# Review: Forming a Missional Church — Creating Deep Cultural Change in Congregations

We have noticed a welcome recent trend in thinking about church life. It is a movement away from a fixation on processes and programs, traditions and techniques, mechanistic deliberations about an organisation. It is towards considering the *culture* of the church and understanding it as a social and familial system. It is towards recognising (perish the thought) that God the Holy Spirit *is* actually thoroughly and presently involved; church leadership is more a matter of sharing spiritual discernment than reliance upon managerial expertise.
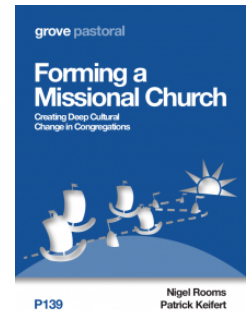
Two books I have recently read—Patrick Keifert's *We Are Here Now,* and the Grove Booklet *Forming a Missional Church* which Keifert has co-authored with Nigel Rooms—do well to advance this trend and make it accessible to local congregations. The two overlap in content and I will concentrate on the Grove booklet here.

The need for cultural change is often recognised and touted albeit somewhat impotently. Rooms and Keifert seek to actually get to a practical outcome. The groundwork that gets them there takes a number of forms:
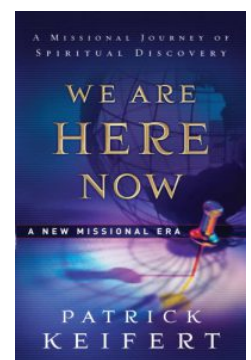
Firstly, they engage with postmodernity. Cultural connection within a postmodern world necessarily requires pushback

against such modern influences as individualism, propositionalism, and didacticism. It means advancing modes and manners of being church that value real and shared experience.

> *The categorization of faith as private is among the reasons why many Christians do not speak and act as if God were living and active in the here and now of our every days lives. (Page 4)*

This basis for their approach is not novel: the juxtaposition of church and the postmodern world has been around for at least two decades. Keifert is right not to be morose about the changing world. Rather than phrases like "post-Christendom" he prefers a "new missional era." This obvious and positive sense only adds to my bemusement that such cultural thinking has been largely left behind in academia by church leaders in the field.

Secondly, they bring insights from systems theory. Keifert and Rooms recognise that churches like all "living, feeling, learning human organizations… are not simply machines to be fixed or problems that respond to **technical** solutions" (page 5, emphasis mine). Our tendency for off-the-shelf solutions makes us ill-prepared for "those challenges or problems or complicated situations for which there is not a ready or known fix." Instead, we must attend to **adaptive** change.

> *Adaptive challenges require change and transformation on the part of those facing them, in contrast to technical problems where there is a known solution and no change is required… (Page 6)*

Indeed, technical "solutions" can be used to insulate ourselves from the costly self-reflection and honesty that is necessary for the mission of the church to be taken seriously.

*Our task is being born into our world, our culture and context, and **dying to all we do not need** to be God's church in, but not of, the world—and then living into God's preferred and promised future. Mission, missional life, missional churches… the missio Dei is cross-shaped. (Page 6, emphasis mine)*

I have found the language of "adaptive" and "technical" to be reasonably useful as a "way in" for people to begin wrestling with the sorts of issues at stake. It is quite managerial in tone, however, and some might find liturgical or reflective language more helpful. After all, as long as the tendency to apply it only to individuals can be avoided, "adaptive" language speaks to concepts such as "being refined", "amending one's life", and being "*transformed by the renewing of your mind*."

