

# Inspirational Sources for Church Development

## A Discussion of Selected Topics from the Church Growth Movement and from Offshoots that Arose in its Wake

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### Abstract

The purpose of this article is to identify and discuss key issues in church growth movement and the literature following in its wake, which represents vital sources for the emerging discipline in practical theology of church development. The church growth movement has had a strong impact on churches around the globe. Factors such as scriptural authority, evangelism, cultural openness and relevance, pastoral leadership, organization, planning, vision and goals are among issues and factors discussed in the literature. Among the shortcomings of church growth thinking is an all-too-simple theoretical reasoning, a lack of causal modeling and theological issues only superficially discussed. Oftentimes, the growth is assumed to come simply by addressing a few factors. Nevertheless, several of the issues and factors that are identified and discussed have influenced subsequent work on church development.

### Introduction

Church development has been discussed and written about dating back to the time of the early Christians. At all times throughout history, including the New Testament era, there has been a strong focus on developing good congregations: how this is done and what forms church development has taken at any time depend on both external and internal circumstances, causing church activities to adapt to the situation and reorient. Since the beginning of the 1960s, there has been an increasing focus on what creates church growth, based on the work of Donald McGavran at Fuller Theological Seminary in California.

McGavran's starting point was his experiences as a missionary in India, his insights into the revival traditions of the 1700s and 1800s, and the knowledge of missiologist Roland Allan and Methodist bishop John Waskom Pickett. These two authors conducted studies on the effect of missionary work and were critical of the strategies that were chosen. The *purpose* of this article is to identify and discuss the key issues in church growth studies developed by McGavran and

in the context that evolved around and followed him, which represents key sources for the emerging discipline in practical theology of church development.

There are research efforts on church development conducted today within the framework of the national churches, e.g., by the Norwegian School of Theology, and within the framework of the free church communities, e.g., Ansgar Theological College, the Norwegian School of Leadership and Theology and the Örebro School of Theology. This article is largely based on the thinking within a Free Church context. *The contribution* of this article primarily relates to the identification and discussion of key points in the literature following the church growth movement. This movement has had a strong impact on recent studies on church development. In the discussion, I also address some weaknesses in this literature. Although I refer to some theological critiques, the critical reasoning in this paper is mainly done on the basis of behavioral scientific arguments because that is my field of research.

Some use the term “church growth movement”<sup>1</sup> based on what occurred in the aftermath of McGavran. This usage was most likely an accurate term until the 1980s, when a plurality of thinking about church growth had grown, making the field more diverse. Later in the article, I also examine some contributions that can be said to be offshoots of the early church growth thinking, although they are also critical of parts of their source (natural church development (NCD), which initially was known as natural church growth, the purpose-driven church, seeker-sensitive worship, emerging churches and house churches). All these directions are relatively pragmatic in their arguments for the organization and management of churches. In the literature developed by writers within these traditions, the connection to the church growth movement is easy to observe, both thematically and as a starting point as one progresses (away?) from it. Because the focus of this article is inspirational sources for today's church development, I do not discuss the latest contributions within church development but only note some of them.

Now, it must be noted that it is not easy to classify contributions to church growth and church development. The argument used and sentiments that have emerged have much in common, but there are also some differences. This statement also applies to the group of studies that often is classified as belonging to the church growth movement. In this presentation, I first outline the main conclusions of the work that were reached in the first decades of church growth research. In many ways, these researchers were the first who initiated a systematic effort to obtain

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<sup>1</sup> Church growth is not given any specific definition beyond the purely linguistic. The church growth movement and church growth thinking refer to the work and thinking that were developed by, around and following the work of Professor Donald McGavran at Fuller Theological Seminary. It is not possible to give a precise definition of this movement beyond saying that the issues I address in the subsequent main section of this article were central themes in the works that emerged through McGavran. The work that was performed in this movement does not always meet the standards of scientific research in the field of theology or the behavioral sciences. It represents a slightly more advanced form of consultant reports. However, there is barely any other academic work that has had a stronger influence on Free Church congregational thinking the last 100 years. Therefore, there is a good reason to dwell on this research and thinking. The other topics discussed in this article are largely evolutions of church growth thinking, and they are also included because they are important, at least for free church ecclesiology, and because they are precursors of the efforts currently being made to build up a field that I refer to here as church development. The focus here is primarily on church growth in a Free Church setting. The ambition is to develop research that meets the demands of scientific research within the emerging field of church development. One important challenge that this field has is that it is developed on the boundary between theological and empirical research traditions.

a better insight into church leadership and organization, and they were early adopters of applying knowledge from the behavioral sciences into a church setting.

It must be noted that much of the literature that has been produced within this tradition can be criticized for lacking a scientific approach. In particular, this critique applies to the more empirically based reasoning. It is easy to note weaknesses in retrospect, such as the insufficient systematic processing of empirical information and critical theological discussion of practices. However, this tradition, as I show in the following, created a number of interesting thoughts on why some churches grow and others do not. In some of these areas, there are also reasonably good studies.

In the following, I explain the central thoughts in the church growth literature. Some critical arguments are made along the way. Then, I follow with discussions of NCD, purpose-driven and seeker-sensitive congregations, emerging churches and house churches. Before I conclude, I examine some general weaknesses in the literature.

## Some key elements of the early church growth movement

### **The Bible as the foundation**

From the beginning, church growth thinking emphasized that churches seldom grow if they do not emphasize the authority of the Bible. The necessity of truly believing in what one is doing has been underlined since its inception (McGavran, 1955). Kelly's (1986) study is often used to indicate that this conclusion is also empirically correct. The study shows that conservative churches in the United States are growing, whereas liberal churches are becoming smaller. Church growth thinkers were early adopters of concepts and arguments from anthropology, sociology and management (McGavran & Wagner, 1990). The behavioral sciences are understood as useful tools for the church's ministry, which is one of the reasons the church growth movement was criticized for lacking a theological anchor even as its initial developers strongly argued that the thinking was grounded in a conservative theological base. Subsequently, the relationship between the authority of the Bibles and church growth has been discussed more thoroughly. The behavioral sciences are considered tools. Where there is conflict between the behavioral sciences and the Bible concerning the conclusion, the Bible must prevail (See f.ex. Wagner, 1981).

