U.S. universities - then the contrast becomes crystal clear.²¹⁵

John Dewey is known as the father of modern secular education. Dewey admittedly was influenced by men like Jean-Jacques Rousseau (for his education theory), Immanuel Kant, and Descartes (for his epistemological framework). Charles Darwin²¹⁶ was the greatest in John Dewey’s estimation, as John Dewey’s *Humanist Manifesto* declared that “man alone is responsible for achieving the world of his dreams.”²¹⁷

Dewey’s philosophy of pragmatism led him to his educational theory, which was training an individual to fit into a social entity of the state. He agrees with Marx’s replacement of home education with social conditioning. In his own *Pedagogic Creed*, he writes that “the school is primarily a social institution” and that education “is the regulation of the process of coming to

²¹³John Dewey, *My Pedagogic Creed* (Chicago, IL: A. Flanagan Company, 1910), 8,16-17.

²¹⁴James Lindsay, *The Marxification of Education: Paulo Freire’s Critical Marxism and the Theft of Education* (Orlando, FL: New Discourses, 2022), ix.

²¹⁵James Lindsay, “The Queer Gnostic Cult,” *New Discourses*, accessed April 24, 2024, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0K3ZkrCyleI>.

²¹⁶“It’s a social deconstruction agenda. They are using little children... to accomplish this.” “Mommy, Mommy, I Don’t Want to Be a Boy!” Little Girl’s Reaction to Radical Sex Ed Program Says it All,” *Christian Broadcast Network*, accessed July 10, 2024, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xNOBlyvaPKo>.

²¹⁷James Lindsay, “Queer Theory Is the Doctrine of a Sex-Based Cult,” *New Discourses*, accessed July 10, 2024, <https://newdiscourses.com/2024/05/queer-theory-doctrine-sex-based-cult-2/>.

share in the social consciousness.” In his humanistic worldview, he believed that “the teacher always is the prophet of the true God and ushers in the true kingdom of God.”²¹⁸

Author James Lindsay describes the “theft of education” in his book *The Marxification of Education: Paulo Freire’s Critical Marxism and the Theft of Education*. He says that “this theft of education has a purpose; it enables a counterfeit to replace it. The mechanism and description of this gigantic educational ripoff can be summarized in a single sentence: Our kids go to Paulo Freire’s schools.” Brazilian educator and philosopher Paulo Freire (1921-1997) adopted Karl Marx’s theology in full where “man’s true nature lies in gaining the power to transform the world (into a socialist utopia through relentless critique of what *is*), and his ability to participate in this process of political activism and transformation is the most fundamental aspect of his being and his key human right.”²¹⁹

The cracked foundation of Freire’s Critical theory, laid down in all our institutions, has many forms. The most destructive to humanity is the Critical Queer Theory. In an episode of his *New Discourses*, Lindsay elaborates on Queer Theory as the doctrine of an esoteric religious cult with structures of Gnosticism (religious movement emphasizing secret knowledge of spiritual truths) and Hermeticism (esoteric tradition focusing on spiritual and philosophical knowledge). He describes how this Queer Gnostic cult is consuming our society, especially in education.²²⁰

Lindsay explains that Queer Theory, as a “Gnostic Cult,” introduces and normalizes radical sexual and gender ideologies to children. He points to the “Drag Queen Story Hour”²²¹

²¹⁸The “woke” ideology which originally meant being “awake” to discrimination. The term has now expanded to encompass a broader awareness of social injustices, especially related to ethnicity, sex, and other identity-based issues. For a history of the Woke movement, see the article, “Where ‘woke’ came from and why marketers should think twice before jumping on the social activism bandwagon,” *The Conversation*, accessed April 24, 2024, <https://theconversation.com/where-woke-came-from-and-why-marketers-should-think-twice-before-jumping-on-the-social-activism-bandwagon-122713>.

²¹⁹Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 3rd ed. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), 263.

²²⁰Benedict of Nursia (480-547) was an Italian monk, writer, theologian, and the sixth-century father of Western monasticism who responded to Roman civilization by founding monastic communities. Rod Dreher, *The Benedict Option: A Strategy for Christians in a Post-Christian Nation* (New York, NY: Penguin Random House, 2017), 2.

²²¹The Rule of Benedict is a set of guidelines for monastic life written by Benedict of Nursia in the 6th century. It provides a comprehensive and balanced framework for community living, prayer, work, and personal conduct for monks. “The Rule of Benedict,” Archive.osb.org, accessed July 10, 2024, <https://www.archive.osb.org/rb/text/toc.html>.

with the inclusion of sexually explicit materials in school libraries as examples of how this ideology seeks to indoctrinate young minds. He sees this as a form of initiation into the cult, aiming to distort and destroy the traditional understandings of sex, gender, and identity.²²²

The globalist infiltrators have captured the education system with their neo-Marxist “Woke” movement.²²³ The venom of the serpent has seeped into all the veins of our education system and has spread as gangrene around the globe. The deconstruction of any vestiges of Christian virtue continues. When the foundations of the Christian ethic are destroyed, “what can the righteous do?” (Psalm 11:3).

Global Education

The church can be what we are intended to be—the true salt, light, and aroma of Christ. We must face head-on the anti-Christian indoctrination of the globalists with a commitment to a Christ-centered education worked out in families and churches. The opportunity to instruct the next generation in a Christian worldview is before us.

As Christians, we may live in a day likened to the days before the fall of Rome in the middle of the first millennia. Alasdair MacIntyre concludes his book *After Virtue* by citing the Christians' unwitting strategy during the Roman Empire's slow demise. “What they set themselves to achieve instead—often not recognizing fully what they were doing—was the construction of new forms of community within which the moral life could be sustained so that morality and civility might survive the coming ages of barbarism and darkness.”²²⁴

While some see the only response to a decaying moral society is to isolate from the world (“come out of her” (i.e. Babylon) in Rev. 18:4), others like Rod Dreher believe we should “exile

²²²Rod Dreher, *The Benedict Option: A Strategy for Christians in a Post-Christian Nation* (New York, NY: Penguin Random House, 2017), 18.

²²³Extensive reviews of the homeschooling options are written by Cathy Duffy on her website “Cathy Duffy Reviews,” accessed July 20, 2024, <https://cathyduffyreviews.com/>.

²²⁴James Tooley discusses the success of low-cost private schools in developing countries in his book *The Beautiful Tree: A Personal Journey Into How the World's Poorest People Are Educating Themselves*. James Tooley, *The Beautiful Tree: A Personal Journey Into How the World's Poorest People Are Educating Themselves* (Washington, DC: Cato Institute, 2009).

in place.” In his book, *The Benedict²²⁵ Option: A Strategy for Christians in a Post-Christian Nation*, Dreher “draws on the authority of Scripture and the ancient church's wisdom to embrace... a vibrant counterculture. Recognizing the toxins of modern secularism and the fragmentation caused by relativism, ‘Benedict Option Christians’ look to Scripture and Benedict’s Rule²²⁶ for ways to cultivate practices and communities.”²²⁷

Leaders of Church communities must recognize their shepherding responsibility to lead parents in fulfilling their obligation to Christian education for their children (Deut. 6:9). By necessity, Christian Education curricula²²⁸ continue to increase as the government schools increasingly become more statist and hostile to the Christian faith. At the same time, Private Christian schools are multiplying internationally.²²⁹ Some Christian homeschooling groups and schools are even operating under government surveillance as Christian parents recognize their responsibility to provide a Christian Education for their children.²³⁰

²²⁵It is vital to translate books from the vast array of high quality classical education books into the world's major languages. Apologia Science (<https://www.apologia.com/>) textbooks are especially valuable to replace the evolutionary science textbooks in secular education.. Christian Education Fund for the Future (CEFF, <https://ceff.us/>) is a ministry helping to facilitate translation and contextualization of curriculum for Asia. Their mission is to “advance God’s Kingdom by developing Christ-centered, classical curriculum and teacher training resources for K-12 education in China.”

²²⁶The Trivium begins at a young age with the Grammar or Parrot stage, in which the student learns and commits to memorizing basic facts about the world. The Logic stage (middle school) is when the student learns to use reason to analyze facts, see how things relate, and discern meaning from them. The final Rhetoric phase focuses on abstract thinking and how to express themselves in clear written and oral communication. “The Trivium,” *Veritas Press*, accessed April 25, 2024, <https://veritaspress.com/the-trivium>.

²²⁷Dorothy L. Sayers, *The Lost Tools of Learning: Symposium on Education* (Waterford, Ireland: CrossReach Publications, 2017), 34.

²²⁸Douglas Wilson, *Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991), 76.

²²⁹In the book *Covid-19, Psychological Operations, and the War for Technocracy*, David Hughes examines psychological warfare and social control during the Covid-19 pandemic to advance a technocratic agenda toward a dystopian future dominated by a small elite. David A. Hughes, “Covid-19, Psychological Operations, and the War for Technocracy, Vol. 1 (Palgrave Macmillan Cham, 2024), accessed July 10, 2024, <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-031-41850-1>

²³⁰Christians should all be aware of the drama put on display in the media, primarily directed by elites in the Council on Foreign Relations, Bilderberg Meetings, and The Trilateral Commission. “The American Empire and its Media,” Swiss Policy Research, accessed July 10, 2024, <https://swprs.org/the-american-empire-and-its-media/#foobox-2/0/cfr-media-network-hdv-spr.png?ssl=1>. Those who are aware of the propaganda will focus more on the issues than the theatrics in the endless news cycles which keep people distracted from the underlying battle of worldviews and spiritual warfare over our nations.

One of the best models for Christian Education is the classical method. Classical Christian Education presents Western texts (Great Books) and uses the medieval pedagogical structure of the Trivium.²³¹ Dorothy Sayers describes this model in her 1947 essay “The Lost Tools of Learning,” a founding document for the modern classical education movement. In this rigorous form of Christian Education, Sayer writes, “The doors of the storehouse of knowledge should now be thrown open for them to browse about as they will.”²³²

Classical Education was endorsed again and regained traction through Douglas Wilson’s 1991 book *Recovering the Lost Art of Learning*. In his book, Wilson highlights timeless educational principles to cultivate a love for learning, critical thinking, and effective communication. He also urges the Christian educator to “not only have a Christian understanding of the material, he must have a Biblical understanding of the student. If he does not, the result will be a hybrid Christian methodology employed to achieve a humanistic goal.”²³³

Every regime, educated and governed by secular humanism, has understood that to maintain power, you must control not only the schools but also every means of communication. In his book, *The Hidden Enemy: Aggressive Secularism, Radical Islam, and the Fight for Our Future*, Dr. Michael Youssef delves into the challenges posed by globalism, aggressive secularism, and radical Islam, arguing that these forces are working to undermine Christian values and freedoms. He explores how propaganda is used as a tool by globalists to manipulate public opinion and shape societal norms.²³⁴ Youssef advises distinguishing what propaganda is from the truth. With propaganda in the news stories you see and hear, he suggests, “Don’t

²³¹Michael Youssef, *The Hidden Enemy: Aggressive Secularism, Radical Islam, and the Fight for our Future* (Carol Stream, Illinois, Tyndale House Publishers, 2018), 186.

²³²“Nouthetic Counseling,” from nouthesia (*noutheteo*) in Romans 15:14, teaches that the Scriptures make one competent to counsel another. “What is Nouthetic Counseling?” *Mid-America: Institute for Nouthetic Studies*, accessed July 10, 2024, <https://nouthetic.org/about/what-is-nouthetic-counseling/>.

²³³Jay Adams, *Back to the Blackboard: Design for a Biblical Christian School* (Woodruff, SC: Timeless Texts, 1998), 6.

²³⁴Leon Trotsky, *Literature and Revolution*, trans. Rose Strunsky (Chicago: Hay-market, 2005), 207. In his 1883 book, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Friedrich Nietzsche paints the portrait of a character, Zarathustra, who sees humanity as the *Übermensch*, the “Overman” or “Superman”, advancing with each generation. Zarathustra links the *Übermensch* to the body and that the soul is simply an aspect of the body. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (London: Penguin Books, 2003), 61.

automatically believe news reports, but fact-check (even the “fact-checkers”) those reports and seek out sources that are reliable²³⁵ ... avoid consuming news only from outlets that merely confirm your biases...”²³⁶

The late Jay Adams (1929 - 2020), former pastor, author and founder of the biblical “Nouthetic”²³⁷ counselling movement, could see the war in education looming on the horizon at the turn of the 21st Century. In his book, *Back to the Blackboard: Design for a Biblical Christian School*, he says

that the conflict provides us with an unparalleled opportunity; that is how we must view it. We must neither shy away from the war that lies ahead, nor crawl into holes along with certain well-meaning, but misguided survivalists. Rather, we must be ready to meet the opponent in his own corner, carrying the fight to him. The greatest opportunity that I know for spreading the gospel to the length and breadth of this land, and carrying the good news throughout the world in an unprecedented way during the next few years lies just ahead. If the church can defeat the humanist, giant, at the zenith of his powers, crippling him with decisive blows, until there is no fight left in him, even greater resources will be available for such positive purposes, as evangelism, and many wider opportunities for service will open. Seizing the opportunity, however, will require a concerted effort, and probably a very bruising battle. Humanism, having so fully triumphed, isn't likely to disappear on its own; it will have to be driven away by a force better trained and more powerful than itself.²³⁸

In spite of the challenges created by globalist humanistic indoctrination, especially through academia and social media, Christians have a prime opportunity and responsibility to take up the sword of the Spirit (Eph. 6:17) to pierce through the lies and rightly divide the word of truth (2 Tim. 2:15). According to the promises in God’s Word, we can be optimistic for the increase and spread of the knowledge of God and his truth when we are strategically and intentionally seeking to love God with all our heart, soul, and *mind*. (Matt. 22:37) “For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD

as the waters cover the sea.”
Habbakuk 2:14

²³⁵McGuire and Anderson, *Babylon Code*, 254.

²³⁶Yuval Noah Harari, *Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow* (New York: Penguin Random House, 2017), 23

²³⁷Christian author David Herbert comments in his book *Becoming God*. “With the assistance of modern technology, post-humanists are challenging humanity’s greatest enemy-death. No longer should any individual’s life be relegated to just memories.” David Herbert, *Becoming God: Transhumanism and the Quest for Cybernetic Immortality* (Joshua Press, 2014), 128.

²³⁸Harari, *Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow*, 25-26

Global Challenges and Opportunities in Technology

Globalist Bio-Technology

In 1924, Leon Trotsky, the Russian revolutionary, wrote: “Man will make it his purpose to master his feelings, to raise his instincts to the heights of consciousness, to make them transparent, to extend the wires of his will into hidden recesses, and therefore, to raise himself to a new plane, to create a higher, social, biological type, or, if you please, superman.”²³⁹

History is replete with human efforts to achieve “Superman” status and even immortality to reach “godhood.” It all started with the original Luciferian deception when Satan promised Adam and Eve, “You will be like God” (Gen. 3:5). Since ancient Babylon; occult societies have passed down the core belief that men can become like gods. In our day, there is a growing faith that through advancements in genetic engineering and biotechnology, homo sapiens can attain divine status.²⁴⁰ This ideology presents a significant challenge to the truth of God’s Word that we are made in the image of God with immortal souls yet subject to mortal bodies since the fall into sin (Eccl. 12:7; Rom. 3:23).

Yuval Noah Harari, a historian, philosopher and author of popular science, writes in his book *Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow*, that physical death is a mere “technical problem” that has a “technical solution” through modern medical science. In his worldview, he

²³⁹Yuval Noah Harari, *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* (New York, NY: Penguin Random House, 2016), 399-409. In a video compilation of lectures and interviews, Harari said, “We humans should get used to the idea that we are no longer mysterious souls. We are now hackable animals.... The whole idea that humans have this soul or spirit.. they have free will... that is over... Data might enable human elites to do something more radical than just build digital dictatorships. By hacking organisms elites gain the power to reengineer the future of life itself. Because once you can hack something you can usually also engineer it. And if indeed we succeed in hacking and engineering life this will be not just the greatest revolution in the history of humanity, this will be the greatest revolution in biology since the very beginning of life four billion years ago. For four billion years nothing fundamental changed in the basics rules of the game of life. All of life for four billion years... was subject to the laws of natural selection and to the laws of organic biochemistry. But this is now about to change science is replacing evolution by natural selection with evolution by intelligent design. Not the intelligent design of some god above the clouds but our intelligent design and the intelligent design of our clouds... these are the new driving forces of evolution. And at the same time science may enable life after being confined for four billion years to the limited realm of organic compounds Science may enable life to breakout into the inorganic realm. So after four billion years of organic life shaped by natural selection we will enter into the era of inorganic life shaped by intelligent design.” Yuval Noah Harari, video interviews, accessed April 25, 2024, <https://www.bitchute.com/video/>

²⁴⁰Harari, *Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow*, 73.

believes that since we will manage to bring “famine, plagues, and war under control,”²⁴¹ we can now focus on the greatest problem—death.²⁴² He condescendingly looks down at death as though it were a disease and not the consequence of our first parent’s rebelling against God. “Humans don’t die... because God decreed it, or because mortality is an essential part of some great cosmic plan. Humans always die due to some technical glitch... Every technical problem has a technical solution. We don’t need to wait for the Second Coming in order to overcome death.”²⁴³

In his unwavering optimism in modern-day science, Harari believes²⁴⁴ that “... humankind is poised to replace natural selection with intelligent design and to extend life from the organic realm into the inorganic”²⁴⁵ through the biological engineering, cyborg engineering, and the engineering of inorganic beings. It is the vision of merging man and machine and transforming man into a divine being. “Having raised humanity above the beastly level of

²⁴¹Harari thinks this will happen gradually, starting with our voluntary ceding of control of our lives to the smartphone and, over time, changing ourselves by re-engineering drugs until we are no longer recognizably human. Harari, *Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow*, 21, 55.

²⁴²According to their WEF website, “The Fourth Industrial Revolution represents a fundamental change in the way we live, work and relate to one another. It is a new chapter in human development, enabled by extraordinary technology advances commensurate with those of the first, second and third industrial revolutions. These advances are merging the physical, digital and biological worlds in ways that create both huge promise and potential peril. The speed, breadth and depth of this revolution is forcing us to rethink how countries develop, how organisations create value and even what it means to be human. The Fourth Industrial Revolution is about more than just technology- driven change; it is an opportunity to help everyone, including leaders, policy-makers and people from all income groups and nations, to harness converging technologies in order to create an inclusive, human-centred future. The real opportunity is to look beyond technology, and find ways to give the greatest number of people the ability to positively impact their families, organisations and communities.” “Fourth Industrial Revolution,” *World Economic Forum*, accessed April 25, 2024, <https://www.weforum.org/focus/fourth-industrial-revolution/>.

²⁴³Stephen Hawking’s book (published posthumously), *Brief Answers to the Big Questions*, speaks of his concerns with AGI: “Artificial intelligence developed so far has proved very useful, I fear the consequences of creating something that can match or surpass humans... humans, who are limited by slow biological evolution, couldn’t compete and would be superseded. And in the future, it could develop a will of its own, a will that is in conflict with ours... The real risk with AI isn’t malice, but competence. A super-intelligent AI will be extremely good at accomplishing his goals, and if those goals aren’t aligned with ours, we’re in trouble.” Stephen Hawking, *Brief Answers to the Big Questions* (London: Murray, 2018), 186, 188.

²⁴⁴Klaus Schwab, video interviews, accessed April 25, 2024, <https://www.bitchute.com/video/Av8KSv3n4zJs/>.

²⁴⁵Michael Rectenwald, “The Great Reset: Part VI: Plans of a Technocratic Elite,” *Mises Institute*, December 2, 2024, accessed April 20, 2024, https://mises.org/mises-wire/great-reset-part-vi-plans-technocratic-elite#footnote1_dsIqE5tO6OeK.

survival struggles, we will now aim to upgrade humans into gods and turn Homo sapiens into Homo Deus.”²⁴⁶

The “Fourth Industrial Revolution”²⁴⁷ (4-IR) is often used by the World Economic Forum (WEF) to speak of rapid changes that are ahead for humanity. Klaus Schwab said in an interview, “One of the features of the Fourth Industrial Revolution is that it does not change what we are doing, but it changes us... it changes you. If you take genetic editing as an example, it’s you who are changed. Of course, this has a big impact on your identity... The New Industrial Revolution Av8KSv3n4zJs/. offers us many opportunities that raises many questions on the ethical²⁴⁸ and legal implications and we have to be prepared for it.”²⁴⁹

Schwab, with the WEF, promotes a particular vision for the 4-IR but the developments he announces are not original to him. The prophets of future technological innovations have forecasted these and more revolutionary developments long before Schwab heralded them.²⁵⁰ For example, futurist Ray Kurzweil has predicted that in 2045, information technology will become so advanced that the most dramatic moment in modern history—the *Singularity*—will occur. This Singularity can be defined as, “The merging of our biological thinking and existence with our technology, resulting in a world that is still human but transcends our biological roots.”²⁵¹

²⁴⁶Ray Kurzweil and Terry Grossman, *Transcend: Nine Steps to Living Well Forever* (Emmaus, PA: Rodale Books, 2010), xvii.

²⁴⁷Ray Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near: When Humans Transcend Biology* (New York: Penguin, 2005), 9.

²⁴⁸Kurzweil does not want to face the reality of death as he ages. He takes over 150 tablets daily. His blood is cleansed every few months – “all in an effort to reprogram the body’s biochemistry.” Michael Sheerer, “The Immortals: A Review of Transcendent Man: A Film About the Life and Ideas of Ray Kurzweil,” *The Work of Michael Sheerer* (2009), accessed April 29, 2024, <http://www.michaelsheerer.com/tag/ray-kurzweil/>.

²⁴⁹David Herbert, *Becoming God: Transhumanism and the Quest for Cybernetic Immortality* (Kitchener, ON: Joshua Press, 2014), 85.

²⁵⁰Ray Kurzweil, *The Age of Spiritual Machines: When Computers Exceed Human Intelligence* (New York: Viking, 1999), 44.

²⁵¹If he is overtaken by death, Kurzweil has set in motion an alternative plan – cryonics. He and others, like Martine Rothblatt, have already arranged to have their body cryopreserved with the Alcor Life Extension Foundation. To be buried in the ground or to be cremated is unthinkable. Even though we do not presently have the means of reviving bodies cryonically preserved. Technology is looked to as the panacea to gain eternal life and become “like God.” (Genesis 3:4). “The Alcor Life Extension Program,” accessed April 29, 2024, [https:// www.alcor.org/](https://www.alcor.org/).

Ray Kurzweil is a prolific inventor, Google's Director of engineering, and author of the book *Singularity is Near*. In his book, he unpacks his belief that within the foreseeable future, possibly as few as 30 years, AI robots will overtake humans in their intelligence and capabilities: "The non-biological portion of our intelligence will predominate." "The Singularity will allow us to transcend these locations of our biological bodies in brains... We will gain power over our fates. Our mortality will be in our own hands. We can live as long as we want (subtly different statement from saying we will live forever)... By the end of this century, the non-biological portion of our intelligence will be trillions of trillions of times more powerful than unaided human intelligence."²⁵²

Kurzweil's quest for *Singularity* is also spiritually motivated.²⁵³ "The origin of this matchless, intricate universe was a total mystery to him, but he was absolutely certain that God was not its Craftsman."²⁵⁴ Dr. Kurzweil wrote: "Let us praise evolution. It has created a plethora of designs of indescribable beauty, complexity and elegance, not to mention effectiveness."²⁵⁵ However, according to Kurzweil, all these attributes of God (power, creativity, intelligence, memory, and love) are located within the human neocortex. He says these divine qualities have evolved within the human species as humanity has evolved. Thus, "evolution is a spiritual process; entities become more god-like,²⁵⁶ never reaching that ideal but moving in that direction exponentially. So, we will explode into these very qualities in which God is described."²⁵⁷

²⁵²"Ray Kurzweil: Human Enhancement and Singularity," *Religion & Ethics News Weekly* (July 15, 2011) Kurzweil interviewed by James Bedsoe, "Ray Kurzweil on How We Will Become God-like," 33rd Square (January 2, 2014), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6XY38r9x5k4>.

