

BUILDING A CHINESE HIGH-TECH MARKETPLACE
CLUSTER AND CHURCH IN SILICON VALLEY

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ABSTRACT

Building a Chinese High-tech Marketplace Cluster and Church in Silicon Valley

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This ministry focus paper develops a model combining the Marketplace Cluster and the local church in the high-tech industry in order to target Chinese non-believers in Silicon Valley.

Chinese in Silicon Valley have strong links to high-tech industry through their work. Their cultures are based on Far East religions; whereas, Christianity has been mainly a Western religion. Conflicts exist when East and West meet in the Chinese professional community.

Of the more than one hundred Chinese churches in the Silicon Valley, few are multiplying rapidly, and many are stagnant or declining. Blocking growth is the traditional church focus legacy: the “Church has a Mission.” This new model moves the ministry into the Mission focused Post-modern era: the “Mission has a Church.”

These professionals are interested in quenching their spiritual thirst. The church has been concerned with attenders’ distinct cultural and religious traditions. The missional challenge is preaching the gospel before people enter the church.

The Marketplace Cluster operates outside the local church building, not separate in any way except application. While distinct, it supports the local church. The local church gathers one day a week, and the Marketplace Cluster operates five days a week. They operate out of different sets of cultural rule books.

I am implementing this cluster and church model by first launching the cluster: Silicon Valley Harvest, and then Silicon Valley Church. Planting a Marketplace Cluster before planting a local church re-shaped the traditional ministry legacy of the local church.

This paper describes a “3C” perspective to integrate local church, Marketplace Cluster, and home cell into an innovative paradigm for missions in the Post-modern era.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
PART ONE: CONTEXT	
Chapter 1. CHINESE MARKETPLACE CONTEXT IN SILICON VALLEY	8
Chapter 2. THE GAP BETWEEN MARKETPLACE AND CHURCH	32
PART TWO: FOUNDATIONS	
Chapter 3. THEOLOGY OF THE CHURCH	63
Chapter 4. THEOLOGY OF MARKETPLACE CLUSTER	88
PART THREE: STRATEGY	
Chapter 5. ANALYSIS OF AND APPROACH TO BUILDING MARKETPLACE CLUSTERS	107
Chapter 6. SPIRITUAL FORMATION IN A MARKETPLACE CLUSTER	135
Chapter 7. IMPLEMENTATION OF MARKETPLACE CLUSTER	160
CONCLUSION	190
BIBLIOGRAPHY	194

INTRODUCTION

According to the latest U.S. Census' 3-Year American Community Survey from 2006-2008, an average of 30 percent of the ethnic Chinese population living in the San Francisco Bay Area are skilled professionals working in technology, scientific, engineering, and management industries. This amounts to approximately seventy-seven thousand individuals. Of this population, roughly 67 percent are Chinese immigrants, and more than half remain non-U.S. citizens. In Santa Clara County alone, where most are employed within the high-tech industry, there are approximately fifteen thousand Chinese immigrant high-tech professionals working and living within the heart of the Silicon Valley.¹ Although there are more than one hundred ethnic, Mandarin-speaking, Chinese immigrant churches within the Silicon Valley, the majority of the Chinese immigrant high-tech professional population has yet to accept Christianity. Many converts to and seekers of the faith remain marginal Christians and do not attend church on a regular basis. For various reasons, the gospel is not adequately reaching Chinese immigrant high-tech professionals through the Chinese immigrant churches in the Silicon Valley.

This paper will briefly introduce key factors that have been known to prevent Chinese immigrant high-tech professionals from accepting Christianity and propose a ministry model. This ministry model reaches out to them by addressing their spiritual needs in order to bring them to Christ and into active church participation. This paper is

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, *American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates*, Data Set 2006-2008. Data interpretation from the four major counties in the Bay Area that comprise the greater Silicon Valley – Bay Area (San Francisco, Alameda, San Mateo, and Santa Clara Counties).

not intended to study the factors as to why the gospel is not reaching the Chinese immigrant high-tech professionals through Silicon Valley churches, or why Christian converts become “unchurched.” Instead, the focus of this paper is to introduce a ministry model called the “Marketplace Cluster” ministry, which I have implemented and practiced over the years in the Silicon Valley as a pastor. It reaches out specifically to Chinese immigrant high-tech professionals who are non-believers by preparing and leading them into a local church.

Simply stated, the Marketplace Cluster is a ministry model for implementing a series of methods to introduce and bring the gospel and the church out of the four walls of a traditional local church into a particular high-tech company consisting of people who share a common life and the same working experiences. The goal is to bring the church and its functions and ministries to the people who form the cluster at the location and time determined by the participants. This often takes place where the participants work during weekdays.

A key criterion of this ministry model is that the ministry should focus on and reach out only to a narrowly defined community of individuals, for example, individuals sharing common backgrounds and values, working within similar occupations, and experiencing the need for spiritual well-being. This serves to differentiate the Marketplace Cluster from the traditional local church that ministers to a general community and from a church cell group that serves and supports members and membership growth in its own church. The Marketplace Cluster ministry model seeks to gather and minister to all participants in the defined market, regardless of the

participants' religious affiliation or lack thereof. Its ultimate purpose is to guide and place the participants into active fellowship and service in the church of their choice.

Therefore, the application of this ministry model to any narrowly defined community of individuals is entirely possible and is not a unique ministry model for ministering solely to Chinese immigrant high-tech professionals. Since I was a high-tech Chinese professional working in the Silicon Valley before I became a pastor, this paper is focused on the high-tech community. The Marketplace Cluster I started has attained a measure of success over the years such that I feel prepared to share this experience. More importantly, Chinese immigrant high-tech professionals have revealed serious symptoms of increasingly severe spiritual imbalance and dysfunction in individuals and their family lives. There are ever more pressing needs and calling to continue to reach out to this community as the strains and pressures of living and working in the fast-paced community of Silicon Valley intensify.

As Silicon Valley continues to develop and evolve, its economy and working culture are continually and simultaneously being reinforced and constrained by several factors: a growing and increasingly integrated global economy, burgeoning but short-lived and ever changing new technologies, and a constant influx of new and diverse cultures and traditions that come with new waves of non-immigrant and immigrant workers from all over the world. These factors present serious challenges to the stability and security of one's livelihood as well as one's opportunities.² Against this backdrop, higher level education, long working hours, and the common traditional and cultural

² Bernard P. Wong, *The Chinese in Silicon Valley: Globalization, Social Networks, and Ethnic Identity* (Lanham, MA: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2006), 17.

values that had defined the Chinese immigrant high-tech professional's worldview are no longer applicable to help make sense of the fast and ever-changing environment. I would contend that no other time is a better time than the present to proactively reach out to the Chinese immigrant high-tech professionals in the Silicon Valley in order to help them recognize, seek, and realize substantive spiritual awakening, healing, and growth in Christ.

The organization of this paper is divided into three sections. Chapter 1 begins by exploring the two contexts: that of the Chinese immigrant high-tech professional and that of the church. These contexts and the similarities and differences between them present the key issues and challenges that the ministry faces at the outset and must overcome. This contextual discussion includes a brief description of their common background and the traditions, cultural traits, and the values that define the Chinese immigrant high-tech professional's worldview in the Silicon Valley. Chapter 2 follows by introducing and outlining the proposed methods for implementing the Marketplace Cluster ministry model. The chapter details various gaps that need to be bridged between the spiritual needs presented by the workplace and the traditional church's defined functions and ministry before the ministry can serve as a successful vehicle for integrating its participants into the church and continue a sustainable relationship.

The second section begins with chapter 3, setting forth a more in-depth description and discussion of the foundation that has helped to define and give rise to various key interpretations regarding the theology of the church. This is followed by chapter 4, in which the theology of the cluster concept for the Marketplace Cluster

ministry model is proposed and discussed. Together, chapters 3 and 4 lay the foundation for the reason why the church and the Marketplace Cluster ministry model need one another. They can and should co-exist as a new ministry model for both outreach and bridging the gap between church and the workplace that chapter 2 has introduced.

The third section consists of the final three chapters of this paper. Chapter 5 proposes a description of the strategy to redefine the post-modernity mission and to implement the Marketplace Cluster inside the high-tech companies in the Silicon Valley. It provides practical strategies and incentives for the local church to shift the focus away from the church's role in defining for the community as to what the community "needs" and toward recognizing community's collective "desires" in humanity's post-modern era. The workplace should help as the source for presenting those "desires." Chapter 6 discusses further strategies for spiritual development and formation for the participant in the Marketplace Cluster ministry model so that the participant comes to have an understanding of God and a human's relationship with God. It also discusses the various functions of the church that need to be introduced to the participant to facilitate his or her preparation for entry into the church community. It further proposes that the Marketplace Cluster ministry model should and can continue to serve as a church outside of the local church. Finally, chapter 7 outlines and discusses the methods for organizing the Marketplace Cluster ministry and the required training of the co-worker and ministry leaders to help operate a successful ministry.

These three sections in their totality will demonstrate that the purpose of this ministry focus paper is to present a contextually informed, biblically-based strategy for

building the Marketplace Cluster and church in the Silicon Valley, ministering to Chinese immigrant high-tech professionals.

PART ONE

CONTEXT

CHAPTER 1

CHINESE MARKETPLACE CONTEXT IN SILICON VALLEY

Over the last ten years, the Silicon Valley Chinese community has been undergoing substantial growth with the rising influx of newcomers from Taiwan, Hong Kong, and China. Unlike their immigrant forefathers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, who were poorly educated laborers, local ethnic shopkeepers, and menial services providers, the members of the Chinese immigrant community in the Silicon Valley are no longer regarded as helpless victims of circumstance, burdened by their ethnic culture.³ Presently, approximately 30 percent of the Chinese in the Silicon Valley are highly educated, highly skilled, globally connected professionals, businessmen, and cross-cultural industry and community leaders working in high-tech related industries.⁴

In light of these changes in the Chinese immigrant community, the purpose of this project is to present an effective model for building a church for Chinese Mandarin speaking professionals in Silicon Valley high-tech corporations. The proposed new model is a hybrid between the church and the marketplace, which meets the particular

³ Wong, *The Chinese In Silicon Valley*, 15.

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, *American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates*, Data Set 2006-2008.

needs of high-tech professional Chinese immigrants and addresses the obstacles they encounter in the marketplace. It is important to examine these obstacles as they exist in American corporations, as well as the obstacles due to the conservative culture of the Chinese immigrant church. This ministry project targets Chinese immigrants instead of American-born Chinese (ABC), while also focusing on professionals in American corporations (as opposed to Chinese high-tech corporations). In order to help immigrants in real-life situations, there is a need to investigate the frustrations and challenges Chinese immigrants face as they bring their culture into the American corporate culture.

Although there are many Chinese immigrant Christians in local churches, this does not mean that the Chinese immigrant unbelievers will join them. This ministry project is not trying to duplicate the existing Chinese immigrant church model inside the American corporation. Chinese immigrant churches in the United States differ from American mainstream churches in certain distinguishing aspects. However, the reasons behind the difference have rarely been subject to theoretical analysis. This chapter uses participant observation and interview data to analyze a Chinese immigrant church that has a tolerance level between that of the conservative Chinese church and the more liberal marketplace.

With total of twenty years as a Chinese immigrant high-tech professional within Apple Computer, and Sun Microsystems, as well as having attended a Chinese immigrant church, I will present both the marketplace and church contexts. This chapter briefly explores the cultural background of the immigrant Chinese high-tech professionals with the Chinese style of communication, social relationship, value systems, self-presentation,

and shame-oriented culture. Although these obstacles become the glass-ceiling in an immigrant's career, they will provide great opportunities for the gospel to answer questions of the purpose of the life. This chapter also explores the immigrant Chinese church with its tradition of being conservative, fundamentalist, and opposed to religious form. These traditions, along with certain intolerances and an inconsistency in addressing social issues, have become obstacles preventing high-tech unbelievers from coming to the church. The Chinese, high-tech marketplace church is the new sack for the new wine of marketplace ministry. We are told to "put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved" (Mt 9:17).

Exploring Chinese Immigrant Professionals in American Corporate Culture

The challenge for the Chinese immigrant high-tech professionals in Silicon Valley has a lot to do with their culture. The corporate cultures they work in, along with the clash between American and Chinese cultures, have posed major obstacles for them in their professional and personal lives. There are cultural factors inhibiting the occupational and social mobility of the Chinese in Silicon Valley. This section will examine some of these cultural issues; understanding the issues will help both the church ministry and Marketplace ministry, if they are properly handled.

Communication Characteristics

The lack of "verbal aggressiveness" on the part of Chinese immigrant high-tech professionals is perhaps one of the major obstacles to their occupational mobility. From my high-tech professional jobs in Silicon Valley in the years 1980 to 2000, I also noticed

that there is a certain truth in the assertions of Matloff regarding the “glass ceiling” of promotion.⁵ Both White American employers and Chinese high-tech professionals agree that there is one area that both groups need to work on. White employers complained that Chinese high-tech professionals, especially those first generation immigrants from China and Taiwan, are “too quiet” in meetings. Some may have good ideas but are afraid to express themselves in public. From the side of the Chinese high-tech professionals, they do not feel comfortable speaking out, partly due to the fact that their English is not perfect and partly due to the fact that, when they speak out, they are often not taken seriously. Many Chinese high-tech professionals also agree that White Americans like to talk and that the Chinese enculturation process and education systems have not trained students to assert themselves in the public.

There is a difference in the style of communication. The Chinese high-tech professionals feel that their Chinese way is more civilized and genteel. In many business meetings and professional presentations, Chinese high-tech professionals do not take an active role in defending their projects and budgets. In American corporate culture, one has to do public relations to sell one’s ideas or projects. The boardroom is also a war-room. White American colleagues understand this process of fighting for their team and become rather competitive and aggressive. There is cut-throat competition among the different projects and teams. One has to sell one’s ideas and defend one’s project aggressively. Many Chinese high-tech professionals are not trained in this manner.

⁵ Norman Matloff, *High-tech Trojan Horse: Immigration and the Computer Industry - Issues Involving the Glass Ceiling for Asian-American Programmers* (New York: Immigration Studies Center, 1999), 8-9.

Cultural Conflict

There is a lack of understanding or misreading of both American culture and the American corporate culture among the Chinese immigrant professionals. Further, many of them have ingrained in them the traditions and values of the Chinese culture. Many Chinese high-tech professionals still emphasize respect for authority and the importance of humility and modesty.⁶ Many feel that they should not glorify their ideas and their achievements. David Lee, the inventor and developer of the Daisy Wheel Printer, also saw the necessity of training the Chinese to be more assertive. He said: “If we don’t blow our own horn, who will?”⁷

Closely related to verbal aggressiveness is “self-presentation.” Many Chinese high-tech professionals have not mastered the techniques of “self-presentation.” They are steeped in their belief in meritocracy, seniority, and formal certification. Many of the immigrant Chinese came from elite universities in China or Taiwan. With their Ph.D.s and work ethic, many believe and hope that they will be appreciated and recognized by their business leaders. Thus, their pain becomes so much greater when they are by-passed for promotions. When they realize that their less qualified colleagues are now their project managers, these immigrant Chinese become enraged. Some of them become so

⁶ Serrie Hendrick, *Anthropology and International Business*, Publication Number 28 (Williamsburg, VA: College of William and Mary, 1999), 36-37.