### **Focus on growth**

In the church growth literature, the concept of growth is central. It is emphasized that God wants growth and that growth is biblical. Gibbs (1992, p. 26) expresses it as follows: "... I want to emphasize the fact that Scripture clearly demonstrates that it is God's intention that the Kingdom should grow and not remain static." I do not discuss the growth concept thoroughly here, but I simply want to note that several scriptures underpin that God's intention is the growth of his kingdom.

The small seed that grows into a large tree can be used as an illustration (Matt 13:31, Mark 4:30, Luke 13:18). Similarly, the emergence of the kingdom of God on earth had a small beginning, but it has nevertheless caused a very large growth. The seed planted in good soil produces thirty, sixty or even one hundred times what was originally sown. The parable about the seed and the mustard seed (Matt 13:31 to 35) provides a warning about the dangers of numerical growth, but simultaneously, according to Gibbs (1992), it confirms that such growth characterizes the kingdom of God.

Scriptures that address the importance of growth in the kingdom of God illustrate the importance of growth (Matt 13:47-48, Matt 22:1-14). Gibbs (1992) emphasizes that it is essential to understand the relationship between the growth of God's kingdom and church growth because a close identification of the church as the kingdom of God can hinder us from seeing the church's imperfection. A shift in focus from Christ to the evangelization of the church may be in danger of decaying to a desire to only win new members. The church, however, has a central place in God's plan of salvation. Examples of this place are Jesus' answer to Peter's confession in Matt 16:17-19 and Paul's description of Aristarchus, Mark and Justus as his partners in planting churches and the ministry of God's kingdom in Col. 4:11. The separation of church from the kingdom of God breaks the thread of hope and destroys its binding community to Christ as Savior and lord (Gibbs, 1992). Being a responsible member of a local church is understood as a visible mark of growth (Kurian, 2010).

Concerning the growth of the true church, in his doctoral thesis, Van Engen (1981) argues that growth must be included among the factors that should characterize the church. This inclusion does not always imply an increase in number. It will depend on many factors in the community where the church works. The desire for growth is the criterion that must form the basis for the evaluation of the church. According to van Engen, such a desire must not simply be empty words but a concrete and substantial effort for the growth to occur. Therefore, one cannot ignore the knowledge and advice that exist about how one should facilitate and pursue growth. The absence of growth must always lead to an examination: is there anything more we can do to obtain new growth for the church?

### **Evangelism, spiritual gifts and discipleship**

Surrendering to Christ often occurs through social networks and not as an immediate surrender in a random campaign. The significance of personal evangelization work is observed when a new person becomes a Christian. Through his or her effort, family and friends often become Christians and enter into the church. Each church member's evangelization is essential for growth in the local church (McGavran, 1988).

In his missionary work, McGavran (1955) observed that investment in the diaconal institution and buildings did not lead to church growth. The church had forgotten the biblical principles of missionary work that are shown in Acts, he said. Instead, there were unbiblical traditions and methods. The development of institutions that swallowed large financial resources in favor of the preaching ministry was one of the issues that were criticized. He therefore believed that it was

important to go back to Acts to learn how to do missionary work. Among other things, this belief led to the conclusion that evangelization in the spirit and power was very important (McGavran, 1988). Moreover, it was particularly through Wagner (1979, 1988a) that spiritual gifts became a vital part of evangelism and church ministry. An important impulse here came from the large church growth in Latin America (Wagner, 1988b). Already, this argumentation shows pragmatism and the willingness to observe effects and then act on them, while referring to the Scripture to substantiate the veracity of the observation. Naturally, this argumentation is a difficult rationale from a theological and social scientific perspective.

In connection with evangelism, church growth thinking emphasizes the importance of following up decisions to follow Christ with lasting discipleship training. It is claimed that the goal in much traditional evangelization was achieved when a non-Christian gave a positive verbal response to the message. In the great commission, the effort "to make disciples" is the central purpose. In other words, the sign of the result is obtained when a change in lasting behavior shows that the individual has become a disciple (Arn, 1986).

Without joining a local church, a convert cannot receive the full meaning of being a disciple. Moreover, the individual believer cannot fulfill his or her service in the Kingdom without being part of a local church. When the individual fulfills his or her service in the congregation to which he or she is called, the discipleship is filled with meaning. Evangelization is therefore not completed before a person shows responsible participation in a local church (McGavran, 1955).

If this line of argument is our starting point, then the responsibility of the church is to evangelize not only by spreading the message but also by helping new converts in the process until they have become active disciples. On this basis, a church must put as much emphasis on organizing efforts to lead new believers into an active church service as it puts on organizing various campaigns. This thinking also means that one cannot be content with counting those who give a positive verbal response to the message when measuring the results of evangelization. Because a successful result of evangelization is responsible participation in a congregation, it is more accurate to measure performance by counting the number of persons who are integrated into a church.

Thus, an important part of the basis of church growth is that evangelism is about bringing people into a local church. A criticism of this proposition is that discipleship involves something more. The disciple is also a student in a learning process that is willing to study the Bible, listen to lessons and act accordingly. A central concept in the work of evangelization is receptivity. The message is that we have to increase the focus on those who we think are susceptible. With customs from biblical language, the point is to use resources where 'markets are green to autumn' (McGavran, 1988, p. 48).

### **Evangelism and/or social work**

McGavran (1955) had grown tired of the structure of large costly institutions within social care because they did not lead many people to repentance and into a local church. The issue of evangelism versus social responsibility was debated heavily within the church growth movement in its

early years. It was very clear that evangelistic activities should have a higher priority than building social institutions. This attitude has gradually changed somewhat. An important reason for this change is that church growth researchers quickly became central in the Lausanne movement. Wagner's involvement during the design of the Lausanne Covenant and his studies on the works of John Stott were especially important. The Lausanne Pact notes that evangelism and social political involvement are both parts of the Christian's duty (Article 5). Wagner (1981) therefore changed position and argued that missionary work encompasses both a cultural and an evangelistic mandate.

The cultural mandate includes Christian social responsibility. The Church has no opportunity to choose whether it will become involved in social services; the lifestyle of the Kingdom requires it. Nonetheless, it is still emphasized that it is necessary to prioritize evangelism. The distinction between the two mandates was confirmed in the Lausanne Covenant (Article 5).

In liberal theology, Wagner (1981) argues that one can often track a reluctance to place the spiritual over the physical. In line with the Lausanne Covenant, Wagner claims that the Church's mission of sacrificial service puts evangelism at the forefront (Article 6). This priority was underlined even more strongly in 1980 at the meeting of the Lausanne Movement in Thailand. This emphasis is not a denial that evangelism and society work closely together but a recognition that no human need is greater than the need to be reconciled with the Creator (Wagner, 1981).