Thirdly, they ground everything on robust missiology. The beginning of this is the now famous adage, which they do well to quote:

It is not the church of God that has a mission in the world but the God of mission who has a church in the world. (Page 10)

Missiology in practice emphasises the centrality of *discernment* in the mode and manner of being church. "We cannot simply bless every good thing" (page 11), they say, clearly understanding the propensity of churches to equate their programmatic busy-ness with effective outreach. Rather, "the main skill individuals and Christian communities require to lift anchor faithfully and sail into the unknown, adaptive, exciting, challenging journey of the *missio Dei* is discernment… asking and finding answers to the question, 'What is God up to?'" (page 11). Such a journey can seem uncertain and therefore unprofessional or irresponsible for some, but from experience we know that it is, in the end,

an *exciting* journey that is literally mission-critical:

> *…rather than doing mission by conducting a programme of mission activities (Alpha courses, holiday clubs for children and young people, invitational events etc), none of which are unhelpful per se, the church becomes so caught up in the missio Dei that its members are naturally 'detectives of divinity.' The church's very being becomes missional so that all it is and does serves the mission of God. (Pages 11-12)*

I was astounded, however, by the claim that in 2008-9 "the missiological concept of the *missio Dei* was only just taking hold at the level of theologically trained clergy" in the English context (page 10). It makes me aware of how ahead of the curve things have been in other less-established contexts around the world. But the fact that it is on the agenda is fruit of the *Mission-Shaped Church* report from 2004 (which they mention), and seminal works such as Wright's *The Mission of God* from 2006. It elevates the importance of works such as these and other significant efforts (Forge Network etc.) around the turn of the millennium.

These three forms of engagement coalesce and have their natural conclusions in what it means to live and act as a church community. Clearly it also challenges some of the precious ways we have viewed leadership. The challenge for church leaders can be personal and overwhelming; it's one thing to talk about missiological concepts in theory, or even to bring some sort of analysis to the church as an institution, but adaptive change cannot be led except by example. It means dealing with the "trap" of modernity that makes the "professional" leader "the primary basis of identity for both the community and the leader" while at the same time recognising that there *is* a role for "spiritual discernment, spiritual leadership" (page 13). To avoid this trap the leader must take a "personal spiritual journey, sometimes called a rule of life" (page 14) that faces and

avoids "our own desire for control and certainty, especially in choppy waters" (page 15). Personally speaking, I have known the pain and frustration that comes from falling into this trap, seeking a vain fleeting peace in control and drive and avoidance, when the call is to trust God even as impotence and anxiety loom.

In the end, Room and Keifert present "six missional practices" (page 20). These should not be seen so much as steps in a recipe but practices that found and inform a "diffused innovation." The hope is that through them cultural change might advance throughout the community while naturally responding to strengths and weaknesses and the very real human aspects that will either welcome or resist it.

dwelling in the word — a shared method of Bible that seeks to heed what God is saying in his Word, recognising that the Holy Spirit will speak in Scripture not only *to* individuals but *through* the members of the body, one to another. It sounds simple but, when taken seriously, allows a shared experience of being undone and remade by the Spirit of God through the Word of God.

dwelling in the world — involves the shared journey of listening and hearing what is happening within and around the community. It allows hard things to be heard, and undiscovered ways to be revealed. It anticipates the *activity* of the Holy Spirit in the real world who calls us beyond ourselves.

hospitality — is engagement beyond the community that comes neither from above or below, but both gives and receives, "taking turns hosting and being a guest" (page 22). It recognises that the best place to encounter both world and word is at the point where relationships open up. It turns us towards those "people of peace"—"friendly looking strangers"— that we often ignore, who are right in front of us, who are possibly not what we had expected or hoped, but who are open

to heed and be heeded.

corporate spiritual discernment – is placed not at the beginning, but in the middle, as the shared experience of dwelling in word and world begins to develop a sense of "What is God's preferred and promised future for our local Church?" "Who is God calling us to join in accomplishing that preferred future in our community?" (page 22)

announcing the kingdom – recognises that there is a gospel to share, and a Saviour to speak about. It is adaptive, not impositional: Putting words to the recognition of how the Spirit of Christ is already at work, it invites others to join him, and to enter into the kingdom not as some abstraction but in how he is present in the here and now.

focus for missional action – urges a further and clearer pursuit of the journey of discernment:

> *"Every ministry setting has more good things to do and more good things to love than any local church can rightly or well take on. Without the practise of discerning a focus for missional action, the sixth missional practice, the others lead to a kind of disorderly love and dissipation of energy and life into nothingness. **St. Augustine refers to this pattern of behaviour as sin and it is a very common practice in most local churches.**" (Page 23, emphasis mine)*

These six applied practices require further thought on my part to fully understand how they are meant and why they are emphasised over other actions and disciplines. The groundwork on which they are based certainly matches my own experience. By laying this groundwork Rooms and Keifert have helped answer my own questions of "*What* is going on?" in a mission-adverse church. In the six practices they also attempt to answer the "So what" question: "So what can we do about it?" Given the veracity of their starting point, they certainly cannot be lightly dismissed. Critical and biblical enquiry

would serve to strengthen what should be strengthened, and correct what might be askance. This is something I hope to attend to at some point.

My main caution (which is not insurmountable) is this: behind these books is an ecclesial **product**. *Partnership for Missional Church (PMC)* is a church consultancy framework through which churches who want to explore these practices can "buy in" facilitation and support over a three-year process. Monetisation like this isn't necessarily bad; it is akin to 3dm (focussing on discipleship and missional communities) or NCD which takes an inventory based approach to balanced growth. But there *is* a little discordance when a framework which resists a culture of faddish quickfixes is promulgated as something that literally needs a ™ symbol. Nevertheless, PMC does better than most to transcend the irony; a non-linear messy frustrating journey of discernment is not the stuff of populism. To the extent that it will play its part in the developing trend—changing culture until mission is a natural rhythm—it will do itself out of a job and, in that possibility, it would rightly be seen as a success.

Review: Out of Chaos — Refounding Religious Congregations

I must admit, I didn't think a 1980s
reflection by a Marist brother on the
aftermath of Vatican II would be particularly
relevant to today's task of dealing with
ecclesial torpor. But there is wisdom and
insight in this book that plays in the same
space as contemporary texts on church
leadership and mission action planning, and it
does so in a distinct and provocative way.
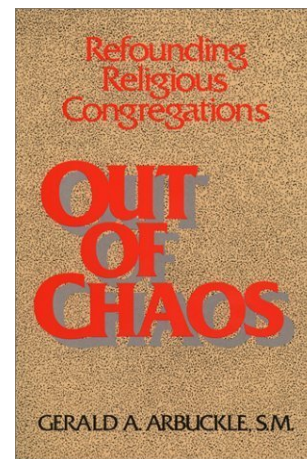
I've come across Gerald Arbuckle before with regard to
pioneering *dissent.* Here the keyword is the need for
religious congregations to be ***refounded.*** "Congregations" in
this context are Catholic religious societies dealing with
the *chaos* (another keyword) they experienced after the Second
Vatican Council. Vatican II occurred in the 1960s, this book
was written in the 1980s, bringing with it the insight of a
generation's experience.

The applicability in our own generation comes from the fact
that the church of the Western World is facing its own
existential chaos; our very reason for existence whirls about
in a pool of semantics with people swimming in different
directions as we begin to differ even on the most fundamental
aspects of our *founding myth* (another keyword) or worldview.

What *are* we for? Even today I was referred to a survey that
purported to discern the nature and effect of *discipleship* in
a region. It was premised on a subjective sense of how the
respondents' faith had grown and the "growth activities" they
participated in. It's not a bad survey but the *essence* of
discipleship is actually missing. There was no reference to
the Great Commission (where we are called to disciple
nations), no engagement with following Christ on the path of
suffering. It appears as subjective semantics with no
foundation, chaos artificially blanketed by catch-all words
and phrases that cannot tell a story that draws us beyond
ourselves. We need *refounding*.