⁷ Connie Yu, *Chinese in San Jose and the Santa Clara Valley* (Mount Pleasant, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 1987), 98.

emotional that they may go back to Asia to become “astronauts.”⁸ Others decide to leave their companies to become self-employed and to organize start-up companies with other Chinese.

Connecting Socially

Chinese high-tech professionals need to understand that “technology is not everything.” Chinese immigrant high-tech professionals have to integrate themselves with the human nexus of their companies. Many Chinese professionals are hard workers. They come to work early and go home late, as they are extraordinarily dedicated to their jobs. This phenomenon is well recognized in Silicon Valley. In fact, this is one of the reasons why many White employers want to hire them. Many of them prefer work over “play.” In fact, they even skip company picnics, parties, soccer games, and drinking events. As a result, in the corporate world, they are seen as odd and not part of the company. They do not feel like going to these events because it is a waste of time and they do not drink. While it is true that drinking is part of the attraction for many party-goers, networking and socializing with colleagues are extremely important. Conversations about sports, political events, and “gossiping” are sometimes important mechanisms to integrate themselves into the corporate world. It is in these social events that one can present oneself as a likable colleague and a team player. Social acceptance can be an important step toward one’s promotion.

⁸ An astronaut is a family member who leaves the United States to work in his or her home country in order to be appropriately employed.

The lack of English proficiency is another factor, which hampers social interaction and acceptance of the Chinese in the professional circle. When Americans learn a little Chinese and speak Mandarin, the Chinese people are generally quite impressed. That is because the Chinese people feel very proud that foreigners appreciate Chinese culture. However, the situation is reversed when the Chinese speak broken English. They are considered to be uneducated and unintelligent. In the U.S., people often form their opinions about others on the basis of linguistic ability. Further, Americans are not used to learning other languages, but expect everybody else to speak English. It is a kind of ethnocentrism, which affects their perception of other people. Regardless of the superior training of the immigrant Chinese in science and technology, some Americans still judge their ability in terms of their language skills. Unfortunately, this kind of opinion does dictate decision making and the assignment of jobs. Thus, it is important that the high-tech professionals from China or Taiwan become well prepared in the English language.

Additional Barriers to Career Advancement

American born Chinese do not quite have the same problems. However, many Chinese high-tech professionals, regardless of their English proficiency, complain that the “glass-ceiling” does exist. There is a stereotype that Chinese Americans have a communication problem, which is used as an excuse by White Americans to bar their promotion. This kind of discrimination takes place in the high-tech business world. In essence, it is bad business practice; it is a waste of talents. Objectively speaking, some Chinese immigrant professionals from China and Taiwan are not proficient in English.

This lack of English proficiency needs to be corrected if one wants to function well in the Silicon Valley. There are unusual talents among the Chinese. They are intelligent and hardworking but need help in speaking and writing English.

There is a cultural problem on the part of White Americans when it comes to accent discrimination. Not only is there a racial hierarchy in social differences, but there is also discrimination on the basis of race and nationality. Thus, for instance, when a French person speaks English with an accent, it is considered to be charming. A German accent is considered to be less. There are accent reduction classes in Silicon Valley, but they do not apply to the French and German people. Thus, there is a built-in discrimination against certain accents.

Moreover, in American society, there is also a myth about the “model minority.” Some white people use it to bypass the Chinese in favor of other groups. They say: “You are a model minority. Why should I promote you?” Thus, in order to foster better understanding and communication, there are problems that need to be ironed out with respect to both the Whites and the Chinese. These problems are deeply rooted in their cultures.

Some of the business practices of the Chinese pose obstacles that inhibit mobility. One of these is the concept of “stability.” Many Chinese high-tech professionals seldom job hunt or change jobs. By contrast, White Americans tend to look for jobs continuously. Social mobility often implies geographical mobility. People who want to move up change their companies and their place of residence. It is a habit of many Chinese high-tech professionals to stay put in a company for too long. If one does stay in

the same company for too long, it is perceived to be a weakness. The question asked by the management is: “If he or she is so good, how come he or she is still here?” This question suggests that there is a problem, either professionally or with the person’s character. While some White American engineers may use a new job offer as a bargaining chip to get a promotion, Chinese engineers seldom use this strategy to break the “glass ceiling.”

In the case of engineers who have become entrepreneurs, there is also a tendency for them to maintain their business for a long period of time. In Chinese culture, the thinking is that, when one’s business is doing well, one does not want to sell it. Keeping a stable business going is important in Chinese business practices. In the U.S., this is not considered to be a good strategy. Chinese people are taught to be conservative in their business practices. In the U.S, one needs to be innovative and to take risks. One needs to grasp a business opportunity quickly and use it to build and expand the business. It is difficult for Chinese to do this, but it has to be done in order to achieve high success.

The cultural problem of “face” has been commonly recognized by Chinese high-tech professionals and employers alike. Employees desire respect and dignity in all situations. Causing a person to lose face, or losing one’s face in public, however, has more consequences among the Chinese. In a “shame-oriented” culture, one finds it unbearable to face public humiliation. This, perhaps, is a reason why a Chinese may not want to confront one’s superior, even if the superior is not right. In America, it is important to clarify misunderstanding through public discourse or argument. However, Chinese high-tech professionals prefer non-confrontation, as things are often swept under

the rug. What the Chinese need to realize is that confrontation or debates are sometimes necessary to correct the misconceptions of their bosses. If someone is wrong, someone needs to argue it out and complain to a superior. “The squeaky wheel gets the grease” is something the Chinese need to learn in order to achieve social advancement.

Different Approaches to Individual Initiative

In the Silicon Valley technology community, squabbles on infringement of patents, copyrights, and intellectual property rights are frequent. There are Chinese companies suing other Chinese companies and individuals arguing with other individuals. This is one area that many immigrant Chinese high-tech professionals are lax about. Many Chinese high-tech professionals conveniently take their designs from their previous work to a new company. They think of nothing about it. In this society, companies and businesses are extremely sensitive about business secrets, patents, and intellectual property. An individual’s invention must be protected. Some companies do not even allow photographs to be taken on their premises. E-mail communications with outsiders may even be screened. Business secrets mean money. An individual’s achievement is to be celebrated. Among the Chinese, there is no copyright attitude with regards to intellectual properties. This perhaps has something to do with the business practices in China.

Individualism is a trademark of American culture. In early childhood, American children have been trained in individual expression, creativity, and the pursuit of self-fulfillment. Individualism is an important cultural value, which has been built in early

socialization, kindergarten, grade school, high school, college, and their careers.⁹ They are trained to break out on their own. This kind of attitude and practice of going out on one's own in job performance and starting pioneering careers as inventors, explorers, or entrepreneurs has been stressed. They fight for their rights and protect themselves. In Silicon Valley, there are some Chinese high-tech professionals who are like that. However, the number of this group of pioneers or entrepreneurs is still quite small. Recently, some Chinese professional organizations as well as alumni associations have been dealing with this issue of individualism. They also realize that the education of the Chinese high-tech professionals in both China and Taiwan has stressed the aspects of technology and science. They feel that not enough attention is paid to social sciences and humanities. As a consequence, their knowledge of Chinese culture and American culture is limited.

The over-emphasis on science and technology may not even be viable as many technology jobs are being out-sourced. For the Chinese immigrant community in Silicon Valley, there is a need for occupational diversity. Some see the importance of having better humanistic training for the Chinese high-tech professionals. Some suggest retraining to cope with the saturation and out-sourcing of technology jobs. What is relevant here is to have more tools in dealing with their occupational mobility. Local knowledge and an in-depth understanding of both American and Chinese culture are indispensable for their careers in the U.S.

⁹ Francis L. K. Hsu, *American and Chinese: Passage to Differences* (Honolulu HI: University Press of Hawaii, 1986), 308.

It is important for marketplace ministers to understand the cultural context in order to reach out to unbelievers in the Chinese immigrant high-tech professional community. The evangelism of Chinese immigrant high-tech professionals in Silicon Valley has a lot to do with their culture. The corporate cultures they work in, along with the clash between American and Chinese cultures, have posed major obstacles for them in their professional, personal, and family lives. Knowing the corporate culture and the Chinese and American cultures, and knowing each one's communication, behavior, and ideal patterns, as demonstrated in this section, may help toward removing some of the barriers to social mobility. Unfortunately, much of the cultural information was not taught in engineering classes at home or in America. In a society like the U.S., which emphasizes multiculturalism, there are giant steps to be taken in college, graduate school, and corporate life. Individually, Chinese immigrant professionals may do well in their careers if they can master both their home and host cultures.

Exploring the Chinese Immigrant Church in American Culture

The fact that Christianity is not an indigenous religion for Asia makes Asian immigrants' Christian experience more interesting, complex, and puzzling in many ways. This is particularly true for the Chinese, a group with less Christian tradition than other Asians. Many Korean immigrants were already Christians prior to their immigration, and numbers of Filipinos, Vietnamese, and other Southeast Asians were Catholics or Protestants in their home countries. In contrast, the percentage of Chinese who were Christians before immigration is very low. The exceptionally low proportion of Chinese Christians can be traced back to an irreligious tradition in China. For decades, the

Communist party has indoctrinated the people with atheism, with the result that many Mainland Chinese take atheism for granted as a worldview.

The Chinese immigrant church in Silicon Valley has provoked increasing sociological interest in recent years, as this rapidly growing immigrant group – Mainland Chinese – has become a new target group for Christian evangelicalism. Chinese churches in which these Chinese converts worship tend to be strict and conservative and to insist on biblical literalism. They often lack hierarchy and have untrained leaders; they strongly emphasize personal salvation and maintain higher tension level with other religious groups.¹⁰ These characteristics distinguish the Asian immigrant churches from American mainline churches and ally them, at least philosophically, with American fundamentalist Protestant churches. Since Christianity is not an indigenous religion for Asian immigrants, there is no doubt that their experience with Christianity is closely related with their assimilation.

There are either more-tolerant or less-tolerant members in Chinese immigrant churches from the survey of churches in the Silicon Valley. More-tolerant members tend to compromise with the secular world, and to accept popular values and religious pluralism. Their churches also interpret biblical Scripture metaphorically rather than literally. Their leaders tend to be unspecialized, and their members mostly of the less-educated, middle class, or marginalized members of the community. Less-tolerant members have opposite characteristics. They hold themselves separate from the larger society and believe that the church has become too worldly. They comprise small and

¹⁰ Antony W. Alumkal, *Asian American Evangelical Churches: Race, Ethnicity, and Assimilation in the Second Generation* (New York: LFB Scholarly Pub. 2003), 119.

informal groups offering close personal relationships among the members. Their belief system is very rigid and interprets the Scriptures literally, while their leaders are usually professionally trained, and the members mostly of the well-educated, middle class.

Chinese immigrant churches condemn many stances on issues and groups that are either more or less tolerated in American mainline churches, such as certain sexual practices and non-Protestant religions. Moreover, the less tolerant members often do not tolerate many things common in Chinese culture, such as dancing, singing pop songs, playing cards, and using the dragon image. Furthermore, while the past experience says that more tolerance is typically found among those who are less-educated and poor, members in Silicon Valley Chinese churches tend to be well-educated professionals. Many in the well-educated group have a post-graduate degree and live in an affluent suburban area where the church is located. For this reason, the Chinese immigrant church has an obstacle to reach marketplace high-tech professionals in Silicon Valley.

Observation Analysis

While sharing many similarities with American mainline churches, Chinese immigrant churches differ from them in certain distinguishing aspects. The purpose of this assessment is to highlight the tolerance and tension between the traditional Chinese immigrant church and high-tech professionals in American culture. Although both live in Silicon Valley, they seem to come from two different worlds. The reasons behind these differences, however, have rarely been subject to theoretical analysis. There is need to examine the Chinese immigrant church within the tolerance range of the American society and marketplace by analyzing participant observation.

This observation is based on twenty years of observation (from 1980 to 2000) when I was an elder in a Chinese immigrant church, which will be called “Chinese Christian Church” or “CCC” (pseudonym). My data were obtained in three ways: participant observation, interviews, and content analyses. To carry out participant observation, I attended various activities organized or facilitated by the CCC, including Sunday worship services, Friday Bible studies, Sunday school classes, holiday celebrations, sermons, regular meetings, and so forth. In addition to conducting informal interviews by talking to the CCC members casually and extensively, I also did semi-structured interviews with many members. These semi-structured interviews contained open-ended questions asking their reasons and feelings about churchgoing, in general, and about attending the CCC and their own fellowships, in particular. I also asked them to describe their immigration experiences and feelings about their American lives. Content analyses were also conducted on materials printed or distributed by the CCC, including flyers, booklets, program brochures, newsletters and magazines. The CCC is medium-sized with about three hundred members in 2000; it is conservative, evangelistic, nondenominational and independent, just like many of the typical Chinese new immigrant churches that have been documented.¹¹ The church established different ministries and fellowships to accommodate the diverse members. There are four ministries arranged by languages, including three Chinese dialects - Mandarin, Cantonese, and English; while under these language groups are more than ten fellowships.

¹¹ Fenggang Yang, *Chinese Conversion to Evangelical Christianity: The Importance of Social and Cultural Contexts* (College Station, PA: Pennsylvania State University, 1998), 257.

In this study, particular attention was given to a fellowship that hosted Mainland Chinese. The CCC had very few members from Mainland China until 1995. In 1995, the increasing influx of Mainland Chinese caught the attention of the church's Taiwanese leaders, who then set up a fellowship for the Mainlanders. I found that the CCC incorporated characteristics of both a less-tolerant and more-tolerant American culture. Particularly, its theology was rather strict, although some compromises were made. On the other hand, the organization was structured to a certain extent but was still less formal and hierarchical. I will elaborate these aspects in the following section.

Tension with the Secular World

Most of the Chinese immigrant churches rejected values and practices popular outside the church. In the CCC, the term *worldly* was equivalent to *dishonest*. The ministers frequently criticized contemporary American society as lacking morality and as being distant from God. They also condemned many popular activities in Chinese societies, such as playing cards, dancing, singing pop songs, and drinking. They denounced many other religions, including Catholicism, Mormonism, Judaism, and Christian Science, as being untrue, heretical, or hypocritical. The CCC was also not very interested in political involvement or community service outside the church, as the ministers claimed Christian life and evangelism to be their sole purpose. Moreover, like other typical Chinese churches, it was independent and had no denominational affiliation.

The CCC, however, was not completely isolated from the outside world. It recognized some conservative Christian organizations as true and had informal networks with a number of them. Some fellowships also had contact with secular organizations,

such as Chinese University Alumni Associations, and held events together with them which helped the church in recruiting members.