The pragmatic attitude of the church growth movement is evident in this question. Limited resources often make it necessary to prioritize evangelism. In the end, the congregations that make this prioritization will be those that do the most for the poor and disadvantaged. Wagner (1976) believes that, for example, churches that concentrate on developing a ministry philosophy around social work in the long term tend to lose social strength. This tendency is ironic because intention of socially oriented pastors is precisely the opposite (Kelly, 1986; Wagner, 1976, p. 175). The reasoning behind this thinking is that churches that primarily prioritize social work will often stagnate. In the competition for active members, they will lose to secular and professional aid organizations. The church has a clear advantage on the spiritual side. The only human need that churches and only churches can meet is the need for communion with God. According to Wagner (1976), churches are the only place where people can be saved. No other social institution can offer this. Spiritually motivated momentum is strong and, over time, will be decisive in whether congregations are growing or declining.

## **Culture Openness**

Culture openness was a central theme already in church growth movement's early phase (McGavran, 1955). It maintains that the church must adapt to its cultural context to win new people. The movement has stimulated the church to demonstrate the ability to develop a form that is attractive for the groups it aim to reach. McGavran and Wagner (1990) argue that people want to become Christians without crossing social, linguistic or class barriers. Rainer (1993, p. 163) expresses this point as follows:

The best example of this hermeneutical approach emerges from the great interest the Church growth movement has for sociology, demography and marketing. The movement uses all available "tools" for achieving a culture of a "user friendly" basis.

Several scriptures are cited that defend such an approach. The classic reference is 1 Cor. 9:22: "To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some." Basing their argument on the controversy in Jerusalem over Gentile customs, Robinson and Christine (1994, p. 90) advocate the importance of being open to foreign cultural habits (Acts 15):

All too often, the western church has been so bound by their own culture, it has not been able to make the same kind of steps that the leaders in Jerusalem, which freed the gentile Christian part of the church from the Jewish culture, to facilitate the progress of the gospel.

The church growth movement is not blind to the fact that there is also another side to this matter. A one-sided focus on the fact that we live in this world can cause us to win the world and have numerical growth but create few disciples. On the other hand, a unilateral focus on the fact that we are not of this world can cause us to close the door to those who are outside (Rom.12:2).

Being culturally relevant and creating disciples are not things where we can choose a little of each. The cost of discipleship must remain in tension with the desire to be relevant. Therefore, it is a question of both-and. From this line of reasoning, the church should be both culturally relevant and present a message without compromise. That this is possible is supported by the fact that conservative churches are primarily the churches that are growing (Kelly, 1986). It is also noted that a culturally relevant form may appeal to consumer instincts and create Christians who are only concerned with getting their own needs met. This mentality is not consistent with the idea that all Christians should participate in efforts to win new humans for the gospel.

Some critics of church growth thinking have also argued that the distinction between content and form that the above line of reasoning implies is fundamentally difficult or impossible to perform (e.g., Alfsvåg, 2004). As noted, it is beyond the scope of this article to delve deeply into the theological reasoning, but it is most likely appropriate that content and form cannot be separated completely and that doing so may be even more difficult than some of the church growth literature seems to indicate. On the other hand, it is problematic to claim that the distinction does not exist and that everything we do in, for instance, the liturgy in Sunday services can or must be theologically justified. I think that it is important to seriously consider how participants experience the different church activities and use this consideration as a source when the different activities and services are designed. Therefore, the question of relevance is of great importance, whereas simultaneously, the relationship between form and content must always be carefully considered.

## **The principle of homogeneity**

Understanding that people want to become Christians without crossing social, linguistic or class-related barriers led to the so-called homogeneity principle. McGavran and Wagner (1990) are believed to have observed that the churches that are growing target one homogeneous group. This observation created much debate because some believed that this prioritization could lead to an increased influx to the church but that the cost was that the proclamation of the new human nature that the Christian faith meant was laid aside.

Ultimately, the principle could legitimize racism (Reapsome, 1983). Understood in this manner, the principle is problematic. The Christian faith implies an ability to tolerate others and to be able to include different people in one's own community. On the other hand, the critique can be made that, to date, all church efforts that target one or a few specific groups will be incorrect. Here, some discretionary considerations clearly must be made. It is beyond the scope of this article to delve into such a debate.

## **Pragmatism**

Although the church growth movement is theologically conservative, it has also emerged as pragmatic. The question is, given the results, whether the effort is acceptable or should be cancelled. This question has led to more manifestations. Ecclesiastical traditions should primarily be assessed based on whether they lead to good results. If they do not, then the recommendation is to drop them.

McGavran (1973) dedicated one of his books to the men and women whose work rejects ideas that do not work and who practice those that actually make disciples. The church growth movement considers evangelism in precisely the same way that an engineer considers a plane. The first question is, does it fly? The next question is, how efficiently does it fly? These questions are as irritating in a religious context as the church growth movement itself often has been considered to be (Stafford, 1986). This pragmatism is typical of all of McGavran's works and continues throughout the church growth movement.

The recent literature on church development has a more mature approach to pragmatism. The point that the organization of the church must be scrutinized to ascertain whether it yields results remains important, but this thinking becomes problematic when one becomes too concerned with effects and too little concerned with the biblical standards for church development (see f.ex. Råmunddal, 2015; Schwarz, 1998). The significance of the possible positive effects of tradition are also now more central (Råmunddal, 2011).

## **Many themes**

During the 1980s and 1990s, the themes that emerged in the church growth literature revolved around prayer, the pastor's function, organization, leadership, vision and strategy, marketing, growth barriers, church planting, spiritual battle, and gifts (a summary of the literature is given



in Jenssen, 1995). Among the issues heavily discussed are the pastor's function and the importance of vision, spiritual gifts and small groups. Additionally, coaching and mentoring have been widely praised in the literature on the leadership of churches in recent years. The root of this praise can be found in the church growth movement's focus on, for example, leadership in the books of Fuller Theological Seminary Professor J. Robert Clinton (1989, 1992). The concern is to find methods of developing leadership skills in others (Collins, 2001; Pue, 2005).