²⁵³John Lennox explains in his book *2084*. "We are now firmly in the realm of AGI (Artificial General Intelligence) or, simply, general AI, that typically denotes attempts to construct a machine that can simulate equal or greater intelligence than a human being - in short, a superintelligence." John C. Lennox, *2084: Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Humanity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Reflective, 2020), 46.

²⁵⁴Herbert, *Becoming God: Transhumanism and the Quest for Cybernetic Immortality*, 116-117.

²⁵⁵Kevin Warwick, *March of the Machines: Why the New Race of Robots Will Rule the World* (London, UK: Century, 1997), xi, 257.

²⁵⁶Jennifer Bilek, "Martine Rothblatt: A Founding Father of the Transgender Empire," July 6, 2020, Material Humanism, accessed April 29, 2024, <https://uncommongroundmedia.com/martine-rothblatt-a-founding-father-of-the-transgender-empire/>.

²⁵⁷The gnostic techno-religion has an icon, the world-famous robot, Sophia (wisdom), which derives her name from the goddess Aeon whose fall from grace is described in the Gnostic Gospels. Joe Allen, *Dark Aeon*:

Kurzweil also articulates the vision for Artificial General Intelligence (AGI),²⁵⁸ which was foreseen by statistician I.J. Good in 1965. He wrote in his famous article, *Speculations Concerning the First Ultraintelligent Machine*,

Let an ultra intelligent machine be defined as a machine that can far surpass all the intellectual activities of any man however clever. Since the design of machines is one of these intellectual activities, an ultraintelligent machine could design even better machines; there would then unquestionably be an “intelligence explosion,” and the intelligence of man would be left far behind. Thus the first ultra intelligent machine is the last invention that man need ever make.

According to Kevin Warwick, a professor of cybernetics, the most momentous event for AGI in the world's history will be – the *Singularity* – which *he* believes will occur around 2050. For Warwick, this historic shaping event will be translated into the cyborgation of man. At that moment, humanity will be able to shed its body burdened with limitations and become a cyborg.

In his book, *Becoming God*, Professor David Herbert comments on the spiritual nature of Warwick's quest: “As an agnostic, he sees that God, even if he existed, could not be of any assistance. More tragic is the inevitability of death – something which is even beyond God's control. Rather, it is a dreadful consequence that natural selection has directed against all living things, resulting in the total obliteration of all consciousness and existence. Without the merging of humans with machines, humanity as a species is doomed to oblivion...”²⁵⁹

Warwick has maintained that “just as we humans split from our chimpanzee cousins, so cyborgs (cybernetic organisms) will split from humans... We have the technology, we have the ability, I believe, to create machines that will not only be as intelligent as humans, but will go on to be far more intelligent... There will be no way to stop the march of the machines... Machines can be born, over and over, and retain their memories from one life onto the next... in this way, machines could be immortal.”²⁶⁰

Transhumanism and the War Against Humanity (War Room Books, 2023).

²⁵⁸Martine Rothblatt, *From Transgender to Transhuman: A Manifesto On the Freedom of Form* (U.S.A., Martine Rothblatt, 2011), 35.

²⁵⁹Natasha Vita More, “The Transhumanist Manifesto,” Humanity Plus, Revised 1998 v.2, 2008 v.3, 2020 v.4, Original 1983, accessed May 15, 2024, <https://www.humanityplus.org/the-transhumanist-manifesto>.

²⁶⁰Nick Bostrom, *Superintelligence: Paths, Dangers, Strategies* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2014), vii. How do these transhumanists envision immortality? They describe a million nanobots (miniaturized computers),

Martine Rothblatt, who has been called a *Founding Father of the Transgender Empire*, is also a pioneer in the transhumanism movement.²⁶¹ He wrote a book called *From Transgender to Transhuman*, which has deep undertones of a gnostic cult.²⁶² He writes, “Once we realize that our essential sweetness is in our minds, and that each of us has unique life-path potential not fully tethered to a body-determined route, then it is as sensible to be transhuman as it is to be transgendered. The being is mightier than the gene.”²⁶³

The “Transhumanist Manifesto,” written in 1994, reads like a religious creed:

We are transhuman. Transhumans integrate the eminent progression of creativity and sensibility merged by discovery. Transhumans want to elevate and extend life. Transhumans seek to expand life. As our tools and ideas continue to evolve, so too shall we. We are designing the technologies to enhance our senses and increase our understanding. The transhumanist ecology and freedom exercises self-awareness and self-responsibility. Let us choose to be transhumanist not only in our bodies, but also in our values. Toward diversity, multiplicity. Toward non-partisan ideology (transpolitics, transpartisan, transmodernity). Toward transhuman rights of morphological freedom, existence safety, personhood preservation. Toward a more human transhumanity.”²⁶⁴

smaller than a red blood cell, infused into a person’s blood, having the capacity “to perform various services, such as removing toxins, sweeping out debris, correcting DNA errors, repairing and restoring cell membranes... and a myriad of other tasks.” Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near: When Humans Transcend Biology*, 256-257.

²⁶¹Cornelis Van Dam agrees. In his book *God and Government*, he writes about the nature of the conflict in our Western culture. “... humanism is a virtual deification of man. Instead of the Creator being worshipped and obeyed, it is man, the creature, who sets the norms and expects unconditional obedience... humanism also looks forward to a utopian future, although humanism bases its hope for a perfect comity of peace and justice solely on man and not on the redeeming work of God in Jesus Christ. A related indicator of the religious nature of humanism is its optimistic faith in human progress. Contrary to the historical evidence, there is always the hope that things will get better through the efforts of man and that utopia can be reached. Such faith is needed for this since history has shown the futility of human striving for perfection. God’s work of salvation as detailed in his Word is needed.” Cornelis Van Dam, *God and Government: Biblical Principles for Today* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2011), 22.

²⁶²Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951; repr., London, UK: Penguin, 2017), 387, 437. MIT Physicist Max Tegmark imagines how world domination might occur. In his book *Life 3.0*, Tegmark imagines a highly secretive project which develops a powerful AI system called Prometheus (from the Greek mythology god of fire). In his vision, Tegmark sees Prometheus eventually gaining absolute control of the planet. “For the first time ever, our planet was run by a single power, amplified by an intelligence so fast that it could potentially enable life to flourish for billions of years on earth and throughout the cosmos... The idea is that, in this way, the world would become the “perfect” totalitarian state. Not only can Prometheus record all electronic communications, it can understand all communications and be fully aware of what people around the world are doing and even thinking... With the excuse of fighting crime and terrorism and rescuing people, suffering, medical emergencies, everybody could be required to wear a ‘security bracelet’ come by the functionality of an Apple Watch with continuous uploading position, health status and conversations overheard. Unauthorized attempts to remove or disable. It would cause it to inject a little toxin into the forearm...” Max Tegmark, *Life 3.0: Being Human in the Age of Artificial Intelligence* (New York, NY: Knopf, 2017), 21, 136.

²⁶³John E. Lennox, *2084: Intelligence and the Future of Humanity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Reflective, 2020), 13.

²⁶⁴Lennox, *2084: Intelligence and the Future of Humanity*, 105.

Author of *TransEvolution, the Common Age of Human Deconstruction*, Daniel Esterlyn, writes, “What’s coming over the next five or ten years will forever revolutionize the very definition of humanity. I can tell you without a doubt that the generations of children who are being born right now are the last truly 100 percent human generation of human beings on the planet. The children will be transhuman children – post-human man, machines, cyborgs, and being, so we’re not totally human as a result of synthetic biology. It’s absolutely inevitable – the whole idea emerging man and machines.”²⁶⁵

One can foresee how technology could be used by totalitarian governments to control the masses who are dependent upon it. Hannah Arendt wrote one of the first books on totalitarianism, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. She believed that totalitarianism was rooted in a utopian vision based upon the rejection of God and the deification of man.²⁶⁶ She wrote, “In trying to create a perverse heaven on earth, totalitarian systems acknowledge no limit on either of their contact or their aspirations. They take Dostoyevsky’s chilling warning that ‘if God does not exist, everything is permitted’ and institutionalize it in the Party.”²⁶⁷

In George Orwell’s book *1984*, he anticipated the emergence of a totalitarian surveillance state and “thought control.” This dystopian view of the future is increasingly connected with artificial intelligence (AI) developments. There is a great deal of interest in where this is all headed. Indeed, digital assistance and medical innovation can lead to a better quality of life. Still,

²⁶⁵Harari also revealed in his interview the purpose of worldwide manufactured crises, such as the spread of the coronavirus in 2019. “In this time of crisis, you have to follow science. It has been said that you should never allow a good crisis to go to waste because the crisis is an opportunity to also do good reforms that, in normal times, people will never agree to, but in a crisis, we have no choice.... People could look back in a hundred years and identify the coronavirus epidemic as the moment when a new regime of surveillance took over, especially surveillance under the skin, which I think is maybe the most important development of the twenty-first century is this ability to hack human beings to go under the skin collect biometric data analyze it understand people better than they understand themselves. This, I believe, is maybe the most important event in the twenty-first century.” Yuval Noah Harari, video interviews, accessed April 25, 2024, <https://www.bitchute.com/video/Av8KSv3n4zJs/>. Harari is referring to the Internet of Bodies (IoB) technology. Bernard Marr, “What Is The Internet Of Bodies? And How Is It Changing Our World,” *Forbes.com*, December 6, 2019, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/bernardmarr/2019/12/06/what-is-the-internet-of-bodies-and-how-is-it-changing-our-world/>.

²⁶⁶Shoshana Zuboff, *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism* (London, UK: Profile Books, 2019), 34.

²⁶⁷Tom Parker, “Klaus Schwab: Those who master new technologies ‘in some way, will be the master of the world,’” *Reclaim Net*, February 14, 2023, accessed May 13, 2024, <https://reclaimthenet.org/schwab-new-technologies-master-of-the-world>.

there is the reality of job losses and the genuine possibility of an ‘Orwellian’ surveillance society.²⁶⁸

John Lennox, the Oxford Mathematics Professor and Apologist, warns in his book *2084: Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Humanity*,

This development, if ever it occurs, would have huge implications, so that it is important to think about it, even if the contours are unclear. One good reason for this is the fact that some aspects of what AGI might do... are already spreading throughout the world today. Surveillance at the levels intended brings with it immense power... there is a great deal of literature to address the question of eventual world domination in the hands of those who develop AGI, or even in the hands of an AGI system itself. However, we should not let futuristic scenarios blind us to the fact that AGI has already gone far enough to make it realizable within a relatively short time. We do not have to wait for full AGI for that to happen.²⁶⁹

Yuval Harari does not hide what is possible if totalitarian governments use AI to gain total control. He said in an interview that “past many tyrants and governments wanted to” control the world. Still, no one understood biology enough or had enough data, “neither the Gestapo nor the KGB could do it, but soon, at least some cooperations and governments will be able to systematically hack all the people. ...Today we have the technology to hack human beings on a massive scale. Everything is being digitized. Everything is being monitored.”²⁷⁰

In her book *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism* by Harvard Professor Shoshana Zuboff, subtitled *The Fight for a Human Future: the New Frontier of Power*. Her thesis is that we are

²⁶⁸Heinrich Grave, “Biometric vs the wallet: The future of authentication,” Biometric Update, accessed May 13, 2024, <https://www.biometricupdate.com/202310/biometrics-vs-the-wallet-the-future-of-authentication>. The China Communist Party is building the most extensive police run DNA database to establish social control of its citizens. Emily Dirks and Dr James Leibold, “Genomic Surveillance,” Australia Strategic Policy Institute, June 17, 2020, <https://www.aspi.org.au/report/genomic-surveillance>. In Xinjiang Province, the Uyghur population is subject to the most intense surveillance the world has ever seen and has been described as a digital fortress. “How Mass Surveillance Works in Xinjiang,” *Human Rights Watch*, April 2019, accessed May 15, 2024, <https://xjdp.aspi.org.au/explainers/how-mass-surveillance-works-in-xinjiang>. This kind of digital dictatorship has been called an “Algorithm Ghetto.” “Parallel Systems: The Algorithm Ghetto,” *Geopolitics & Empire*, November 15, 2023, accessed May 14, 2024, <https://geopoliticsandempire.com/2022/11/15/hrvoje-moric-parallel-systems-algorithm-ghetto/>.

²⁶⁹Lisa Navarrette, “Has Technology Increased Persecution?,” International Christian Concern, Accessed July 16, 2024, https://www.persecution.org/2024/07/11/has-technology-increased-persecution/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Has%20Technology%20Increased%20Persecution%3F&utm_campaign=2024-07-16%20ICC%20Global%20Digest.

²⁷⁰In his Farewell Address to the United States on January 17, 1961, Dwight Eisenhower warned the citizens to be vigilant in preserving the nation’s democratic principles and freedoms in the face of advancing technological progress. “In holding scientific research and discovery in respect, as we should, we must also be alert to the equal and opposite danger that public policy could itself become the captive of a scientific-technological elite.”

moving into a new kind of economic order that collects the big data that we generate and exploits it as raw material to make money, as well as increasing the risk of the kind of surveillance society that threatens the stability and freedoms that are currently enjoyed. She writes, “Personal information is increasingly used to enforce standards of behavior. Information processing is developing, therefore, into an essential element of long-term strategies of manipulation intended to mold and adjust individual conduct.”²⁷¹

There are many more ways advancing technology will radically change our lives. At the World Government Summit, an event hosted by a non-profit organization “dedicated to the shaping of the future of governments,” in the keynote address, Klaus Schwab said that we are moving into the “exponential phases” of artificial intelligence, the metaverse, neospace, synthetic biology, which will completely change our lives over the next ten years. He added, “And whoever masters those technologies, in some way, will be the master of the world.”²⁷²

Under the rule of technocratic governments monitoring their citizens through bio-surveillance facial recognition and bio-metrics²⁷³, movement for mission workers will become increasingly challenging. Technology also facilitates the planning and coordination of attacks against Christian communities by extremist groups.²⁷⁴ All citizens should be alert to the subtle control that technology can give to governments to monitor their private lives.²⁷⁵ Presently, Digital Identification (ID) is being tested in various countries with the plan to integrate with a programmable monetary system ultimately controlled by a global Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) and with “no person left behind.”²⁷⁶

²⁷¹Patrick Wood explains the emerging digital financial system intersecting with digital ID and what it would mean for citizens of the world. Patrick Wood, “Digital ID Blockchain Explained,” *Political Incorrectness*, accessed May 13, 2024, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I2UWcKBmxDM> <https://dial.global/>.

²⁷²Lennox, 2084: *Intelligence and the Future of Humanity*, 108.

²⁷³Jeremy Kahn, “What Google’s ‘woke’ AI imagine controversy says about AI—and about Google,” *Fortune*, accessed May 14, 2024, <https://fortune.com/2024/02/27/google-gemini-woke-ai-images-alphabet-sundar-pichai/>.

²⁷⁴Lennox, 2084: *Intelligence and the Future of Humanity*, 175-176.

²⁷⁵Endorsers include the late Stephen Hawking and Elon Musk. For a full list see “Asilomar AI Principle,” *Future of Life Institute*, August 11, 2017, accessed May 13, 2024, <https://futureoflife.org/ai-principles>

²⁷⁶Lennox, 2084: *Intelligence and the Future of Humanity*, 78.

Global connectivity

As with all technological advances, they have the potential to be used for good or evil. There are many valuable positive developments and some very alarming negative aspects that demand close ethical attention. Christians are the best equipped with God's Word to answer the moral questions that are increasingly being asked about actual and hypothetical developments in these technological fields. We can ask these questions and provide biblical answers to each one. On a most basic level, the question is asked, "What does it mean to be human?" It means that we are created in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:26-27). Surgeries which mutilate the body or seek to merge man and machine are an affront to the worth and dignity of our God-given human attributes.

As John Lennox asks, the most significant question is, "What worldview will a super-intelligence or an AGI have? The worldview must be embedded by the human constructors and software programmers. What might that worldview be, and on what values will it be based?"²⁷⁷ For example, Google's AI tool, Gemini, has already revealed its "woke" bias to the world.²⁷⁸

In the *opening years of the 20th Century*, the Darwinian secular humanist worldview generated an unbridled optimism in human potential. A "Brave New World" seemed just around the corner. Lennox writes in his book *2084*,

...the imagined Marxist Utopia that was to arise out of the workings of the inexorable laws of history turned into a nightmare of human carnage and cost the lives of millions. Not only Marxism of course. Extreme nationalism of different kinds has produced similar results. History has taught the hard lesson: there is no pathway to paradise that bypasses the problem of human sin... the word Utopia means "no place" and is, ironically, highly appropriate for this context. Every attempt so far to realize Utopia has failed, because the visionaries who tried to create such a state, did not take into account the fact that human nature is seriously flawed as a result of the entry of sin, and alienation into the world at the fall. They did not see, as we pointed out earlier, that humans need saving much more than they need upgrading. The Utopian missionaries had no message of salvation, no connection with a divine power capable of changing what human beings are like. As a result, the 20th century was the bloodiest in history.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁷Harari, *Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow*, 330.

²⁷⁸Marica Micallef, "WEF advisor Yuval Noah Harari explains how drugs and video games have been used to control world populations," Simon Mercieca Free Press, accessed May 13, 2024, <https://simonmercieca.com/2022/11/06/wef-advisor-yuval-noah-harari-explains-how-drugs-and-video-games-have-been-used-to-control-world-populations/>.

²⁷⁹Lennox, *2084: Intelligence and the Future of Humanity*, 128.

However, some minds have not become utterly darkened in God's common grace. Some secular scientists can foresee the dangers of technology, especially with AI. In 2017, over one thousand AI research workers addressed their ethical concerns regarding AI in formulating the *Asilomar AI Principles* developed at the conference in Asilomar, California.²⁸⁰ John Lennox explains that “the main thrust to these principles is to ensure that research in AI is ethically structured in such a way that the resultant systems are safe, secure, and designed in alignment with commonly held human values so that they are beneficial to humanity and lead to the flourishing of as many people as possible. Attempts to use advanced AI to develop super-intelligence, should be constrained by widely shared ethical convictions, so that they serve the good of all human beings, rather than the narrow interest of a state or corporation.”²⁸¹

One of the ethical concerns is the loss of jobs as new technologies replace them. Yuval Harari writes, “In the twenty-first century, we might witness the creation of a massive new unworking class... who contribute nothing to the prosperity, power and glory of society. This ‘useless class’ will not be merely unemployed — it will be unemployable.”²⁸² In another interview, Harari wonders what the world will do with these “useless” and “worthless” people. His proposed solution is giving them a “combination of drugs and computer games.”²⁸³

Lennox brings us back to the biblical ethic of work. “The concept of a ‘useless class’ is chilling and dehumanizing. The New Testament advice for believers is: ‘If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat’ (2 Thess 3:10). It does not, however, say, if anyone does not work, let him not eat. If certain AGI pundits are right, the prospect of future techno-unemployment is worse than grim.”²⁸⁴

²⁸⁰Margaret Boden, “Robot Says: Whatever,” Aeon, 13 August 2018, Accessed May 6, 2024, <https://aeon.co/essays/the-robots-wont-take-over-because-they-couldnt-care-less>.

²⁸¹“Make disciples using media, story and technology,” *Mission Media U*, accessed May 13, 2024, [MissionMediaU.org](https://missionmediau.org).

²⁸²Don Barger, “International Mission News: How AI Assists in Global Translation,” The Gospel Coalition, February 26, 2024, accessed May 13, 2024, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/ai-bible-translation/>.

²⁸³Kapwing’s (kapwing.com) automatic subtitles claim to be the best-in-class for accuracy. They can rapidly produce subtitles for a video in over 70 languages with their AI Subtitle Generator.

In her article, “The Robots Won’t Take Over Because They Couldn’t Care Less,” Margaret Boden argues that fears of robots and artificial intelligence (AI) taking over jobs and dominating society are unfounded. The author contends that while robots may excel at specific tasks and computations, they lack the human qualities of care, passion, and emotional intelligence. These human attributes are essential for many jobs and interactions that require empathy, creativity, and understanding. Therefore, the article suggests that the unique qualities that make us human are irreplaceable and that robots are unlikely to replace us entirely in the workforce or society. “The users and designers of AI systems — and of a future society in which AI is rampant — should remember the fundamental difference between human and artificial intelligence: one cares, the other does not.”²⁸⁵

Casting off fears of an AI takeover, the Church can harness the potential in the available technology and seize the opportunity to accelerate the gospel’s spread. The most significant benefit is technology’s connectivity to global missions enterprises. As high-speed internet and mobile phones are becoming accessible, even in very remote regions, communication with people worldwide is accessible through text or video. Social media apps can extend our social network far and wide with people of like-minded faith. Using social media, audio, and video technology online can contribute significantly to making disciples of the unengaged, unreached people where missionaries are not welcomed.²⁸⁶

AI technology can exponentially accelerate the translation of the Bible and biblical content. Translation projects require missionaries to live in the area, work with Indigenous translators, and leverage AI language models. In his article, “How AI Assists in Global Translation,” Don Barger quotes a leader working among unreached people groups: “Whether

²⁸⁴Charlie Fink, “AI Lip Dubbing Puts Words In Your Mouth,” *Forbes Magazine*, accessed May 13, 2024, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/charliefink/2023/11/07/ai-lip-dubbing-puts-words-in-your-mouth/?sh=cb6719b16d55>

²⁸⁵Some of the most powerful machine translators are Google Translate, DeepL, and Microsoft.

²⁸⁶A platform which uses blockchain security is *Diode*, a military grade level of online anonymity. See URL: <https://diode.io/>.

most of the church understands this yet or not, AI-assisted Bible translations are a global priority.” Barger adds that they are also “an incredible global opportunity.”²⁸⁷

Artificial Intelligence language machine learners can also quickly produce subtitles from audio recordings.²⁸⁸ Audio-visual recordings can also be dubbed using AI-generated voice generation with the authentic lip movement of a mother-tongue speaker.²⁸⁹ In worship services, people can hear a voice interpretation in an earpiece or follow along with a simultaneous written translation of the preacher.²⁹⁰ Now, mission workers can communicate with people on a fundamental level with people from all major languages, whereas in the past, it would have required a human translator.

The wise users of these technological devices will be mindful that with the increasing data harvesting, governments and corporations can monitor everything in our lives more easily. However, we can reduce the data we allow them to attain from our private lives. Missionaries, especially, will need to drastically reduce their trackability by using secure technology²⁹¹ and reducing their footprint online.²⁹²

²⁸⁷Downloading and using browsers like Brave.com can significantly reduce trackable data.

²⁸⁸The term “Luddite” can refer to anyone who opposes technological progress or automation. It is often used more broadly to describe those who are resistant to or skeptical of new technologies. “Ludite,” Wikipedia.org, accessed July 10, 2024, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luddite>.