Organization and Leadership

Unlike the often hierarchical churches, Chinese immigrant churches are characterized by a high degree of equality and fraternity among their members.¹² In the CCC, ministers always declared an equal relationship between leaders and members. The leaders emphasized to members that they were all the same, with the only difference being that they had different burdens before the Lord: The ministers' burden was to serve the church. Members of the CCC called each other "sisters" and "brothers," instead of using their names or titles. Spouses referred to each other as "my sister or my brother." The CCC fostered a close, home-like community, where each one watched out for and supported each other.

The organization process drew it away from the original goal of religious purity to increasingly devote energy to organizational maintenance, with its structure becoming increasingly formal.¹³ Although the Chinese immigrant church avoids formal structure in pursuing religious purity, this usually changes as the group develops. The organization of the CCC was structured to some extent, although still less formally than the mainline churches. It organized its members into four linguistic ministries with each ministry having several fellowships hosting members with various backgrounds. The Mandarin

¹² Bryan Wilson, *Religion in Sociological Perspective* (Oxford: UK, Oxford University Press, 1982), 125.

¹³ Stanley D. Eitzen and Maxine Baca Zinn, *In Conflict and Order: Understanding Society* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1988), 213.

Ministry was the largest one with eight fellowships. These fellowships grouped people using such categories as their ages, marital status, and occupations.

A fellowship group typically had untrained and charismatic leaders, while a church has formally seminary-trained leaders. The leadership styles in the CCC varied among fellowships. The minister of Company Fellowship, which mainly hosted young professionals, obtained formal training in a seminary. Some leaders did not have such formal training, such as the minister of the Outreach Fellowship, which hosted new immigrants. Most ministers in the CCC were middle-aged, married men. Their wives usually worked shoulder-to-shoulder with them and became leaders without an official title. Members called these leader couples “auntie” or “uncle,” as in some other Chinese churches.¹⁴ These leaders maintained close relationships with the members, talking to them, visiting their residences, and giving them practical help. The female leaders particularly took on the role of giving members a feeling of being at home. They often greeted members by hugging, sat next to them during services or dinners, and talked to them hand-in-hand. Such physical intimacy is not customary in Chinese tradition and is hardly seen among non-churchgoing Chinese. Some female leaders often cooked for members in family meetings or offered haircuts to the members as American commercial haircuts were too expensive for some.

Religious Purity

Religious purity was a very important point and was emphasized repeatedly in the CCC. All other religions and their practices were denounced there. CCC’s leaders

¹⁴ Yang, *Chinese Conversion*, 129.

forbade worship of any idol, such as ancestors, Buddhist idols, and the Virgin Mary. They were also very intolerant of dragon images, for the reason that the dragon is an evil character in the Bible. However, the dragon is a very important symbol in Chinese culture; Chinese regard it as their ancestor and call themselves “the dragon’s descendants.” It is also a very common decorative figure in Chinese daily life. CCC’s leaders forbade members to have any dragon image at home. The year 2000 was a year of the dragon for Chinese and dragon images appeared on almost every Chinese calendar. The ministers told church members to throw away all those calendars and gave them special calendars that featured Chinese Christian history instead.

In contrast, the American mainline Protestant churches generally show a greater acceptance of pagan Chinese traditions. This may be due partially to the cultural differences between Chinese and Americans, but there are more religious reasons behind it. Not all the Chinese Christian churches are as intolerant; the least tolerance is seen among those newly established evangelical Protestant churches that host new immigrants. On the other hand, those Chinese Catholic churches that were mainly established by early nineteenth-century Chinese immigrants are more tolerant of the Chinese heritage. Some of them even offer sacrificial pig heads and incense sticks to worship ancestors.¹⁵

There was, nonetheless, a certain degree of compromise in the CCC’s strict atmosphere, as illustrated in the following example. During a Bible study, after an elder

¹⁵ Carolyn Chen, *The Religious Varieties of Ethnic Presence: A Comparison between a Taiwanese Immigrant Buddhist Temple and an Evangelical Christian Church* (Oxford UK: Sociology of Religion, 2002), 215-238.

had denounced idol worship, a member raised a question: “I went back to China last summer; that was before I believed in Jesus Christ. I went to visit my grandparents’ graves with my family and relatives and worshiped my grandparents. Will I be punished?” The minister answered: “Before you believed that was okay. This is just as if, before a law existed, people who violated the law wouldn’t be punished. Now you have believed and you shouldn’t do that. If your family asks you to go and you have to, you may go and watch, but remember: Do not ever worship.”

Salvation

Conservative churches usually believe that salvation is scarce and that few will attain it, but they often also believe that the means are essentially simple and direct.¹⁶ The CCC strongly emphasized salvation and regarded it as the only way to gain happiness in life. All other things, such as money, education, or secular work, were worldly and thus meaningless. The importance of “belief” in salvation was always stressed there. For instance, a minister taught the members: “Whether we can be saved or not, does not depend on our secular work or education — our work in a company or getting a PhD, but depends on our faith. Our salvation is because of our work before our Lord, the work of our faith.”

However, the CCC did not believe that salvation was scarce and only few could attain it. Rather, they held that simply believing in God would lead to salvation and anyone who opened his or her heart would experience God and thus gain salvation. In the

¹⁶ Wilson, *Religion*, 21.

CCC, the teaching was that, if a person was touched in his or her heart by God, then that person could be baptized. If one was baptized, then that person could be saved. A member who had never been exposed to Christianity was baptized two weeks after he started to attend the CCC. This is unlikely to happen in institutionalized churches. The CCC often arranged group baptisms. Right before the ceremony, some ministers might encourage those who had not planned to do so to receive the baptism. This showed that the CCC had emotional and spontaneous elements, which were characteristics of more tolerant churches and differed from the rational features of established churches. However, the conceptions of baptism and salvation were not entirely without rationality in the CCC. They did not baptize people who came to the church the first time, as some missionaries in developing societies do. They had Bible studies and Sunday schools to teach members the systematic concepts of salvation. Although they might baptize people without much knowledge of the Bible, the newly baptized members were asked to sit together with non-Christian members in a “Seeking-heart Class” to study the Bible from the beginning.

The CCC and its Fit with High-tech Chinese Professionals

The questions could be posed as to why the CCC mixed characteristics of either high tolerance or more tolerance to the existing American social environment as described above, and why this hybrid appealed to new Chinese immigrants. Sociologists of religion have found that peoples’ religious motivations can be traced back to their biographies as well as to the social, cultural, and ethnic characteristics embedded in the

religious institutions.¹⁷ Chinese immigrant churches mostly serve well-educated people with a higher socioeconomic status. New Chinese immigrants in the CCC could not simply be put into either category. My observations and the interviews show that the separation can be explained at least partially by the following factors outlined below.

First, the CCC members were mostly new immigrants who were not fully integrated into American society. An important factor contributing to the lack of integration was the language barrier. The young members typically came to the United States after their twenties and had passed the critical period for language learning. Although they had usually obtained American post-secondary education and were able to speak English in their work, they still felt more comfortable speaking Chinese in their daily lives. The CCC also hosted many older members who had come to the United States at an advanced age to join their children or siblings here; they spoke almost no English. These language barriers separated many CCC members from local Americans in their daily lives. Such ethnic separation typically resulted in religious separation.

Second, new Chinese immigrants are more concerned with issues in their private spheres—their work, families, and children’s education—rather than community participation and political involvements. In the CCC, the most popular topics among members were green card residency, job-seeking, salary, housing, and children’s schooling and health; societal and political issues were rarely discussed. Some of my interviewees said that they had to take care of practical issues at that point in life and thus did not have much time to look at the broader society. Some also attributed their political

¹⁷ Kevin J. Christiano, William H. Swatos Jr., and Peter Kivisto, *Sociology of Religion: Contemporary Developments* (Walnut Creek, CA: Rowman & Littlefield Pub. 2002), 46.

apathy to the general indifference towards public issues in Chinese traditional culture, the political turmoil in China's recent history, and the lack of a sense of belonging to the American society.

However, Chinese immigrants do not intend to be isolated from the broader society. Many of them are professionals who work or intend to work in racially diversified mainstream institutions.¹⁸ They desire to be incorporated into the mainstream society. Being in contact with the larger society and establishing social networks with more people are regarded as being to their benefit. Through connections with other churches, the CCC members could meet more people, extend their social networks, and obtain better knowledge and information about Christianity and American society in general. Therefore, most of them will not join a less-tolerant church that totally isolates itself but, rather, prefer a group with connections to the outside world.

A major factor that makes the CCC recruit more actively is that its congregational members are themselves adult converts. The CCC members were not born into the church, and most of them were not used to church-going before active proselytizing drew them in. The CCC Marketplace Fellowship outreach leaders were more diligent in recruiting than other fellowship leaders, and the more sectarian recruiting practice was consistent with Mainland Christian Chinese members who were less familiar with Christianity. It was also necessary because of the high mobility of high-tech professionals and new immigrant members. Every year, many of the CCC Marketplace Fellowship members moved out of the area after layoffs, changing jobs, or even due to the low

¹⁸ Yang, *Chinese Conversion*, 139.

degree of tolerance in the secular world. Moreover, since most members did not have a Christian, or any church-going tradition, some simply stopped attending when they were too busy, when they no longer needed the practical help from the church, or when they had found their own social networks outside the church. Pushing the boat closer to fish in the deep ocean is better than waiting for fish to come near the boat. Chinese immigrant churches need to revisit their outreach strategy to build the church inside the high-tech corporation in Silicon Valley. This is the purpose of this ministry project, and it will be discussed more in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 2

THE GAP BETWEEN MARKETPLACE AND CHURCH

Chinese high-tech professionals, in thinking of religion, include in that category church, worship services, Sunday school, and the like. When local church Christians think of a religious leader, the most commonly envisioned person is a pastor, priest, elder, or cell group leader. Work, specifically employment, is not regarded to be a significant part of Chinese high-tech professionals' religious experience. Business managers, professional engineers, lawyers, teachers, medical doctors, stockbrokers, and factory workers are rarely considered religious leaders. However, in recent years, there has been a growing awareness that people's religious faith should inform and impact their lives at work. There is increased attention being paid to the idea that lay people can also be leaders, not only at work, but also in their faith community. The church is strengthened when lay people take their appropriate leadership roles.

There are at least two gaps that prevent the church from fully preparing and equipping its people for leadership in the workplace. These two gaps are the gap between functioning at work and in church, and the gap between behavior on Sunday and the rest of the week. High-tech professionals' ministry will play the key roles in filling the gaps

between church and marketplace. This chapter will demonstrate that high-tech professionals are needed, along with local church clergy, to address and remedy the problem of these gaps. It will delineate the specific roles of clergy, church lay volunteers, and other lay members, specifically high-tech professionals, in bridging the gaps between church and marketplace.

The Gap between Sunday and Weekdays

When I worked for Apple Computer, one of my colleagues said: “My boss went to church, that’s what he did on Sunday; my boss went to hell for what he did on weekdays.” The same could be said of other Chinese high-tech professional Christians in the Silicon Valley. It is necessary to understand how big this gap is and how it came about. Some people who attend church services and participate in the sacraments exhibit different personalities. They seem to be one person on Sunday and another on Monday. They have one mind for the sanctuary and another for the marketplace. They have one conscience for the church and another for the high-tech company. Employees who occupy a pew on Sunday may feel it is all right to steal a pack of pencils from the company storage on Monday. Their worship conflicts with their work, but they will not acknowledge the conflict. The gap is a breach in the ethics between being in the pew on Sunday and the boardroom on Monday. The gap is the difference between what a believer hopes for, sitting in church on Sunday, and that person’s actions the rest of the week.

The gap referred to is one in which the Sunday worship experience, from prayers to sacraments to sermons, while often meaningful and well administered, bears little

relationship to a person's Monday workplace or office reality. This often leads a believer to live a bifurcated life, compartmentalizing his or her faith as a private matter relegated to Sunday, where one's Monday is no longer shaped by or informed by faith teaching.

The gap becomes broader as many Silicon Valley Chinese local church pastors are simply not trained to think about the church as anything other than the center of one's faith life. These pastors have a theology that spiritualizes faith and takes it out of the realm of a working person's life. It seems that church pastors are not giving their lay leaders the perspective that their job really matters to their faith. Most of the church congregation has never heard a sermon relating faith to employment, and only a few have been inspired through a sermon to work harder. When a pastor does discuss work, it is viewed as a place for self-expression rather than an opportunity for serving or loving others. The most common word used by pastors when discussing economic issues is *selfishness*, and there is a strong tendency for pastors to preach on issues that are prevalent in the media and related to politics and the culture wars and not on issues more pertinent to people's everyday lives. God never made a distinction between sacred and secular. The sum of these perceptions is that there is a large gap between pastors and business professionals.

The pastor, and by extension the church, should rather equip the followers of Jesus to live out faith-filled lives Monday through Saturday. The Bible gives a consistent message that people of faith are meant to be salt and light in the world. One's daily work matters to God; indeed, it matters deeply. Not only does it matter what a believer does, but also how it is done. Work can be a holy calling. The best advice one might give a

future pastor is “It’s not about Sunday!” That reframing would make a huge difference in how pastors preach, pray, lead worship, and teach.

Wrong Expectations Developed from Biblical Answers Confronted by Real-life Experience

I had more than twenty years of experience as a computer professional in Silicon Valley before I became a pastor. I learned that the marketplace is a place where Christians can grow and where their witness can make a difference. Only once did I have the privilege of leading a fellow worker to Christ on the job, but I had many opportunities to share my faith. I discovered that Christian convictions are a whole lot easier to have on Sunday in the church than on Monday at work. I became skeptical of easy and pat answers that Christians repeated that did not fit the reality of people's everyday lives.

For example, in high-tech companies, there was a gap between employees and management in facing conflict. Most believers know, “Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God” (Rom 13:1), but they have difficulty following that in the workplace. Some supervisors do not like to hire Christian employees, and some employees do not like to work for a Christian boss. As an explanation, some supervisors think that, since the employee is a Christian who should be able to walk an extra mile, they can take advantage of the employee. On the other hand, Christian employees of a boss who is also a Christian may feel the boss should take care of them a little bit better. These wrong expectations result in conflict between management and employee even when both are Christians.

Working with people of all different backgrounds and convictions made me realize that I often let my narrow experience of life shape my theology and limit God to my puny perspective. For example, I might have favored Christian workers but found that some unbelievers' work ethic was better than the conduct of the Christians. Thus, we should treat them equally. If Christianity is to be relevant, it must enable the Christian to learn how to work with all kinds of people and do it in such a way that they are accepted as part of the team. In other words, one has to be accepted by fellow workers as a person before he or she will have any interest in accepting their witness for Christ. In contrast, poor working relationships will so undermine one's witness that it will be basically worthless in its impact.

Thus, work and witness are not two separate things. They are one because work is the foundation for witness. Paul says in Colossians 3:17, "And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." Paul says the Christian life consists in what one says and what one does. Proverbs 12:14 says the same thing: "From the fruit of his lips a man is filled with good things as surely as the work of his hands rewards him." Words and work are the two means whereby all experience the good life.