The need for a vision-driven, strong and energetic pastor is among the conclusions reached in this literature (Barna, 1992; Hadaway, 1991; Wagner, 1990). The notion of a strong pastor has especially been criticized both because it will not fit European culture and because there are examples of the abuse of pastoral power. It must also be noted that a strong leader seems to be positively correlated with churches that grow (Hadaway, 1991). Given that this correlation is an accurate observation, as a result, the development of strong pastors who lead without abusing their power is necessary.

Especially due to the tremendous growth in the Pentecostal movement in South America, spiritual battle and gifts are important (Wagner, 1979, 1988a, 1988b). This area is also key within church development today (Tangen, 2015).

A number of books on the importance of small groups for church growth have been written. Particularly for larger congregations, the literature emphasizes the importance of creating small communities to provide a sense of family and of creating arenas where members can develop and test their gifts in a secure framework. The importance of small groups is stressed by Wagner (1976), among others. He stresses that a church that wants to grow must create three categories of gatherings in the church: small groups, the congregation and the celebration. The objective of the medium group, the congregation, is to create an appropriate group where it is possible to provide quality teaching. Small groups will be led by volunteers and normally put limits on the quality of teaching. The large celebration can create a special atmosphere that is attractive and that binds together different groups in the church. Meanwhile, in such a gathering, there will be several different groups of participants present, which limits the ability to meet the specific needs that each group has for teaching.

### **Learning from the church growth movement**

As, e.g., Berentsen (1981) notes, some of the theological discussions have weaknesses, and this issue should be further processed. In connection with the preparation of the Lausanne Covenant, a discussion on the relationship between social work and evangelization was held, but there are most likely still some aspects that should be studied more closely. Others have noted that the strong distinction that is made between content and form is problematic (f.ex. Alfsvåg, 2004). It is conceivable that this distinction is somewhat more difficult than it appears in part of the church growth literature, but I believe, as noted, that it is vital to be concerned with relevance in all church ministries and that it is possible to do so without changing or weakening the theological foundation.

A central behavioral sciences-related weakness in the church growth literature concerns theory and model building: how are the factors developed (theoretically and/or empirically); how are the factors related to each other, and how are they related to growth (the causal relationships); how important are the individual factors; and how much do they explain church growth, separately and together? Nevertheless, I believe that several of the factors that the church growth movement has brought forth are still very important for church growth and that they should continue to challenge us. Here, the key factors are theologically conservative theology, together with pragmatism in method selection, the willingness to adapt methods to the cultural context, the spiritual power of the work, 'strong' leadership, evangelism, and discipleship.

In the wake of the classical church growth thinking, some new perspectives on church growth have emerged that warrant separate attention here. Inter alia, I shall discuss Natural Church Development, targeted church leadership and seeker-sensitive worship. Although some of the promoters of these perspectives are critical of aspects of the church growth movement, simultaneously, the similarities are large. All of these approaches are fairly one-dimensional, e.g., meet some criteria, and the congregation will grow. This is the case for Natural Church Development, which I will discuss first.

## Natural Church Development

### **Growth Automatism**

During the 1990s, the natural church growth approach was created (Schwarz, 1998). The promoter of the approach was very critical of the church growth movement's mindset and arguments. Among other things, Schwarz (1998) criticized what he regarded as an excessively strong focus on the measurement of growth, and the concept of natural growth was created. To better distance itself from the church growth movement, the term natural church growth was replaced with natural church development (NCD). Nevertheless, as I argue, I think that NCD largely represents a continuation of the work of the church growth movement.

A central idea within this thinking is that the church's focus must be on developing healthy churches. If one succeeds in this regard, growth will come automatically. We must learn from nature, Schwarz (1998) argues. It is important to create a favorable environment, e.g., irrigating, fertilizing, and ensuring the lights are on, and then, growth will come automatically. Natural church growth is about releasing growth automatism (Schwarz, 1998). This use of language is taken from nature and the processes that occur therein.

### **Eight quality signs**

Based on a large international survey, Schwarz (1998) believes that there are eight signs of quality that characterize healthy and growing churches. The focus on the work of the church should help to ensure that these quality characteristics come to fruition. The eight characteristics of qual-

ity are: empowering leadership, gift-oriented ministries, passionate spirituality, functional structures, inspiring worship services, holistic small groups, need-oriented evangelism and loving relationships.

As noted above, Schwarz (1998) was critical of several aspects of the early church growth thinking; however, I once again find several of the hallmarks of the church growth literature; for example, the focus on cell groups, gifts, inspiring worship, and evangelism. It is emphasized that it is not the nouns (leadership, ministry, worship, etc.) that are central but the adjectives (empowering, inspiring, holistic, etc.) that are the most important. A small point in this context is that it appears that these adjectives are chosen relatively freely when one compares the Norwegian and the Danish translations (Schwartz, 1996; Schwarz, 1998). The choices may seem to be at least partly motivated by the desire to recognize these words as culturally correct and praiseworthy instead of the desire to select a translation that is as close to the empirical questions in the investigation as possible. I now take a closer look at the eight qualities.

Regarding the empowering leadership style, it is noted that the leadership style of pastors of growing churches is more relational, personal, and team-oriented. These leaders spend a considerable amount of time to equip, encourage, motivate and guide others to service, and it is emphasized that they do not think of employees as helpers but rather as people who should be helped to use their full potential. This mindset, he believes, is fundamentally different from what emerges in the church growth literature. In this literature, according to Schwarz (1998), one is more project- and person-oriented, more goal- than relationship-oriented and more authoritarian than team-oriented. In our opinion, apart from the fact that pastors are often portrayed as strong, this characterization is a somewhat one-sided and imprecise understanding of the church growth literature. The level of precision and the use of references in Schwarz's (1998) polemic are so limited that it is difficult to criticize him. However, the term team is used in many places in the literature on church growth (eg. Wagner, 1989).

An alternative method for evaluating any nuances in the way leadership is described is to note that Schwarz (1998) increasingly looks to build on a model of harmony. For example, he says little about the differences between interests and interest groups and how leaders in churches should handle conflicts that arise from such differences. There seems to be a greater understanding in the church growth movement than in the NCD that conflicts are part of the work of church leaders. The ability and strength to address such conflicts are essential, for example, for a pastor, but this issue is not explicitly discussed in the literature.

The second quality indicator, gift-oriented ministry, emphasizes that it is important for individuals to find their gift and an opportunity to develop it within the congregation's activities. When volunteers are able to work with tasks tailored to their gifts, they will most likely do more, and the results will become better. It is vital that leaders ensure that volunteers take on tasks that fit their gifts. In the book on spiritual gifts (Schwarz, 1999), I see clear similarities with Wagner's (1979) way of thinking about testing spiritual gifts.