The refreshing difference in Arbuckle's approach is that it is fundamentally *spiritual*. I don't mean in an ethereal contemplative sense, but in the sense that he fully expects that the Spirit of Christ has been, is, and will be forming and preparing his people. This is a Catholic distinctive that we could do well to embrace.

> *In salvation history, God permits chaos to develop that people may rediscover that he must be at the very heart of their lives (e.g. see Dt 8:1-4) (Page 3)*

As the Spirit leads us, so he understands that passing through chaos is painful. Refounding involves *suffering*: an antidote to the quick-fix and *cheap* mission action planning that pervades today.

> *So this book offers readers no dramatically simple or rapid way to begin and sustain refounding. In fact the road to refounding is a humanly complex and a spiritually painful one, for Christ calls us to a more intimate, privileged relationship with himself, which means being invited to share deeply in the purifying experience of his own suffering. (Page 6)*

But "refounded" is an interesting term. I can see its value over "reforming" which connnotes the continuous, ongoing, iterative, day-by-day *semper reformanda.* "Refounding" recognises the passing through of chaos, it reflects a *season*.

Arbuckle draws on the sociological concept of mythology to explain. "Myth" in this sense doesn't mean vague or imaginary legend, it refers to a founding "story", an "historically transmitted pattern of meanings." When I have come to a new church context I have looked for the "folklore" or "DNA" of the church, to seek to understand where the Lord has led it and is leading it. "Founding myth" is the same thing: it's the *historic story* that gives meaning and order and purpose to

a group or congregation. In a season of chaos this story is lost, and *refounding* is not just to rediscover it, but to recapitulate it in a new context, a different world. It is to sing the ancient songs in a new land such that they are heard and joined. "Reconversion" is not an overstatement of how this can be described, as Christ is at the heart of our "founding myth."

Arbuckle's categorisation of "creation/regeneration myth", "character myth", "identity myth", "eschatological myth" and "direction myth" (pages 21-23) are useful in that ongoing discernment of "DNA" and "folklore." They are thoughts that I suspect I will return to.

The main component in Arbuckle's thoughts, however, is, I think, the most provocative. He considers that the main actor in the refounding process is not found primarily in councils, committees, working groups, or consultations (such as the many chapter meetings that apparently followed Vatican II), but in "refounding persons", individuals with a particular *charism* gift (page 89) to call the group to its reconversion.

Arbuckle appeals to a management speak of "pathfinders, problem solvers, and implementers" (page 30) that is now outdated. More helpfully, though, he looks to the OT role of *prophet* as exemplars of what he means. There is a pattern: from a season of chaos that is allowed by God "to develop as the preface or catalyst for a marked creative faith response from his chosen people" (Page 50), God calls the people, through his prophets, back to the "regenerative myth" in which they repent and trust in the Lord's power alone.

> *Every time the Jewish people experience chaos or weariness and then resurrection to test Yahweh's love, they relive the primal events of their creation in sacred time. (Page 50)*

These refounding prophets are therefore "Israel's creative, dynamic and questioning memory" (page 57) who simultaneously

criticise the people for the gap between the vision of who they are and they reality of who they have become, and energise the people to bridge that gap through faith by giving them hope (page 58).

> *The prophets reject the distorted culture in which they live, for they measure it against the vision they know can and should be realized, if the creation myth is taken seriously… They break through the chaos of confusion, of numbness and denial, by pointing out the way the people must go in order to return the culture to Yahweh-centered foundations. (Pages 58-59)*

He takes this thinking, applying it to his post-Vatican II situation, and then generalises to consider the "role of the refounding person." The description is apt:

> *There is a fire in these people, a Gospel radicality that inspires the converting, disturbs the complacent, the spiritually lethargic, those who deny chaos both inside and outside themselves and those who compromise with worldly values. They can be feared, like all innovators, because they dare to push back the frontiers of the unknown — chaos, a world of meaninglessness — in the name of Jesus Christ. (Page 88)*