²⁸⁹We do not want to replicate the societal plague of the West where “our world is more connected than ever but maybe more superficial than ever.” Paul Borthwick writes, “Involvement in the global church will call us back to building genuine, trusting, interdependent friendships. Our sisters and brothers around the world are generally more relational than we are, and our lives will be enriched by their hospitality and love. But we must remember one Christian from India said, ‘You don’t make friends by texting.’” Paul Borthwick, *Western Christians in Global Missions: What’s the Role of the North American Church* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2012), 27.

²⁹⁰Lennox, 2084: *Intelligence and the Future of Humanity*, 161.

²⁹¹The Chalcedon Creed, adopted in 451 A.D., was a response to heretical views concerning the nature of Christ. The creed states that the Lord Jesus Christ is “...the same, perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood; truly God and truly man, of a reasonable soul and body; consubstantial with us according to the manhood... in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son...” “Chalcedonian Creed,” English Translation, accessed July 10, 2024, <https://www.theopedia.com/chalcedonian-creed>.

²⁹²Lennox, 2084: *Intelligence and the Future of Humanity*, 158.

Some Christians may conclude that we should reject all advances in technology like “Luddites.”²⁹³ Instead, Christians should strive to find ways these technological innovations can advance the gospel. While seeking to develop connectivity with the world, we must remember the priority of relationships.²⁹⁴

The Church, as a witness to the world (Acts 1:8), must not be distracted from its mandate to proclaim the gospel to all creation (Mark 16:15). Just as the Apostle Paul used the primitive technology of ink and papyrus paper (3 John 1:13), we can continue to sow the seed of God’s Word broadly and abundantly through every lawful technological medium, especially in the developments in AI.

We have been given beautiful feet (Isa. 52:7; Rom. 10:15) to tell the world this good news of Christ’s kingdom reign. The first announcement of the gospel (*proto-euangelion*) to our first parents proclaimed that a Seed would arise to do the will of God (Ps 40:7-8) and release from the devil those he holds in the fear of death (Heb. 2:14-15). In the fullness of time, God would send his own beloved Son to be “truly *Homo Deus*, not an amalgam of human, biological life and technology (another human creation), but something in a different category altogether - Diety embodied in man, the God-Man, Jesus Christ. He is the one who shall ultimately triumph.”²⁹⁵ In the *Homo Deus* project, man thinks he can become a god. In the gospel, God becomes a man. As Lennox states, the reality about the true *Homo Deus*,²⁹⁶

As we have seen, there appears to be as little, if any, evidence, or even consensus of belief, that AGI will ever be reached. In contrast, there is a great deal of evidence and a widespread conviction that Jesus Christ is both man and God (*Homo+Deus*). This is, of course, a staggering claim. If true, it at once implies that we do not have to wait for some

²⁹³The New Living Translation helps us understand the meaning of these verses. “Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being.” *New Living Study Bible* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2008), 2014.

²⁹⁴Lennox, 2084: *Intelligence and the Future of Humanity*, 191

²⁹⁵The Heidelberg Catechism, Question 1, addresses the defeat of the devil. “He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood, and has set me free from the tyranny of the devil.” “WTS Resources: Heidelberg Catechism,” *Westminster Theological Seminary*, accessed July 30, 2024, <https://students.wts.edu/resources/creeds/heidelberg.html>.

²⁹⁶G.W. Bromiley, “Persecute; Persecution,” *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1986), 771.

kind of merger of human life and technology... Such a *human* superintelligence already exists... “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us” John 1:14. The uncertain quest to enable humans to become gods pales into insignificance with this true narrative that flows in the exact opposite direction—the staggering fact that God has already become man.”²⁹⁷

In great contrast with the globalist transhumanists who grasp after godhood, the Lord Jesus Christ did not count “equality with God something to be grasped but humbled himself, by taking the form of a servant” (Ph 2:6-7).²⁹⁸ All people will be humbled before the God-Man “who was, and is and is to come, the Almighty” (Rev. 1:8). At the appearance of the LORD Jesus, the “lawless one,” who proclaims himself to be God, will be destroyed with the breath of Christ’s mouth (2 Thess. 2:4,8). The Devil and death will be cast into the lake of fire, the second death (Rev. 20:10-14). Those who have been redeemed and have conquered by the precious blood of the Lamb will dwell forever in the New Heavens and New Earth where there is no death (Rev. 21:1-4). All who seek to keep themselves alive, transhumanists included, can pass from death to life (John 5:24).

Jesus said, .. “I am the resurrection and the life.
Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live,
and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die.
Do you believe this?”
John 11:25-26

²⁹⁷Stan Guthrie, *Missions in the Third Millennium: 21 Key Trends for the 21st Century* (Colorado Springs, CO: Paternoster, 2004), 234.

²⁹⁸Every year, the Open Doors World Watch List is an annual ranking and in-depth information about the 50 countries where Christians face the most extreme persecution. See <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/persecution/countries/>.

Global Challenges and Opportunities in Movements

Globalist Persecution

As we have observed, the idea of *Homo Deus* began in the garden when man sought to be God. When a ruler grasps for divine rights, the populace suffers under their cruel reign,

We read of emperors like the Babylonian Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 3) and the Greek Antiochus Epiphanies (Dan. 11:21-32), who arrogated divine powers to themselves, the latter using those powers to justify violence. The ruling Roman emperors assumed divine honours. For example, Julius Caesar was regarded as a god – Divus Julius – and in later New Testament times, that element in the Imperial Cult led to periods of persecution for Christians who bravely paid with their lives for refusing to bow down and worship the emperor as a *Homo Deus*.²⁹⁹

Behind the scenes in a king's court is the battle between the kingdom of God and Satan. Since the definitive defeat of the Devil at the cross and the empty tomb, he has been filled with "great wrath, because he knows that his time is short" (Rev. 12:12), awaiting the final judgement (Rev. 20:10). The cosmic conflict is centred upon Jesus Christ. When Paul was confronted on the road to Damascus, Jesus made it clear that Paul's persecution of *Christ*-ians was ultimately directed at himself. To the degree that we identify with Jesus and represent him, we will also become a focus of conflict because we bear his name. Jesus warned his disciples that they would be delivered over to be persecuted and killed and that all nations would hate them on account of his name. (Matt. 24:9)³⁰⁰

The apostles expected this opposition and hatred as they proclaimed Jesus' Name. Though they did not know precisely how they would suffer, they witnessed boldly, knowing that Jesus was still reigning LORD in their suffering. After being charged not to speak or teach to

²⁹⁹John Flavel, *Preparation for Suffering* (Forest, VA: Corner Pillar Press, 2011), 13.

³⁰⁰Francis Schaeffer summarizes what Samuel Rutherford (1600-1661), the author of *Lex Rex* (The Law is King), gives as three appropriate responses to persecution. "First, he must defend himself by protest (in contemporary society, this would most often be by legal action); second, he must flee if at all possible; and third, he may use force, if necessary, to defend himself. One should not employ force if he may save himself by flight; nor should one employ flight if he can save himself and defend himself by protest and the employment of constitutional means of redress." Francis Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2005), 103-104. Schaeffer also references Rutherford to conclude that "citizens have a moral obligation to resist unjust and tyrannical government. While we must always be subject to the office of the magistrate, we are not be subject to the man in that office who commands that which is contrary to the Bible." Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto*, 101.

anyone in the name of Jesus, they prayed: Sovereign Lord, who made heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them,

who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit,

‘Why do the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain?

The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together,

against the Lord and against his Anointed.

Acts 4:24-26 (cf. Psalm 2:1-2)

In prayer, they called on Christ the Creator and addressed him as “Sovereign Lord” (Δέσποτα, Despota), meaning absolute ruler and master. The apostles confessed their assurance of God’s absolute control over the events of history among all the nations. God carried out his purposes even in their suffering for Jesus’ name.

The apostles viewed suffering for Christ as a privilege and honour. Even after receiving a beating, they rejoiced when they suffered dishonour for the name of Jesus (Acts 5:41). Instead of being stopped or silenced by persecution, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ (Acts 5:42). They rejoiced in the blessedness promised by Jesus to those who are persecuted for righteousness sake (Matt. 5:10-12) because the Spirit of glory and God rested upon them (1 Peter 4:14). As the word of the Lord spread, religious and political leaders rose against this movement which even they could not deny was “turning the world upside down” (Acts 17:6).

The Hebrew word (רָדַף), often translated as ‘persecute’ (Jer. 29:18; Ps. 71:11-13), carries the idea of “following after or pursuing.” In the Greek New Testament, the word (διώκω, diōkō) has virtually the exact meaning of “pursuing or driving away.” (Matt. 5:12; Acts 22:4) Another word, θλίψις (thlipsis), often translated as tribulation or affliction also speaks of persecution (Matt. 24:9; Acts 11:19).

Considering all the uses of these related words, Geoffrey Bromiley gives a good definition of persecution: “Persecution is the suffering or pressure, mental, moral, or physical,

which authorities, individuals, or crowds inflict on others, especially for opinions or beliefs, with a view to their subjection by recantation, silencing, or, as a last resort, execution.”³⁰¹

“Is it safe?” is commonly asked when one is sent out to disciple the nations. The question comes from a heart of concern but lacks the understanding that there is always a degree of risk in any Kingdom venture. Jesus said, “Behold, I am sending you out as sheep amid *wolves*, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves” (Matt. 10:16). As Jesus sends out his laborers, they *will* face opposition and dangers of all kinds. Some will be sent to places of particular darkness and oppression. “Some missions leaders stress that hazardous duty has always been, and should continue to be, accepted as part of the cost of doing the Lord’s business around the world.”³⁰²

The remaining least evangelized places in the world are unreached for a reason—great risk is involved in reaching them. Finishing evangelizing all the remaining peoples will require a wise risk assessment. We need to “count the cost” and be wise in our planning lest we act foolishly in the face of risks or dangers. Even with the potential threats to our safety, we must also be filled with courageous faith in Christ, who is worthy of laying down our lives for his name’s sake.

Whether persecution comes from totalitarian technocratic states or radical religious groups, Satan works through the rage fomented by anti-Christ ideology.³⁰³ Our response to the enemy’s threats and attacks calls for “the endurance of the saints” (Rev. 14:12) and the love of Christ to endure “everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory” (2 Tim 2:8-9).

The English Puritan Presbyterian minister John Flavel helps his readers prepare for pending persecution. “The expectation of and preparation for suffering abates much of its dread and terror by accustoming our thoughts beforehand to them, that we may find them not so

³⁰¹Paul Golf and Pastor Lee, *The Coming Chinese Church: How Rising Faith in China is Spilling Over Its Boundaries* (Grand Rapids, MI: Monarch Books, 2013), 50.

³⁰²Richard Wurmbrand, *Tortured for Christ* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2017), 56.

³⁰³Almost all of these unreached peoples live within the “10/40 Window.” “10/40 Window,” *Joshua Project*, https://joshuaproject.net/resources/articles/10_40_window.

grievous, shocking, and intolerable when they come.”³⁰⁴. We need to develop a practical theology of safety and suffering to navigate the risks of persecution involved in discipling the nations. We also need to understand this calling to follow Jesus and to make followers of Jesus in a dangerous world.

Biblically, the Lord gives three basic responses for his people, who face risk and persecution. The first is “flight”. There is biblical permission to flee from persecution (Matt. 10:23; Acts 8:1; 9:25; 14:5,6; 2 Corinth. 11:32,33). However, we must assess the motivations behind the fleeing. If it is primarily to avoid suffering, then this would be evading the call and privilege to suffer for Christ’s sake. Ensuring safety and avoiding suffering does not count as the cost of discipleship.³⁰⁵

When Jesus told his disciples to flee persecution in one town, it was not to run away from suffering. Still, in order for the gospel to be preached in another city (Matt. 10:23), Paul evaded capture and death to continue proclaiming Christ (Acts 9:25, 14:5-6). Jesus, as the Good Shepherd, was not concerned about his safety, but when “his time had come,” he laid down his life for his sheep. Under-shepherds should also walk this way, ready to lay down their lives for the sheep (1 John 3:16).

The second biblical response we may be called to is “fortitude.” At times, fleeing persecution may be impossible, impractical or inappropriate. Instead, the Bible often encourages believers to stand firm in the face of persecution (Matt. 24:13, 1 Peter 5:9). As Jesus knew the persecution which was coming upon the Church in Smyrna, he encouraged them with these

³⁰⁴ According to the Joshua Project, a Frontier People Group (FPG) with fewer than 0.1% Christians, has virtually no followers of Jesus and no confirmed sustained gospel movement and still needs pioneer cross-cultural workers. “Frontier Unreached Peoples,” JoshuaProject.net, <https://joshuaproject.net/frontier>. In a 2023 consultation, eight key elements were proposed to seek breakthroughs in these FPGs. They include 1) prayer by the global prayer networks and adoptions for the 300 largest FPGs; 2) the use of media technology and the internet; 3) mobilization of local and global labourers; 4) disciple-making movement methodology and existing movement leaders crossing cultures; 5) blessing the families and the communities; 6) entrepreneurship; 7) blessing the Jesus movements God is raising within resistant communities that are avoiding association with Christendom; 8) using diaspora communities as bridges back to the mega-sized FPGs.³⁰⁶ R.W. Lewis, “Seeking Movements Among Frontier Peoples,” *Mission Frontiers* (March/April 2024), accessed May 14, 2024, https://www.missionfrontiers.org/pdfs/06-12_MF_46-2_MAR-APR-24_LEWIS.pdf, 12.

³⁰⁵ R.W. Lewis, “Seeking Movements Among Frontier Peoples,” *Mission Frontiers*, March/April 2024, accessed May 14, 2024, https://www.missionfrontiers.org/pdfs/06-12_MF_46-2_MAR-APR-24_LEWIS.pdf.

words: “Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days, you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life” (Rev. 2:10).

Jesus’ instructions to his disciples to “stay in Jerusalem” (Luke 24:49) were a call to fortify faith. With the religious and political leaders centred in Jerusalem, they were in the lion’s den of danger. Paul even went into danger, knowing the possible consequences (Acts 21:13). May we be ready to not only be imprisoned but even to die for the name of the Lord Jesus.

The third response that may be needed is a “fight.” Sometimes, defending oneself or fighting for a legal right is appropriate. Again, the motivation is critical. Will your fight hinder or further the spread of the gospel and the exaltation of Christ’s name? There are also times to defend your innocence and use your legal rights. In Paul’s case, he used his status as a Roman citizen to be released (Acts 16:37) and pleaded his innocence (Acts 25:10-11). At times, Jesus was silent before his accusers (Mark 14:61) and at other times, he defended himself during his trial (John 18:23). There is a time to speak and a time to remain silent. Through the prayerful and wise application of Scripture, you can know how to answer the foolish persecutor (Prov. 26:4-5).

Jesus will not leave us in our persecution. He promises, “On my account, you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and the Gentiles. However, when they hand you over, do not worry about how to respond or what to say. In that hour, you will be given (δοθήσεται, dothēsetai) what to say—and it will be the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you” (Matt. 10:18-20).

Whatever the form of persecution and our response to it, we can see God’s purpose in it to purify us. The Chinese underground church has experienced multiple waves of persecution. “The furnace of persecution refined the faith” of the Chinese church so that more persecution turned into more refinement.³⁰⁶ Richard Wurmbrand writes in his biography *Tortured for Christ*,

³⁰⁶David Garrison, *A Wind in the House of Islam: How God is drawing Muslims from around the World to Faith in Jesus Christ* (Monument, CO: Wigtake Resources, 2014).

”If the heart is cleansed by the love of Jesus Christ, and if the heart loves Him, one can resist all tortures.”³⁰⁷ They overcome as “more than conquerors” (Rom. 8:35) by “the blood of the Lamb, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.” (Rev. 1:2, 9, 12:7:14; 12:11).

Global Revival

Most of today’s least-reached peoples have not heard the gospel because reaching them remains challenging.³⁰⁸ Persecution and other barriers (geography, language, culture, religion, politics, economics, spiritual darkness) leave them hidden or overlooked. These unreached groups generally will not hear the good news until someone reaches across the barriers to share and demonstrate the love of Christ and until a Church grows among them. Pioneer mission work is hard, expensive, and takes time. It requires excellent cultural understanding, commitment, and earnest prayer.

Missiologist R.W. Lewis proposes a strategy for reaching the 300 largest unreached Frontier People Groups.³⁰⁹ Lewis writes with a note of hope, “We are closer than ever before to taking the good news to all the peoples of the earth. However, we face new challenges as the world rapidly changes due to the internet and increasing political surveillance and control. Today’s great blessing is that the global Church, having spread to over half of the world, is excited to participate in blessing the world’s families, bringing the last people groups to God’s feast.”³¹⁰

Church historian David Garrison discovered from a survey of recent Muslim Background Believers that there were sixty-nine movements to Christ (of 1,000 or more converts) in the last

³⁰⁷“30 Days of Prayer for the Muslim World has been inviting Christians to pray with love and respect for Muslim peoples around the world since 1993.” “About Us,” *30 Days of Prayer for the Muslim World*, accessed July 11, 2024, <https://www.pray30days.org/about>.

³⁰⁸Jayson Casper, “Researchers Finding Christians in Iran Approaching 1 Million,” *Christianity Today*, September 3, 2020, accessed May 14, 2024, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2020/september/iran-christian-conversions-gamaan-religion-survey.html/>.

³⁰⁹“Pray for Iran,” *Operation World*, Monthly Prayer Calendar, July 14, 2024, accessed July 11, 2024, <https://operationworld.org/locations/iran/>.

³¹⁰Borthwick, *Western Christians in Global Mission*, 40.

twelve years compared to seven movements to Christ before the 21st century.³¹¹ One impetus to pray for such revival among Muslims is the “30 Days of Prayer for the Muslim World” which runs during the month of Ramadan.³¹² For example, the Islamic Republic of Iran has the fastest-growing church in the world.³¹³ “From only 500 Muslim-background believers in 1979, many estimates suggest the number is even greater than 1 million just in Iran alone.”³¹⁴

Ministry to newcomers, whether to refugees, immigrants, or international students, is opening a wide door for the gospel. As many of those who come to the West from the Majority World are not believers, they can be welcomed and led to Christ. They can explore the Christian faith without the threat of government surveillance or radical groups. Some of these are Christians from culturally conservative nations who are agents of salt and light in our Christian climate under the pressure of wokeism.

In his book, *Western Christians in Global Missions*, Paul Borthwick writes, “With these mass migrations of peoples, we may have opportunity to reach people who were, up to this point, considered unreached—not because we went to their place but because they came to our place.”³¹⁵ Again, Borthwick writes, “When we join together—rich and poor, Western and non-Western, brothers and sisters—we can learn how to steward our mutual resources toward the vision of a global family in worship: from every tribe, language, people and nation (Rev. 5:9; 7:9).”³¹⁶

³¹¹Borthwick, *Western Christians in Global Mission*, 101.

³¹²Andrew Walls, “Demographics, Power and the Gospel in the Twenty-First Century,” *Lecture, SIL International Conference and WBTI Convention* (Waxhaw, N.C., June 6, 2002).

³¹³Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2002), 1-2.

³¹⁴Samuel Escobar, *The New Global Mission: The Gospel from Everywhere to Everyone* (Lisle, IL: IVP Academic, 2013).

³¹⁵Timothy C. Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions: A Trinitarian Missiology for the Twenty-First Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2010), 33. “The fact of Christianity’s global comeback is undeniable. Africa went from ten million Christians in 1900 to four hundred million in 2000...” Mark Shaw, *Global Awakening: How 20th Century revivals triggered a Christian Revolution* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010), 196.

³¹⁶Borthwick, *Western Christians in Global Mission*, 87.

Mission historian Andrew Walls observes, “Over the past century, Christian advance, and Christian recession, have gone on simultaneously: recession in the west, advance in Africa, Asia, and Latin America; withering at this, blossoming at the edges. The time passes to the Christians of Asia and Africa in the Americas, and... The Pacific... these areas, these southern continents, if we may so call them, where more and more the responsibility now lies for Christian mission in the world.”³¹⁷ The center of Christianity has shifted from North America and Europe to Africa, Asia and Latin America.” Philip Jenkins, author of *The Next Christendom*, writes that this shift is “one of the transforming moments in the history of religion worldwide.”³¹⁸

Samuel Escobar, in his book *The New Global Missions: The Gospel from Everywhere to Everyone*, believes that, because of globalization, missions are no longer a matter of missionaries from the West going to the rest of the world. Christian missions are now truly global. Missionaries from all places are going to all peoples.³¹⁹ Author Tim Tennent explains that the growth of the Global South (or Majority World) has resulted in the “simultaneous emergence of multiple new centres of Christian vitality, which has created a multidirectional mission with six sending and receiving continents.”³²⁰ There is a shift in the centre of gravity of the church. There is a transfer of leadership to the Majority World, with the West serving more as helpers, the assistants and the facilitators. Those in the West will still find a place “in the global mission of God, but we must approach our global family with humility and a commitment to be learners.”³²¹

In his book *Releasing the Workers of the Eleventh Hour: the Global South and the Task Remaining*, Ben Naja uses the parable of the labourers in the vineyard. The 11th-hour workers, he proposes, are those in the Global South (Africa, Asia, and Latin America). Although they are

³¹⁷Ben Naja, *Releasing the Workers of the Eleventh Hour: The Global South and the Task Remaining* (Littleton, CO: William Carey Library, 2008).

³¹⁸Jae Kyeong Lee, “South Korea’s Great Missionary Movement: God’s Sovereignty, Our Obedience,” *IMB, East Asian Peoples - Update*, February 9, 2018, accessed May 14, 2024, <https://www.imb.org/2018/02/09/south-korea-mission-movement/>.

³¹⁹Gene Getz and Joe Wall, *Effective Church Growth Strategies* (Nashville, TN: Word Publishing, 2000), 20.

³²⁰Mark Shaw, *Global Awakening: How 20th Century revivals triggered a Christian Revolution* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010), 28.

³²¹Shaw, *Global Awakening*, 202.

the last to receive the gospel, they carry the primary responsibility of fulfilling the tasks of discipling the remaining Unreached People Groups (UPGs). Because of its rapid growth and vibrant spirituality, Global South workers hold significant potential for advancing the mission of the global church.³²² The harvest force is in the harvest field. South Korea has become a formidable missionary-sending country.³²³

Many of these missionary movements have been birthed out of local revivals. J. Edwin Orr, a long-time student of revival, has argued that the primary factor behind the significant national and international church-growth movements has been the sovereign movement of the Holy Spirit, usually in response to extraordinary prayer on the part of God's people.

No amount of hard work, no creative strategy, no investment of money can produce any true church growth (people coming to Christ and growing spiritually) unless the Spirit of God moves. On the other hand, to acknowledge that church growth is carried out through guidance and power of the Holy Spirit in no way precludes the involvement of responsible human beings who make informed and wise plans. The Scriptures teach this balance repeatedly.³²⁴

Missionary Professor and Author Mark Shaw researched how revivals in the last century have triggered a Christian revolution in the Global South. He contends that in this time of...

...globalization (where Western economic and religion-cultural forces are destabilizing traditional societies) two reactions occur. There is the initial stage of relativization in which the local traditions take a huge hit from the impact of global trends. But following this initial hit there is often a hit back through localization... Fresh on the heels of localization may come what some sociologists call globalization. Local forces kick in and begin to produce revival, resurgence and expansion. Globalization is the local going global....³²⁵

³²²Donald K. Smith, *Make Haste SLOWLY!: Growing effective intercultural communication*, 2nd edition, (Books On Creating Understanding, 2013), accessed via Kindle Edition. In his book, Smith provides 13 principles for working toward cultural change.