The third sign of quality is a passionate spirituality. In churches that are growing, Schwarz (1998) finds more enthusiasm, a more active prayer life, etc. From a biblical perspective, these findings are not unexpected, but from a behavioral research perspective, the point of the direction

of causality may be questioned. Is it the enthusiasm that produces the results, or is it the results that provide excitement? Functional structures are the fourth sign of quality. This sign involves developing a church organization that facilitates growth. However, it is somewhat unclear what functional structures are except that Schwarz (1998) believes it is important to have department managers in the various ministry areas.

Inspiring worship services also separate growing from non-growing churches. NCD emphasizes that an inspiring worship service can take many forms. For example, Schwarz (1998) thinks that his survey shows that indiscriminately introducing seeker-sensitive worship services does not produce results. Holistic groups are the fifth quality factor. These groups are important because they provide the opportunity to serve each other and people outside the church. They are natural places for leadership training, and according to Schwarz (1998), the concept of discipleship is materialized through holistic groups.

Need-oriented evangelism also contributes to growth. Schwarz (1998) believes that his study shows that it is especially important to make those with an evangelist gift active. According to him, they are often too little challenged, whereas other Christians are often challenged beyond what their gift implies. Simultaneously, he notes that it is the task of all Christians to have contact with non-believers so that they can hear the gospel and so that they come in contact with a church. It is also important that the church's evangelism meets the needs of non-Christians. Schwarz (1998) argues that the data show that encouraging the church to make more contact with non-believers is not a growth principle. The important task is to use the already existing contacts for evangelization because the existing network of contacts is already very large within the congregation. How this emerges from the data is not known. The eighth quality indicator, loving relationships, implies that churches that consistently grow show more compassion in relationships.

### **Minimum factor**

Schwarz (1998) argues that not one sign of quality should be overlooked if the church wants quantitative growth. Thus, it is not one factor that is crucial but rather the interaction between them. However, no measure of the interaction effects between the eight factors is given. Schwarz (1998) argues that the church must focus on the minimum factor. He illustrates this point with a wooden cask that has different heights on poles. When one fills it with water, the barrel overflows when it comes over the lowest rod in the barrel. This point is where remediation efforts must be placed. Simultaneously, he notes that one should not forget the other factors. It is the interaction of all of the factors that makes the church grow.

The rationale for the focus on the minimum factor is somewhat unclear, and it did not seem as though Schwarz (1998) had an empirical basis for his reasoning. Regardless, it is not shown in his presentation. It seems that the conclusions are based on their own experience and the examples from agriculture. Apart from a loose idea of an interaction between the various factors, it is difficult to know whether it is an actual interaction between two or more of the eight factors, and how strong such interactions are.

To assist congregations, NCD has developed an analytical tool. The purpose of this tool is to discover how the church scores on the different quality factors. The result is called a church profile. A survey must be conducted, with interviews of the pastor and 30 active members of the congregation. The questionnaire is similar to that used in the international study. The answers are collected and processed by a consultant. In NCD, a mentor for the church is appointed. NCD approves the mentors after they have graduated from a training program. Congregations that are monitored through this system go through a six-step process. In steps one and two, the churches are prepared; in steps three and four, the congregation is analyzed, a profile given and a schedule developed. In steps five and six, the measures are implemented, and the cycle is then repeated.

### **Natural Church Development - Reflections**

As in the traditional church growth literature, Schwarz (1998) emphasizes the importance of biblical authority. He claims that, based on the bible, we must distinguish between what is theologically sound and what we need to opt out of. Nonetheless, Råmunddal (2012) has challenged some aspects of his theology. He notes that the weakness of Schwarz's thinking is that he does not present a thoughtful relationship between the normativity of the Bible and church thinking. In Schwarz's reasoning, it may seem slightly random when he uses empirical study, an analogy with nature, or the Bible as justification. Additionally, the three elements often emerge as equal grounds for his thinking and recommendations.

Schwarz is harsh in his criticism of church growth thinking. Referring to this thinking, he writes (1998, p. 14):

Natural church growth means taking leave of superficial pragmatism, simplified cause-effect thinking, focusing on quantity, manipulative marketing methods and questionable "can do attitude". It means laying of humanistic recipes for success and move to growth principles that God has laid down in what he has created.

Meanwhile, as I have observed, his mindset contains many of the factors and examples of practical advice in the church growth literature. This is the case, for example, with regard to inspiring worship services, small groups, and need orientation in evangelization (see f.ex. Wagner, 1976). As in church growth thinking, growth is central, and spiritual gifts, including the way in which the gifts can be found in individuals (tested), are largely derived from the thinking of Wagner (1979).

What is new is that NCD has attempted to create a complete and universal recipe for growth. It is a bold project and can hardly be justified from an empirical investigation. In the behavioral sciences, there is a widespread belief that universal theories are very rarely found. If one argues that it is precisely the eight factors found in NCD that are important, then the argument has to be theological in nature.

It is not unlikely that Schwarz (1998) has identified important issues for church growth, but undoubtedly, there are more that are important. Some of the additional elements that are like-

ly to be important are most likely situation dependent. It is not difficult to understand that churches in different cultures must do much differently if they are to succeed. Moreover, Schwarz (1998) touches upon the question of how to proceed when the quality factors are implemented to a very small extent. How resistance to change is met? How are conflicts on the road resolved? How is the need for change communicated?

Criticism of the use of numbers is also peculiar. There are hardly any other concepts that put more emphasis on achieving numerical data and analyzing them as NCD does. The use of numbers is so advanced that the churches themselves are not able to do it, and an external consultant must therefore do the job. It is also problematic to assert that it is not important to follow the numerical development of church growth. NCD assumes that it is always possible for a church or an external consultant to know the quality of the congregation. I believe that it is wise to examine the numerical growth along the way. Oftentimes, the growth numbers function as a barometer. If the church does not grow, then it is especially important to try to do something about it.

There are also several questions with incomplete answers within NCD. For instance, it is claimed that the interaction between the factors is very important. Meanwhile none of the interacting effects is given. NCD does not provide details on how much of the growth can be explained by the eight factors. Both of these questions may have been answered by stating the interaction effects and by providing the explanatory power (explained variance). Several of the contents of the factors are also inadequately explained. For example, it is noted that functional structures are important. The only example noted of what this factor means is the introduction of department heads in the church. There can hardly be any doubt that many other structural factors are important. From a research perspective, NCD provides inadequate transparency with regard to the questionnaires and the methods of analysis.