From this discussion, it is apparent that two key elements for success in bridging the gap between one's worship and the marketplace will be the person's words and work, or what the person says and does. In fact, as to one's work, the Hebrew word *avodah* is

the root word having the meanings of “work” and “worship.” God sees our work as worship.¹⁹

The Gap between Sacred and Profane

French sociologist Emile Durkheim said, “Religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden.”²⁰

The dichotomy between the sacred and the profane is the central characteristic of religion, especially as practiced in local churches. There must be many ways to change Chinese high-tech professionals’ thinking to break free of this Sunday/Monday dichotomy. The first step is to disavow the concept, described by Durkheim, that divides the world into secular versus sacred, private versus public, faith versus work, and charity versus justice. It can be argued, in fact, whether what happens on Monday or Sunday is more important, but, from a kingdom perspective, there is no difference between Sunday and Monday. When Peter said he had never eaten anything impure or unclean, God told Peter twice, not to call anything impure that God had made clean (Acts 10:15). This is the way God broke Peter’s dichotomy so that Gentile Cornelius could get into the kingdom of God. An understanding of the kingdom of God makes it evident that everything is sacred because God is the creator of all things and nothing exists outside of His love and compassion.

¹⁹ *Seven Mountains* quote from God in Your Workplace website, <http://www.the7mountains.com/> (accessed September 15, 2010).

²⁰ Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1912, English translation by Joseph Swain: 1915), 47.

One of the reasons many Chinese high-tech professionals turn away from Christianity is that believers represent a faith that has no relevance to them because of the sacred-secular divide. Henry Drummond, writing to his own generation many years ago put it powerfully. “It is because to large masses of people Christianity has become synonymous with a Temple service that other large masses of people decline to touch it...what they cannot follow, and must evermore live outside of, is a worship which ends with the worshipper, a religion expressed only in ceremony, and a faith unrelated to life.”²¹ High-tech professional believers need to live the Christian kingdom and so bring it into the workplace.

According to kingdom-centered faith, in which there is no gap between sacred and secular, if the Christian faith is relevant at all, it must be relevant in the workplace. This project is looking at a rediscovery of kingdom theology, which has many aspects. One of the starting points for this rediscovery, though, is the doctrine of the Trinity. In a recent Lausanne paper on “Marketplace Ministry,” the following conclusion was presented: “To bridge the gap in our partial perceptions of God’s work we need to be more thoroughly Trinitarian instead of having in practice a Unitarian (one person) theology playing favorites with the Trinity.”²²

When it comes to the church, one can think of Sunday as the church gathered and Monday as the church scattered. Sunday then becomes a time to strengthen, encourage,

²¹ Henry Drummond, *The Greatest Things in the World* (Ada, MI: Baker Publishing, 1977), 61.

²² *Marketplace Ministry*, Occasional Paper No. 40, produced by the issue group on this topic at the 2004 Forum hosted by the Lausanne Committee for the World Evangelization in Pattaya, Thailand, September 29 to October 5, 2004, 20.

and equip Christians to take the kingdom into their world. As a church growth expert, Eddie Gibbs says, “Churches should shift from an invitational, ‘Come’, seeker service strategy (which works in largely churched suburbs) to a ‘Go’ strategy of dispersal, with a sustained commitment to infiltrating each segment of this fragmenting world.”²³ The marketplace, then, becomes a focal point for producing the kingdom, and high-tech professionals become the leaders of the movement. As these new marketplace leaders are not the ordained clergy, it is helpful to remind both clergy and marketplace leaders of the “priesthood of all believers,” which is described in the next section.

Priesthood of All Believers

The “priesthood of all believers” is not only a concept for Marketplace Ministry but is also the concept appropriate for closing the gap between sacred and profane. For most people, the office of pastor is considered to be the highest position in the church. This notion, however common, is an unfortunate development because it has forged a dichotomy, creating two classes of Christians: laity and clergy. The origin of this error is traced to the fourth century when the Church adopted the hierarchical structure of the Roman Empire, instead of staying with the New Testament “body” model. Paul’s description of how the Church works as a body in 1 Corinthians 12:22-25 has been all but lost through the centuries. Martin Luther argued against the distinction between “spiritual” and “secular” classes in the Church, even though they perform different duties. He defined the doctrine of the “priesthood of all believers” as saying that all baptized

²³ Eddie Gibbs, *Church Next: Quantum Changes in Christian Ministry* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 105.

believers are no less important than bishops and they are equally religious officers.²⁴ Many churches are breaking free from this historical bond, replacing the multi-level hierarchical way of being God's people with the every-member-equal "body" way of being God's people.

A Further Definition of Priesthood of All Believers

In defining the "priesthood of all believers," one refers first to the believer having direct access to God, which is secured by Christ's gracious work on the cross. In Hebrews 10:19, "We have boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus," and in Ephesians 2:18, "The Holy Spirit enables our access, as we have access by one Spirit to the Father." The meaning of direct access is through Christ without the intervention of any other human. In 1 Timothy 2:5 is written, "For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ." Believers are set aside as a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (1 Pt 2:4). The first and foremost sacrifice offered up by the Christian is himself. In Romans 12:1, Apostle Paul told the Roman believers "to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service."

Secondly, A believer is a priest as he or she appeals to God in intercession for others, which requires that "supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks be made for all men" (1 Tm 2:1). All believers also have an anointing from God and do not need anyone to teach them but "the same anointing teaches [them] concerning all things"

²⁴ Martin Luther, *Weimar Ausgabe*, vol. 6, p. 407, lines 19–25 as quoted in Timothy Wengert, "The Priesthood of All Believers and Other Pious Myths," 12, http://www.valpo.edu/ils/assets/pdfs/05_wengert.pdf (accessed August 25, 2014).

(1 Jn 2:26-27). Apostle John tells the believers that the Spirit's anointing has rendered them able to discern false teaching and they should not need someone else to expose a false prophet (1 Jn 4:1-3).

Lastly, priests represent God to people through evangelism and represent people to God in prayerful intercession. Evangelism is the great priestly work of the Christian Church, and believers are called out from the world, in 1 Peter 2:9, "that you may proclaim the praises of him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." The doctrine of the priesthood of all believers does not mean that local churches limit their boundaries of fellowship but reminds them to break the dichotomy of "spiritual" and "secular" to reveal that all believers are "priests" and "spiritual" in the sight of God. The priesthood of all believers takes place in and through not only the Christian community but also the Marketplace ministry. No one can take this doctrine out of the marketplace context and understand it.

Brief History of the Priesthood of All Believers

Not until the 1950s did the Church begin to awaken to a better way of doing business. It rediscovered the biblical model for ministry. Ephesians 4:11-12 sharply focuses it by enjoining pastors and teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry. The context and other Scriptures make it unmistakably clear that every Christian is a minister. So many churches of all denomination are participating in this rediscovery that the result is nothing less than a second Reformation.

In the first Reformation, the Church gave the "Bible" to the people. In the second Reformation, the Church is giving the "ministry" to the people. The Church is again

becoming a classless Church. The disparity of laity and clergy is being replaced by the parity of all the people of God, the *laos*. How did the Church arrive at the separation between clergy and laity and hierarchy? One needs to understand “priesthood of all believers” by retracing the steps to help correct the course. The answer starts in the Old Testament and follows the New Testament trail to the present.

In Old Testament Israel, the priestly order separated priests from the rest of the people. The New Testament does not provide evidence of an order of priest. Jesus’ coming ended that order (Heb 4-5). The Church of Jesus Christ as a whole is a "royal priesthood" (1 Pt 2:9). All Christians are given gifts for ministry. There is only one order: *laos*, "the people of God." All are ministers. All are priests. All are “called.” The differences between laity and clergy are not in order, but in function. Apostle Peter's definition of the Church - a “royal priesthood” - establishes the fact that only one order exists. That one order is priest (or minister); however, God has given it many functions. Unfortunately, the change to two orders began with one of the greatest events in church history, the Edict of Constantine. The Church began to adopt the hierarchical structure of the Roman government, thereby starting its drift from the New Testament “body” design. At times, the Church struggled to free itself from the vise grip of hierarchy. The sixteenth century Reformation led by Martin Luther not only rediscovered justification by faith, but also rediscovered the priesthood of believers. Priesthood includes two roles: priest, representing people to God, and minister, doing service for God. The Reformation defined every believer to be a priest and every believer to be a minister. Although the Church continued to follow the "every believer is a priest” reform, because the grip of the

two-class system was so powerful, the reform failed. Not until the 1950s did the Church reignite its struggle for this reform. Since then, Church leaders and congregations have broken free by rediscovering what had been lost from the New Testament model wherein every Christian is a minister, and the differentiation between Christians is in function – not in order. The awakened Church today is winning the struggle. It is releasing the power of the laity by giving ministry back to them, and releasing a new power in the clergy by restoring the clergy's function of equipping the laity to do the ministry. The Church can once again be classless, including both clergy and laity in one order.

In the marketplace, “priesthood of all believers” means one with a marketplace flavor. It is not enough to build anointed businesses and offer money to the church. Every marketplace believer must have a calling to be both a business leader and spiritual priest. In the book of Zechariah, the leadership of Israel’s remnant was comprised of Joshua, the High Priest of Israel, and Zerubbabel the Governor. Both of them were outstanding leaders, which represents the partnership of the spiritual priest with the political leader in alignment with God’s plan. Moses performed his work duty for the entire nation, and his role as a leader was public to the people. He also performed as a spiritual priest by interceding for people on their behalf. We Christians are called to lay down our lives for the worker next to us in the office and intercede for those we are called to serve. Nehemiah was a respected governor who initiated the reconstruction of Jerusalem, organized the people, and supervised the construction work. Also, he called the nation to repentance, restored the worship, and became a spiritual priest to the people. He was not only anointed to lead and build but was also the priest of prayer.

The Priesthood of All Believers in the Marketplace

In marketplace ministry, the powerful combination of spiritual and secular roles defines the “priesthood of all believers” in an unprecedented way. Marketplace believers should not only have been equipped with expertise in business, but they also need to have the spiritual wisdom of priesthood. They generally think of themselves as problem-solvers and not problem-intercessors, but prayer is the single key to reclaiming the marketplace priesthood. Prayer requires humility and recognition of weakness. God is not impressed by believers’ strength, nor discouraged by their weakness, but God loves their earnest pursuit.

Marketplace believers are called to be priests, to cry out to God, and to conquer the marketplace. Every marketplace believer can minister in the power of the Holy Spirit for the growth of the Body of Christ. Each marketplace believer has an important part to play in God’s Kingdom. All are equal to one another in every aspect and not assigned to a lower class or a higher class. All believers, including those in the marketplace, are God’s humble servants and should be given honor and respect by each other for their roles in priestly ministry.

High-tech Professionals Awakening

High-tech professionals are the ones who sit in the pews, who never seem to make it into the ministry of the Chinese local church. Although many are talented, they are consumed by their jobs or businesses. They are either unavailable or unmotivated to be part of the Chinese local church ministry team. They are a little frustrated about their

inability to participate, and they are often a source of frustration for the pastoral team since they never seem to get totally on board with the Chinese local church. It is an uncomfortably large percentage within Chinese local church congregations, but high-tech professionals are sleeping giants in most local churches. These believers must be awakened to their role and call.

While it is clear that clergy and lay ministers have roles in the Chinese local church, it is also evident that all Christians in the marketplace, as high-tech professionals, have roles out in the world, expanding the kingdom of God. This project attempts to close the gaps between clergy, local church lay ministry, and high-tech professionals. God is not trying to make clergy out of everyone or to keep the entire congregation busy inside the Chinese local church. The high-tech professionals could be encouraged to have a ministry in the marketplace expanding the kingdom. They are the Abrahams and Isaacs (businessmen), Joshuas and Calebs (military), Josephs and Davids (government officials), and Nathans and Daniels (prophets in government) of this present age. They can expand the kingdom of God into every area of society. The apostle Paul asked the question, “How will they go unless they are sent” (Rom 10:15)? The implied answer is that they will not go. We need to send out high-tech professionals to expand the kingdom of God into their corner of the world, to be kings.

Priests (pastors, teachers, other church leaders) play an important role in equipping the saints to do the ministry (inside and outside the church). They naturally gravitate to a peaceful, healthy atmosphere and have a godly motivation to keep their congregations happy and maturing. In contrast, kings are aggressive. They establish their

authority, and they are willing to assert themselves. They move people into new territories and stretch people out of their comfort zones to expand the kingdom of God in the marketplace. Historically, kings have been leaders who worked closely with priests. They were talented people with the resources to get things done.

High-tech professionals are similar to the kings in the Old Testament. A person had to be born of the kingly family in order to become a king and had to be born into the priestly family line to become a priest. However, Jesus Christ came to the Earth as both King and Priest. Those who become Christians are born into God's family and are now of the kingly and priestly family line. A Christian is a king and a priest. One's primary calling may be to serve within the local church as a priest (clergy or lay ministry) or it may be to expand the kingdom in the marketplace as a king (high-tech professionals). Either way, Christians will serve Him wholeheartedly, or He will be with them. This understanding opens the door for marketplace ministry and the role of high-tech professionals endeavoring to expand the kingdom.

God has always used "kings" as the movers and shakers in the kingdom. The Old Testament figure Daniel spent his life in a governmental role but used a prophetic gift to interpret dreams. Abraham was a businessman who raised livestock and became the most powerful man in his day. Moses was a national leader. Joshua was a military leader. They all had callings as kings to possess the inheritance God gave His people. In the New Testament, there are examples of the Lord pressing major initiatives with kings again. Neither Jesus nor any of the twelve disciples came from priestly lines. The major players

were kings in the ministry sense. They had influence and power in the marketplace; some even had significant wealth.

Notice that the high-tech professionals do more than provide financially for the Chinese local church. This is important because some church leaders today want to release high-tech professionals, but they think high-tech professionals are to use all of their profit to provide for the clergy and the church. Of course, the high-tech professionals may be blessed financially, and they will be generous in providing for the Chinese local church, but they are called to do more than that. High-tech professionals have the calling of God to extend the kingdom of Jesus Christ into the marketplace to fill it with His glory. While high-tech professionals have a role in extending the church, clergy must also support these professionals.

Clergy and Lay Supporting One Another's Ministries

The high-tech professionals live high-quality material lives, and their incomes are the highest paid in Silicon Valley. When they take on ministry through the local church, they have a different point of view regarding spending money than clergy. The high-tech professional lay minister's calling involves higher material standards than the apostle Paul's tent-making, but the local church clergy may still be suffering in poverty. Both lay minister and clergy need to respect each other's calling, learning to work together, and leveraging the gifts from God.