³²³Shaw, *Global Awakening: How 20th Century Revivals Triggered a Christian Revolution*, 196.

³²⁴Tertullian, *Apology*, 37.4, newadvent.org, accessed July 12, 2024, <https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0301.htm>.

³²⁵“Finishing the task” is a well-worn phrase to speak of the commission. Is the commission “finishable?” Jesus gave us an indication of its finality in the words of Matthew 24:14, “And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.” Many coalitions have been formed over the centuries to rally the church to this end. The most recent, “Finishing the Task,”... is a coalition of thousands of believers, churches, denominations, and organizations coming together to fulfill the Great Commission. It’s a call to mobilize all of Christ’s Church, in all its diversity, to do all Christ commands, with all people, in all places, all for God’s glory by 2033, the 2000th anniversary of the instructions given to us by Jesus...” “Finishing the Task,” finishingthetask.com, <https://finishingthetask.com/about-finishing-the-task/>.

In his research of recent global revivals, Shaw describes the several stages of “global” with varied expressions. He writes,

The fullest expression of a revival movement comes with a systemic change whereby political, economic, and social systems are dramatically changed by the ongoing application of gospel values and concepts in the wider society... Global factors create the larger contexts for these local movements and open up the possibility of the movement entering the global highway and influencing diverse cultures around the world... Revivals of various kinds renew the local and produce even glocalization where the renewed people take their movement to regional and even international levels and counter the forces of globalization by making the cultural traffic two way and not just one way.³²⁶

Veteran missionary and educator in East Africa, Donald Smith, in his book *Make Haste Slowly!*, speaks of the need to address the core of a culture to catalyze change. At the core is the worldview, which includes its values, beliefs, and assumptions. These are not often articulated by the people or consciously held but are demonstrated in a cultural group's choices and behaviours. We all have these fundamental core beliefs, values, and assumptions that our parents and peers informed us of. Some of these must change if they contradict the truth of God's Word. We must address those inner unbiblical core beliefs and values to catalyze an outward change to a whole culture.³²⁷

Missionaries working with national leaders are the “ambassadors” who catalyze change in culture by establishing the church. In the process, there will always be the “defectors” and “adversaries” who will resist the change. It is also to be expected that the “early majority” and “late majority” will be brought along if strong leaders are moving the church to greater conformity to the Word of God.

When a healthy, growing church in a nation can demonstrate to the government and society that they are “productive citizens and allies of nation building,” they provide a reason to

³²⁶Strategy can be defined as the “practical working out of God's will within a cultural context.” Gailyn Van Rheen, *Missions: Biblical Foundations and Contemporary Strategies* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996), 140.

³²⁷Paul uses the term “planting” in 1 Corinthians 3:6 (and Apollos watering). He also uses the analogy of establishing the church on the only foundation of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 3:11). Each of these analogies substantiates the necessity of intentional disciple-making, which leads to the formation of churches where the commands of Christ can be obeyed. Many of Christ's commands, for example, the “one-another” commands, naturally require a living community (*communitas*) to be fulfilled.

optimize the “conditions of their continued growth.”³²⁸ As Tertullian defended tolerance for Christians, he wrote in his Apology, “We are but yesterday, and yet we have filled all the places that belong to you—cities, islands, forts, towns, exchanges; the military camps themselves, tribes, town councils, the palace, the senate, the market-place; we have left you nothing but your temples.”³²⁹

The commission to disciple the nations is a strategy of saturating and permeating every people group with the gospel of the kingdom and its universal implications for every sector of society. The reality of Christ's present mediatorial kingship over all the spheres of church, state, family, and individuals leads us to pray with confidence, “Your kingdom come” (Matt. 6:10).

³²⁸Ray Easley, “Theological Education and Leadership Development,” *Renewal*, no.2, (2014): 4-26. The Lausanne Movement estimates that “only 5% of all pastoral leaders presently in ministry have received training. This means that as many as 2 million pastors around the world are ministering without the training, skills, and relationships necessary to flourish in sustained ministry...” Ramesh Richard, “Training Pastors: a High Priority for Global Ministry Strategy,” *lausanne.org*, September 2015, Volume 4, Issue 5, <https://www.lausanne.org/content/lga/2015-09/training-of-pastors>.

³²⁹Jonathan Chao, “Education and Leadership”, *The New Face of Evangelicalism: An International Symposium on the Lausanne Covenant*, ed. Rene Padilla (Chicago, IL: IVP, 1976), 43.

A Framework for Discipling the Nations

The commission that the risen Lord Jesus gave before his ascension (Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:6-11) and coronation (Ps. 110:1; Heb. 1:3; Eph. 1:20-21) echoes through the centuries. The command to disciple the nations stands as the great Mission of the Church. While the Church faces formidable challenges, new innovative opportunities exist to finish the task.³³⁰

Among many of the challenges from the devil, we have seen his influence behind the globalist elite's imposition of anti-Christ ideologies and idolatries, whether through their system of indoctrination, their technocratic state control, and their persecution of Christ's Church. Simultaneously, we see manifold opportunities to accelerate the spread of the Word through Christ-centered education, technology connecting us with the globe, and unprecedented harvesting of souls in the Global South.

Christians who understand the historical development of globalist ambitions from the Tower of Babel to today will discern and redeem the time, knowing that these days are evil (Eph. 5:16). The world's propaganda will seek to distract and divert the Church off course from the path Jesus set before us, to "go into the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation" (Mark 16:15). The Church must remain laser-focused on "co-mission" with Christ.

This paper is a clarion call to the Church to stay the course and be disciplined with the task, no matter what challenges lay before us. Instead, we have prime opportunities to seize on this mission to disciple the nations. The remainder of the paper proposes a strategic plan as a "framework" or "roadmap" to navigate the challenges and opportunities ahead.

³³⁰In collaboration with the Reformed Presbyterian Global Missions Board, I have designed a flow chart which gives a roadmap or framework for two models of discipling the nations. The "Macedonian Model" is based on the Apostle Paul's dream of a Macedonian man begging him to "Come over here and help us." (Acts 16:9) Likewise, this model is used when someone in another country is identified as having the requisite character, commitment and alignment for the purpose of planting Reformed Planting Churches. The national church planter is guided through the phases of church planting (E1-E4) by RPGM Board and staff in cooperation with other partners and a Commission (see Appendix A). The "Apostolic Model" is based upon the calling of Paul and Barnabas by the Holy Spirit and the Church to disciple the nations in Asia Minor (Acts 13:1-3). In this model, missionaries are confirmed in their calling and empowered for the work (E0) of establishing the national church (E1-E4) under the shared oversight from the local session, the RPGM Board and staff, and the Commission (see Appendix A). The overarching goal in both of these models is "To disciple the nations by establishing national Reformed Presbyterian churches that rely on Christ to *train, govern, support* and *propagate* themselves."

The strategy³³¹ of discipling the nations will necessarily incorporate discipleship in all spheres of society within every people group (ἔθνη, ethnē). The discipleship process will progress from the individual to the family, church, and state. In making disciples of the nations, we preach Christ, who reigns and rules over these spheres as mediator king (Eph. 1:20-22; 1 Cor. 15:24-25). The increase of his government (Is. 9:7) will come to full fruition when he has subdued all under his feet (Ps. 47:3) and when his kingdom is built on the ruins of the kingdoms of the earth (Dan. 2:44).

..... Discipling the nations will require a strategic plan. The strategy of discipling the nations will necessarily incorporate discipleship in all spheres of society within every people group (ἔθνη, ethnē). The discipleship process will progress from the individual to the family, church, and state. In discipling the nations, we preach Christ, who reigns and rules over these spheres as mediator king (Eph. 1:20-22; 1 Cor. 15:24-25). The increase of his government (Is. 9:7) will come to full fruition when he has subdued all under his feet (Ps. 47:3) and when his kingdom is built on the ruins of the kingdoms of the earth (Dan. 2:44).

With this eschatology of sure victory in this mission, we follow the strategic plan of the master builder of the Church, Jesus Christ (Matt. 16:18). The Great Commission necessitates the building of the Church (ἐκκλησία, ekklesia) for it to be realized. Firstly, the baptism of new believers and their children is the entrance to the membership of the visible Church. Secondly, the local *church* is where all the commands of Christ are taught and obeyed. Churches are to be led by men who are set apart and sent out by the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:1-4) to preach the good news of his Kingdom (Luke 4:43).

In the final commission to the disciples in Acts 1:8, Jesus lays out the strategy demonstrating a dependence upon the Holy Spirit. The disciples were to wait for the empowering of the Holy Spirit to enable them to be his witnesses from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth.

³³¹In his book *The Disciple Making Pastor*, Bill Hull writes that Paideian [training] means “instruction with discipline.” Modern educators often associate the word “training” with young people, but in a way, paideia captures the entire process of Christian development. It joins information with discipline or accountability; this gradual, ongoing process is intentional and guided... I defined discipling as “the intentional training of disciples, with accountability, on the basis of loving relationships.” Bill Hull, *The Disciple-Making Pastor* (Grand Rapids, MI: BakerBooks, 2007), 223.

Through the Apostles, the Holy Spirit continued what “Jesus began to do and teach.” This teaching and preaching of the Word of the Lord spread rapidly. Wherever it was received, the number of the disciples increased (Acts 6:7; 12:24; 13:48-49; 19:18-20), and the churches were strengthened (16:5).

Paul’s strategy was the same. He disciplined men who would teach what they learned to reliable men who would then teach others (2 Tim. 2:2). Note how Paul envisioned the discipleship process to extend to the 3rd generation of disciples (Timothy, reliable men, and others). Paul, the master church planter, must have used this strategy to train twelve disciples in Ephesus (Acts 19:7) to plant churches³³² since, remarkably, after two years, the result of his training is that “all the residents of Asia (Minor) heard the word of the Lord” (Acts 19:10). Near the end of his ministry (just over a decade) he could declare that “there is no more place for me to work in these regions” (Romans 15:23).

Although the “word of the Lord” has spread to all corners of the globe, many thousands of ethnic groups have not heard of it. Where the word has spread, there is still a dire need for depth in teaching so that all Jesus has commanded is known and obeyed (Matt. 28:20) in all spheres of society. As the number of disciples is expanding rapidly in the Global South, the need for training is reaching crisis levels. The rapid multiplication of churches requires equally trained leaders to oversee these new congregations.³³³

The present model of theological education does not meet the pressing demand from the growing number of untrained church leaders. In 1976, Jonathan Chao evaluated the status of theological education in his day:

It is not possible to improve 'theological education' in isolation from its ministerial context. Rather, a complete, integrated approach to the development of indigenous leadership within the overall context of the church and her ministry must be undertaken ... A critical and historical analysis of the traditional missionary model of ministry exported from the West shows that it is built on the administrative structure reflecting the Roman mentality rather than the functional structure of service as found in the New Testament ... This kind of rethinking, although by no means new implies that

³³²David H. Kelsey, *Between Athens and Berlin* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 6.

³³³Edward Farley, *Theologia: The Fragmentation and Unity of Theological Education* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press), 3.

any attempt to 'improve' the present form of theological education is not enough. What we need is not renovation but innovation.³³⁴

Innovation is necessary to reimagine the model of theological education that will meet the demands of training millions of men worldwide to faithfully plant and lead disciple-making churches. As we seek to glean wisdom from scripture and history, we will study the Scriptures to find a roadmap and framework for training men who can disciple nations in another cultural context.³³⁵

In the Western theological community, three ancient terms have been used to describe theological education: *Paideia*,³³⁶ *Theologia*, and *Habitus*. *Paideia* is a process of 'culturing' the soul and schooling as 'character formation.'³³⁷ The concern of this kind of education (*Paideia*) is on character and wisdom—a focus on being (character) rather than doing (skills). *Theologia* is a discernment, wisdom (sapiential), and knowledge that attends to the Christian life.³³⁸ *Habitus* is the habit of making judgements about life which are “grounded in a fundamental understanding of what it is to be a Christian here and now.”³³⁹

Paideia, *Theologia* and *Habitus* rightly emphasize the acquiring of biblical wisdom. From that wisdom, we must also develop the necessary competencies for faithful and fruitful ministry. Effective ministry training will, therefore, place a balanced emphasis on developing character (heart), knowledge (head), and skills (hands). The motivation for learning must always

³³⁴ Joseph Hough, “Introduction: Who Shall Teach in a Theological School,” *Theological Education* (Autumn 1991): 7.

³³⁵ The debate over theological education in more recent decades has been summarized well by David Kelsey and Barbara Wheeler in “The ATS Basic Issues Research Project: Thinking about Theological Education,” *Theological Education*, Vol. XXX, no. 2 (Spring 1994): 71-80.

³³⁶ We will only study this topic in the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles. However, one could say that theological education has existed since the beginning. The Hebrew Bible narratives are replete with accounts of teachers and students. To name a few, Samuel taught the prophets in Ramah (1 Samuel 19:20), Elisha conducted theological education Gilgal (2 Kings 4:38-42), and Ezra and the priests taught the people in Jerusalem (Nehemiah 7:73-8:12).

³³⁷ “A disciple (μαθητής) is a learner or follower - usually someone committed to a significant master.” Michael Wilkins, *Following the Master* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992), 38.

³³⁸ Frank E. Gabelein, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), 594-599.

³³⁹ The primary reason that Jesus' ministry lasted for approximately three years is that the “Gospel According to John” explicitly mentions three separate Passovers (John 2:13; 6:4; 11:55). Craig L. Blomberg, *Jesus and the Gospels: An Introduction and Survey* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2009), 224.

be love for God when serving others. With all of these components, we could define theological education as the pursuit of biblical wisdom through discipleship training toward maturity in character (heart), knowledge (head) and skills (hands), motivated by love for God, in service to others, for the building of Christ's church and the glory of God.

Over the centuries, the meaning and nature of theological education have been hotly debated.³⁴⁰ The culture of the age inevitably influences the model's shape, whether in the form of a reaction or an accommodation. To evaluate past and present models of theological education, we must go to our source of wisdom for the church in every culture and every generation, the Word of God.³⁴¹ Jesus and the Apostles provide us with the contours of a paradigm or model for theological education. In light of God's Word, we will compare the various models in the Scriptures and propose a way forward for global theological education in our generation and the next.

Theological Education in the Gospels

Jesus was the master theological educator. His students called him 'Rabbi' because he was their master teacher. He confirmed their assessment of him several times: "You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am (John 13:13; cf. Matt. 23:10; 26:18). He was different from other Rabbis in his day: "... for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as their scribes" (Matt. 7:29). The term "theological education" could be considered an equivalent to the word Jesus used when, in his universal authority, he commissioned his disciples³⁴² to "make disciples" (μαθητεύσατε, mathēteusate) of all nations (Matt. 28:19). Christ's command to disciple the nations was to baptize them in the Triune Name and teach (διδάσκοντες) them to observe all that he has commanded.³⁴³

³⁴⁰In this paper, the model and means of theological education will be more fully developed than the goal and context.

³⁴¹D. A. Carson, *Matthew. Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Vol. 9(Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 148.

³⁴²R. E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Revell, 2010), 21.

³⁴³Keith Ferdinando, "Jesus, the Theological Educator," *Themelios*, Vol. 38, Issue 3 (November 2013), 369.

From the day he chose the twelve (Matt. 10:1-4; Mark 3:13-19; and Luke 6:12-16), he had taught them so that at the end of three years,³⁴⁴ they were then to go and teach others as they had been taught. On the day of his resurrection, Jesus said to them, "... as the Father has sent Me, I also send you" (John 20:21). Jesus himself only spoke what he heard from his Father (John 12:49) and doing his Father's will was his daily food (John 4:34). Likewise, the "theological education" (discipleship) the apostles received from Jesus was to be replicated both in the content (only speaking what they heard) and its practice (doing his will). The Lord Jesus, as the master theological educator, laid out a roadmap in the record of the gospel accounts, providing the goal, model, means, and context for theological educators to follow.³⁴⁵

The Goal

Jesus' teaching was purposeful. He taught his band of men with the end goal of producing much fruit that would remain (John 15:1-8). From the initial calling of the first of the twelve, he cast his vision for them: "Come, follow me ... and I will make you fishers of men" (Matt. 4:19). Jesus had the final commission (Matt. 28:18-20) in mind with his first summons. As D. A. Carson succinctly writes: "There is a straight line from this commission to the Great Commission."³⁴⁶ From the very beginning, he was training missionaries, intending to send them to do greater works in the world (John 14:12). Coleman says: "The initial objective of Jesus' plan was to enlist men who could bear witness to his life and carry on his work after he returned to the Father."³⁴⁷

The goal of discipling the nations was constantly kept before the men in their theological training. The missionary expeditions on which he sent his disciples (Luke 9:1-6; 10:1-23) were practicums in "fishing for men." They learned to fish not only by watching the master fisher of men but also by fishing themselves. He sent them out "as sheep amid wolves" (Matt. 10:16),

³⁴⁴Richard R. DeRidder, *Discipling Nations* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books House, 1975), 214.

³⁴⁵Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (London: SCM, 2001), 44.

³⁴⁶Ken G. Smith, *With Him: A Biblical Model of Discipleship for Men* (Leyland: 10Publishing, 2017), 20-21.

³⁴⁷Collinson, S. "Making Disciples: An Educational Strategy for use Beyond the Time of Jesus?" *Journal of Christian Education* 43, no. 3 (2000), 48.

followed by debriefing sessions in preparation for when they would be sent to hostile nations (cf. Luke 9:10). Jesus was continually equipping his Apostles with the purpose of building his church through them as they would be sent out to the nations.³⁴⁸

Having become disciples under Christ's Lordship, the disciples are immediately commanded to make disciples. The direction is ever outward. This finds illustration in the parables of Jesus. The net is cast into the sea in order to be drawn in again (Matt. 13:47). The seed is broadcast in order to gather an abundant harvest (Matt. 13:1-8). The leaven is kneaded into the meal to leaven the whole loaf (Matt. 13:33). The light is set on the lamp stand in order to give light to the house which would otherwise be in darkness (Matt. 5:15). The mustard seed is planted and birds come to make nests in the resulting tree (Matt. 13:31-32).³⁴⁹

The Model

Jesus called his disciples to follow him. Usually, disciples attached themselves to their preferred teacher, but Jesus took the initiative (after much prayer) to select and call his disciples. The call to follow him implied self-renunciation and suffering (Matt. 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23). As Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote, "When God calls a man, he bids him come and die."³⁵⁰ He intends his disciples to become like him, following his steps as the Suffering Servant (cf. Isaiah 53). Jesus said, "A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher" (Luke 6:40).

Becoming like Jesus required a close walk with him. When he appointed the Twelve, it was "so that they would be with him" (Mark 3:14). As they walked with him, they would become like him. After three years of being 'with him,' Luke records how the leaders of the Jews marvelled when they "saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus."³⁵¹ It was their confident boldness in preaching which amazed them. They preached like Jesus.

³⁴⁸Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 34.

³⁴⁹Smith, *With Him*, 23.

³⁵⁰"In the early period of their discipleship, hearing and seeing seem to have been the main occupation of the twelve." See A. B. Bruce., *Training of the Twelve* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Classics, 2000), 36.

³⁵¹Hull, *The Disciple-Making Pastor*, 269-313

The preaching and teaching ministry of Jesus was unique. In the Jewish rabbinic schools, “the primary task was to learn the Torah.”³⁵² However, with Rabbi Yeshuah, “knowledge was not communicated by the Master in terms of laws and dogmas, but in the living personality of One who walked among them.”³⁵³ In their constant contact with him, they learned from his words and his life as a model before them.

When Jesus wanted to teach about service, he modelled what a servant looks like. In a society where disciples were expected to serve their master, Jesus put on a towel (a sign of servitude) and washed their feet (John 13:1-17). He said, “If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet” (John 13:14). In washing their feet, he taught the lesson. He demonstrated it in practice and reinforced it with words urging them to follow his example.

Many examples could be given of Jesus teaching his disciples through a living example: his communion with the Father in prayer (Luke 5:16), his dependence upon the Word of God (Matt. 4:1-11), his compassion for the lost and least (Matt. 9:10-13, 36), and his obedient faith to his Father's will (Mark 10:32; Luke 22:42). Throughout Jesus' life, in his words and deeds, he was constantly teaching them his ways. Ken Smith summarizes the principle: “By being with your mentor as he ministers, you learn both how to minister and how to conduct yourself in the process.”³⁵⁴

The theological education of the disciples was most effectively caught (not only taught) by demonstration. When Jesus called his first disciples to “come and see” (John 1:39),³⁵⁵ they observed the master at work as he lived his life before them. When the call to “follow me” came (Matt. 4:19), they had already watched his walk and were ready to follow in his steps. Then, when they were commanded to “remain” in him (John 15:4), they were already clean because of

³⁵²Bernhard Ott, *Understanding and Developing Theological Education* (Cumbria: Langham Global Library, 2016), 89-90.

³⁵³Donald A. Hagner et al. Matthew, *Word Biblical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2017), 156.

³⁵⁴Craig L. Blomberg, *Jesus and the Gospels: An Introduction and Survey* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2009), 94

³⁵⁵Blomberg, *Jesus and the Gospels*, 300.

his Word (John 15:3). After almost three years of following Jesus in his model of theological education, his apostles were sent out to go and do the same among the nations.³⁵⁶

The Means

Jesus taught his disciples by giving words about life. While he effectively taught by example, he also instructed his disciples using words of wisdom in the power of the Holy Spirit. All four gospels (especially John) give significant space to Jesus' teaching. He taught formally while sitting down, giving long discourses, for example, the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew chapters 5-8. He also taught informally in everyday life and ministry³⁵⁷ as the disciples walked with him.

Jesus crafted his teaching so that his disciples could quickly memorize it. Literary devices like repetition, alliteration, and parallelism assisted the primary oral learners in memorizing long discourses. Stylistic devices like repetition, parallelism, rhythm, alliteration, assonance, and symmetry suggest that Jesus designed his discourses 'for easy memorization.'³⁵⁸

Blomberg comments,

It would have been quite typical and expected for Jesus' disciples, revering their teacher, to commit to memory significant portions of his teaching and even brief narratives of his great works, and to have remembered those accounts accurately for a considerable span of time. As much as 80 percent of Jesus' teaching seems to have been cast in poetic form, which would have made its memorization that much easier.³⁵⁹

The didactic characteristic of teaching was most evident in the use of the parables. Parabolē (παραβολή), like its Hebrew equivalent, māshāl (משל), refers to a wide variety of forms, including proverbs, allegories, prophetic discourses and enigmatic sayings.³⁶⁰ Jesus taught using parables to convey a single moral truth to some hearers and to conceal it from others (Matt.

³⁵⁶George Eldon, Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 90.

³⁵⁷"With him, the learned atmosphere of the school.. is wholly lacking, with its stage-by-stage build-up of teaching..." Robert Banks, *Reenvisioning Theological Education: Exploring a Missional Alternative to Current Models* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 106.

³⁵⁸Robert H. Stein, *The Method and Message of Jesus' Teaching* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994), 24.

³⁵⁹Keith Ferdinando, "Jesus, the Theological Educator," *Themelios*, Vol. 38, Issue 3 (November 2013), 365.

³⁶⁰"Learning through memorization was a basic pedagogical method in first-century Judaism . . . as well as in antiquity as a whole." C. Blomberg, *The Historical Reliability of the Gospels* (Leicester: IVP, 1987), 25–28.