And he summarises their characteristics (Pages 96-97). They are close to people, especially the poor, and with a finger on the pulse. They exercise creative imagination and perception as to how "people… are starved of Gospel values" and "they are able creatively to construct new ways to respond to this deprivation." They are committed to hard work. They are committed to small beginnings. They tolerate failure. And they are community-oriented; like the prophets before them:

> *Prophets are not loners, even if they are marginalised or threatened with death by the people for whom they work; they*

Now all of this *could* be a disconcerting propensity to look for "supermen" and "superwomen" to come and refound us, a guru mentality that speaks more of worldly celebrity than anything else. But where we might look for "super-apostles" Arbuckle wants us to look for a genuine apostolicity.

He recognises that the refounding charism is predicated on a level of faith (helpfully enumerated on page 99) that expresses a "driving selflessness" made manifest only through a union with Christ in his suffering. He posits "a shattering failure, or rejection by one's own congregation" as a near necessity to deal with pride and to allow a "refounding person an ultimate jump into a more perfect faith, a faith that moves one into the darkness of belief and away from one's own false securities" (pages 105-106). Such persons are often marked by loneliness and "a strong urge to escape the prophetic responsibility" (page 106).

The reality is that we all know people like this; we look up to them, and as we grow we begin to realise the cost they have counted and respect them even more. They are not gurus, but gifts to God's church.

The detail of Arbuckle's treatise goes into further description, even advice, for refounding persons, and also their superiors. He puts a significant amount of work into analysing the cultures of contexts and considering where relational and structural facilitation may or may not be effective. But above all, he recognises that there will likely be **conflict** between the refounding persons and their superiors

He notes that true refounders do not deliberately bring discord, but also recognises that the inherent passion and

charism will "inevitably cause tension, difficulties, and even conflicts" (page 107). In the face of rejection he urges the refounder towards prayerful discernment and submission, but without quenching the fire. Different authority lines can be pursued, and withdrawal "to a new congregation or reform within a tradition" might be necessary because "religious life does not demand an absolute commitment" (page 109). This is strong, refreshingly unusual stuff.

For the superior authority figure, Arbuckle urges them to recognise, release, and cover the prophets that God will raise up. This is an obligation on the superior who might otherwise risk quenching the Spirit. This counters an attitude that suggests the role of the Superior is to repress, so as to ensure the prophetic refounder may emerge from that repression with a seemingly-helpful humility and holiness. Arbuckle rightly counters that such an attitude is dangerously simplistic (page 118) and effectively pharisaical. Yes, discernment is needed, but in the end the refounding should not be quenched.

Throughout history, anything charismatic has always been a point of concern and fear for churches and ecclesial organisations. We've all seen excesses of exuberance. We are quick to counter with common sense, and to speak from the known. But Arbuckle is right, in times of chaos what is known is fleeting and we need to re-find our foundations. We know what they are in the abstract — biblical Truth, salvation in Christ, the present and coming Kingdom of God. But grasping them, embracing them, embedding them, being *rooted* in them and *living* them is simply something the church is not doing very well. Whether you call them prophets or apostles or refounders or reformers, we *do* need godly men and women, who have been led through refining fire, through whom God will minister to and lead us. Inasmuch as they bring us to Jesus, they should be recognised, supported, released, and even followed, out of the chaos that so marks our time.

Review: Parochial Vision
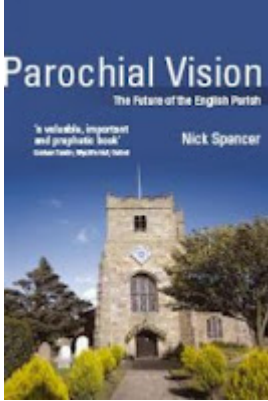
I had heard of Nick Spencer's *Parochial Vision* because it has come up as an input into the strategic plan for the Diocese of Tasmania. One of the aspects of the plan is the exploration of a so-called "Hub" model and other ways of reenvisioning Anglican structures for doing ministry in this state. The plan has drawn support from Spencer's key purpose of reappropriating the historic "minster" model.