By a high-tech professional's standard, clergy and lay ministry are typically far less focused on wealth and possessions. Pastors, especially TV ministers who are over-zealous for wealth, seem out of place. On the other hand, some pastors spiritualize

poverty and encourage others to adopt their simple lifestyles. They say, “Blessed are the poor,” and they believe humility and meekness are clothed in “holy” poverty. However, high-tech professionals simply cannot absorb this message. Their ministries in the marketplace are rooted in their influence and prosperity. Without promoting the excesses of materialism, clergy must make room in their theology and churches for high-tech professionals to be channels for the finances, influence, power, and leadership to expand the kingdom (outside the church). If clergy release their ministry, lay ministry will bring evangelism to high-tech communities and growth to local churches.

The role of the Chinese local church pastor is to speak the voice of God and to have the responsibility to run the Chinese local church. When the church undertakes large-scale programs, projects, or fund-raisers, they often attract kingly ministries. The leader of the kingly ministry feels tempted to run the church and overtake the normal ministries of the church. The pastor can never surrender the leadership of the church to a high-tech professional without violating a spiritual principle. High-tech professionals do not serve God in the Chinese local church; they serve Him in the marketplace. Chinese local church pastors must never surrender their leadership to high-tech professionals, who are called to function outside the church.

The most important gap among clergy, lay ministry, and high-tech professionals is in decision making. Present theology places senior pastors of local churches as the highest authority and requires all activities to come under their “covering.” The senior pastor needs to be the highest authority in his or her church, and should not be deterred from his or her vision for the church by high-tech professionals who really are called to

expand the kingdom in the marketplace. By the same token, when high-tech professionals function in the marketplace, expanding the kingdom, they are not simply an extension of the pastoral ministry in that city. Although high-tech professionals receive guidance from clergy and those in lay ministry, they make decisions on their own. For example, King David did not need anyone's permission to fight a battle. He heard from God and he took action. High-tech professionals need to give themselves permission to hear God and act. They do not need their pastor's permission to operate outside the church. Of course, their actions should harmonize with those of their pastor, but high-tech professionals certainly will not get direction to function outside the church from most pastors.

Chinese high-tech professionals are competitive, bold, creative, and decisive. For the most part, they will not learn to exercise those skills from a shepherding mentality. Chinese local church pastors should make the decisions affecting the local church. High-tech professionals should focus their initiatives toward the Great Commission—reaching outside the church and expanding the kingdom. They should return from the marketplace with fruit—fruit that grows the local church. The pastor's function is primarily in the church; the high-tech professional's function is primarily in the marketplace. Even though the ministry of high-tech professionals is focused on the marketplace, they will still attend and support their local church, worshipping beside clergy and lay ministry.

There will be no Silicon Valley marketplace transformation without high-tech professionals. Pastors have stepped outside the church and have not seen the benefit of working with high-tech professionals in the capacity for which God created them. Without the decisiveness of high-tech professionals, progress in these pastors' strategy is

painfully slow. The very concept of taking a marketplace is a high-tech professional function that can be blessed by pastors, but not performed by them.

The Apostolic Movement and Its Role

The End Times Apostolic Movement began officially at the turn of the twentieth to twenty-first century, *coming clearly into focus* around the year 2001.²⁵ The marketplace ministry is part of that birthing and the first beginnings of the restoration of the Apostolic Office to the Body of Christ. Peter Wagner states, “I believe that the government of the church is finally coming into place and that is the scripture teaches in Eph. 2 that the foundation of the church is apostles and prophets.”²⁶ The fundamental difference between the apostle Paul and the new apostolic movement is the focus. Jesus commissioned the apostle Paul to go to the world, to the gentiles, and to turn them from the power of Satan to God. It was not to install a government and rule over the Church. Paul was too busy doing ministry, starting churches, teaching the apostles’ doctrine, and raising up those equipped to do ministry. The focus of today’s apostolic movement is raising up new apostles to the marketplace instead of keeping them in the local church.

Today when the apostolic movement begins to function, marketplace ministers will hold the role of apostles to help release the kingly anointing and bridge the functional gaps between clergy, lay ministry, and high-tech professionals. There will be greater initiative and authority for bold new moves outside the church that expand the

²⁵ Apostolic Movement International website, “The New Apostolic Movement has Begun,” <http://www.apostolic-movement.com/> (accessed July 15, 2012).

²⁶ C. Peter Wagner, Arise Prophetic Conference, Gateway Church, San Jose, CA, October 10, 2004.

kingdom and grow the ministry as a by-product. When high-tech professionals begin to function, new land will be taken for the kingdom. They will begin to inherit the whole Earth, as they possess what the Lord has for them. Pastors will see the impact of high-tech professionals in church growth and evangelism.

The biggest mistake is to assign high-tech professionals to be in charge of people ministries inside the church, thus subverting their focus. They can minister to and mentor their employees and customers and create an ownership in their own ministry. They will delight in bringing them to church as well. If high-tech professionals are challenged to expand the influence of their ministry through their business or job or network and are successful, then they can be challenged to network with other high-tech professionals and expand into missions around the world.

The Bridge between Marketplace and Local Church

Pastors Helping Their Congregants Integrate Work and Faith

In order to bridge the gap between Sunday and weekdays, there is a real need for strong clergy leadership from the pulpit. Marketplace leaders come to church because they want direction for faithful living. Some will, of course, go their own way, read books, and come to their own conclusions. The majority will, however, continue to perceive a gap between Sunday and weekdays if their pastors do not guide them and show them how to bridge that gap. There are four main things that pastors can do to help their marketplace professionals live the faith in their workplaces.

First, pastors need to point out that faith is a way of life. The church should have a “church without walls”²⁷ initiative that highlights everyday activities of church members that reflect the faith as a normal part of life, pointing out that church exists on weekdays. Currently, when people hear the word *church*, they still tend to think about the local church entity and its building. Church, according to a full biblical perspective, is the people of God wherever they are doing whatever they are doing. Our marketplace leaders need to know that they are the church and they can live church Monday to Friday in their workplaces.

Second, pastors need to preach sermons that encourage work. The majority of sermons that mention business in church tend to be either superficial or negative. With the global economy in recession, it is easy to be negative about business and blame corporate greed. However, the goal of preaching a sermon on work should be to expand the horizons of the congregants, not to pontificate about the economy. The pastor should tell them how God created humans in His image and then commissioned them in Genesis 1:28 to work. The pastor should affirm to them that their work is a way that humans fulfill part of their original purpose. He or she should think about having special services regularly throughout the year that emphasize the spiritual and social benefits of work.

Third, pastors should gain some experience in the marketplace. Lots of pastors do not talk about work and business because they do not understand it and are intimidated by it. For the same reason, lots of high-tech professionals do not talk about God, Jesus, and

²⁷ Jim Petersen, *Church without Walls: Moving beyond Traditional Boundaries* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1991), 108.

church. Going to work in a business can not only bridge a gap to people in the community and the congregation, but it can also expand a pastor's understanding. Church pastors need to have some work experience from the marketplace through different channels. I know a pastor who works once a month through a temp agency simply because he wants to be in the marketplace. Pastors can take time out from work at the church to encourage their church members to take time out from work to help at the church.

Fourth, pastors can commission their marketplace people. It is easy for a local church to devote a service to commissioning church members who go for seven days on a short-term mission trip, but how many churches have special commissioning services for their marketplace church members who spend 250 days a year in the workplace? It would be a real benefit for everyone if the church found ways to commission church members as they do other types of missionary service. Pastors can also highlight periodically the work and businesses of church members by taking three to four minutes to talk about the job of a church member and how this job fulfills the original commission to work in Genesis 1:28. The church can also put blurbs in the church bulletin or on the church website to constantly remind church members that they are all priests, whether they work in the church office or a corporate office.

High-Tech Professionals to Bridge the Gap

There are two tracks on which the train of high-tech professionals makes progress into the secular world. If they do and say right and wise things, they will be able to transfer the truth of Sunday into the marketplace on weekdays. If any changes are going

to take place, and if high-tech professionals are going to let Christ transform their daily work, they need to focus on these two things: work and word.

Work

Solomon says the work of one's hands is what rewards that person (Prv 10:4). Everything in life that people enjoy and praise God for comes by means of work: homes, possessions, churches, schools, cities, stores, and roads all come by work. Even the treasures of nature exist because God worked for six days in creating it all. Then God gave humans the intelligence to know how to use nature, and, by work, get out of it all God built into it. Work is of the very essence of life. It is for good reason that labor is the term used for the activity that leads to the birth of a child. People only have life and the gift of children by means of work.

Reality, as humans know it, began with God working, and the first thing God did with Adam was to give him a job. Many think of paradise as a vacation, but, for Adam, it was a vocation. Genesis 2:15 says, "The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it." There was no unemployment in this perfect world. God made humans to work. The fall made work harder and less productive, but work is not the curse. Work was part of the blessing of humans in the state of perfection, and it will be a part of their eternal relation to God. Humans are made in the image of God with the capacity to think and reason, so they can figure out how to use energy in such a way as to take raw material and create what is new and beneficial.

Jesus himself worked. He trained to be a carpenter, a worker with wood. He created things by work, and He left an example that dignifies manual labor. Jesus chose

men to be His disciples who were part of the labor force of His day. They all had jobs they had to leave. Jesus did not go to those who were idle and unemployed to choose His disciples. Jesus wanted workers, for His task of reaching this world was going to take work. In John 5:17, Jesus said, "My Father is always at His work to this very day, and I, too, am working."

What Silicon Valley needs are Christian high-tech professionals who can see how their work fits into the plan of God to use work to reach the marketplace. The marketplace is one of the key areas of life in which Christians can build relationships with the world. On Sunday, Christians build relationships with other Christians and develop the family of God ties, but, Monday through Friday, Christians have opportunities to build relationships with the world. The marketplace is the Christian's experience of the incarnation. Jesus was in heavenly glory, but He came to be a man and a worker in the midst of worldly people. In the same way, Christians must leave the shelter of the Christian environment and descend into the world of the marketplace where there is foul language, there are dirty stories, and one experiences exposure to all that is secular.

Christians have to make a difference and be the salt and the light. The first step is by our work. High-tech professional Christians have to be good workers to have any chance to be good witnesses. The Christian who is lazy and shirks his or her fair share of the load will not be taken seriously if he or she tries to witness for Christ. High-tech professional work itself has to be the Christians' first witness. If the people they work with do not respect them for the job they do, those people will not have respect for any

belief the Christians have. If a Christian's beliefs do not benefit others first by giving them a helpful co-worker, then that Christian can forget about making any positive impression on co-workers with words. Their actions will speak so loudly that co-workers will not hear what is said.

When high-tech professional Christians can see that the job they do is the key to a good witness, then Christ will be able to transform their daily work, for they will then be able to see that their work itself is a tool for witness. If Christians do a better than average job, even when they do not like what they have to do, it opens up doors of opportunity to witness. Doing a poor job at anything is not a very effective witness for Christ. There are so many jobs that have to be done that are not glamorous, fun, or meaningful. They are just jobs that have to be done, and it is hard to link them in any way with the glory of God. It seems almost demeaning to link God with such lowly tasks.

There is a humorous event in the life of C. S. Lewis, which he shared in a letter to his brother. He wrote, "I was going into town one day and had got as far as the gate when I realized that I had odd shoes on, one of them clean and the other dirty. There was no time to go back. As it was impossible to clean the dirty one, I decided that the only way of making myself look less ridiculous was to dirty the clean one."²⁸ Imagine, here is one of the world's most distinguished professors and world famous Christian authors, and he is trying to get his clean shoe dirty so it would match his other dirty one. I doubt if Lewis was thinking of the glory of God as he labored on this trivial task. He was thinking only of his own image and of the embarrassment of looking foolish. However, this trivial

²⁸ C. S. Lewis, *Letters of C. S. Lewis* (New York: Mariner Books, 1994), 352.

event calls attention to the fact that all of life's tasks add to or detract from the glory of God by making people either acceptable to others, or rejected by others.

Everything Christians do on the job, however trivial, makes them more or less acceptable. It either helps to build relationships or tears them apart. If a Christian's work meets with approval, he or she has a better chance of having words of witness heard. If a person is not a better worker and more helpful to the team for being a Christian, why should anyone be impressed with being a Christian? If the atheist does a better job, and if the humanist is more cooperative, and if the non-church person is a better encourager of others, why is anybody going to listen to a Christian, especially if that Christian is more interested in being critical and self-righteous than in being a team player?

This applies to high-tech professional Christians in Silicon Valley. If it is not better to work for a supervisor because that person is a Christian, why should anyone be impressed by the fact that the supervisor is a Christian? If non-Christian bosses and employers treat people better, why should anyone be eager to know more about Christians? Instead, they will be annoyed with those who are Christian and probably feel that Christians use their religious convictions to justify their Christian behavior. The best basis for a witness for Christ in the marketplace is doing a job in such a way that co-workers will like the Christian as a fellow worker, or as a boss. A Christian's work itself is the first and primary witness for Christ.

Words

As the hands produce work, so the mind produces words. Words are also like work, and not just for the writer and speaker, but for all people. Words represent the work

of the inner person. They are the labor of one's thinking, feeling, and caring. By means of words a person does work that the hands can never do. People build buildings with their hands, but it is by their words that they build up people by edifying and encouraging them. It is by their hands that they operate machines, but it is by words that they control relationships.

One of the key ways that Christ can transform one's daily work is by making that person aware that what is said is a part of his or her daily work. What a person says after doing a good job can make all the difference in the world as to happiness with the job and effectiveness as a Christian witness. The Christian who does not have a different vocabulary from the world is going to have a hard time bridging the gap between Sunday and weekdays. If someone praises God with his or her tongue on Sunday and then curses a person with that tongue on Monday, this performance will please neither God nor humans. One's words must develop a consistency if there is to be any transfer of the sacred to the secular. If a person uses sacred vocabulary in church, but then a secular vocabulary at work, these dual dictionaries of speech never intermingle, and that person will not likely be allowing Christ to influence his or her daily work. It is by words, some spoken and some unspoken, that Christians often do their greatest work for God.

Jesus said that, by a person's words, he or she will be justified or condemned (Mt 7:1). Words are works for which people shall receive or lose a reward. Words are works that will transform a Christian's work as a witness to others. To make worship practical for Monday, one needs to listen to God on Sunday and strive to see what can be learned then and applied on Monday. Mother Teresa of Calcutta was saying something very

practical when she said, "The essential thing is not what we say, but what God says to us and through us. All our words will be useless unless they come from within. Words which do not give the light of Christ increase the darkness."²⁹

When Christians only communicate words that reveal their personality and biases, they draw or repel people. This is not all bad, for it is part of life that one cannot escape, and it can even be very good. However, when one communicates the words of God and His will for humans, then that person helps others focus on Christ and not just on personality. People should be given a chance to respond to Jesus based on who He is and His claims, regardless of who the witness is. That is why Christians need to learn to share with others the words of Christ, saying things that convey His convictions, even if the hearer has not yet embraced them. The only way to do this is to listen to the Word of God with the marketplace in mind. Christians need to work at breaking down the barriers between the secular and the sacred.