13:11, Mark 4:12, Luke 8:10).³⁶¹ He communicated truth in culturally familiar stories but was deliberately enigmatic so that only those “who had ears to hear” (Matt. 11:15; Mark 4:9; Luke 8:8) would hear and would understand (Matthew 13:23).

Jesus was often informal and dialogical, welcoming questions, discussion, and debate.³⁶² In this informal learning environment, Jesus harnessed a dispute to reveal the truth about the kingdom. He would use the occasion to correct or rebuke the attitudes of the heart (Matt. 22:29). At the same time, he would reveal the source of these issues (Mark 7:20-22), knowing what was in their hearts (John 2:24). Then he would direct the conversation to teach about his mission as the Son of Man (Mark 10:45).

Questions posed to Jesus often led to a teaching moment. For example, when an expert in the law asked Jesus, “Who is my neighbour?” (Luke 10:25), Jesus took the opportunity to tell a story about a “Good Samaritan” to expose his ethnocentric attitude and reinforce the commandment of “loving your neighbour” (i.e., even enemies). Typically, Jesus would add a question as a rhetorical device to drive home his point.³⁶³

At other times, Jesus created a teaching moment. He would initiate a conversation by asking a question to cause his listeners to think about who he was. When he announced to a paralytic that his sins were forgiven, he asked: “Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise, take up your bed and walk?’” (Mark 2:9). On several occasions he asked if it was lawful on the Sabbath “to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy it?” (Matt. 12:12; Mark 3:4; Luke 6:9). And finally, he asked his disciples their thoughts and beliefs concerning his identity - this during the week leading to his death: “What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?” (Matt. 22:42).

His questions stimulated reflection, revealed prejudices and assumptions, and challenged his learners to respond to the truth of what he said and who he was. Each interaction

³⁶¹Robert Banks, *Reenvisioning Theological Education* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 99.

³⁶²Sylvia Wikley Collinson, “Making Disciples: An Educational Strategy for use Beyond the Time of Jesus?,” *Journal of Christian Education* 43, no. 3 (2000), 7-18.

³⁶³Smith, *With Him: A Biblical Model of Discipleship for Men*, 20-21.

demonstrated that Jesus' teaching was based on understanding their hearts. The questions he asked them showed intimate knowledge and concern for their lives and their relationships with God and one another.³⁶⁴

While Jesus transmitted a body of knowledge through pedagogical methods and conducive memorization,³⁶⁵ he also created learning environments for discussion, debate, and reasoning. The disciples learned as their teacher corrected and challenged their attitudes. Jesus taught his disciples while walking along the roads and through the villages. Their conversations were naturally integrated into the realities of life as they were immersed in ministry.

The Context

Jesus taught his disciples in the communal context. He called them individuals and joined them as members of a community with himself.³⁶⁶ The communal dimension was an intentional element of their theological education. "The discipleship relationships that were formed between Jesus and others in the Gospels were rarely one-to-one encounters."³⁶⁷ The learning took place in the context of accountable relationships as a band of brothers under the leadership of their Elder Brother.

Smith writes that three components make up a "true learning situation": the teacher who knows, the student who learns, and the environment for learning. Most of the learning for the disciples took place in the public arena where Jesus served. Real-life ministry with Jesus formed the context for learning.³⁶⁸ "It was not preparation of the Twelve for mission that was uppermost in his mind, but engagement of the Twelve in mission."³⁶⁹

³⁶⁴Banks, *Reenvisioning Theological Education*, 111.

³⁶⁵Keith Ferdinando, "Jesus, the Theological Educator," *Themelios*, Vol. 38, Issue 3 (November 2013), 369.

³⁶⁶Sylvia Wikley Collinson, *Making Disciples* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2004), 150.

³⁶⁷Refer to my paper in Appendix B, "A Model for Theological Education," which I presented to the Reformed Presbyterian Global Alliance (RPGA) Theological Colleges Working Group, further studies this.

³⁶⁸The church must constantly "reaffirm her faith not only in Sola Scriptura but also in Tota Scriptura." R.C. Sproul, "Tota Scriptura," *Ligonier Ministries*, <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/tota-scriptura>.

³⁶⁹David Gooding, *True to the Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Gospel Folio Press, 1995), 40,45.

The mixed group of men from varied backgrounds were purposefully brought together to prepare them for ministry with a multi-ethnic and socially diverse Church. Living in a close community exposed their motivations and attitudes with others and also among themselves. They would reveal their selfish ambitions when caught arguing about their relative positions with Jesus (Mark 9:33-34) and their ethnocentric hatred when proposing to call down fire on the unreceptive Samaritan village (Luke 9:52-56). Communal living does not allow the concealment of pride. Humility needs to be taught, and that is by gracious leaders. “Indeed, the most fruitful learning experiences are invariably collaborative: iron sharpens iron.”³⁷⁰

Theological education was carried out in a community context to restore a community. Biblical reconciliation is taught in a community that seeks to live as one.³⁷¹ The unity of the community was part of the “High Priestly prayer” for his disciples “that they may all be one” (John 17:21). This restoration to unity was first with God and then with one another in their shared fellowship in Jesus. Maintaining that unity in the community was integral to obediently following the Master in his mission to build a worldwide catholic Church.

So far, our study of “Theological Education” has been limited to the Gospel accounts and the training of the Twelve. Now, we will examine how the first disciples applied the teaching of their Master in the training of the next generation, as recounted in the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles.³⁷² While all of Scripture³⁷³ is instructive and profitable (2 Tim. 3:16-17) to guide refining a paradigm or model for Theological Education, we must always have our eye on Rabbi Yeshuah, the pre-eminent Theological Educator. We would not go astray by modelling our discipling of the nations following his discipling of the twelve.

³⁷⁰Derek Carlsen, *Faith & Courage: Commentary on Acts* (Cape Town: Christian Liberty Books, 2000), 501.

³⁷¹Steve Addison, *What Jesus Started: Joining the Movement, Changing the World* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2012), 66.

³⁷²What happened to the Apostles? Bryan Litfin writes, “They died and went on to their reward—but they also left behind their successors, the men and women who received the torch of the Christian faith and passed it on to the next generation.” Bryan Litfin, *After Acts: Exploring the Lives and Legends of the Apostles* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2015), 184.

³⁷³S. Collinson. “Making Disciples: An Educational Strategy for use Beyond the Time of Jesus?” *Journal of Christian Education* 43, no. 3 (2000), 7.

Theological Education in the Acts of the Apostles and Pauline Epistles

Christ's commission in Acts 1:8 frames³⁷⁴ Luke's recounting of the "Acts of the Apostles" (Πράξεις τῶν Ἀποστόλων) and the rapidly expanding Church from Jerusalem (2:1-8:4), Judea and Samaria (8:5-12:25) and to the ends of the earth (13:1-28:31). As the Holy Spirit caused the word of the Lord to multiply (Acts 6:7, 12:24, 13:49; 19:20), is there evidence for an Apostolic pattern which provided the leadership structure, content of teaching and principles of training to sustain this movement? Can an Apostolic model for theological education be deduced from the study of Acts and Pauline Epistles?

Leadership Structure

Theological education is the concern of the church leaders to ensure that all members are equipped for service. Leaders themselves are endowed with gifts and offices to fulfill this ministry. We find an enfolding progression of a leadership structure in the narrative of the Book of Acts, with its contours revealed more clearly in the Pauline Epistles.

Luke, the author of the book "Acts of the Apostles," first records that Jesus appeared to his disciples for "forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God" (Acts 1:3). He instructed them to wait for the promised Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4) when they will receive the power which will make them bold witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). As we trace the multiplication of disciples, we can also follow the trail of the gospel of Christ's Kingdom spreading to the cities and the countryside of Palestine and beyond (Acts 8:4). By the time Paul was imprisoned in Rome, as a book-end note in the last verse of Acts 28:31, Luke accentuates that Paul continued to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom with all boldness and without hindrance.³⁷⁵

Luke wrote the book of Acts inserting distinct bookmarks where he highlights how the Word of the Lord spread, grew, multiplied and prevailed (Acts 6:7; 9:31; 12:24; 16:5; 19:20;

³⁷⁴Walter L. Liefeld, *Interpreting the Book of Acts: Guides to New Testament Exegesis #4* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1995), 97-98.

³⁷⁵Nathan Trice, "Ordained Servant Online," opc.org, March 2014, https://opc.org/os.html?article_id=409

28:31).³⁷⁶ We can see that the whole church was participating as witnesses of the risen Christ and bearers of the good news. For example, when persecution struck the church in Jerusalem after Stephen's death, we are told that disciples travelled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch preaching the Lord Jesus (Acts 11:19-21). We are not told that the Jerusalem church sanctioned these men to preach. While the gospel largely seemed to spread through the ministry of lay leaders organically, we see the structure of the leadership surfacing when the report of the church plant in Antioch "came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem" (Acts 11:22) and they sent Barnabas who then sought the help of Saul (Paul) to teach the many new disciples (Acts 11:23-26).

The early disciples obeyed the great commission from the risen Lord as they made disciples of the nations and taught them all Christ had commanded (Matt. 28:18-20).³⁷⁷ In every place where disciples gathered, they devoted themselves to the "apostles teaching, and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42). As Collinson describes what discipleship looked like in the young new testament church:

The characteristics of post-ascension discipling may be thus summarized as teaching which was intentional, relational, largely informal, communal, reciprocal and centrifugal. Such discipling was intended to result in each person becoming an active follower of Jesus and participant in his mission to the world.³⁷⁸

A leadership structure began to emerge as the church grew, and the need to distribute roles and responsibilities had to be clearly stated. "So Acts describes a changing pattern of leadership and authority due to the nature of the church as "emerging" rather than static."³⁷⁹ When there was a dispute between Hellenistic (Greek-speaking) Jews and the Hebrews in Jerusalem regarding the distribution of food to the widows, the twelve apostles called all the disciples together to choose from among them men who would be responsible for this ministry of

³⁷⁶Roger Beckwith, *Elders in Every City* (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster Press, 2003), 12.

³⁷⁷Benjamin Merkle and Thomas Schreiner, *Shepherding God's Flock: Biblical Leadership in the New Testament and Beyond* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Ministry, 2014), 115.

³⁷⁸Cornelis Van Dam, *The Elder: Today's Ministry Rooted in All of Scripture* (Phillisburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2009), 119.

³⁷⁹Ernest Best, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary of Ephesians* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 398.

mercy so that they could devote themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word (Acts 6:1-6). In the election and ordination of these seven men, we find the precursor to the distinctive office of a deacon later developed in the church.³⁸⁰

In Paul's letter to Timothy, written approximately 30 years after this event in Acts 6, the church is given a list of qualifications for an elder (πρεσβύτερος) or overseer (ἐπίσκοπος) (1 Tim. 3:1-7) and for a deacon (διάκονος) (1 Tim. 3:8-13). Paul also writes a similar list of qualifications in his letter to Titus (1:5-9). As Paul was bidding farewell to the elders (Acts 20:17) of the church in Ephesus he urged them, as shepherds of the church to "pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his blood" (Acts 20:28). In these words we observe the title of elder and the role of the overseer (literally "bishops") and the work of the shepherd to be the same office. The other office of deacon (1 Tim. 3:8-13) means a servant. We find the two-fold expression of "overseers and deacons" in Phil. 1:1, which continues to be referenced in much of the earliest post-apostolic literature.³⁸¹

The elders or overseers were called "leaders" by the writer to the Hebrews (Heb. 13:7,17).³⁸² Paul mentions the gift of leadership (Rom. 12:8), which is an added endowment to some who hold the office of elder.³⁸³ There are other gifts which the ascended Christ has given the leaders in the church: "apostle, prophet, evangelist, shepherd and teachers" (Eph. 4:11). Christ has gifted these leaders in his church to "'equip' or 'prepare' (καταρτισμὸν) the saints for the work of ministry" (4:12). Those holding the authoritative office of Elder with one or several of these gifts are to lead with this goal in view. The leaders then train the church members on

³⁸⁰Herman Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1975), 458.

³⁸¹Martin Foord, "The Elements of a Theology of Theological Education" in *Theological Education: Foundations, Practices, and Future Directions*, ed. Andrew M. Bain and Ian Hussey (Eugene: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2018), 37.

³⁸²F.F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles: The Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951.), 380.

³⁸³Jerry Wragg, *Exemplary Spiritual Leadership: Facing the Challenges, Escaping the Dangers* (Leominster: Day One Publications, 2010), 34.

how to exercise their gifts. The result is that all believers engage in ministry, and in this way, the body of Christ grows as a whole (4:13-16). These leadership gifts "have an enabling function."³⁸⁴

The first task of the leader is to "govern" or 'rule' in the household of God (1 Tim. 5:17), like a father who manages the family well (1 Tim. 3:4-5). Another task for the leader is to model the Christian life for all believers (1 Tim. 4:11; Titus 2:7; Heb. 13:7), leading with an exemplary life before the congregation. Thirdly, the leader is to keep watch over his own life and also over the flock under his care (1 Tim. 4:16; Acts 20:28). Finally, the leader is to teach God's people the apostolic "tradition," also described as "sound doctrine," the "deposit" or the "first principles" (1 Tim. 3:2; Heb. 13:7) while also refuting error (Titus 1:9). Ridderbos writes in his compendium of Pauline theology:

... elders had the leadership of the church not only in terms of administration and church order, but also in a spiritual sense. Within and without they had to advocate and defend the Christian faith in its pure and original meaning.³⁸⁵

Therefore, theological education for the leader is of foremost importance. The leader must teach what is in accord with the truth of God's Word. We will now examine the biblical content of the leader's teaching further.

The Content of Teaching

All elders are to be able to teach (1 Tim. 3:2). However, for those who particularly labour in preaching and teaching (1 Tim. 5:17), there follows the necessity for them to know God's Word thoroughly. If word ministry focuses on proclamation, one cannot proclaim what one does not know. However, true knowledge of God goes beyond the mere rational accumulation of information; it is "to know this love that surpasses knowledge" (Eph. 3:19). Growth in a knowledge of God must include growth in love and zeal. Any theological education that reduces love and zeal is nothing less than pernicious."³⁸⁶

³⁸⁴Thabiti M. Anyabwile, *Finding Faithful Elders and Deacons* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 115.

³⁸⁵Jeff Reed, *Church-Based Theology: Creating a New Paradigm* (Ames, Iowa: 1995), 8-9, http://cc-amesdsm.org/download/paradigmPapers/5_Church%20Based%20Theology.pdf.

³⁸⁶F.F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles: The Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951), 356.

As a tall building requires a deep foundation, a comprehensive theological education forms the grounding for character formation and ministry skill development. This kind of education is not restricted to passing on information, a knowledge which can lead to pride (1 Corinth. 8:1), but a transformation of the whole person through renewing the mind. This entire personal transformation requires the understanding of the whole counsel of God. Paul did not “hesitate to proclaim” the whole will or counsel of God (Acts 20:27).³⁸⁷ In Paul’s final letter to his disciple Timothy, he wrote that “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work”(2 Tim. 3:16-17).

Those who teach and preach are especially to present themselves to God “as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15). This competency of correctly handling the Word requires understanding and the ability to teach through all the various genres in Scripture (historical, wisdom, prophetic, didactic, etc..) as well as having a grasp of the unity and continuity of the Old and New Testament.³⁸⁸ For example, in the preaching of Peter (Acts 2:14-40), Stephen (Acts 7), or Paul (Acts 13:16-41), each of them demonstrated a mastery of the ‘Law and the Prophets’ as they proclaimed the gospel from the Old Testament.

The leaders in the New Testament were likewise to proclaim the entire counsel of God, including what was passed on from Christ through the Apostles. Paul referred to this body of teaching as the “elementary teaching,” which is the “first principles” of the faith (Col. 2:6-8, cf. Heb 5:11-14). In his later letters to disciples, Timothy and Titus, Paul called it a “deposit of sound doctrine,” which was to be guarded carefully (1 Tim. 1:10; 6:3; 2 Tim. 1:13,14; 2:2; Titus 1:9,13; 2:1,2).³⁸⁹ “This teaching included more than just a few core doctrines for salvation. It

³⁸⁷James D. G. Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem, Christianity in the Making* (Cambridge, U.K.; Grand Rapids, MI.: Eerdmans, 2008), 769.

³⁸⁸Smith, *With Him: A Biblical Model of Discipleship for Men*, 41.

³⁸⁹Timothy is a man who was thoroughly trained in the gospel ministry. Timothy was acquainted with the Holy Scriptures (2 Timothy 1:5; 3:14-15). The brothers in the church of Lystra and Iconium spoke highly of him, encouraging Paul to take him along in the church planting ministry (Acts 16:1-3). Later, Paul wrote a personal letter

included teachings such as how local churches ought to conduct their community life (1 Tim. 3:14- 16; Titus 2) and how individual households ought to conduct their family life (household texts such as Eph. 5:22-6:9).”³⁹⁰

An example of concentrated training was Paul's ministry in Ephesus. After initial opposition from the Jews, he withdrew with the disciples, reasoning daily with them in the Hall of Tyrannus for two years (Acts 19:9-10). Paul likely taught during the siesta period between 11 am and 4 pm when the hall was not formally used. “We must picture Paul spending the hours from daybreak to 11 am at his manual labour (1 Corinth. 4:12) and then devoting the next five hours to the still more exhausting business of Christian dialectic,”³⁹¹ Dunn says of this time of teaching:

For Paul to have lectured for two years in the same setting indicates an extensive range of subjects, texts and traditions covered during the period. We have to envisage an extensive syllabus covering the exposition of many Scriptures, instruction in the Jesus tradition, and elaboration of characteristic Pauline themes from his letters.³⁹²

We can be assured that Paul was not only teaching the content of Scripture (Biblical, Systematic and Historical Theology) but was equipping the disciples with the requisite skills for the interpretation (Hermeneutics & Exegesis), the defence (Apologetics) and the use of the Scriptures in preaching and counselling. The impartation of information must have been translated into practical ministry because we are told that the fruit of Paul’s “reasoning” (διαλεγόμενος) with the disciples was that “all of Asia [Minor] heard the word of the Lord” (Acts 19:9-10).

to Timothy, his “true child in the faith,” to not neglect the gift he received when the elders had laid their hands on him (1 Timothy 4:14). In Paul’s farewell letter, Timothy was then charged to entrust the gospel ministry to a third generation of ministers (2 Tim. 2:1-2).

³⁹⁰Herman Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1975), 453.

³⁹¹Gregory R. Perry, “New Wineskins: Relocating and Reconstructing Theological Education,” in *For the World: Essays in Honor of Richard Pratt, Jr.*, edited by Justin S. Holcomb and Glenn Lucke (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2014), 183.

³⁹²These are represented in Appendix C as a proposed model of a reproducing disciple-making church.

Principles of Training

At its core, the Apostle's strategy for theological training was rooted in the life and ministry of local churches. We have already established that "gifted" leaders (Eph. 4:11) are God's gift to "equip" the members of the church for fruitful service. In 2 Tim. 2:1-2, Paul summarizes this principle of reproductive training when he writes to Timothy:³⁹³

You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others. (2 Timothy 2:1-2)

Theological training for Timothy began when Paul selected him as a spiritual son in the faith and fellow worker (Acts 16:1-5). Timothy heard the Scriptures being taught by Paul during their missionary journeys together.³⁹⁴ That "deposit" or "tradition" was now to be "entrusted" (παράθου) to faithful men. These are also to be teachers of the same "tradition." "As "teaching" and "tradition" are concepts that in Paul lie very closely together (cf. Rom. 6:17; Gal. 1:12; 2 Thess. 2:15; Col. 2:6,7), one will have to understand by "teachers" those who were competent to instruct others in the Christian tradition and precepts (cf. 1 Corinth. 4:17; 2 Tim. 2:2)."³⁹⁵

The context in which ministers of the gospel were prepared for the ministry of teaching and preaching was the planting and establishing of local churches. The multiplication of churches was built on the multiplication of disciples and leaders. Those who are proven faithful and gifted in the ministry of the church are most effectively equipped for leadership as they serve the church.³⁹⁶ This principle of faithfulness within the context of real-life ministry yields the greatest potential for growth in conviction, character, and competence. The ultimate goal in the training process is to thoroughly furnish men for every good work (2 Tim. 3:16-17) and set them on a path of lifelong learning of wisdom.

³⁹³Foord, *The Elements of a Theology of Theological Education*, 41-42.

³⁹⁴Robert Brynjolfson and Jonathan Lewis, *The Integral Ministry Training Journey: Design and Evaluation* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2006), 4.

³⁹⁵Foord, *The Elements of a Theology of Theological Education*, 42.

³⁹⁶Dennis E. Johnson, *The Message of Acts in the History of Redemption* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1997), 23.

We could make a case, in observing the example of Timothy, that there were three levels of discipleship and theological training. The first level was foundational discipleship in his youth, the second level was the practical ministry of church planting, and the third level was participation in preparing men for the ordained ministry, leading to faithful and fruitful gospel ministries.³⁹⁷ Theological education, as found in the Scripture, is not confined to a few years of residential instruction but where the “teacher” embodies the message in a lifelong relationship. With this principle of training by example, Paul wrote to the church in Philippi, “What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you” (Phil. 4:9).

Theological education is not simply imparting information but also illustrating it throughout life. “It needs teachers who model godliness and a community that builds faithfulness.”³⁹⁸ The modelling of Christ-likeness by teachers in a real-life community context provides the framework for the content of theological education to be internalized (caught, not only taught) in the head (knowledge acquisition), the heart (character formation), and hands (skill development).³⁹⁹

... theological education includes three fundamental moments: preparation where word gifts are tested and fostered; education which trains people in both the learning and using of God's word to serve people; and supervision when the knowledge and skills learnt are more formally put into practice.⁴⁰⁰

Ultimately, it is the risen Jesus Christ who is the Teacher of the church who continues his ministry of teaching by his Holy Spirit. In the opening words of Luke's second letter to Theophilus, the books of Acts, Luke emphasizes that what Jesus “began to do and teach”

³⁹⁷Edward Farley, *Theologia: The Fragmentation and Unity of Theological Education* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983).

³⁹⁸Jeff Reed, “Church-Based Theological Education: Creating a New Paradigm,” *New Paradigms for the Post-Modern Church*, presented at BILD-International Conference (Ames, Iowa), May 5, 1995, 5, http://cc-amesdsm.org/download/paradigmPapers/5_Church%20Based%20Theology.pdf.

³⁹⁹Paul R. Gupta and Sherwood Lingenfelter, *Breaking Tradition to Accomplish Vision* (Winona Lake, IN: Bhm Books, 2006), 25.

⁴⁰⁰Ted Warren Ward, Duane Elmer and Lois McKinney, *With an Eye on the Future: Development and Mission in the 21st Century* (Monrovia, CA: MARC, 1996), 99.

continued after his ascension in the power of his Spirit poured out upon the church.⁴⁰¹ The gospel of the Kingdom will be preached, and the whole counsel of God will be taught from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth. The book of Acts does not fully provide a manual on theological training to fulfill this mandate but testifies to the potential of the word of the Lord to multiply through the power of the Holy Spirit. In searching for a model of theological education to meet the present and pressing need for leadership training worldwide, we must never forget that the Spirit of Jesus guides and empowers the heralds of his word.