In an in-depth study conducted in two churches in Norway, Råmunddal (2009) finds that NCD has had a limited influence on the churches' development.

What can we then learn from NCD? Most likely, it is important to focus on quality / health in church ministry. The eight factors are most likely among many factors that are important for growth, and it is most likely important to do something about areas where the church is weak. The shortcomings of the approach are the same as those of the early church growth thinking with regard to theory and model building: How are the factors related to each other and to church growth? How important are the individual factors, and how much do the factors explain the growth? NCD has clearly done more work in developing concepts and testing them empirically. Unfortunately, this research is not made available for inspection. The idea that the relationship between these factors is universal is very problematic, both methodologically and theoretically. Empirical research very rarely provides such theories. Merely working to improve in the areas where one is weakest is also debatable. Should one never give momentum to the areas that make the church unique?

## Purpose-driven church and seeker-sensitive worship

### **What is a purpose-driven and seeker-sensitive church?**

In the 1990s, the idea of purpose-driven church leadership was also developed (Warren, 1995), and the concept of seeker-sensitive worship was created (see f.ex. Hybles & Hybles, 1995). The purpose-driven church is in many ways a good representation of the main aspects of the church growth tradition the past 30-40 years. Both pragmatism and the focus on growth described above underpin the relationship with church growth thinking. According to Warren (1995), all churches are driven by something. It may be tradition, economics, personalities, buildings or something similar. If the congregation shall develop in a healthy manner, it cannot be driven by such factors. It should be driven by God's purpose for the church. All activities must be driven by this objective. The importance of vision and objectives were also key ideas in church growth thinking (see f.ex. 1984; 1989).

Simultaneously, Warren (1995) argues that health comes before growth. As Schwarz (1998) also argues, healthy churches grow. The aims of the congregation, according to Warren (1995), are worship, fellowship, discipleship, ministry and evangelism. He finds the sources of this thinking in Matthew 22:37 to 40 and Matt 28:19-20. For a church to reach these goals it must (Warren, 1995):

- Assimilate new members
- Have measures/programs for every purpose
- Teach the purposes of the church
- Form small groups that are linked to that purpose
- Organize based on the church's purpose
- Hire staff based on the church's purpose
- Preach based on the purpose
- Budget based on the purpose
- Plan based on the purpose
- Evaluate whether the objectives are reached

The teaching must develop to fit the purpose. In his own church, the first level of courses (educational programs) aims to lead people to Christ and the church; the next level of courses is aimed at making new members mature in their spiritual life; the third level is aimed at preparing members for ministry; and the fourth level is aimed at equipping them for evangelism and missionary work.

The idea behind seeker-sensitive worship can be described through the strategy developed in the environment at Willow Creek Community Church (Church, 1996). The idea is that one first builds a relationship with non-Christians and then shares one's testimony verbally. Doing so should then lead to an invitation to a seeker-sensitive church service, i.e., a service that is adapted to newcomers. When they gradually become familiar with the main points of the gospel, new-

comers go to the next level of education, which aims at being part of the community and being taught God's Word. To become a devoted follower of Christ, it is important to be part of a group. Here, newcomers begin to serve the church with their gifts and also with their money. It is also emphasized that church members should have a dual focus, outwardly towards non-Christians and inwardly towards contributing to the community.

In seeker-sensitive worship, it is emphasized that the service should create interest of the Christian faith and should lead the seekers to decide to become Christians. Therefore, in this approach, one has been very concerned with designing the service so that it is appealing to the unchurched. Simple preaching, the use of drama and contemporary music have been among the key ingredients.

There have been some critical experiences with this form of worship. Willow Creek Community Church, which has been one of the largest congregations in the United States and which has invested heavily in this regular meeting, has partly changed its Sunday services to also teach believers to progress in their Christian life. The reason for this change is partly a survey that the church conducted, indicating that worship participants did not sufficiently mature in their Christian faith through the form of seeker-sensitive worship (Hawkins & Parkinson, 2007; see also Pritchard, 1996). Meanwhile, the idea of seeker-sensitive and inspiring services remains central to Willow Creek and many other churches.

### **Learning from the purpose-driven and seeker-sensitive church**

Leaders and others who want to create change must think that change can be performed through planned actions (Råmunddal, 2011). In a church context, it may also be the case that planned change, which church growth thinking also involves, should be emphasized to a greater extent if one is to obtain changes. Meanwhile, there are good reasons to emphasize other perspectives on change as well, e.g., whether lifecycle reasoning (Van de Ven & Pool, 1995) and institutionalization processes (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Meyer & Scott, 1983; Zucker, 1977) will be decisive in processes of change. I do not go into detail about these perspectives here but simply note that regardless, it is conceivable that knowledge of businesses' life cycles and institutionalization processes may help us improve the planned change efforts.

The idea of culturally relevant worship services is also largely drawn from the 'open culture' thinking in the church growth literature (see above), and it is most likely essential if the goal is higher worship participation. However, it is also important to stress the importance of bringing people from knowledge and acceptance of the Christian faith to active discipleship.



## Emerging churches

### **Introduction to emerging churches**

In recent years, some parts of thinking about church growth have developed in different directions. Some parts of the literature have been very critical of the traditional literature on church growth. Emerging churches is a relatively new term that is used frequently in conversations about how churches can be developed to meet people in the postmodern era to a greater extent. The term is used in many different forms of church ministries. For instance, there seem to be a high number of those who promote house churches who understand themselves within this category of churches. Furthermore, it seems that the concept includes many churches that only differ from other churches in their willingness to stimulate contemporary music to become more missional in their work. Most churches differ little in respect to theology from the evangelical and Pentecostal traditions. However, some of the leaders and congregations within the group of emerging churches are still more liberal on some key issues (Gibbs & Bolger, 2005).

A common characteristic of those who use this term is that they want to enter into the culture of postmodernity to a much greater extent than existing churches. According to Gibbs and Bolger (2005), intercultural training is very important for these churches because Christ was incarnated in the culture and really engaged in contemporary culture, because a cultural understanding has always been important for the church, because the Christian faith and modernity decline in our society, because the West is undergoing a strong process of cultural change, because the majority of churches have practices adapted to a society that no longer exists, and because the culture of postmodernity requires new structures.