One of the hardest working groups of Christians in the world is the Wycliffe Bible Translators. They have to link the sacred and secular all day long as they seek to learn what words in a particular language best say what the Bible is trying to communicate. Scott MacGregor was working on a language in which he had to study boats in order to accurately communicate the story of Christ. Jesus preached from a boat, but the people he was trying to reach did not have a simple word for boat. They had twelve different kinds of boats, and he had to study all of them to select the one that most fit the type of fishing

²⁹ Mother Teresa, quote from Think Exist website, http://thinkexist.com/quotation/words_which_do_not_give_the_light_of_christ/215932.html (accessed September 15, 2010).

boat Jesus would have used. This kind of thing is going on all over the world. The search goes on for the right words to convey the Word of God to people in the context in which they live.³⁰

If high-tech professionals could see themselves in this same role, it could transform their daily work. Secular workers are to bring their jobs into our worship with the prayer that God would open their eyes to see how His Word can change their words in a way that would convey what God wants communicated. When God wanted to save this lost, secular world, He sent the Word. The Word became flesh, and not only told of the will of God, but showed it by His works. Words and works are the two channels God used to save people.

When a high-tech professional Christian has won the respect of his or her fellow workers by doing good work, then that Christian can have a powerful impact on them by words. It also works the other way. If a Christian talks down to others as a self-righteous Pharisee, that one's words will destroy the witness of any good work. One's words have to correspond with one's work and be words of encouragement and hope that entice the worldly mind to wonder what the person has found in Christ. If all a person does is complain about life, the job, and humans as lousy sinners, that will not have much appeal to non-Christians. They need to see and hear in a Christian one who knows just as much as they do about the disappointing side of life, but who can yet be an optimist with joy, hope, and love for life. They need to hear words from Christians that convey how being a

³⁰ Scott MacGregor from Wycliffe Exist website, <http://www.wycliffe.org/SearchResults.aspx?SearchArea=0&QueryExpr=MacGregor> (accessed September 15, 2011).

Christian is more than a Sunday affair, but rather a life-changing affair, with Jesus making a difference in everyday, secular life.

If Christians will only be conscious of the presence of God in their daily lives, their daily work will be transformed, for they will be thinking of how they can be channels of His love and truth in work relationships. Proverbs 12:25 says, "An anxious heart weighs a man down, but a kind word cheers him up." Christ could transform Christians' daily work if they would just consciously speak a kind word to one or several fellow workers. Christians have the power to add to life's gloom, or to lighten up the room with words that encourage. High-tech professional Christians who focus on excellence in their work and encouragement in their words will bridge the gap between reverence and worship and relevance in marketplace. The next two chapters will discuss the theology of Church and cluster in marketplace.

PART TWO
FOUNDATIONS

CHAPTER 3

THEOLOGY OF THE CHURCH

It is not uncommon today to hear unbelievers in the marketplace disparage the Church. I have heard Chinese high-tech professionals say, in effect, “Christ, yes; Church, no.” They profess they love Jesus, desiring even to follow Him, but they have little use for “the Church.” This low estimation of the Church may be due to several factors, including lack of understanding of what the Church truly is, as taught in the Bible, or a misconception of the Church, taught by others with erroneous views of the Church.

The Church is the light of the world, but the marketplace is the heart of the city. To be able to conquer a city, local churches need to conquer the marketplace, and God’s kingdom needs to be established there. In order to renew Silicon Valley, transformation in the high-tech companies is needed, and Christian high-tech professionals have to play the key roles. The role is determined by the type of relationship between church and the marketplace. God has a purpose to transform Silicon Valley through high-tech professionals. The kingdom of God is manifest in the place where ordinary people gather, as in Jesus’ time. Today, unbelievers do not gather at the church, but, when Christians move inward to the marketplace, high-tech companies become the center of the church’s activities – especially the sharing of the gospel.

This chapter will begin a study from “The Theology of the Church” and move to “The Model of the Church” and “The Church Jesus and His Disciples Built.” The chapter will increase the understanding of the Lord’s Church and its place in the world, locate the Marketplace Cluster and Church squarely in harmony with the Bible, and propose solutions to some of the challenges facing the Lord’s Church today in the marketplace.

The Theology of the Church: Using Three Images

In the theology of *ecclesia*, the images of the people of God, the body of Christ, and the temple of the Holy Spirit are the major preferences in ecclesiastical legacy. The Reformed churches have emphasized the Church as the people of God; the sacramental churches have focused on the Church as the body of Christ; and the Pentecostal churches have preferred the Church as the temple of the Holy Spirit.³¹ From a systematic theology perspective, a full Trinitarian approach serves the best in biblical church doctrine and encompasses the three facets. From the view of historical revelation, the Old Testament People of God became the Body of Christ, which formed as the Temple of Holy Spirit. In Galatians 3:14 and 3:29, the coming of the Holy Spirit fulfills the promise to Abraham and makes the Gentiles Abraham's seed. Only the coming of the Holy Spirit gives the Body of Christ its full reality, just as only Christ's redemption gives sinners the ability to become the true people of God by being covered by the blood of the New Covenant. The next sections consider the Church as the People of God first, then explore the Church as the

³¹ Lesslie Newbigin, *The Household of God* (London: SCM Press, 1953), 30.

Body of Christ, and then examine how Christ indwells the Church as the Temple of Holy Spirit.

People of God

In 1 Peter 2:9-10, Apostle Peter draws a picture of the Old Testament Scriptures Exodus 19:6 and Isaiah 43:21 to describe the Church.³² The relationship between God and his people had been interrupted by sin, so that Israel was named *Loammi*, that is, “not my people” (Hos 1:9); however, Peter here heralds the fulfillment of Hosea's promise. By God's grace, those who were “not My people” are called *Ammi*, that is, “my people,” and receive mercy (Hos 2:1). Now they join in the praises of God, “who calls them out of darkness into His light” (1 Pt 2:9).

Now exploring how God meets with his people, one finds that God claimed his people in the covenant at Mount Sinai (Ex 19:5), and the principle term *ecclesia* used for church in New Testament (Mt 16:18) looks back to that event. The term *ecclesia* is the Greek Old Testament translation of the Hebrew word *qahal*, which means assembly. Both words denote an actual assembly, rather than a congregation. God's assembly includes all his ‘holy ones’: angelic hosts and earthly saints. At Mount Sinai, God was present with thousands of his angels as he assembled his people at his feet (Dt 33:2-3; Ps 68:17). In church, not only do we believers come to the assembly where our risen Lord is, but also he comes by his Spirit to the assembly where we are. Where two or three are gathered together in his name, there he is in the midst of them (Mt 18:20). Although the Lord's true

³² In 1 Peter 1:18, that the churches are composed mainly of Gentiles is evident from his description of their past manner of life.

assembly is in heaven, it also appears in many ways on earth: in house churches, in city churches, in marketplace churches, and in the Church universal.

Another principle is that God came not only to meet with Israel but to dwell with them. Because Israel was indeed a stiff-necked people and God is holy (Ex 34:7), the design of the tabernacle provided insulation. God dwelt behind curtains, symbolically sealed off from the sinful camp. Yet the tabernacle also provided a way of approach. Sinners brought their sacrifices to the altar, and the priests entered with the blood of atonement into the holy place. The tabernacle declared the holiness of God; in it, his wrath against sin was alleviated through sacrifice. God had taken his people for his inheritance, stating that “they were his and he was theirs” through the provision of God’s grace (Lv 26:11-12). The presence of God separated Israel from all the other nations, and they were a kingdom of priests, a holy nation (Ex 19:6).

Apostle Peter cites the Old Testament and describes the Church as God’s “chosen people” because God loved them. God chose Israel to make known his salvation to all nations (Ps 67:2). God does not choose the spiritually fit but those with weakness, folly, and nothingness that no one might glory before him (1 Cor 1:26-31). When the Lord comes, he will gather his people and make them his forever (Ez 34:23-24). The final festival assembly will welcome the Gentiles with the People of God (Jer 3:17). God’s presence and glory will replace the Ark of the Covenant (Jer 3:16). Not all who bear the name Israel are the seed of Abraham (Rom 9:6), but the Servant of the Lord is his chosen. God will bring back the remnant of Israel and become a light to the Gentiles (Is 49:6). God’s chosen Servant and the hope of God’s chosen people will claim them for the Lord.

Body of Christ

Apostle Paul's image of the Church as the body of Christ begins with Christ's physical body hanging on the cross. This is easy to perceive from the way he speaks of how Jews and Gentiles have been made one body in Christ (1 Cor 12:13). The enmity was abolished in Christ's flesh, for the far-off Gentiles were joined to the nearby Jews by the blood of Christ's sacrifice (Eph 2:13-18). They were made one new man in Christ (Eph 2:15). Paul says that they were both reconciled to God in one body through the cross (Eph 2:16). Both phrases "one body in Christ" and "one man in Christ" describe the Church that bled on the cross. The context supports both interpretations, and the point is that, when Paul thinks of the Church as Christ's body, he thinks first of the body of Christ on the cross. It is because we believers were united to him, to his body as he paid the price of sin, that we are now one body.

Apostle Paul emphasizes both individual unions with Christ and community in the body of Christ. So it is with Christ. "For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free, and we were all given the one Spirit to drink" (1 Cor 12:12-13). Paul says, "So it is with Christ," because the body to which we are joined by the baptism of the Spirit is first the body of Christ on the cross, and thereby his body is the Church. The Spirit joins us to Christ, and therefore to those who are Christ's.

The Church is organic because the body of Christ is made up of the members who are dependent on one another in the exercise of the life they have from Christ. Paul presents the unity of the Spirit in the great variety of gifts granted to the Church (1 Cor 12). Peter also defines two classes of gifts in the Church, which include gifts of speaking God's

Word and gifts of serving (1 Pt 4:10-11). To be effectively exercised, some gifts require recognition by the community; this is particularly true in the gifts of ruling (Rom 12:8; 1 Cor 12:28; 1 Tm 5:17). Publicly recognized gifts such as encouragement, ruling, giving, and mercy are different only in degree, not in kind, from gifts possessed by every believer.

When the church at Corinth was beginning to divide over which leader to follow, Paul cried out, “Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you?”(1 Cor 1:13). The union of the Church with Christ is representative. As Adam represented all humankind in him, so Christ represents all who are united to him (Rom 5:15-19). When Christ died, we sinners died; when Christ rose, we sinners rose. The union of the Church with Christ is often called an “organic union”³³ with Christ, based on the fact that the Church is not just an institution or organization, but an organism, a body united to Christ as Head (Eph 1:22, 23; Col 1:18; Rom 12:15; 1 Cor 12:27). Therefore, Paul urges those who have died with Christ to put to death sin in themselves, and those who have risen with Christ to seek the things that are above (Col 3:1-5).

Apostle Paul's figure of the body of Christ starts with his body given on the cross and received in the sign and the seal of the sacrament (1 Cor 10:16-17). However, he extends it to describe the “one new man” in Christ (Eph 2:15; 4:24; Col 3:10). The relation of Christ the Head to the body compares to the union of man and wife as “one body” in marriage (1 Cor 11:3; Eph 5:28-32). In 1 Corinthians 12:21, the head is not identified with Christ but it is seen as a member, along with eyes, ears, and nose in distinction from the trunk and limbs as members of the body. Paul never thought of Christ as a head in need of

³³ James Fowler, *Union with Christ: Seeking a Balanced Understanding* (Fallbrook, CA: Christ in You Ministries Publishing, 2013), 31.

body.³⁴ Also, the Church as the “one new man” in Christ is not identical with Christ, but is, through the Spirit, in vital union with Christ.

Temple of the Holy Spirit

At Pentecost, Jesus kept his promise, which is also the promise of the Father (Acts 1:4-5). The Church does not live with a fading memory of the presence of the Lord, but with the reality of his coming in the Holy Spirit. The people of God, claimed by Christ in the blood of New Covenant, are made the temple of the Holy Spirit as they are waiting for the returning Lord. In the Holy Spirit, God comes to make believers his and to become ours. On the one hand, God possesses his people, both individually and as a body. On the other hand, God's people possess the Lord. The Holy Spirit of promise seals this mutual possession (Eph 1:13).

The Holy Spirit comes to realize God's promises. He makes the Church the people of God as the prophets predicted, giving them new hearts in the New Covenant (Ez 36:25-28). He joins them to Jesus Christ, for “no-one can say ‘Jesus is Lord!’ apart from the Spirit” (1 Cor 12:3). The Church is, therefore, the people of God and the Body of Christ because it is the temple of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit fulfills; he does not obliterate membership in God's people or discipleship in following Christ.

The Church is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who dwells in the Church but is not confined to the Church. Hans Küng declares that the Holy Spirit cannot be restricted to the

³⁴ “Recall the ‘Head,’” in C. S. Lewis, *That Hideous Strength* (London: Pan, 1955), 57. The meaning of the relationship of head and body in Eph 4:16 is much discussed; in any case, the head is viewed as the source of life.

clergy, to Rome, to the Catholic Church, or even to Christianity.³⁵ The Church does not already exist as an organized hierarchical institution that the Holy Spirit enters and empowers.³⁶ Rather, the Church is created by the Holy Spirit, the author of life, who grants the gift of faith.³⁷ To be sure, the Holy Spirit cannot be boxed in by the constraints of human institutions. He is the Creator Spirit, sovereign and omnipotent, who governs all things. The Holy Spirit is not confined to the Church as his only field of operation.

Since salvation is only in Christ, there is no salvation outside the Church of Christ for those whom the Holy Spirit unites to Christ, he unites to all others who are in Christ. Since the Holy Spirit dwells in the Church and fills the Church with gifts for witness, nurture, and worship, the visible Church may well be called the mother of the faithful.³⁸ The Church is God's household (1 Tm 3:15). From the Church, the gospel goes forward, and those who are added to the Lord are added to the community of his people (Acts 2:41, 47; 5:14; 11:24). They are not added to the Lord because they are added to the Church.³⁹ The body of the individual believer and the body of the Church are alike the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19; 3:16).

Apostle Paul emphasizes both individual union with Christ and community in the Body of Christ. It is union with Christ for believers were all baptized by one Holy Spirit

³⁵ Hans Küng, *The Church* (London: Search Press, 1967), trans. R. and R. Ockenden; (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1969), 175.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 176.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 177.

³⁸ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, vol. 2, trans. John Allen (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, 1939), 273.

³⁹ George Smeaton, *The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (London: Banner of Truth, 1958), 235.

into one body “whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free - and we were all given the one Spirit to drink” (1 Cor 12:12-13). Apostle Paul says, “So it is with Christ” because the body to which we are joined by the baptism of the Holy Spirit is first the body of Christ on the Cross and, thereby, his body the Church. The Holy Spirit joins us to Christ and, therefore, to those who are Christ's. The power of the Holy Spirit creates the Church, but the Holy Spirit's work is defined by his own purposes of salvation, revealed in Scripture and accomplished in Jesus Christ. Those whom he joins to Christ he joins to the body of Christ, a communion gathered by the Word and marked by the sacraments.