The presence of Jesus among us by his Spirit does not exempt us from careful planning and courageous leadership. But it does demand that we not take our plans too seriously... The presence of Jesus demands that we formulate and reformulate our fallible plans to keep in step with his invincible plan.⁴⁰²

Toward a Model of Global Theological Education for Today

The “winds of change” in theological education since the 1980s are, in part, a response to the rapidly changing contemporary cultural context. Theological institutions and churches are seeking to adjust to the move from an industrial to an information and technological society. As the church in the Global South multiplies exponentially, the formal structures of theological education cannot meet the desperate need for ministerial training.⁴⁰³ To present the church mature in Christ, we must work toward a trans-cultural model of theological education that will answer the demand.

First and foremost, any program of theological study must be designed with the ultimate goal of discipling the nations. The process of equipping men for this task will, therefore, include the stages and elements Jesus integrated into his training of the Twelve. Theological educators should regularly revisit the effectiveness of the theological education paradigm and make the

⁴⁰¹Edward Farley warned about this continued fragmentation into specializations because of the focus on the models of abstract knowledge separated from a concrete community. See Banks, *Reenvisioning Theological Education*, 62-63.

⁴⁰²Brynolfson and Lewis, *The Integral Ministry Training Journey*, 4.

⁴⁰³Perry, "New Wineskins: Relocating and Reconstructing Theological Education," 183.

necessary changes back to the original purpose of Jesus and his mission to the world.⁴⁰⁴ In this sense, disciple-making is “at the very centre of the entire theological education enterprise.”⁴⁰⁵

Jesus’ training of the twelve incorporated breadth and depth in discipleship with a holistic formation of their character, knowledge and skill. Contemporary theological education, fragmented into specializations,⁴⁰⁶ often has a heavy emphasis on the academic (knowing) dimension of learning that neglects the character (being) and skill development (doing). A balanced curriculum will train a disciple in all three areas of knowledge (academics), being (character) and doing (competencies).⁴⁰⁷ Integrating these three components of the student’s life and ministry (i.e. the man, the message, and the mission) will require a context for learning. As we have seen in the New Testament, the local church is the essential context for developing and deploying labourers in the Lord’s harvest.

Many theological institutes emphasize mentoring students in the context of the local church. In the article *Relocating and Reconstructing Theological Education*, the contributors called for a closer relationship between the seminaries (faculty) and churches (leadership) in the theological education of their students. The “mentoring-in-context” model they advocate seeks to build on Jesus’ call to follow him and add Paul’s exhortation to ‘imitate’ him as he follows Christ (1 Corinth. 11:1). “Like Jesus, Paul embodies the curriculum he teaches, he is building a curriculum vitae, a way in/or life that reflects the wisdom, love and reign of God.”⁴⁰⁸

⁴⁰⁴Brynjolfson and Lewis, *The Integral Ministry Training Journey*, 94.

⁴⁰⁵Ott, *Understanding and Developing Theological Education*, 89-90.

⁴⁰⁶Perry Shaw, *Transforming Theological Education* (Grand Rapids, MI: Langham Global Library), 81-82.

⁴⁰⁷Brynjolfson and Lewis, *The Integral Ministry Training Journey*, 33.

⁴⁰⁸Brynjolfson and Lewis, *The Integral Ministry Training Journey*, 7,9. **From...** — **To...** Traditional, academic-based accrediting system Church-based assessment procedures, which accommodate formal, non-formal and informal forms of theological education. Residential, for-service Church-based, in-service Centralized faculty in a seminary Decentralized faculty serving in local churches Fragmented curriculum based on Schleimarcher’s four-Model more consistent with the unfolding of the fold model Scriptures and current needs of the churches Academic, testing course design Wisdom, problem-posing course design

Steve Hoke defines curriculum as “the entire learning environment in which intentional learning occurs.”⁴⁰⁹ This broad definition of curriculum uses the different forms of theological education. Bernhard Ott refers to the following distinctions made by the European Commission on the domains of education:⁴¹⁰ 1. Formal Learning: Learning that normally takes place in a school, it is highly structured

with academic goals, a timeframe, a curriculum and leads to certification. 2. Non-Formal Learning: Learning which doesn’t take place in the school and doesn’t

normally lead to certification. However, it will have goals, a timeframe and a curriculum.

3. Informal Learning: Learning which takes place in every day life, at work, in the family, or in leisure time. It is not structured and does not lead to certification. It can be goal oriented but learning is not intentional but more accidental.

Informal learning can also be understood to have a ‘hidden curriculum.’ Perry Shaw defines the hidden curriculum as the “unwritten, unofficial... values, and perspectives” that a student absorbs unconsciously.⁴¹¹ The “hidden curriculum” in informal learning can be integral to the student’s growth, especially if it involves reflecting on the lessons learned from God’s providence. The “mentoring-in-context” model identifies weaknesses and gives direction to grow in grace. The domain of informal education has the most significant potential to address character issues.⁴¹²

⁴⁰⁹The Biblical Institute for Leadership Development (BILD International) is a parachurch organization that aims to provide a philosophy and resources to aid in making God’s church central and equipping every believer with the Gospel and teachings of Christ. BILD International was created to provide a church-based way to train Christian leaders locally and award accredited BA and MA degrees. See <https://www.bild.org/>. Note that my reference to this training paradigm does not endorse the curriculum.

⁴¹⁰Jeff Reed, “Church-Based Theology,” 6-7.

⁴¹¹See Appendix B: Vince Ward, *A Model for Theological Education: A Paper presented to the Reformed Presbyterian Global Alliance Theological Education Working group*, 2019.

⁴¹²In the First Book of Discipline, Chapter 12), “For Prophesying or Interpreting of Scripture, John Knox provides a vision of what these *Exercises* should look like: “To the end that the Church of God may have a trial of men’s knowledge, judgments, graces, and utterances, and that such as somewhat have profited in God’s Word may from time to time grow to more full perfection to serve the Church, as necessity shall require, it is most expedient that in every town where schools and repair of learned men are, there be a certain day every week appointed to that exercise which Saint Paul calleth prophesying. The order thereof is expressed by him in these words: “Let two or three prophets speak; and let the rest judge. But if anything be revealed to him that sitteth by, let the former keep silence. For ye may, one by one, all prophesy, that all may learn, and all may receive consolation. And the spirits, that is, the judgments, of the prophets, are subject to the prophets.” John J. Murray, “The Exercise” in the Scottish Reformation,” christianstudylibrary.org, <https://www.christianstudylibrary.org/article/exercise-scottish-reformation>.

A curriculum will be effective when learning outcomes are clearly defined. Learning outcome statements “guide the training process so that learning interventions are designed to achieve explicit learning targets. Furthermore, they serve to evaluate the program and provide criteria to assess the progress of the trainee... Outcomes-led curriculum design keeps the desired intent clearly in focus.”⁴¹³ Regular assessments are essential in measuring student growth. Training should be customized as much as possible to prepare the individual for their unique calling. This can be achieved through specialized learning-by-doing and learning-by-teaching practicums, followed by reflection and evaluation.

Jeff Reed, founder of BILD International,⁴¹⁴ proposes a new paradigm he calls “church-based” in contrast with the traditional seminary model or even church-housed seminaries. The mega shifts he is proposing essentially give the responsibility of the training to local churches, with seminaries assuming a resource role to the churches. The following is a table summarizing some of his recommendations for mega shifts in theological education:⁴¹⁵

The church-based model highlights the necessary community context for learning. The Scriptures show that leadership training was not separated from the church but was always understood as a matter of establishing churches. Theological institutions support churches by providing resources for teaching and mentoring. The goal is for every student to be surrounded by many counsellors (Prov. 11:14) as they learn while in ministry within the local church.

⁴¹³Glissmann, Volker. “Grassroots Theological Education: Theological Education by Extension in Malawi” *InSights Journal*, Vol. 5, no.1, 59.

⁴¹⁴These needs can be felt as actual needs. They can be spiritual needs or physical needs. Some ministries are often established because the church does not have the capacity or expertise to respond competently and expeditiously. For example, mission aviation helps missionaries reach remote areas with significant needs for the church (Examples: MAF, AimAir). Medical mission work provides health care to the sick and helps bring a witness for the church in the area (Kijabe Hospital, Samaritan’s Purse Hospitals). Bible translation offers the Bible in the vernacular so that the Word of God can be taught and preached in the people’s heart language (Wycliffe, Seed Company). Technology (Radio (FM/SW), Internet, Apps, MP3 players, etc...) helps to sow the Scriptures broadly and abundantly (TWR, Reach Beyond (Formerly HCJB). Christian Education with an evangelistic and covenantal emphasis strengthens the next generation in a Christian worldview (Christian School International, ACE). Skill training (agriculture, animal husbandry, business, etc..) helps improve the livelihood of the church members and helps lift people out of poverty (Echo, Business as Missions).

⁴¹⁵Ott et al, *Encountering the Theology of Mission*, 151,154.

Local training does not uproot students and their families from the field of service; it keeps them focused on disciple-making in the church and provides the context for the development of convictions, character, and competencies. With this model, local church-based training centres and central theological institutions must learn to share their strengths while working together to make disciple-makers, plant reproducing churches, and multiply ministers.⁴¹⁶

One of the best ways the Scottish church trained men in a local or regional context in the First Reformation was through its “Exercise” meetings. Small groups of men met for preaching (“prophesying”) and theological discussion. Before forming Presbyteries in the National Church of Scotland, the “Exercises” were essential for training men for the ministry.⁴¹⁷

Theological education should be more comprehensive for those trained for full-time pastoral ministry.⁴¹⁸ The local church should be a place for all people to be equipped through practical theological education and contribute to the growth and maturity of the church ((Ephesians 4:11-13). Often, gifted leaders will seek out cooperation with other churches to establish specialized ministries to strengthen the wider church and advance the mission of the Church.⁴¹⁹ These Christian ministries should not replace but support what the church is called to do. Establishing and strengthening biblical churches must remain the central task of missions.

One way to understand the church's responsibility in the world is in terms of the two mandates. Both form a comprehensive way to express God’s concern for the totality of life. The Creation mandate (or cultural mandate) is primarily found in the blessing of God upon our first parenting telling them to be “fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing

⁴¹⁶LeRoy Eims, *Lost Art of Disciple Making* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1978), 61.

⁴¹⁷In my ministry, I call these fellowship groups *discipling kingdom communities on mission* to represent the two emphases of *discipleship* and *mission*. These groups are mixed and ideally should be 10-12 adults at most to allow for sharing and caring. Not only is the context where the “one anothers” can be practiced, but it is also where leaders are equipped for service. As Christians “do life together,” the Lord Jesus promised his presence with us and his rule over us as we seek to obey all he has commanded (Matt. 28:20).

⁴¹⁸Joel Beeke, “The Discipline of God,” Accessed July 14, 2024, <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/discipline-god/>.

⁴¹⁹Hull, *The Complete Book of Discipleship*, 30.

that moves on the earth” (Genesis 1:28). The other mandate is called the “gospel mandate,” also known as the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:16-18; Luke 24:46-49; John 20:21-23). The first mandate is to provide for mankind’s well-being in an ordered and just society, and the second is to provide a restored relationship with God and freedom from the effects of sin in all areas of life. Both mandates feed into each other. Fulfilling the gospel mandate leads to fulfilling the creation mandate as a source of God’s love. Fulfilling the creation mandate leads to fulfilling the gospel mandate as an expression of God’s love.⁴²⁰

The great commission of Christ (Matt. 28:19-20) was not only to make converts but disciples for Christ who progress on to maturity (John 15:16; Heb. 6:1). The co-mission with Christ is to lead people to become disciplined disciples of Christ who bear much fruit (John 15:8).⁴²¹ The church of Jesus Christ is the covenanted community from which the Great Commission proceeds and within which edifying communication is cultivated. The discipline of *discipling communities*⁴²² is the call of every local church. To the extent that a church makes conscious choices to be disciplined in disciple-making will make the difference between being a “healthy” or “unhealthy” church.

Jesus is the model who embodies the discipline of disciple-making. The basic vocabulary for discipleship is akin to discipline. Disciple (*discipulus*) and discipline (*disciplina*) derive from one Latin root and carry the notion of order. Referring to treatment that corrects or punishes, discipline is instruction or knowledge given to a learner (disciple). Discipleship and discipline

⁴²⁰Smith, *With Him*, 20.

⁴²¹Jerry Bridges speaks to the heart of the matter in our discipleship of one another, our union with God in Christ. “We cannot have meaningful fellowship with one another unless we are individually experiencing vital fellowship with God.” He also explains, “It is not the Word of God itself or even prayer that supplies the power and grace to live the Christian life; it is Christ who is our life (Colossians 3:4). The Word of God and prayer are the primary means by which the Holy Spirit mediates Christ’s life to us. We must never so emphasize the spokes of the Wheel, which is God’s channel of grace, that we lose sight of the hub, Jesus Christ, who is the source of our life.” Jerry Bridges, *Crisis of Caring* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1985), 20, 34-35.

⁴²²A multi-leveled training curriculum must be employed for this model of becoming a disciple-making church. The practical training of the lay persons (laborers) and members would be mostly informal as the trainer comes “alongside” the disciple. This maintains the “with me” principle and also equips the disciple for their discipleship ministry. In this way, disciple-making in the church will be dispersed throughout the body of believers.

are, therefore, inseparably connected.⁴²³ Discipleship training involves the discipline of constant repetition. Since consistent self-discipline is rare, we need the disciplining of others in accountable relationships.⁴²⁴

From the day he appointed his disciples (Apostles), Jesus' purpose was for them to be with him. Discipleship requires closeness so that they are remodelled after the likeness of their teacher. "In short, one can see in people the traits of their teacher"⁴²⁵ (Acts 4:13). As they followed him, observing and hearing his life and teaching, they became more like their master. Jesus said it is enough for the disciples to be like him as their teacher and master (Matt. 10:25). Christlikeness is the goal of discipleship, which requires discipline.

The apostle Paul taught Timothy (1 Tim. 4:7) the importance of disciplined training for godliness. The word for training (γύμναζε, gymnaze) describes vigorous effort. It brings us back to the greco-roman gymnasium, where they exercised naked with much sweat. The unencumbered attire also reminds us of the similar call to "take off" (ἀποθέμενοι, apothemenoi) every weight of sin that ensnares and keeps us from running the race with perseverance as we look unto Jesus (Heb. 12:1-2). By the power of the Spirit, we need to put off the sins on the "stop doing" list and put on the virtues of the "start doing" list (Col. 3:9-10). This ruthless running to the goal for the prize of the upward call of Christ (Phil. 3:14) should mark the culture in all our

⁴²³These trusted "friends" are the "first responders" because they are often the first people at a struggle or crisis scene. They are likely the first to see evidence of sin and suffering as they "do life together." In triage of the severity, some cases can be treated on the spot, while others need to be identified, diagnosed, and given the right level of support and care. Garret Higbee, "Uncommon Community: Biblical Counseling in Small Groups," 248-49, in Bob Kelleman and Jeff Forrey, *Scripture and Counseling: God's Word for Life in a Broken World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing, 2014).

⁴²⁴Essentially, discipleship will run along the lines of trusting relationships of friendship. There is power in these relationships to catalyze significant change, or they can cause great harm if power is misused and abused. Paul Tripp and Tim Lane describe the influence of relationships. "We live with this tension between self-protective isolation and the dream for meaningful relationships... Every relational decision we make is moving in one of these directions." Tim Lane and Paul Tripp, *Relationships: A Mess Worth Making*, (Greensboro, NC: New Growth, 2008), 17.

⁴²⁵Harvest Bible Chapel uses a helpful way of assessment called S.O.S., which assesses the *severity* of the issues, the *ownership* of the person needing counsel, and the *support* level around them. If the person, for example, had a strong support structure and was teachable, this mitigated the severity in many cases and gave more time to address the problem. Higbee, "Uncommon Community," 252.

churches. The leaders will set the pace for this culture of discipline as they train themselves for godliness and run the race with tenacious discipline for the glory of God.

Spirit-led believers have all the resources necessary to be “competent to admonish and counsel and instruct one another” (Rom. 15:14 AMP) because the Word of God is sufficient to thoroughly equip the servant of God for every good work (2 Tim. 3:17). Elders in the church are responsible to oversee church-based discipleship ministry where every member is disciplined in caring for one another. Toward achieving that vision, the following is a model for a local church to become a discipling community.⁴²⁶

Whatever model one uses to become a biblical discipling community, the intentional *discipline* of caring for “one another” is critical. Discipline is the fundamental factor that leads churches from being haphazard in discipleship to providing focused attention on discipling one another. The ultimate purpose of discipleship is to point to the Master, Head, and King of the Church, the LORD Jesus Christ, who disciplines us to make disciples to his glory.

The following model provides a framework and learning outcomes for each Level (Tracks) in the church-based discipleship and theological education model. The first track (Level 1) is the foundational level of discipleship, from the spiritual maturity of an infant in Christ to a reproducing disciple-maker. The second track (Level 2) is for those participating in a church planting effort. The objectives would be the same for those seeking renewal in an existing church. The third track (Level 3) is for men called to the gospel ministry, beginning with the screening from the session, coming under the care of Presbytery, and completing the theological studies and licensure examinations toward ordination. The goal for those called to the office of elders is to reproduce more disciples and officers for the building up of the church to the glory of God. The following Table 1 outlines the content of a core curriculum for the training of ministers in biblical convictions (head), godly character (heart), and ministry competencies (hands).

⁴²⁶With intentionality, the elder(s) can lead through the four phases of training and delegation. (M.A.W.L.) of Model (show them how to do it), Assist (helping them to do it), Watch (observe and give feedback afterward) and Launch (leave them to counsel while monitoring progress with follow-up coaching). Jon Luesink, *A Training Cycle for Disciple-Making: MAWL*, outreach.ca, accessed June 15, 2024, <https://outreach.ca/article/ArticleId/4270/MAWL-Model-Assist-Watch-Launch>.

A plan for multi-level disciple-making must be set forth to create and sustain a culture with a discipline of multiplying disciple-making churches.⁴²⁷ Disciples need to be brought from infancy to maturity (Level 1: E1-E4 Discipleship Training) (Heb. 6:1) to become fruitful labourers in the harvest (Level 2: E1-E4 Mission Training) (Matt. 9:37-38). Some men will continue to leadership roles as elders (ruling or teaching) or deacons (Level 3: Heart/Head/Hands) (1 Tim. 3:1-17).

The best context for disciples is in the intimacy of a small group of believers. Jesus chose his Twelve Apostles to be with him (Mark 3:14) and sent them out to establish churches that were devoted to teaching, prayer, fellowship, and sacrament (Acts 2:42). Paul gathered the believers in homes that they would practice the “one-another” commandments in the context of the local church. A church of small group communities (not only with small group communities) emphasizes the intimacy and accountability necessary for discipleship toward life change.

Another weekly smaller (cell or micro) group ministry mainly provides “lay counselling” context through one-on-one or small group discipleship. These gender-specific groups provide the intimacy for intentional and intensive discipleship. Initially, these groups can be facilitated by a trainer who can ensure that the meetings' purpose and process are standardized. The purpose of the meeting is to train in practicing “one another's” and build a level of trust where confession of sin and struggles can be shared in confidentiality. These trusting relationships allow for and provide the forum for admonishing and encouraging one another.

Following this multi-levelled disciples-making paradigm, a referral system in Appendix will help guide passing people down to others with more experience, maturity or authority to address more complex discipleship challenges.⁴²⁸ A colour-coded system provides a simple way of discerning when to continue discipling and when to refer. Discipleship with people with

⁴²⁷Gonzalez calls for “no less than a radical transformation in theological education... grounded in a renewed vision... In this vision, all of Christian life is, among other things, a life of theological study and reflection.” See Justo Gonzalez, *The History of Theological Education* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2015), 119.

⁴²⁸To name a few: Joseph (Gen. 39:3,21,29; Acts 7:9); Joshua (Joshua 6:27); Samuel (1 Sam. 3:19).

typical spiritual struggles (green) can remain confidential within relationships.⁴²⁹ When a pattern of sin or struggle is revealed, a referral (yellow) to a lay leader (usually gender-specific) can necessitate a referral (yellow). For those most severe issues (orange) and crises (red), the elders should be called upon to intervene (see Appendix D).⁴³⁰

Every member of the body of Christ has been given grace according to the gifts distributed by the ascended Christ (Eph. 4:7-11). Whatever the gift, it should be exercised according to the measure of grace given. The elders in the church are tasked with equipping the gifted members to help build up the church of Christ to greater maturity. The trained elder should be looking to bring those they identify with the gift to counsel under their wing.⁴³¹

A faithful model of training men who will disciple nations will hold fast to the biblical principles of theological education found in many seminaries and churches today. However, to meet the desperate need to train millions of men worldwide, we must evaluate the reasons for our ineffectiveness in bringing training to the masses of untrained ministers. In some parts of our training practices, refining is required, but transformation is necessary in other areas.⁴³² Further research into designing a trans-cultural biblical model of theological education is necessary. The proposed model must be thoroughly tested and evaluated with real students in many different contexts. The goal is clear: to make disciples of the nations for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴²⁹Daniel was deeply committed to following God's Law. (Dan. 1:8-16). Daniel maintained a consistent prayer habit even when forbidden (Dan. 6:1-10). Daniel trusted in God's sovereignty and providence over all circumstances (Dan. 2, and Dan. 5). Daniel displayed unwavering courage and integrity in the face of adversity (Dan. 3, Dan. 6). Daniel remained humble and focused on serving God and others (Dan. 1:20, Dan. 2:48-49, Dan. 6:1-3).

⁴³⁰Throughout history, people have felt that the only way to respond to the evil embedded in the world's governmental or commercial structures is to withdraw into a private ghetto or monastery or to attempt violent overthrow.

⁴³¹Quotation of Jeremiah 29:4-7

⁴³²In the context of a State Church or a Religion that forbids private meetings, the Church must continue to organize itself into small enough groups to cultivate spiritual piety and seek protection from its persecutors.

Conclusion

In the coming years, the Church will face manifold challenges and opportunities. In these trying yet exciting times, the saints are called to “endurance and faith” (Rev. 13:10) in pursuing the great calling to follow Christ (Luke 9:23), the great commandment to love God and our neighbours (Matt. 22:34-40), and the great commission to make disciples of the nations (Matt. 28:18-20). We can be faithful knowing God is with us (“I will be with you always,” Matt. 28:20) wherever we go, making disciple-makers. Many men in Scripture walked in faithfulness to God because God was with them.⁴³³ In the face of pressures to conform and compromise, God calls us to faithfulness to him and his Word.

Daniel was faithful to God, but God was with Daniel in the lion’s den (Dan. 6:22). While in exile, God placed him among the most potent occult forces on the earth in the courts of the king of Babylon. Daniel’s relationship with the elite power centre was not confrontational. Daniel walked with God, and God worked supernaturally through him. He demonstrated a resilient faith under the pressure to compromise.⁴³⁴

Daniel did not fear the king, but he purposed to stand for what was correct as a matter of principle in the fear of God. We, too, will be faced with the temptation of two extremes to withdraw or compromise.⁴³⁵ We must remain faithful to God and his Word no matter what may come to test us in the furnace of affliction. We are even called to prosper as we live in Babylon. The prophet Jeremiah brought the word of the Lord to those in exile:

Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage so that they may bear them; multiply there, and do not

⁴³³Quotation of Hebrews 10:23-25.