> *"This book is a contribution… It looks at the parish system that has dominated the English landscape for a thousand years and proposes a new approach base on the system out of which parish churches grew." (Pages xii-xiii)*

There is a deep exploration to this purpose. Unlike other books I have read recently Spencer gives a thoroughly enjoyable and graspable insight into English church history. This made the book an excellent take-with-me-on-planes-and-trains book for my travels last week.

The first two chapters give an excellent overview of the rise of the parish model — essentially a model for ministry shaped around dividing a region into smaller and smaller heavily demarcated areas in which an individual minister has the so-called cure of souls.

In this overview Spencer has a rhetorical intent and he presents some of the perhaps-less-than-honourable reasons for the genesis of the parish model with its benefices and rights of tithe etc. He makes comparison with methodist and non-conformist post-reformation models and so demonstrate the

inherent flaws in the parish model. This leads into the consideration of the industrial and post-industrial eras in the second chapter that leaves us seeing the cracks in the edifice held together only by the fact of the English church's establishment.

> *"At the turn of the twenty-first, the Church matters less in people's lives than it has done at any time over the past 1,000years. Most people neither know nor care which parish they are resident in… For 500 years, the parish had been a natural community in rural areas. It may have originally been a secular unit, it may have evolved in the most ad hoc manner, there may have been a multitude of stresses and strains that twisted and tweaked the structures here and there, but the power of authority kept it in place…*
>
> *"The deep roots that have kept the parish structure alive for so much longer than might have been predicted a century ago are also the reason why, ultimately, it cannot survive."*
> *(Pages 56-58)*

Spencer suggests the *minster model* as a solution. In pre-modern pre-Parish times, within the celtic foundations of the English Church, these were "communal churches" (Page 69). Not yet a nation of Roman-esque Christendom, England had not been fully converted, and not able or ready to be split into small ecclesiastical and bureaucratic "parish" regions. Rather, minster churches – large churches with relatively larger regional affiliations (*parochiae)* – acted as "missionary churches, whose task was to educate the people in the faith just as much as it was to pastor to them or administer the sacraments." (Page 73)

> *"Anglo-Saxon minsters became centres for missionary activity from which small groups ventured out into the nominally Christian but often culturally pagan territory which surrounded them, and preached and ministered from bases*

established within local settlements, such as stone crosses in villages… at which local devotions would be performed."
(Page 74)

The parallels with a post-Christian western world are clear (see Page 95) and Spencer suggests a number of related reasons for a "return to minster churches" (Page 83) including social, ecclesiastical and historical aspects.

He speaks of the benefit of "collegiality" (Page 107) in having larger team-ministered regions rather than many single-minister parishes. He promotes a synergistic balance between having *local* ministries supported by the resources of a *larger* unit able to bring training and encouragement and providing other aspects of large-scale spectacle and collaboration. He recognises the outcome of the myriad reports and experiments over the years and sees minsters as their end. One thing he draws out from, for instance, is a consideration of a cooperative arrangement of small groups, team-lead local public congregations, and a larger "local church government" level (Page 138). He even begins, in the last chapter, to tentatively suggest some practical ways in which minster model regions may be begun.

I am a supporter of our diocese's strategic plan. My region, in North-West Tasmania is strongly in need of, and ideally placed for, a reimagining of itself as something akin to the minster model. We are not the same as the Church of England, but many of the problems — particularly with regard to nominalism and inefficient parochial insularities — are replicated here. It would work: a cooperative structure that embraces brother collegiality and individuality — common and particular expressions of a general mission — where congregations (some currently existing as parishes) can walk together, doing the good things of old and exciting new things as well.

Sometimes I disagree with the detail of what Spencer suggests as a way forward – nitpicks about the meaning of membership, the focus of financial arrangements etc. – but these are all peripheral to Spencer's main purpose. The parish structure now hinders the church from being the church. A minster/hub/network model looks better.