The Church Universal and The Church Local

Now, one must focus on the definition and understand the word *church* itself. From the Greek, the word *ἐκκλησία* means “an assembly,” which is used most frequently in the New Testament in two senses: the “Universal Church,” that company of souls redeemed by the blood of Christ, and the “local church,” Christians in a geographical area that worship together as a congregation of God’s people.⁴⁰ Failure to distinguish between the “Church Universal” and the “church local” will create erroneous concepts of the church and present a confusing picture of the church in its evangelistic efforts. There are noticeable ways in which the “Church Universal” is different from the “local church.”

Jesus said to Apostle Peter that He would build his Church on the rock (Mt 16:18). The Church Universal composed of all Christians is made up of all the saved, both living and dead (Heb 12:22-24). There is only one Universal Church called the body of Christ

⁴⁰ Mark Copeland, “Church Universal vs. Church Local,” from Executable Outline website, http://www.christianlibrary.org/authors/Mark_A_Copeland/cjb/cjb_03.htm (accessed August 15, 2011).

(Eph 1:22-23) and there is only one body (Eph 4:4). Jesus Christ himself is the chief corner stone, the Church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and all Christians are living stones (Eph 2:20). The Church universal is ONE and cannot be divided!

A church local is made up of Christians in different geographical areas,⁴¹ e.g., the church at Ephesus and the church of Philippi. When the gospel spreads to specific areas, the Christians together start a local church just as the Antioch church began after Jerusalem church (Acts 11:26). Everyone can come to the church, but only Christians can join themselves and be accepted as members of the local church. Unbelievers can be saved and temporarily not belong to any local church. Such was the case of the eunuch baptized by Philip (Acts 8:38). Of course, he was still in the Universal Church and would join the local church later.

The previous paragraphs have presented the key differences between the two: the Church Universal in essence concerns believers' relationship with Christ, and the church local basically concerns our relationship with one another. Of course, one's service in the "church local" can affect his or her standing in the "Church universal." The local church means people of God gathering in a church building, and the marketplace church engaging the World has been compared with people of God gathering in high-tech companies. The church in Greek, *ἐκκλησία*, means "an assembly," which can also apply to people gathering in the marketplace; and the people of God in a high-tech company that worship together as a congregation can also be called a "marketplace church." The church should focus on the People of God, regardless of where they gather. This will break through the

⁴¹ Copeland, "The Nature of Local Church."

traditional building centeredness and move toward the high-tech companies. Such a paradigm shift will bring up another topic – that of suitable settings, which will be discussed in the next section.

The Model of the Church

The church building and the high-tech companies are totally different settings from many aspects. Also, the church culture and business culture have many conflicts. It will crash the marketplace church to push theology into a business environment. It is useful to discuss the difference between theological and marketplace settings by exploring the models of the church. This section will investigate five local church models and then use a suitable model for marketplace church.

Theological Settings

Catholic theologian Avery Dulles provides a helpful resource in sorting through all the possible ecclesiastical options for local church models. In his book *Models of the Church*, he gives an overview of the five main models of church: church as institution, mystical communion, sacrament, herald, and servant.⁴²

The first model, the church as institution, includes clerics (pope, bishops, priests, deacons) and is responsible to the laity for teaching (professing approved doctrines), sanctifying (administering legitimate sacraments), and ruling (governing faith and morals). The second model, church as mystical communion (Body of Christ), is a worshipping community of believers who, by their faith, become a sign and instrument of the union of

⁴² Avery Dulles, *Models of the Church*, Exp Rei Edition (Garden City, NY: Image, 1991).

God and man. In the third model, the church as sacrament, the church is understood as the visible manifestation of the grace of Christ in the human community. The fourth model, church as herald, includes a faithful people who “hear the word of God and keep it” by putting their faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior and proclaiming the Christ event in their lives. Finally, the church as servant presents a redeemed people who have the mandate to establish in this world Christ’s kingship of peace, justice, love, and reconciliation.⁴³

Each model offers helpful insights and positive contributions, but in many regards, the models are incompatible. If the best insights are preserved from each model and integrated together, though, a stronger vision of the church is achieved.⁴⁴ This is what Dulles sets out to do in the latter half of his book. Dulles demonstrates the strengths and weaknesses of each model. He concludes by integrating each model’s positive contributions to form a more comprehensive model of church. By integrating the models in such a way that their respective strengths are preserved, Dulles provides his readers with a larger, broader vision of the church.⁴⁵

Even with Dulles’s new vision of the church, in fact, no matter what model or combination of models local church leaders choose, it will fall short. None of the models is sufficient to address the fullness of God’s call to the church. Each model truly highlights and underscores a vital aspect of the Church. The church is always incomplete and unfinished until the fullness of God’s redemptive purpose is complete. Although the

⁴³ Dulles, *Models of the Church*, 190-191.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 194.

church will never fully live up to any model, no matter how valid or comprehensive it is, this paper will focus on the servant church model for the marketplace setting. The mission of the church is to serve others, to challenge unjust structures, and to live the preferential option for the poor. This model could be complemented by other models that focus more on the uniqueness of Jesus Christ.

The Servant Church Model in the Marketplace Ministry

The servant model of church emphasizes the need for the church to be engaged in social transformation. If traditionally church had been often presented as a refuge from a world of temptation, then the servant model presents a church that should be at the service of a world that is basically good. The church congregations are seen as part of the larger human family. God is known not simply through the church, but also through human experience and the things of this world. Dulles draws attention to the servant model by pointing to the active relationship between the church and the world.⁴⁶ This model defines the core value of the Marketplace ministry in the local church. It emphasizes the responsibility of the church to respect the accomplishments of the marketplace and learn from it. This focus establishes the understanding that there must be a relationship between the church and the marketplace.

The servant model is based on the simple idea that Christ came to serve, and therefore the Church must serve the whole world. It is a call for the “servant” Church to share in the problems of human life, rather than dominating it. This can be proved from

⁴⁶ Dulles, *Models of the Church*, 89.

Christ as the one who came into this world, not to be served but to serve in order to establish and promote the relationship between men. Dulles argument regarding the Servant Model laid a dual approach called “secular-dialogic.”⁴⁷ The first approach is “secular,” where the world is identified as a theological locus and where the local church’s responsibility is to discern the signs of the times. The second approach is “dialogic,” where the Marketplace Cluster should operate as a bridge between the contemporary marketplace and the Christian tradition. Dulles’s two-way approach can be applied to this project as a tool to approach the marketplace and not to criticize it.

Being a church in the world, Dulles quotes Bishop John A. T. Robinson: “The house of God is not the church but the world. The church is the servant, and the first characteristic of a servant is that he lives in someone else’s house, not his own.”⁴⁸ The servant model can establish the church not as a parallel structure “to” the marketplace, but as a structure “in” the marketplace. When Marketplace Cluster makes connection with the workplace, high-tech professionals must be witnesses, for on earth there are only two things Christians can do that we cannot do in heaven and they are sin and witness. However, to be successful we Christians must be equipped and do the ministry in the world that God has called us to do.

The unique characteristic of God revealed in the Old Testament is His involvement in human history. Both Abraham and Moses must be understood in the light of Israel’s election to serve God. The election is not only aimed at excluding any nation or person but

⁴⁷ Dulles, *Models of the Church*, 92.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 96.

also has two purposes of calling and sending. These processes focus on revelation of God's salvation from one marketplace to another marketplace, and from one nation to another nation. On the other hand, the concept of servant in New Testament is derived from Greek word "*diakonia*" which includes the call to serve the poor and oppressed in marketplace. The meaning of *diakonia* is to wait on table, to take care of life needs, or to serve in any capacity. The approach to service should follow Jesus "for even the Son of Man did not come to be serve, but to serve, and give his life as a ransom for many" (Mk 10:45).

All of ministry starts with people who work with God, called by God to a specific ministry and being empowered through spiritual gifts to be successful in being servants. All of these actions towards the world in term of the Great Commission are directed to serving the marketplace and not being isolated from the marketplace. The servant model in the marketplace should be a balance between the theology of Glory and the theology of the Cross. Without this balance, the marketplace ministry will become the service but not the servant.

Marketplace Settings

There are many challenges in implementing the servant model of marketplace church, including theology, purpose, structures, and people.⁴⁹ Although it is difficult to draw any overall conclusions, the marketplace ministry needs to address the following issues.

First is the generation of "marketplace seekers." Today, the high-tech marketplace is one of the fastest-growing groups in America who describe themselves as having no

⁴⁹ Fred Guyette, "The Literature of Ecclesiology: A Ten-Year Retrospective," *Theological Librarianship*, A Journal of the American Theological Library Association 4, no. 1 (July 2011): 88-89.

church affiliation, as “spiritual but not religious.”⁵⁰ Wade Clark Roof describes them as “consumers in a spiritual marketplace,” or more simply as “a generation of seekers.”⁵¹ However, the concern is: what if Roof’s “seekers” are no longer even looking? Today, there are so many religious “options” available that the unique claims of any religion are likely to be regarded as arbitrary rather than absolute. It is easier to sort out or ignore the claims of religious terrorists, but the moral failures of Christian leaders threaten to put their claims in the same discredited pile. Marketplace church might make it easier to reach through those kinds of barriers or help in this situation. The Servant Model presents Christ’s kingship of peace and love for marketplace seekers, but lack of a justice argument is evident in the moral failures of Christian leaders.

Second is the phenomenon of “believing without belonging.” Today, the commitments of social settings are in decline. Loyalty between companies and workers is not as prevalent as it once was. Life-long commitment to one marriage partner appears to suffer from being part of that general trend. The author of the article “Believing without Belonging,” Grace Davie, says that, even if religious institutions have fallen on hard times, religious faith persists.⁵² Yet, one worries whether that kind of confidence can be sustained

⁵⁰ Ryan Wilson, “The New Ecclesiology: Mega-Church, Denominational Church, and No Church,” *Review & Expositor* 107, no. 1 (2010): 61-72; Penny Long Marler and C. Kirk Hadaway, “Being Religious or Being Spiritual in America: A Zero-Sum Proposition?” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 41 (2002): 289-300.

⁵¹ Wade Clark Roof, *A Generation of Seekers: The Spiritual Journeys of the Baby Boom Generation* (San Francisco: Harper, 1993); Wade Clark Roof, *Spiritual Marketplace: Baby Boomers and the Remaking of American Religion* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999).

⁵² Grace Davie, “Believing without Belonging: Is This the Future of Religion in Britain?” *Social Compass* 37, no. 4 (December 1, 1990): 455-469.

for more than one generation.⁵³ Christians all know “you should teach them diligently unto thy children” (Dt 6:7). If long term commitment does not happen, the future of religious communities will crumble. The Servant Model presents Christ’s reconciliation for marketplace seekers so that they feel belonging before they come into the local church, but there is a lack of faithful persistence in the long-term commitment due to unstable employment within the companies.

Third is the sorting out of churches into mega churches or tiny churches. Today, American churches follow two countervailing trends: one toward mega churches and the other toward tiny churches. America claims more than twelve hundred “Mega churches,” who identify themselves as evangelical churches and have an average weekly attendance of two thousand people.⁵⁴ They have their critics, who complain of these churches being too homogeneous in race, class, and political affiliation; more oriented to mass media and entertainment than to worship and community service; and focused too much on what one charismatic leader says rather than on the teachings of Jesus.⁵⁵ On the other hand, other Christians feel a deeper affinity for “tiny churches.” The confession and forgiveness of sin encounter fewer obstacles in face-to-face settings.⁵⁶ It might be easier to feel a sense of

⁵³ Henk de Roest, “The Precarious Church: Developing Congregations in an Individualized Society,” *Ecclesiology* 4 (2008): 204-221.

⁵⁴ “Megachurch Definition,” Hartford Institute for Religion Research, Hartford, Connecticut <http://hrr.hartsem.edu/megachurch/definition.html> (accessed August 15, 2011).

⁵⁵ The Hartford Institute’s website has a very useful list of recommended readings on megachurches, <http://hrr.hartsem.edu/megachurch/bibliography.html> (accessed August 15, 2011).

⁵⁶ Theresa F. Latini, “Confession and Healing in Small-group Community,” *Word & World* 30, no. 1 (2010): 33-40.

belonging and participating, as opposed to being a passive spectator in a mega church.⁵⁷

The Servant Model avoids mega church crowds, and it focuses on tiny-churches' face-to-face caring and teaching.

The fourth challenge is technology and whether it helps or hurts the church. E-generation Christians can be enthusiastic about their favorite blogs. Some pastors have followers on Twitter and Facebook while some pastors offer messages on You-Tube. High-tech social networking begins to displace traditional churches, as seems to be the case with the e-generation Christians. Traditional-church Christians do not always agree to share with each other in social networking but put their differences aside and worship together. If most religious conversations are taking place online instead of at church, local church members may begin to feel that the church is a physical location, something they just do not need anymore. Christians might have a new kind of community, then, but it will not be a church anymore.⁵⁸

Whereas other models give priority to the local church rather than to the Marketplace, the Servant model allows greater respect for secular life and acknowledges the human culture, especially in the high-tech company. The marketplace church in its servant model considers itself as part of the total high-tech company, sharing the same concerns as the rest of high-tech professionals. The strength of this model lies in its

⁵⁷ Kevin D. Whitehead and Andrew L. Whitehead, "A Place to Belong: Small Group Involvement in Religious Congregations," *Sociology of Religion* (2010) doi:10.1093/socrel/srq067 Advance Access Online: <http://socrel.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2010/09/03/socrel.srq067.full.pdf+html> (accessed August 15, 2011).

⁵⁸ Leonora Rand, "The Church on Facebook," *Christian Century* (June 30, 2009): 22; Richard Beck, "How Facebook Killed the Church," *Experimental Theology* (March 5, 2010), <http://experimentaltheology.blogspot.com/2010/03/how-facebook-killed-church.html> (accessed September 15, 2011).

emphasis on serving others and not simply serving the local church's self-interests. The marketplace church not only takes the marketplace as a properly theological locus, but also seeks to operate on the frontier between the contemporary world and the Christian tradition.

The ministry of Jesus, the suffering servant of God, who was certainly a man for others, provides the template for this model. As the Lord was the man for others, so the marketplace church is the community for others. The marketplace church carrying the mission of Jesus seeks to serve the marketplace by fostering the brotherhood of all men. This will lead to the section on the church Jesus built for the Great Commission.

The Church Jesus and the Disciples Built

Jesus Built the Church, Not the Synagogue

Most of the high-tech companies already have Bible groups, which are gatherings of people for religious purposes. These are basically assemblies of high-tech professional Christians from various local churches who come together to study the Word of God during lunch time. The Bible group setting is similar to the Synagogue, but not the Church. It is important to understand why Jesus built *the* Church instead of *the* Synagogue. In answer to the question of how many churches Jesus built (one Universal Church), three Bible verses are instructive: "I will build My church upon this rock" (Mt 16:18), "Christ is the head of the church" (Eph 5:23), and "the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47). Jesus built only "one" Church, and He is the head and Savior of that one Church. It is essential to salvation that every Christian is a member of the Church universal that Jesus built.