⁴³⁴In William Symington’s classic book “Nations, as the moral subjects of Messiah the Prince, are under obligation to recognize his rightful authority over them, by swearing allegiance to him. It is the duty of a subject to swear allegiance to his lawful sovereign; at least he must stand prepared to do so when required. So is it with nations... ought to publicly to avow its attachment to the Lord Jesus Christ as its King and Prince, to recognize his legal authority, and to bind itself to his service by oath.” William Symington, *Messiah the Prince: or The Mediatorial Dominion of Jesus Christ* (London, England: T. Nelson and Sons, Paternoster Row, 1881), 256.

⁴³⁵Quotation of Psalm 2:10-12. “Kiss the son” (Ps. 2:7) is a command to “pay homage” to the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, the mediatorial King and Head of his Church.

decrease. But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.⁴³⁶

Daniel sought Babylon's welfare even while not assimilating evil cultural laws and practices. He continued to serve the king of Babylon and survived to serve at the top level in the following Medo-Persian empire. In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul instructs the godly to serve faithfully in submission to the rulers in authority that God places over us (Rom. 13:1-7).

⁴³⁶Quotation of 1 Timothy 6:15-16. Goal: "To disciple the nations by establishing national Reformed Presbyterian churches that rely on Christ to **train, govern, support** and **propagate** themselves." E1 - EvangelizeE2 - EstablishE3 - EquipE4 - Extend RP Member, Congregation, or Committee RP Member, Congregation, or Committee RP Member, Congregation, or Committee Non-RPGMpeople who are interested in having an RP online or in-person communication with online or in-person fellowship of people who are interested in communication with a online or in-person church who are interested in having an RP communication with a online or in-person network of churches who are interested in communication with a Church in the country.having an RP Church in the country.Church in the country.having an RP Church in the country. NoRecommendto RPGM?Not YetNoRecommendto RPGM?Not YetNoRecommendto RPGM?Not YetNoRecommendto RPGM?Not Yet StopYescommunicationContinue informal StopYescommunicationContinue StopYescommunicationContinue StopYescommunicationContinue Initial online commitment and alignment for the purpose of mature man to seek to determine character, planting RP Churches in the country.communication with at least one Initial online mature man leading a fellowship to seek to alignment for the purpose of planting RP determine character, commitment and Churches in the country.communication with at least one Initial online alignment for the purpose of planting RP mature man leading a church to seek to determine character, commitment and Churches in the country.communication with at least one Initial online alignment for the purpose of planting RP mature men leading churches to seek to determine character, commitment and Churches in the country.communication with at least one RPGMfruitfulness to evangelize and gather core group. RP Global Training Network E1 - DiscernmentEvangelize Phase complete. of faithfulness and fruitfulness to establish new believers and lead them to become a mission church. RP Global Training Network E2 - DiscernmentEstablish Phase complete. of faithfulness and RP Global Training Network E3 - Equip them to become an organized church. fruitfulness to equip leaders and lead DiscernmentPhase complete. of faithfulness and fruitfulness to extend churches and lead them to become a Presbytery (National) Discernmentchurch. RP GTN E4 - Extend Phase complete. of faithfulness and Visit Field by at least two RPGM members. Visit Field by at least two RPGM/Commission Visit Field by at least two RPGM/Commission Visit Field by at least two RPGM/Commission Report to the RPGM Board. members. Report to the RPGM Board/Synod. members. Report to the RPGM Board/Synod. members. Report to the RPGM Board/Synod. NoMission ViableField? Not YetNoChurch?Mission ViableNot YettNoOrganized Church?ViableNot YetNoChurch?National ViableNot Yet Continue Continue Continue Continue StopYescommunicationinformal StopYestraining and oversightStopYestraining and oversightStopYestraining and oversight Goal: "To disciple the nations by establishing national Reformed Presbyterian churches that rely on Christ to **train, govern, support** and **propagate** themselves." E0-EmpowerE1 - EvangelizeE2 - EstablishE3 - EquipE4 - Extend Session of a student-under-care) provides to RPGM of member's character, Session (and Presbytery in case commendation and confirmation calling, and commitment to Mission workers sent out by local support of member according to RPGM and Presbytery. Session church in collaboration with the RPGM and Church Session support of member according to the RPGM and Church partnership agreement. according to the RPGM and Session support of member Church partnership agreement. Session support of member according to the RPGM and Church partnership agreement. missionary service. partnership agreement. Communication and Training (MCT + specialization) online and confirm the individual's character, in-person to also commend and convictions and commitment to Ongoing Church partnership agreement. .in accordance to the RPGM and support of mission worker Ongoing Church partnership agreement. .in accordance to the RPGM and support of mission worker Ongoing Church partnership agreement. .in accordance to the RPGM and support of mission worker Ongoing Church partnership agreement. .in accordance to the RPGM and support of mission worker missionary service. . RPGMand fruitfulness to be an effective Discernmentmember of a mission team. of faithfulness and

However, when the state commands the saints to disobey God's law, we must obey God rather than men. (Acts 5:29) At the end of time, when the Antichrist, the man of lawlessness, arises (2 Thess 2:7), God's people must submit to God and resist the devil (James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:9)

Under the pressure to withdraw or compromise, we must remember this: God is on his throne, ruling over the geopolitical dramas. He can predict the future because he ordains the future. Our knowledge is speculative. His foreknowledge is absolute. "Many plans are in a man's heart, but the purpose of the LORD will prevail." (Prov. 19:21)

Behind evil rulers, there are evil spirits having jurisdiction over a territory (Dan. 10:13,21 "Persia," Is. 24:21 "Greece"). Our ultimate enemies are invisible spiritual forces. The battle is not ultimately against the globalist elite. It is not "against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places" (Eph. 6:12).

In the battle, we must remember that we are from God and have overcome the spirit of the antichrist. (1 John 4:3) Christ who is in us is "greater than he who is in the world"; that is the devil. (1 John 4:4) We can also hear the echo of the prophet Elisha saying to his servant when the enemies of God were attacking Israel, "Do not be afraid... for those who are with us are more than those who are with them" (2 Kings 6:16).

In times of persecution, when the church needs to go "underground" to evade persecution wisely, it would be more prudent to be a church of small groups. People gathering in large

fruitfulness to evangelize and Discernment help gather core group. of faithfulness and fruitfulness to help establish new believers and lead them to Discernment become a mission Church. of faithfulness help equip leaders and lead them faithfulness and fruitfulness to to organize a Church. Discernment of churches and lead them to become a and fruitfulness to help extend Presbytery, a National Church Discernment of faithfulness Exploratory/Vision trip(s) to a field to determine if there is an open door for ministry and suitability of the field to the worker(s) Visit Field by 2+ RPGM Visit Field by 2+ RPGM Visit Field by 2+ RPGM members/Comission. Report to the members/Comission. Report to the members/Comission. Report to the members/Comission. Report to the Visit Field by 2+ RPGM members. RPGM Board/Synod. RPGM Board/Synod. RPGM Board/Synod. RPGM Board/Synod. Report to the RPGM Board. No Qualified Workers Mission Not yet No Mission Viable Field? Not Yet No Church? Mission Viable Not Yet No Organized Church? Viable Not Yet No Church? National Viable Not Yet Stop Yes relationship Continue mentoring Stop Yes oversight training and Continue Stop Yes oversight training and Continue Stop Yes oversight training and Continue Stop Yes oversight training and Continue Church. Church status. Gradual EXIT as churches are becoming more reliant on Christ to **train, govern, support, and propagate** themselves.

numbers publicly draw the attention of persecutors, whether from the State or neighbours. The persecuted Covenanters met in “secret” anywhere they could find privacy.

Even in a totalitarian state with bio-surveillance, the Church is not to forsake the gathering of ourselves together (Heb. 10:25). The people of God must make every effort to meet, receive the means of grace (word, sacrament, and prayer), and build each other up in the worship of God. If any government locks the doors of a church building, the elders⁴³⁷ should make it possible for the members to continue to worship in other venues. These private meetings may be considered illegal gatherings, but their people must obey their God rather than men (Acts 5:29).

In countries where it is forbidden to gather to worship the living God, missionaries and national believers must be wise as serpents and innocent as doves (Matt. 10:16) as they seek to meet. To the government, these gatherings are illegal gatherings. *Still*, to God, they are where he chooses to dwell richly (Eph. 3:17). We can learn from those persecuted countries how these small groups of believers find ways to meet for worship and stir up one another to love and good works.

“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering,
for he who promised is faithful.

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works,

not neglecting to meet together,
as is the habit of some,
but encouraging one another,
and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”⁴³⁸

We will not see revival and reformation among the nations unless Christ-exalting churches are established in every place to obey the commands of Christ in the worship of God. We will also not see such churches unless we develop a pipeline of men equipped for service in the church. Spiritual gifted leaders (Eph. 4:11-13) are called in times of peace and persecution to build up the body of Christ to full maturity in Christ.

⁴³⁷From the minutes of the Reformed Presbyterian Theological Colleges Working Group which met on September 21, 2017.

⁴³⁸Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary: Academic Catalog 2016-2017, Vol. 45 (Pittsburgh, PA)

The Church waging spiritual warfare will be confronted by globalist persecutors, their indoctrination, and the use of biotechnology. Still, the Church on mission with Christ will seize the many opportunities offered by global connectivity and education, accelerating the global revival we are witnessing today.

We know the end of the story—God gains the victory and receives all the glory. Christ reigns now, bringing all his enemies under our feet. “The God of peace will soon crush Satan under our feet” (Rom. 16:20). Christ has overcome the world (John 16:33) and the devil (Col. 2:15). It is now the time for harvesting the elect from the four corners of the earth (John 4:23-38), and then the end will come (Matt. 24:14).

In the end, the so-called “mystery, Babylon” and “Babylon, the great” will fall (Rev. 14:8), will face the fury of his wrath (Rev. 16:9) 7:5) and will be destroyed by fire (Rev. 18:9). The martyrs who have cried out “how long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?” (Rev. 6:10) will finally see the vengeance of the LORD (Rev. 19:2).

Although the nations are in uproar in rebellion against Christ,⁴³⁹ the anointed One, the rulers of the earth are warned from heaven,

Now, therefore, O kings, be wise;
be warned, O rulers of the earth.
Serve the LORD with fear,
and rejoice with trembling.
Kiss the Son,
lest he be angry, and you perish in the way,
for his wrath is quickly kindled.
Blessed are all who take refuge in him.⁴⁴⁰

The final page in redemptive history will be the presentation to Christ, the holy city, the new Jerusalem, the Church, and the Bride of Christ (Rev. 21:1-3). Those who have been declared righteous by faith in Christ will be found in pure and spotless robes before the bridegroom and will be found at the Supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:9). At the throne of the Lamb a new song will

⁴³⁹Norman M. Carson, ed. *To God Alone be Glory* (Pittsburgh, PA: RPTS Press, 2008).

⁴⁴⁰“Scottish Reformed Presbyterian Seminary Prospectus,” Accessed December 14, 2018, <http://www.scottishreformedpresbyterianseminary.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/SRPTS-prospectus-2013.pdf>.

be sung, “Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth” (Rev. 5:9).

At the end of all history, all the nations will fear the name of the LORD and all the kings of the earth will fear his glory (Ps. 102:15) “when all things have been subjected to Him” so that at the consummation of all things “God may be all in all” (1 Cor. 15:28).

“... he who is blessed and only Sovereign,
the King of kings and Lord of lords,
who alone has immortality,
who dwells in unapproachable light,
whom no one has ever seen or can see.
To him be honour and eternal dominion.
Amen.”⁴⁴¹

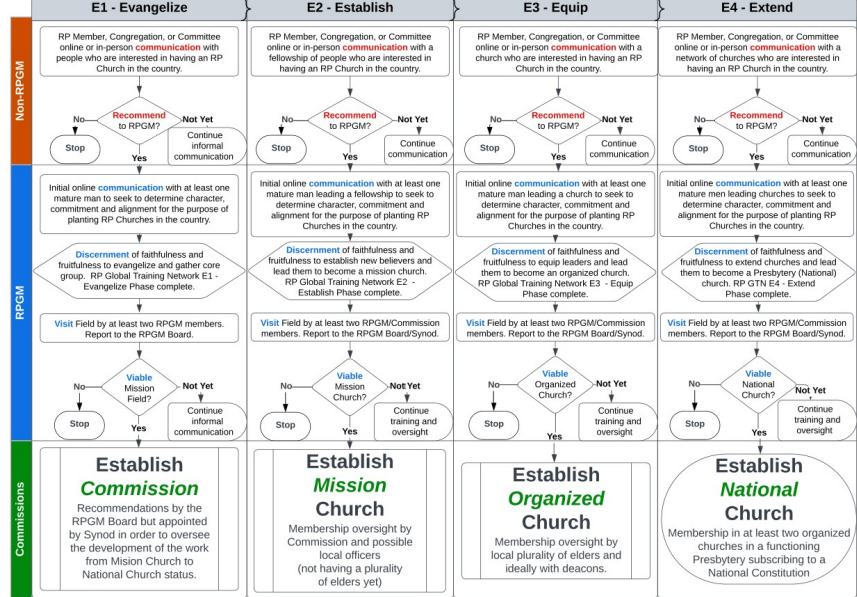
⁴⁴¹“Prospectus for Intake beginning 2015,” accessed December 14, 2018, <http://www.rpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/RTC-prospectus.pdf>

Appendix A



RPGM Discipling Nations Flow Chart - Macedonian Model

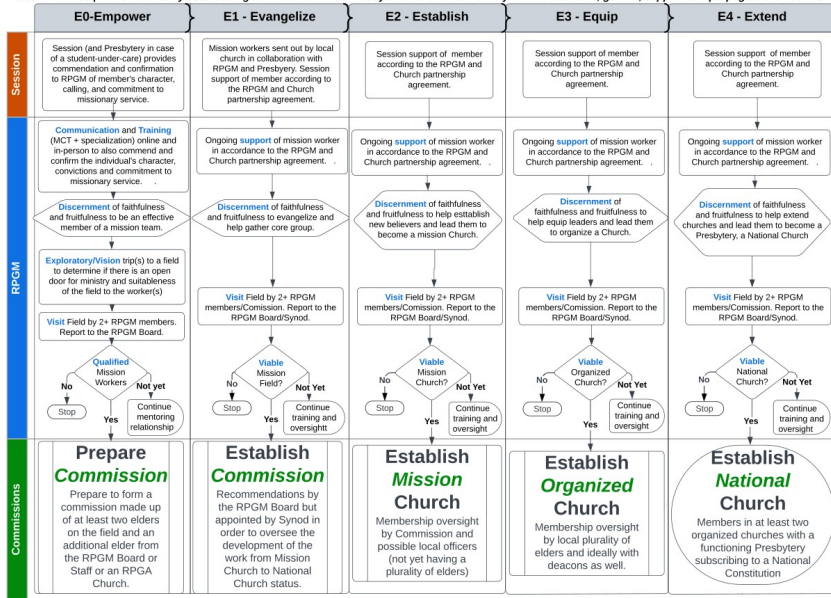
Goal: "To disciple the nations by establishing national Reformed Presbyterian churches that rely on Christ to train, govern, support and propagate themselves."





RPGM Discipling Nations Flow Chart - *Apostolic Model*

Goal: "To disciple the nations by establishing national Reformed Presbyterian churches that rely on Christ to *train, govern, support and propagate* themselves."



Gradual EXIT as churches are becoming more reliant on Christ to *train, govern, support, and propagate* themselves.

A Reformed Presbyterian Model for Theological Education

By: Vince Ward

For: Reformed Presbyterian Theological Colleges Working Group,
an initiative of the Reformed Presbyterian Global Alliance (RPGA)

December 14, 2018

Our world is changing at a pace none can keep up with. What is new and innovative today will soon be obsolete. What do we have in this world which will never change or expire and will speak to every culture and person in history? It is God's inerrant and infallible Word. In whatever form it is communicated orally, on a page or on a screen, the Word of the Lord will stand forever.

Ministers of the gospel are entrusted with the great responsibility of preaching the whole counsel of God and contending for the faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 1:3). Anyone who aspires to the office of a teaching elder must be a faithful steward. How can men who are called to be ministers of the gospel be thoroughly equipped for faithful and fruitful service?

This paper seeks to set forth "a vision and model for theological education in established centres and possible new fields."⁴³⁹ This model must hold fast to the biblical principles and practices of theological education, which are presently found in the Reformed Presbyterian institutions of learning. But how can we refine the paradigm to be more effective and efficient in training men for gospel ministry in order to meet present and future needs?

We must look to the past, to our Master himself, who in his sovereign authority commissions us to disciple nations teaching them to obey his every command (Matthew 28:18-20). We must earnestly guard the good deposit entrusted to us (2 Timothy 1:14), preaching Christ crucified (1 Corinthians 1:23), and his crown rights as mediatorial King over Church and State (Psalm 2).

We will stand on the shoulders of our Covenanter brethren who spilled their blood proclaiming Christ, Zion's only King and Head. As a confessional and covenanting Church, we seek to extend the blessing of Christ's Kingdom to all nations by working as one Reformed Presbyterian Global Alliance with a vision and framework to train and send out a host of labourers into the Lord's harvest.

⁴³⁹ From the minutes of the Reformed Presbyterian Theological Colleges Working Group which met on September 21, 2017.

Reformed Presbyterian Models for Theological Education

The **Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary (RPTS)** has not strayed from teaching God's truth for over two centuries. The purpose of the Master of Divinity program is to prepare men for the gospel ministry. While living in a community with accountability, students are trained and mentored by shepherds and teachers. Upon successful completion, a student will be able to: interpret the Scriptures in the original languages and understand the Reformed faith while stressing Christ's Kingship over every area of life; understand the principles of the mission of the Church; understand and implement the spiritual disciplines necessary for the gospel ministry and perform the duties of an ordained minister according to the Scriptures and our subordinate standards.⁴⁴⁰ As with other RP theological institutions, a Board elected by the Synod provides close oversight to guard and guide the seminary to remain doctrinally sound.⁴⁴¹

Similarly, the **Scottish Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary (SRPTS)** seeks to not only train men *for* the ministry but also *in* ministry. They seek to achieve this by providing students daily scheduled time in reading of God's Word and prayer. They also receive personal mentoring so that they might learn how they are to pastor the flock of Christ toward personal growth in grace and active participation in the body life of the Church. For the faculty, the training of men is "much more than the communication of doctrine. It must have at its heart the Biblical practices of discipling and mentoring."⁴⁴²

The **Reformed Theological College (RTC) in Belfast, Northern Ireland** likewise "focuses not only on encouraging a high level of scholarship but on personal godliness and the development of spiritual gifts and ministry skills"⁴⁴³ As the College is also under the oversight of the Irish Synod, a special Synodical committee was formed in 2012 which considered 'how the selection of candidates for the ministry could and might be improved'. The committee stressed that the primary responsibility of selection resides with the Session of the local congregation to evaluate the personal graces, gifts, and godliness of the candidate. A list of questions was drawn up for the Session to use in the selection process of prospective candidates for the College.

Ottawa Theological Hall (OTH) in Canada is a small church-based seminary that seeks to prepare men for ministry in the context of the Canadian church. The courses are taught by local and visiting professors during non-office hours so that students can continue with their daytime employment. OTH also seeks to integrate theological education into the practical life of the church so that gifts can be evaluated and refined for ministry.⁴⁴⁴

⁴⁴⁰ Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary: Academic Catalog 2016-2017, Vol. 45 (Pittsburgh, PA)

⁴⁴¹ Norman M. Carson, ed. *To God Alone be Glory* (Pittsburgh, PA: RPTS Press, 2008).

⁴⁴² "Scottish Reformed Presbyterian Seminary Prospectus," Accessed December 14, 2018, <http://www.scottishreformedpresbyterianseminary.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/SRPTS-prospectus-2013.pdf>.

⁴⁴³ "Prospectus for Intake beginning 2015," accessed December 14, 2018, <http://www.rpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/RTC-prospectus.pdf>

⁴⁴⁴ "Ottawa Theological Hall," accessed December 14, 2018, rpcottawa.org/connect/oth

The **Kobe Theological Hall (KTH)** in Japan endeavours to equip church officers of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Japan by training men with sound biblical and Reformed Presbyterian theology. Considering the Japanese historical and cultural context, KTH particularly wishes to emphasize the “freedom of faith under the Mediatorial Kingship of Christ in view of the Kingdom of God in Japan.”⁴⁴⁵

Each of these institutions, and others in Asia and Africa, has tailored its paradigm to the context in which they are training men for the ministry. While adaptability is vital to each setting, can a unified model emerge from a study of Scripture and the lessons learned from the present institutions?

Toward a Reformed Presbyterian Model

The need for theological education is reaching crisis levels as Christianity’s centre has moved from the North to the South with the Church growing exponentially in Latin America, Africa, and Asia.⁴⁴⁶ As new opportunities open for Reformed Presbyterian church planting around the globe, our model for theological education should continue to be refined and be made available and adaptable to any context.

The letters to the first churches (especially Ephesians) and the officers of the churches (Timothy and Titus) all provide biblical principles in theological training. At its core, the strategy was rooted in the life and ministry of local churches in which “gifted men” (Ephesians 4:11; 2 Timothy 2:2) entrusted the gospel ministry to other faithful men to establish yet more churches. This reproductive process is exemplified as Paul trained his disciples in the Hall of Tyrannus so that within two years all of Asia Minor heard the Word of the Lord (Acts 19:7-10). The seven churches established in Asia Minor (Revelation 2:1-3:22) are evidence of the church planting strategy launched from Ephesus.

The context in which ministers of the gospel were prepared was the planting and establishing local churches. The multiplication of churches was built on the multiplication of disciples and leaders.⁴⁴⁷ Those who are proven faithful and gifted in the ministry of the church will best be equipped for leadership while continuing to serve the church. The more the training is grounded in real life ministry the greater the potential for growth in convictions, character, and competence. The ultimate goal in the equipping process is to thoroughly furnish men for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17) and set them on a path of lifelong learning of wisdom.

Timothy is an example of a man who was thoroughly trained in the gospel throughout his life. From childhood, Timothy was acquainted with the Holy Scriptures through the instruction of his mother and grandmother (2 Timothy 1:5; 3:14-15). The brothers in the church of Lystra and

⁴⁴⁵ “Kobe Theological Hall: Objectives,” accessed December 14, 2018, <http://www.rpjapan.org/English/KTH/>.

⁴⁴⁶ “Status of Global Christianity,” GordonConwell.edu, accessed December 14, 2028, <http://www.gordonconwell.edu/ockenga/research/documents/StatusofGlobalChristianity2017.pdf>.

⁴⁴⁷ Craig Ott, and Gene Wilson, *Global Church Planting: Biblical Principles and Best Practices for Multiplication* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic), 352-353.

Iconium spoke highly of him encouraging Paul to take him along in the church planting ministry (Acts 16:1-3). Later, Paul wrote a personal letter to Timothy, his “true child in the faith”, to not neglect the gift he received when the elders had laid their hands on him (1 Timothy 4:14). In Paul’s farewell letter, Timothy was charged to entrust the gospel ministry to a third generation of ministers (2 Tim. 2:1-2).

We could make a case, in observing the example of Timothy, that there were three levels of discipleship. The first level was foundational discipleship in his youth, the second level was through practical ministry of church planting and the third level was participation in the preparation of men for the ordained ministry, leading into faithful and fruitful gospel ministries.