Time to make it happen.

Review: Reveal: Where are you?

Greg Hawkins and Cally Parkinson's *Reveal: Where are you?* is a useful book – in the sense of having a person come in and tidy your house is "useful" – you know what needs to be done, you could do it yourself if you had the time and energy, but you are immensely grateful that someone has done it. In the same way I am grateful that these authors from Willow Creek have put this book together and have come up with a result that is *useful* – obvious, relevant, useful.

The book revolves around analysis of surveys done in and around the Willow Creek congregations in America and shows how some of Willow's assumptions about church growth were challenged by the results. The conclusions that are drawn are what make this book useful.

For instance, we see their conclusion that church activities do not necessarily produce spiritual growth, rather "spiritual growth is all about increasing relational closeness to Christ" (p38). This is obvious, but useful because it reminds us of

the prevalent tendency of churches to fit people to activities and to fill "holes in the program" rather than concentrate on things that would foster spiritual growth.

There is a useful identification of a "spiritual continuum" that seeks to place people on stages in a journey of spiritual growth — from "Exploring Christianity" and "Growing in Christ" in the early stages, through to "Close to Christ," and "Christ-Centered" at the end. If the aim is to help people progress along this continuum, then how does the church do it? By promoting ("coaching" is a term used at one point) the "drivers" of personal spiritual practices, and helping individuals overcome the "barriers" of things such as addictions, inappropriate relationships, emotional issues, gossip/judgementalism, and "not prioritizing my spiritual growth." The authors reflect:

> *"The church is most important in the early stages of spiritual growth. Its role then shifts from being the primary influence to a secondary influence." (p41)*

> *"So if the church isn't the driving force behind the later stages of spiritual growth, what is? That's where the second external element of spiritual growth comes into play: personal spiritual practices… prayer, journaling, solitude, studying Scripture — things that individuals do on their own to grow in their relationship with Christ." (p43)*

> *"We want to move people from dependence on the church to a growing interdependent partnership with the church… Our people need to learn to feed themselves through personal spiritual practices that allow them to deepen their relationship with Christ… We want to transition the role of the church from spiritual parent to spiritual coach." (p65)*

The most insightful consideration is the recognition of key groups along the spectrum that, while having journeyed in spiritual growth somewhat, have "stalled" or are

"dissatisfied." The "stalled" person is at an early stage of the spectrum and is usually caught up with difficulties overcoming the personal barriers to spiritual growth. The "dissatisfied" person tends to be well developed in personal spirituality but is dissatisfied with the (in)ability to participate, serve, or be mentored in some way. The key part of this analysis, and something that I want to take on board in my own context is this:

> *"At the heart of the unhappiness may be the fact that neither segment seems to realize that much of the responsibility for their spiritual growth belongs to them. This is the big "aha.""* (p54)

And so the conclusions of this book are, once again, useful – church needs to help people to spiritually grow by helping them to take on the responsibility for that growth. A good conclusion – obvious, useful.

This book was worth the read. I don't know if it's worth the money – $20 for 75 pages (the rest is appendices) seems a bit on the steep side for what is a self-confessedly incomplete book that's more in the category of a report that would be useful to share by pdf than a book worthy of investment for later reference on your library bookshelf.

At times it was a bit *too* obvious – For instance – "In the end nothing was more *predictive* of a person's spiritual growth – love of God and love for others – than his or her personal relationship with Jesus Christ." In other words, spiritual growth and relationship with Jesus correlate – my response was an out-loud "well, duh." Obvious, but useful.

And at other times it's usefulness is outweighed by other resources – For instance the tool given in Appendix 4 and outlined on page 72 pales into comparison next to a tool such as Peter Bolt's *Mission-Minded*, which is basically the same thing (and a lot cheaper).

This book will factor into my own thoughts and machinations about the purpose, place and practice of church. It usefully points out the obvious. If you see it, pick it up and read. It won't take long.