In the literature on emerging churches, topics are often related to how one can help transform the secular areas in the world and how church members can live in dense communities with each other. It is often noted that churches today are keener about talking right than living right. In the literature on emerging churches, the right ways to live are accentuated. The literature also emphasizes that one must be very open to strangers and that one must serve in a generous manner and be 'producers' in the participation of the congregation. Emerging churches would also appear to be missional, and they will be creative, experimental and sensitive in worship and services (Gibbs & Bolger, 2005; McKnight, 2007).

Most of these points are about the realities of working in the culture that the church exists within, and it is in many ways a further accentuation of the cultural relevance also discussed in the church growth literature.

### **Cultural relevance and creativity**

The emerging church thinking emphasizes the importance of cultural relevance even more strongly than before, and it more strongly accentuates that people must be met where they are in the culture of postmodernity. The missional focus in part of this thinking is an important remind-

er of the main task of Christians. The emphasis on creativity and innovation pushes pragmatism and the change perspective even further than in the preceding approaches. However, there is also a potential problem. Some of these churches may become too willing to adjust to the culture. The adjustment to the culture may affect not only the method but also the theology.

## **House churches**

Among the emerging churches, house churches are often noted. This group believes that the development of house churches is the right way to do church (see f.ex. Barna, 2005; Simson, 2001, 2009). Several arguments are given for this idea. This type of church should be more in line with the churches of the New Testament, it removes most of the problems that churches are facing, people come closer to each other, the homes are close to the people whom one will reach with the gospel, the common priesthood becomes more real, etc. (Simson, 2001). The argument is made that many have already chosen this form of church. The similarities with the church growth literature are linked particularly to underline the importance of small groups (see f.ex. Wagner, 1976), but the house church perspective pushes this concept even further and believes that ways of gathering other than in small groups in homes are not necessary on a weekly basis (Simson, 2001).

To the best of my knowledge, extensive studies on house churches have not been conducted. It is believed that small communities provide greater opportunities for communication about difficult and personal subjects. They can also be good prayer fellowships. Such groups may also give people a sense of being part of a community where they are seen, where everyone supports each other and where one has someone to "be accountable" to. Small communities can provide the opportunity for spontaneity and the participation of everyone in the group. Some people within the house church movement also observe some weaknesses in the concept, and therefore, they seek to have larger services on a monthly basis (Simson, 2001).

I believe that a key question is whether small groups are sufficiently attractive to youth as the only community to relate to. Is it primarily families with children who are participating in house churches? Whether these people will seek larger communities with greater social breadth when the children grow up is an open question. In our culture, youth will most likely not be satisfied in their parents' house group. The same things that are occurring in small traditional churches can also occur in house churches. When the children become teenagers, they leave the community in high numbers. There are simply too few of the same age. Many youths participate in small groups. We do not know how many. Many are also active in larger congregations. Youth gatherings and other major meetings might be a prerequisite for participation in small groups. Can it be that, without the larger communities, fewer will participate in small groups?

The small communities in house churches can become clammy. It has most likely occurred in many small traditional churches. It could conceivably be good to relate to more people. Doing so provides multiple impulses. Larger congregations allow for this in a better way than one house church will do. Moreover, it can also be argued that teaching in small groups is unlikely to be good enough in the long run. In a society with a considerable amount of knowledge, there is a

need for solid teaching. A larger community will most likely attract quality preaching because it will be able to finance the preparation. Bibles and theological education cost money, and it takes a considerable amount of time to prepare to give a good sermon. Volunteers will hardly be able to prepare sufficiently to maintain the required quality week after week, year after year.

Spiritual gifts and talents are important in churches. Some gifts are developed in many people, whereas others appear less frequently. In a small group, there will most likely not be a sufficient breadth of gifts.

Music is very important in church life. Worship with a guitar in a small group creates a different atmosphere and a different quality compared to worship in a large group with many instruments and singers. Both types of music can be good but may not necessarily replace one another. Worship in a small group will normally be of a lower musical quality and be dominated by well-known, easy-to-play songs. Simultaneously, more people can use the gifts that they have because the quality requirements are lower and an intimate atmosphere can be created. In larger churches, it is possible to maintain a higher musical quality, and a different atmosphere normally characterizes worship in larger gatherings.

For many young people, the church community or denomination has been the place where the spouse is found. Most parents would hardly wish for their children to search for a spouse outside the Christian community. Congregations are an important marriage market, and a certain size in the environment is necessary for youths. This issue is difficult in house churches. It is also conceivable that house churches are not very attractive for single men and women. They normally need to meet many others in their own situation. Even medium-sized congregations face challenges in this area. Nor is it necessarily easier to invite someone into the home than to a large congregation. For some, going home to a small community will be a large barrier compared to visiting a large congregation where one may initially be more anonymous.

### **What can we learn from emerging churches?**

I think that, through this approach, we primarily see even more clearly that participating in smaller groups is important to people and that churches should see the importance of establishing and developing small communities. Simultaneously, from my perspective, there is a lack of understanding of the advantages of larger services in this thinking. It must be added that there are few studies on these issues and that some of the reasoning in house church thinking indicates an ecclesiology that can be criticized. It is beyond the scope of this article to go into detail on this matter.

### **The factors and the relationships between them**

Most of the approaches or perspectives I have discussed in this paper have a very simple structure. Some necessary conditions or quality characteristics must be fulfilled or realized for the church to grow. Schwarz (1998) and Warren (1995) note that the fulfillment of these condition

creates health, which in turn creates growth. Health, then, is a factor that resides between the conditions and growth. This idea is not reflected in the early church growth thinking. Warren (1995) also introduces some instruments for implementing the quality characteristics. Otherwise, there are some ambiguities in the theoretical approaches, as noted above. For example, holistic groups, inspiring worship services and functional structures are all quality characteristics from Schwarz (1998). However, it is reasonable to believe that functional structures can be regarded as an explanatory factor for holistic groups and inspiring sermons. Without good structures such as department managers for small groups and worship services, implementation will not result equally well.