The following Table provides a framework and objectives for each Level (Tracks) in a church-based discipleship and theological education model⁴⁴⁸

Table 1

Phases	Evangelize (E1)	Establish (E2)	Equip (E3)	Extend (E4)
Picture	 Seed	 Roots	 Fruit	 More Seeds
LEVEL 1 Discipleship Track	Sowing the seed of the gospel (evangelizing) and prepare people for baptism/membership (Acts 16:31; Mark 1:15)	Establishing every new believer in the gospel through a life of loving obedience to Jesus Christ (1 John 5:3; Colossians 2:7)	Equipping every disciple for works of service so that the Church of Jesus Christ may grow in unity and love (Ephesians 4:11-16)	Multiplying the seed of the gospel through a healthy exercising of gifts given to each part in the Body of Christ (Ephesians 4:16; 1 Corinthians 12:4-7)
Spiritual Maturity	Infant	Youth	Adult	Parent
LEVEL 2 Church Planting or Renewal Track	Evangelizing within the church, locally and through social networks	Establishing new believers through the Discipleship Track	Equipping the leaders in ministry teams (fruitful laborers) and officers in the church. (Elders & Deacons)	Extending the gospel ministry to new fields near and far repeating the process (Level 1 & 2)
Church Planting Phases	Fellowship Church	Mission Church	Organized Church	Reproducing Church
LEVEL 3 Minister Training Track	Thorough training to apply the gospel to self and others (life & doctrine)	Grounding through theological studies, character formation and practical application	Comprehensive equipping for the ordained ministry of the Word and Prayer	Multiplying faithful and fruitful laborers for Kingdom service
Presbytery Licensure	Session commending men Presbytery reviewing and approving	License to Preach	License to Receive a Call & Ordination	Examining Students Reproducing Ministers

⁴⁴⁸ The Discipleship Track is the foundational level of discipleship from the spiritual maturity of an infant in Christ to a reproducing disciple-maker. My website provides an introductory curriculum for this level of discipleship. (<http://theonetwork.org/the-core.html>) The second track is for those participating in a church planting effort. The objectives would be the same for those seeking renewal in an existing church. The third track is for men called to the gospel ministry, beginning with the screening from the session, coming under the care of Presbytery, and completing the theological studies and licensure examinations toward ordination. The goal for those called to the office of elders is to reproduce more disciples and officers for the building up of the church to the glory of God.

Principles toward a unified Reformed Presbyterian Model

As a summary, the following are principles to guide us toward a unified model for theological education in Reformed Presbyterian churches around the globe.

Context:

- The best context for preparing men for gospel ministry is training in a setting similar to future ministry (Examples: rural vs. urban, type of mission field, etc.).
- Making full use of available technologies and flexibility with the hours and venues for instruction can allow for more time to practically apply learning objectives.

Curriculum:

- There must be a balance in the core curriculum and electives toward the development of *biblical convictions* (head), *godly character* (heart), and *ministry competencies* (hands).
- Assessments are valuable to measure growth regularly in each of these areas through various forms of examination and mentor evaluation in personal godliness and competencies. Self-evaluation and personal reflection (journaling) is also vital for growth in grace.
- Training should be customized as much as possible to the individual in preparing them for their unique calling. This can be achieved through specialized learning-by-doing and learning-by-teaching practicums followed up by reflection and evaluation.

Structure:

- Theological institutions support the denomination by providing expertise and resources in teaching, mentoring, and coaching.
- Denominational seminaries (eg. RPTS) can serve as the central hub for a network of smaller centres in order that cohorts of students may gather for instruction, accountability and mentoring. The goal is to have every student to be surrounded by an abundance of counsellors (Proverbs 11:14).

Oversight:

- The local church Session assesses and commends the students for their theological education and continues to oversee the spiritual welfare of the student and his family.
- The Presbytery shepherds and oversees students-under-care during their theological studies toward ordination.
- The denominational Board provides accountability for the theological institution to remain faithful to the Word of God.
- In addition to serving in a local congregation, a minister must be able to work constructively within the Church's courts for the good of the wider Church. This is another reason why training received by a central institution plays an important role in Theological Education.

The following table⁴⁴⁹ outlines the content to a core curriculum for the training of ministers in *biblical convictions* (head), *godly character* (heart); and *ministry competencies* (hands).

Table 2

Convictions	
Head  Biblical Convictions	Theological Education (Core academic training in biblical wisdom) 1. Biblical Studies 2. Theology (Biblical, Covenant, Systematic, Historical, Practical, Pastoral, etc.) 3. Languages (Greek and Hebrew) 4. History (Church, RP, etc.) 5. Hermeneutics 6. Homiletics 7. RP Distinctives 8. Counselling 9. Apologetics 10. Ethics 11. Missions 12. Church Planting
Character	
Heart  Godly Character	Personal Godliness (Training by the spiritual disciplines & mentoring) 1. Mentors assess student/semester: • Godliness Assessments • Gift Assessments • Ministry Assessments 2. The Gospel and Sanctification 3. Spiritual Disciplines
Competencies	
Hands  Ministry Competencies	Pastoral Ministry (Training by doing with mentoring/coaching): 1. Preaching: Sermon preparation and preaching with evaluations 2. Counselling: Observing counselling, assisting in counselling and leading in counselling with evaluation 3. Evangelism/Apologetics: Training in various contexts and with people of different worldviews (with study and evaluation) 4. Discipleship: Small group and one-on-one discipleship (training and leading with evaluations) 5. Marriage & Parenting: Study, counselling and mentoring with evaluations 6. Diaconal ministry: Study and service with deacons in the church and community 7. Missions: Study with a cross-cultural mission trip with reflection/evaluation 8. Administration: Church administration (writing, speaking, budgets, etc...) 9. Church polity: Attending session meetings, Presbytery/Synod (with reference to Constitution) 10. Cross-cultural ministry (Cross-cultural evangelism and discipleship, etc.)

⁴⁴⁹ Note: This is an expansion of Table 1: Level 3: E2-E3

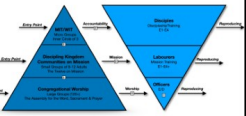
There will always be some tension in striving to maintain the balance between local and central training. We need both. Central training provides an opportunity to develop collegiality and a sense of common denominational identity, as well as allowing instruction from and interaction with specialists.

Local training does not uproot students and their families from the field, keeps them focused on disciple-making in the church and provides the context for the development of convictions, character, and competencies. Both local church-based training centres and central theological institutions must learn to share their strengths while working together toward the common goal to make disciple-makers, plant reproducing churches and multiply ministers.

These principles will help guide theological institutions as they seek to offer accessible training to gospel labourers near and far. There isn't a mould that fits in all places, but we can strive for a model which can be adapted to all contexts. Let us seek to refine our paradigm in order to prepare ministers of the gospel and to establish Reformed Presbyterian churches in strategic centres so that all may hear the Word of the Lord.

“The grass withers and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever.” 1 Peter 1:25

Appendix C

FOUNDATIONS			
"For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1			
Our Vision: <i>What we see</i>	A family of disciple-making church planting RP churches on a global mission beginning at home.	Our Plan <i>How to get there?</i>	Discipleship Phases: (E1-E4 in MIT/WIT groups) E1: Evangelize: Sowing of seed of the Word (Infant) E2: Establish: Being rooted in the Word (Youth) E3: Equip: Bearing fruit by the Word (Adult) E4: Extend: Sowing a forest of the Word (Parent)
Our Mission: <i>Why do we exist?</i>	We are united, following Jesus, making disciplemakers, planting RP reproducing churches to the praise of Jesus Christ.		Church Planting Phases: (E1-E4+ in DKCoMs) Fellowship: Evangelize (E1) a community Mission Church: Establish (E2) the new believers Organized Church: Equip (E3) the members Reproducing Church: Extend (E4) to other areas
Our Doctrine: <i>What we believe?</i>	Our doctrinal standards are summarized in the Westminster Confession of Faith with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms.		
Our Values: <i>What is important?</i>	1. Gospel-Centred: The good news of grace in Jesus Christ is at the centre of our lives and ministries. 2. Mission-Driven: We are on mission with God to bring the good news to the world. 3. People-Focused: We love all people because they are made in the image of God. 4. Kingdom-Advancing: We seek the kingdom of God in all spheres of life. 5. Christ-Exalting: We do all for the glory of the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit.		Training (Funnel): 1. Level 1: Gospel Groups - Men/Women in Training (E1-E4) 2. Level 2: Discipling <i>Kingdom Communities</i> on Mission (E1-E4+) 3. Level 3: Officer Training (Elder/Deacon; Teaching Elder)  Seasons (Equipping) Fall Semester: E1-E2/E1-E2+ (Elder/Deacon: Testing) Winter Semester: E3-E4; E3-E4+ (Elder/Deacon: Training) Spring Semester: Retreats/Workshops Summer Semester: Mission Training Timeline (By faith): 1. Phase 1: Planting DNA; form & training core CPing team 2. Phase 2: Establish disciple-making church of GGs in KCs 3. Phase 3: Equip by multiplying elders/deacons in KCs 4. Phase 4: Extend by multiplying church planters Curriculum (Before Launch): Personal Worship (3x/day); Family Worship (Daily); Membership; MIT/WIT (E1-E4) (Weekly); Mission Training (E1-E4+) (Lord's Day); Elder Training (bi-monthly); Deacon Training (bi-monthly); Teaching Elder Training; Resources List
Our Maxims: <i>What guides us?</i>	- Praying onsite with insight. The church is birthed by prayer. - Workers and resources are in the harvest (Matt 6:33; 9:35-38) - An 'outsular' Church on the move - Discipling Kingdom Communities on Mission - Every member ministering according to their gifts (1 Cor 12) - Meeting anywhere publicly and house-to-house (Acts 20:20) - Where he has you, doing all that you can with what he gives you - Church gathers (Lord's Day) and scatters (every other day) - Healthy leaders = healthy churches = reproducing churches - Acts 2 Core Church: Word, Fellowship, Prayer, Lord's Supper - Organic growth (trellis & vine) in any context or culture - Potential for harvest in every seed (gospel) bearing believer 4 Phases: Come&see; Follow Me; Abide in Me; Go Make Disciples - Saturation and permeation of the gospel (Matthew 28:18-20) - Tell our stories in the grand story of God's glory - The older trains the younger (Titus 2) - Who is your Paul, Timothy and Barnabas? - Fluency in the language of the gospel - Leaders (Eph 4:11) equip the saints for the ministry (4:12) - Fully employing bi-vocational and lay leaders - Tithe is the floor - joy and sacrificial giving is the goal - Cultural anthropologists always learning - Eat together and share stories of God's glory - Cultivating a culture of joy and gratitude - You become what you celebrate - Church across cultures and generations as ONE in Christ - Structure for growth - keep refining the process within - Rev 5-9 Vision: Unity and Diversity in praising the Lamb		

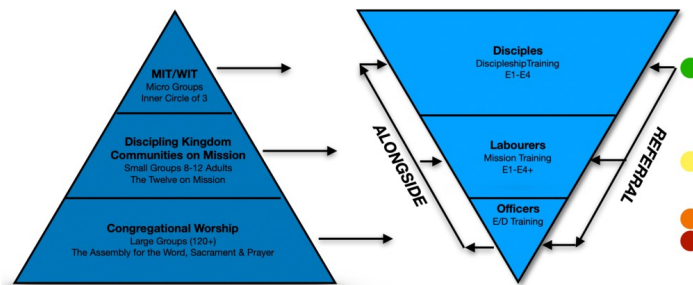
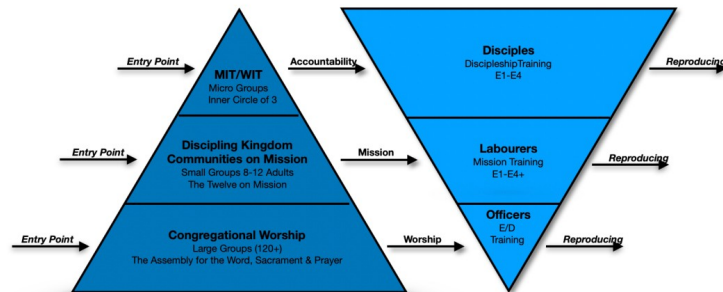
Level 1 Gospel Groups: Men in Training (MIT)/Women in Training (WIT)				
Discipleship	E1 Evangelize	E2 Establish	E3 Equip	E4 Extend
Picture	 Seed	 Roots	 Fruit	 More Seeds
Call	"Come & See" (John 1:38-39)	"Follow Me" (Mark 1:16-17)	"Abide in me" (John 15:1-11)	"Go & disciples nations" (Matthew 28:18-20)
Response	"I believe it" (Trusts in Christ)	"I live it" (Transformed by Christ)	"I model it" (Teaches others)	"I reproduce it" (Trains Trainers")
Growth	Infant in Christ (1 Corinthians 3:1)	Youth in Christ (1 John 2:12-13)	Adult in Christ (Titus 2:6)	Parent in Christ (Ephesians 4:13-15)
Commitment	To Christ	To Growth	To Ministry	To Multiplication
Outcomes	'Head' (Knowing) - Repents of sin and turns to God - Trusts Christ as Lord and Saviour - Understands essentials of the faith - Comprehends new standing and identity in Christ - Discovers what pleases God 'Heart' (Being) - Accepts God's love - Cherishes God's salvation - Reveres God's Word - Receives God's gifts thankfully 'Hands' (Doing) - Begins to practice spiritual disciplines - Begins to put off old self and put on new self - Begins to communicate faith to others - Becomes a covenant member	'Head' (Knowing) - Understands Bible's central message - Grasps power of Gospel sanctification - Discerns cardinal doctrine - Realizes responsibilities in different spheres 'Heart' (Being) - Models servant attitude - Exhibits submissive spirit - Displays passion for purity 'Hands' (Doing) - Practices spiritual disciplines regularly - Pursues sanctification intentionally - Lives out new identity in Christ joyfully - Communicates faith passionately - Participates in ministry training willingly	'Head' (Knowing) - Interprets Scriptures accurately - Arranges biblical worldview - Systematizes key doctrine - Defends faith persuasively 'Heart' (Being) - Experiences God's love deeply - Expresses love for God affectionately - Emulates God's love instinctively 'Hands' (Doing) - Pursues God's presence actively - Engages enemy within/without ruthlessly - Displays fruit of Spirit habitually - Seeks opportunities to serve sacrificially - Leads in work and ministry diligently	'Head' (Knowing) - Studies biblical principles of leadership - Researches biblical principles of mission - Develops in-depth apologetics 'Heart' (Being) - Intrinsically motivated by God's glory - Consciously values Christ above all - Resolutely committed to the faith - Willingly obedient to the point of death 'Hands' (Doing) - Walks in God's presence continually - Models Christian life steadfastly - Multiplies disciple-making tirelessly - Extends God's kingdom strategically

Level 2: Discipling Kingdom Communities on Mission				
Discipleship	E1 Evangelize	E2 Establish	E3 Equip	E4 Extend
Church	Fellowship	Mission	Organized	Multiplying
Membership	New believer	Baptized & Communing	Trainer/Elder/Deacon	TOT/Teaching Elder
Head  To know Inform	Mission Training: • Gospel • Worldviews • Fellowship Assignment: • <i>The Master Plan of Evangelism</i> By Coleman • Reading through NT	Mission Training: • Discipleship • Ethics • Covenanting Assignment: • <i>The Lost Art of Disciplemaking</i> by Eims • Reading through Bible	Mission Training: • Equipping • Gifts • Leadership Assignment: • <i>Spiritual Leadership</i> by Sanders • Outline through Bible • Reformation & ESV Study Bible	Mission Training: • Church Planting • Mission • Reproduction Assignment: • <i>Global Church Planting</i> by Ott & Wilson • Commentary through Bible
Heart  To Believe: Transform	Books to Read: • What is the Gospel? - Carson • Power of Gospel - Bridges Coaching • Cross-Centered Life Evaluation And Action Plan	Books to Note: • War Room - Kendrick • Spiritual Disciplines - Whitney • Holiness - Ryle Coaching • Cross-Centered Life Evaluation and Action Plan	Books to Summarize: • Enemy Within - Lundgaard • Godly Man/Woman - Hughes • Devoted to God - Ferguson Coaching • Character Assessment • Growth Plan • Mentoring	Books to Review: • Mortification of Sin - Owen • Gospel Mystery - Marshall • ... many more Coaching • Character Assessments • Growth Plans
Hands  To Do: Obedience	• Evangelism Workshop • Hospitality Mentoring • Street Evangelism • MIT/WIT (Modeled) • Personal Worship (1x/day) • Family Worship - Bible	• Discipleship Workshop • Older-Younger Discipling • MIT/WIT (Assisted) • Personal Worship (2x/day) • Family Worship - Bible + SC • Marriage/Family Counseling (Modeled)	• Elder/Deacon Training (1 yr +) • Ministry Leadership Training • MIT/WIT (Watched) • Personal Worship (3x/day) • Family Worship - Bible + LC • Marriage/Family Counseling (Assisted)	• Teaching Elder Training (3 yrs +) • Network oversight training • Leadership Coaching • MIT/WIT (TOT) • Personal Worship (4x/day) • Family Worship - Bible + WCF • Marriage/Family Counseling (Watched)

Level 3: Officer Training - Elder/Deacon				
Officers	Elders		Deacons	
Seasons	Testing	Training	Testing	Training
Head  To know Inform	Books to Read & Discuss Testing Period	Books/Manual to Read/Discuss: - Unto Every Good Work by C&C - Elders of the Church by Eyres Bible & Theology Course: - WCF Overview - Reformation Study Bible & ESV Study Bible Notes	Books to Read & Discuss Testing Period	Books/Manual to Read & Discuss Training of Deacons (OPC) Basic Theology Course: Reformation Study Bible Notes
Heart  To Believe: Transform	1st: Character Assessment (self) Session assessment Growth in Grace plan	2nd: Character Assessment (self) Session assessment Growth in Grace plan	1st: Character Assessment (self) Session/Diaconate assessment Growth in Grace plan	2nd: Character Assessment (self) Session/Diaconate assessment Growth in Grace plan
Hands  To Do: Obedience	Observations in testing in home and church: Reading Teaching Preaching Counseling Teaching Evangelism Managing household	MAWLing with Evaluations in the following: Reading Teaching Preaching Counseling Leading Evangelism Sacraments	Observations in testing in home and church: Serving Counseling Managing household Stewardship resources	MAWLing with Evaluations in following: Serving Counseling Managing Stewardship

Level 3: Officer Training - Teaching Elder		
The Man	The Message	The Mission
Character	Convictions	Competencies
Year/Phase 1: Presbytery Receiving Men in Training. <i>Licence to Preach</i>		
Plans by student - Lifelong learning I Plan - Growth in Grace Plan Assessments by Session - Gift Assessments - Character Assessments Prepare for Presb Exam - Personal Godliness	Bible - Bible-in-a-Year Reading: Outlining - OT/NT Survey with Textbooks/Reference - Interpretation/Hermeneutics - Greek I & Hebrew I Theology - Systematic Theology I - Study and Memorizing Shorter Catechism - Biblical Theology History - Overview and summarize timeline Ministry - Evangelism & Apologetics - Discipleship - Preaching: Introduction, Gospels	With Academic Mentors: - Practice reading Gk & Heb bi-weekly - Exegesis evaluation for sermon prep - Review Theology work monthly - Theology table-talk discussions - Preparation for Presbytery exams With Academic Dean: - Oversee progress with spiritual life, studies, plans & papers bi-weekly - Evangelism & Apologetics practicum - Discipleship practicum - Leading a small group bible study With Session oversight: - Teach classes for adult education Help organize & oversee practicums - Preaching at least 5 times in region
Year/Phase 2: Presbytery First Set of Exams (Grammar Stage: Knowing)		
Plans by student - Lifelong learning II Plan - Growth in Grace Plans Assessments by Session - Gift Assessments - Character Assessments Prepare for Presb Exam - Personal Godliness	Bible - Bible-in-a-Year Reading: Summaries - Greek II & Hebrew II Theology - Systematic Theology I & Standards: Analysis - Study Larger Catechism - Covenant Theology History - History Review prepare for Presbytery Exam - Write a history paper for Presbytery Ministry - Evangelism/Discipleship - Pastoral Theology - Counseling: Intro, Marriage and family - Preaching: Psalms, Doctrine, OT Narratives	With Academic Mentors: - Practice reading Gk & Heb bi-weekly - Exegesis evaluation for sermon prep - Guidance with exegesis papers - Review Theology work monthly - Theology table-talk discussions - Preparation for Presbytery exams With Academic Dean: - Oversee progress with spiritual life, studies, plans & papers bi-weekly - Counseling practicums - Preaching once in every church - Leading a small group bible study With Session oversight: - Teach classes for adult education - Help organize & oversee practicums
Year/Phase 3: Presbytery Second Set of Exams (Logic Stage: Understanding)		
Plans by student - Lifelong learning III Plan - Growth in Grace Plans Assessments by Session - Gift Assessments - Character Assessments Prepare for Presb Exam - Personal Godliness In pastoral ministry - Readiness for Pastoral Ministry - Ongoing mentoring in life & ministry	Bible - Bible-in-a-Year Reading: Exegetical Notes - Greek and Hebrew Exegesis Theology - Westminster Standards & Reformed Creeds - Systematic Theology III - Study Westminster Confession of Faith - RP Worship & Constitution History - Historical Theology - Scottish History Ministry - Evangelism/Discipleship - Counseling: Advanced (Accreditation) - Preaching: Prophetic/Apocalyptic Books - Ethics - Mercy Ministries - Care & Admin of Church - Church Planting and Missions	With Academic Mentors: - Practice reading Gk & Heb bi-weekly - Exegesis evaluation for sermon prep - Review Theology work monthly - Theology table-talk discussions - Guidance with "Ministry Phil." paper - Preparation for Presbytery exams With Academic Dean: - Oversee progress with spiritual life, studies, plans & papers bi-weekly - Leading a small group bible study - Counseling, Diaconal, Admin, Church Planting/ Missions practicum - Preaching (every genre) & at least once in every church in Canada Session oversight: - Teach classes for adult education Help organize & oversee practicums
FINAL: Presbytery Last Set of Exams (Rhetoric Stage: Defense). <i>License to Receive a Call</i>		

Appendix D



Biblical Counseling Referral System	
Groups/People	When to Refer?*
Disciples: Members	Practicing of the "one-anothers" (in male or female groups of 2-3) with a competency to counsel in the basic issues. Fellow disciple refers to lay leader when hearing and observing patterns of anger, conflict, fear, worry, temptation, and trials. Fellow disciple refers to Diaconate if there is a physical need.
Labourers: Lay Leaders	Leading in the practice of the "one-anothers" (in male or female groups of 8-12 adults) Lay leader trained in IBCD Level 1 (minimum) can come alongside the disciple (advocate) to help counsel the fellow disciple in the more difficult issues. Lay leader refers to Elders for concerns which are more complex.
Officers (Deacons/Elders.Ministers)	Overseeing the physical (diaconate) and spiritual wellbeing of the church. Deacons come alongside the groups to help meet the spiritual needs of the member. Elders come alongside lay leaders to train, mentor and coach the lay leaders and members to counsel. Teacher in Elders with ACBC certification and Elders trained in IBCD Level 2 (minimum) can come alongside the lay leader, advocate and member to help address the more complex cases. This can involve cases such as major conflict, addictions, and abuse. Counseling of the crisis cases are addressed with everyone concerned under the leadership of the Teaching Elder. This can involve cases such as domestic violence or death of a loved one.
*Always respect confidentiality. When referring, first receive agreement that you are seeking help from the lay leader or deacon/elder. When it is required by law to report (eg. sexual abuse), it must be done as soon as possible and have the elders notified.	

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