The list below gives a tentative and preliminary consideration of the explanatory variables used in the literature in this article:

- The authority of Scripture (McGavran, 1955, 1988; Warren, 1995)
- Need-oriented evangelism (McGavran, 1955, 1988; Warren, 1995)
- Preaching based on the purpose (Warren, 1995)
- Teaching about the church's purpose (McGavran, 1988; Schwarz, 1998; Warren, 1995)
- Worship (Wagner, 1988b)
- Celebrative and inspirational sermons (Schwarz, 1998; Wagner, 1976)
- Seeker-sensitive services (Hybles & Hybles, 1995)
- Passionate spirituality (Schwarz, 1998)
- Gift-oriented ministries (Schwarz, 1998; Wagner, 1979)
- Cultural relevance (Hybles & Hybles, 1995; McGavran, 1955, 1973; Wagner, 1976; Warren, 1995)
- Creativity and innovativeness (Gibbs, 2000; Wagner, 1976)
- Missional (Gibbs & Bolger, 2005; McGavran, 1988; McKnight, 2007)
- Openness to the world (McGavran, 1955; McKnight, 2007)
- Living right (power of example) (Wagner, 1976)
- Serving in a generous manner (McKnight, 2007)
- Service and social commitment (Schwarz, 1998; Warren, 1995)
- Strong pastor / empowering leadership (Hadaway, 1991; Schwarz, 1998; Wagner, 1976)
- Organizing based on the church's purpose (Schwarz, 1998; Warren, 1995)
- Functional structures (Schwarz, 1998)
- Measures / programs to achieve goals (Warren, 1995)
- Congregation (middle-sized group) (Wagner, 1976)
- Budgeting to reach goals (Warren, 1995)
- Planning to reach goals (Warren, 1995)
- Hiring staff based on the purpose (Warren, 1995)
- Small groups / holistic groups (Schwarz, 1998; Wagner, 1976; Warren, 1995)
- Creating a dense community (Schwarz, 1998)
- Loving relationships / community (Schwarz, 1998)
- Evaluating on the basis of goals (Warren, 1995)

Although the discussions in the literature I have reviewed in this article are based on causal reasoning, as noted above, no model that describes the relationship between the factors that explain growth is outlined. It is not easy to specify one possible model structure. However, it is clear that the dependent variable is numerical growth in congregations, measured in terms of active members. Some authors also operate with an intermediate variable called health (Schwarz, 1998; Warren, 1995). The idea is that, when the church is healthy, it will grow.

Health is again explained by a number of quality characteristics (Schwarz, 1998) or factors that must be realized to create health. Moreover, there are traces of thoughts that something also precedes the quality factors, such as organizing. That is, some underlying factors explain whether and how quality factors are fulfilled or realized (Warren, 1995). Different organizational and leadership styles may be important for how the church manages to improve the quality of its work.

### **Weaknesses of the known strategies**

The literature on church growth shows signs of fairly simplistic approaches. Much of the literature I refer to names a few factors that are important to focus on, strive for or realize for the church to grow. The implication is not that all this literature does not contribute to the development of church leadership, but there is a considerable potential for improving this knowledge.

It is appealing to enter five or eight factors as the road to success, but unfortunately, doing so is not that simple. Those who have led growing churches know that there are many factors that are tied together and that affect the progress of the church in a relatively complex manner. For example, developing five or eight quality indicators has limited value, even when they are correct, if one does not know much about how the church should be organized and what type of leadership challenges must be addressed. There has been much focus on the qualities or factors that might promote growth and not enough focus on how processes of change should be initiated and maintained.

The literature also seeks universal theories. For churches, there are some values that are absolute and applicable in all situations because they can be justified theologically, but much of what should be done in churches is not of this kind. In the organizational and leadership literature, emphasis is placed on the importance of situational adaptation, i.e., the ability to find forms that are appropriate for the environmental requirements. Doing so is also necessary in the effort to build and change congregations. Not least, it is vital to take into account the culture that congregations must work within. There are a number of local considerations that one must take if the goal is to develop a growing church. Therefore, it is necessary for church leaders to have the ability to simultaneously learn from others and be able to make the necessary adjustments to their congregations based on the local culture.

In recent years, we have developed concepts and methods for church leadership that spread through a variety of channels across the globe. There are many such recipes within the disciplines of leadership and organizational theory (Røvik, 1998). In the literature, they are called institutionalized management recipes, i.e., recipes for management that have received considera-

ble legitimacy and become normative. In many ways, NCD, the purpose-driven church and seeker-sensitive services are in this category. Such recipes often last only a few years, only to be replaced by new recipes (Røvik, 1998). A key problem of these recipes is that they are often supposed to resolve all challenges, and that they have a universal nature. Contextualization becomes almost unnecessary. The implication is not that all such models are useless. However, *inter alia*, it is very important to understand what makes sense with these models, in which areas they can contribute and how the local adaptation should be performed.

## Some conclusions

The purpose of this article is to identify and discuss key issues in church growth studies because they represent an important source and background for the emerging field of church development, at least for the part of the discipline that developed within the Free Church academic context. The starting point for church growth thinking, which began to be formed in the late 1950s, was that scholars observed that some congregations were growing, others maintained the status quo and still others were declining. Although part of this literature is easy to criticize, it has also obtained many important findings that I do not think should be underestimated. Not least, several of the themes and issues that were identified and discussed influenced subsequent work on church development (Råmunddal, 2011).

The focus and research related to the importance of biblical authority and conservative theology are an example of a topic that has received much attention (Råmunddal, 2015). The same applies to many of the factors that I have observed coming from the church growth movement, which is also found in NCD and the other approaches discussed above. The number of churches that have worked with the early church growth recommendations and with NCD, the purpose-driven church and seeker-sensitive services is unknown but very high, particularly in the free church context. Within NCD, 400 congregations in Norway have had a so-called church profile made prior to January 2015 (Baptist.no, 2015).

It is also important to note that the church growth movement has had a strong impact on the use of the behavioral sciences within church development. The sociology of religion is a large area where such an approach has also been applied for many years, but studies here have rarely been used to understand church growth, and these works seem to have had less influence in the context of free churches. When the behavioral science approach is applied, it is particularly important to discuss the application theologically (Råmunddal, 2015).

Among the shortcomings of church growth thinking are an all-too-simple theoretical reasoning, a lack of causal modeling and theological issues only superficially discussed. Oftentimes, the growth is assumed to come simply by addressing a few factors. Nevertheless, several of the issues and factors that are identified and discussed have influenced subsequent work on church development. There is little or no systematic discussion of how the factors relate to each other (causal). Moreover, implementation challenges are rarely discussed: Will a change initiative meet

resistance? How can resistance possibly be handled? How are changes communicated? How are processes of change led and organized?

(Artikkelen er skrevet med støtte fra Norsk faglitterær forfatter- og oversetterforening.)

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