It was in Matthew 16 that Jesus revealed for the first time His intent to build an entity He called “church,” but the word *church* was unpopular in the religious setting of that time. The popular word used to describe the gathering of a people for religious purposes was *synagogue*. It was basically an assembly of Jews who came together to pray, worship, and teach one another the Word of God. Jesus Himself was familiar with synagogues as he attended synagogue meetings and sometimes even taught in synagogues.

Although Jesus was familiar with synagogue operations, He did not say “I will build my synagogue,” but He said “I will build my church.” This straightaway tells his hearers that the Lord was not simply establishing an assembly of people who would meet together only for religious purposes as the Jews did within the synagogue system. Some churches have not only been run like synagogues historically, but still operate as synagogues even today. Those kinds of churches, just as ancient synagogues, remain a system of bringing people together for religious purposes.

In contrast to the idea of a synagogue, though, the word *church* in Greek *ἐκκλησία* (*ecclesia*) is made up of two words, “ἐκ” which means “out” and “κλεις” which means “a calling.” This word was used “among the Greeks of a body of citizens gathered to discuss the affairs of the state.”⁵⁹ The word “refers to the gathering of competent citizens of a city-state in order to decide issues regarding laws, office appointments, and public policy.”⁶⁰ The *ἐκκλησία* was, therefore, a political system of government and human

⁵⁹ W. E. Vine, *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* (published in 1940 and without copyright; reprint Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1996), s.v. “Church (*ecclesia*).”

⁶⁰ William D. Mounce, *Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), s.v. “Church (*ecclesia*).”

development in the marketplace. In Proverbs 31:23, “Her husband is known in the gates, when he sits among the elders of the land.”

Jesus took “church,” which was a well-known “secular” and “unreligious” system and declared that He would build this system to advance the kingdom of God in the marketplace. Εκκλησια was a system of regulation and development of a city-state, and so those who formed what was known as church needed to be people who were concerned with the affairs of humanity or with the human conditions of their city-state.⁶¹ Today, one wonders why these realities are not even traceable within the operations of the church. Jesus bypassed the whole synagogue operation to reveal the mind and the intent of God for the church. Local church leaders have to produce the εκκλησια (church) not συναγωγη (synagogue) with mature people that God can use to administer and govern the affairs of humanity.

Building the marketplace church involves conflict with either government or businesses who have regulations that oppose the wisdom of God. Marketplace church leaders have to overcome the “Gates of Hades,” which always represent wisdom and government in the marketplace. This means that there is a wisdom of darkness that can overcome marketplace church leaders if they do not receive a higher wisdom from God. When marketplace church leaders build the marketplace church, they are engaged in warfare, including business ethics and company politics. This is similar to high-tech professionals (elders) sitting at the company meeting (gates) to discuss product

⁶¹ “Redefining Church,” Rediscovering the Kingdom of God website <http://rediscoveringthekingdom.info/blog/church-and-kingdom/re-defining-church-part-1/> (accessed August 15, 2011).

(government) issues and develop wisdom for effective technology (city). This is the meaning behind the concept of elders (high-tech professionals) in the churches (marketplace).

High-tech professionals have been “called out” of the marketplace to participate in serious kingdom business. The “calling” is not limited to pastors but to all those who are part of the *ἐκκλησία* (Church) of God. The calling “out” is not to distance marketplace church leaders from the world but to be distinct, based on identity, mentality, and value system. Today’s Church should have clear vision and motivation in advancing the kingdom of God on the earth. The *ἐκκλησία* (Church) of God will not be produced through sermons but through equipping for kingdom functions. Many Christians have become competent in handling local church affairs but are still incapable of advancing the kingdom of God. Local church leaders have to be trained in serving the Lord within the broader scope, and God will place marketplace leaders in the workplace to interact and advance the kingdom of God.

Disciples Built the Church in Houses and on the Street

In the first century, the Church was not built inside a religious synagogue building, but instead it started in the upper room of a private home. The upper room is the place where the disciples gathered during the gestation period of the Church. One hundred twenty men and women were staying there (Acts 1:13, 15). Later, when three thousand converts joined the Church, the apostles did not busy themselves with constructing a religious building; instead, they held church by breaking bread from house to house all over the city (Acts 2:42). Although they continued to go to the Temple for prayer (Acts

2:46), the majority of activities took place in houses where they shared their possessions with those in need and took their meals together with gladness and singleness of heart while praising the Lord (Acts 2:44-47). They all gathered in one heart under Solomon's porch of the Temple (Acts 5:12) with spontaneous activities of bringing forth the sick into the streets (Acts 5:15). This shows how comfortable they were to move from temple to house and street in nontraditional religious settings.

In addition to the apostles, the Early Church leaders also included businesswoman Lydia, who was a wealthy wholesaler of expensive fabric in Philippi and Thyatira, and the first believer Dorcas, who was a designer and manufacturer of inner garments. Dorcas apparently made a good living because she “was abounding with deeds of kindness and charity, which she continually did” (Acts 9:36). She was important enough for her death to be brought to the attention of Peter, and her subsequent resurrection to be noticed by Joppa, leading many of its citizens to believe in the Lord (Acts 9:36-42). Aquila and Priscilla were also a business couple, having the same profession as Paul in tent making (Acts 18:3). These marketplace and community leaders were appointed to become church leaders after a brief time of equipping and usually endured several severe persecutions. Before they took church leadership positions, they were already leaders in the marketplace and community.

In the Early Church era, well-equipped church leaders opened up the door of the gospel for the Gentiles in the marketplace. Gentiles could be saved without having the Jews' circumcision first, a concept which was initially presented to three marketplace leaders – Peter (a fisherman), Simon (a tanner), and Cornelius (a centurion). “This was a

new and radical teaching for which the emerging Church had no paradigm. Nevertheless, God did not hesitate to entrust it to laymen.”⁶²

In addition, when Paul arrived at Salamis in his early missionary trip, although he first went to the synagogue to preach God’s words (Acts 13:5), he was forced to exit the synagogue to focus on the Gentiles (Acts 18:6). This happened in Corinth right after Paul had met with Aquila and Priscilla. He immediately moved his base to a private house where he was able to teach daily (Acts 18:1-3). In the midst of Paul’s missionary trip, God gave him a vision and reminded him that there were many believers in the marketplace, rather than in the synagogue. As a result, Paul settled in Corinth for a year and a half (Acts 18:11).

In summary, Jesus’ objective was to build the Church as a social vehicle with a freely expanding movement rather than building a tourism monument. Jesus intentionally called out twelve disciples who were not members of religious organizations but individuals from the marketplace, and the Holy Spirit also led the Early Church to operate in the marketplace. To accomplish Jesus’ Great Commission, the marketplace has to be transformed, just as it happened in many cities mentioned in Book of Acts. Jesus did not come only to save the Church for believers to transfer to heaven, but He also left the Church in the world for the Great Commission to disciple the marketplace. There are great opportunities to extend the theology of the Church to put the new wine into new sacks of skin. Chapter 4 will discuss the Marketplace Cluster to create collaboration between high-

⁶² Ed Silvano, *Anointed for Business, Every Business Is God’s Business* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books Inc., 2009), 51.

tech professionals from different local churches to bridge between the Sunday local church and weekday high-tech companies.

CHAPTER 4

THEOLOGY OF MARKETPLACE CLUSTER

Marketplace Cluster is a marketplace ministry fellowship organization that local churches choose to join with other churches to plant a new marketplace ministry within the high-tech company in Silicon Valley. There are two types of Marketplace Cluster and the variations depend on the church's involvement in cluster partnership. One type is a church that works alongside a primary church to support the marketplace ministry through financial and personnel resources. Another type is a church that works equally with other churches to develop the marketplace ministry strategy through a joint-effort team. Each company's fellowship members come from different local churches, regardless of their home church participation.

There is a healthy interdependence among the partner churches in the cluster. The strength of a partnership comes from each partner church doing its part and contributing from its own abilities for the benefit of marketplace ministry. There are many different ways to join the Marketplace Cluster. Some local churches may be joined by another local church with the help of a strategic missionary. Others may be connected by a strategic missionary or company fellowship planter. Regardless of the ways to join the Marketplace

Cluster, the partner local church will focus on planting a specific marketplace ministry once the church is committed to the cluster.

As described in the beginning of this project, the marketplace needs the local church to operate outside of the four walls and not separate itself off in any special way but in application. This project calls itself the Marketplace Cluster instead of marketplace church because I do not want to give the impression that this project is a new local church. Both are parts of one Universal Church, but, to a degree, they are two distinct entities and operate out of two different sets of cultural rule books. Although the Marketplace Cluster is a mission fellowship, it still operates within a business building. Unlike the local church with its freedom of activities within church building, Marketplace Cluster is restricted by a company's personnel policy and corporate culture. The local church, for the most part, gathers one day a week, and the Marketplace Cluster is in operation five days a week. This chapter will take a closer theological look at Marketplace Cluster, which is distinctive but also supportive of the local church.

Biblical Example of Marketplace Cluster

Spiritual Meaning of Cluster in the Book of Isaiah

The reason I selected the word *cluster* is that, when God called me out from being a high-tech professional to full-time ministry, the Holy Spirit revealed a picture of a “grape cluster” for me to distinguish the marketplace gathering from other church gatherings. This chapter will develop the spiritual meaning of *cluster*. The word *cluster* is not merely a common English word to describe a gathering, but it also has biblical roots to enrich the marketplace ministry. The core values of the word *cluster* are given in Isaiah 65:8: “the

new wine is found in the cluster” and “for a blessing is in the cluster.” These quotations mean that the paradigm shift of new wine with God’s blessing will be discovered in the cluster. The marketplace gathering represents new wine with blessing (Is 65:8) in the last days, which is the time before the new heavens and new earth (Is 65:17).

In Isaiah 65, one can find a prophecy about Jesus, the seed of Jacob and inheritor of God’s mountain.⁶³ From Isaiah 65:8-9, one sees that a grape can represent the promise of a savior through the line of Jacob and Judah. With this symbolism, the parable provides a prophecy of the nation of Israel being carried by Jesus; this prophecy will be fulfilled when all Israel demonstrates its belief in a savior.

Clarke's *Commentary* provides two sections of exegesis on Isaiah 65:8.⁶⁴ The first part is “the new wine is found in the cluster.” The Hebrews call all things which serve for food הברכה (*berachah*), "a blessing" and Kimchi remarks: "As the cluster of grapes contains, besides the juice, the bark, and the kernels, so the Israelites have, besides the just, sinners among them. But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved. (Lk 5:38).⁶⁵ Cluster is the new bottle for the new wine. In this case, the Marketplace Cluster is the new bottle, and the Marketplace Ministry is the new wine.

Also, the second part of the exegesis is “for a blessing is in it.” Now the cluster must not be destroyed because there is a blessing, a nutritive part in it. Israel shall not be

⁶³ “Thus says the Lord, as the new wine is found in the cluster, and one says, destroy it not; for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants’ sakes, that I may not destroy them all. And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there” (Is 65:8-9).

⁶⁴ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible* [1831], <http://clarke.biblecommenter.com/isaiah/65.htm> (accessed September 15, 2011).

⁶⁵ Ibid.

destroyed because there are righteous persons in it. All humans are people of God, including, of course, unbelievers in high-tech companies. The unbelievers become God's people because of His mercy. Finally, the third part of Isaiah 65:8 said, "So will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all." As the bark and kernels are thrown away when the wine is pressed out, so shall the sinners be purged away from among the righteous. On the Hebrews' return from exile, they should be permitted to enter into the land of Israel. The marketplace church is just like new wine, which is found in the cluster with God's blessing.

Application of Cluster in the Book of Acts

Marketplace Cluster's creative, mid-sized missional communities are exploring the principles and are currently forming a growing movement in Silicon Valley, releasing ordained and lay leaders alike into their missionary callings and rediscovering the dynamics of biblical missionary congregations. An appropriate and convincing basis for a marketplace ministry model can be found in Apostle Paul's missionary journeys in the Book of Acts.

In Acts 18, Apostle Paul met with Aquila and Priscilla and established a business with them to move into the marketplace. Paul worked as a tentmaker and simply moved his pulpit to the marketplace, and this married couple also integrated their business with the pulpit. Although Apostle Paul attempted to establish his evangelistic base in the synagogue, he left and moved into Justus' house with frustration (Acts 18:7). Ed Silvano assumes that Paul and Aquila and Priscilla operated their business out of that particular "house" which could encompass both the home and the workplace in the early church

era.⁶⁶ He intended to leave the synagogue and preach the gospel to as many as Gentiles as possible in a house-based marketplace.

In Acts 19, upon arriving in Ephesus, after many ineffective preaching stints in the synagogue, Apostle Paul moved his mission base to the school of Tyrannus, another marketplace (Acts 19:9). There, the transformation of the marketplace started up and grew quickly. Also, the power of God manifested itself in the marketplace but not in the synagogue. One night, Jesus told Apostle Paul, “I am with you and no harm would come to you for I have many people in the city” (Acts 18:10). The word “city” indicated that Jesus was with Apostle Paul in the “marketplace” and gave reassurance he was doing exactly what Lord want him to do.

Scripture Example of Cluster in the Book of Acts

In the early church, “every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts” (Acts 2:46a) representing the large celebration in the church, and “they broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts” (Acts 2:46b) representing the small cell fellowship in the home. In Corinth, Apostle Paul divided his time between a tent-making partnership with Aquila and Priscilla and the proclamation of the gospel in the synagogue on the Sabbath. Apostle Paul left the synagogue and “went to the house of a man named Titus Justus, a worshiper of God, who was next to the synagogue” (Acts 18:7). The biblical Greek word *ecclesia* is used for the people meeting together in large celebration, but other times it is used for the people wherever they might be found. These

⁶⁶ Ed Silvano, *Transformation* (Ventura, CA: Regal Book, 2007), 75.

are the examples in Scripture of the “Cluster” concept. The cluster is not necessarily in the large church building or small home cell, but in the mid-size marketplace ballroom. So Paul stayed in Corinth for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God (Acts 18:11).

Operational Principle of the Marketplace Clusters

Distinctive but also Supportive

Marketplace Cluster is all about kingdom ministry influence but not the institutional structure. If one mentions church to most non-believers they will think of one or more of the following: a physical building with a gothic architectural design located on some street corner in the community; a meeting of people on a Sunday morning in a church building; the various meetings and activities in which members of Christian group are involved; a group of people identified by a particular denominational label; or a group of believers identified by nation or ethnic group. In this respect, the word *church* has become almost synonymous with *club*. Just as a club seeks to have activities that please its members, so does the church. The growth philosophy usually holds that, if the church can provide good facilities and make its members happy, they will invite their friends and they will also become members of the club. The emphasis is on programs and activities that are directed toward the needs of the existing members, and the focus is on gatherings, events, and programs.

Today, there is a shift going on in the local church inside and outside of the four walls. Though there is only one Universal Church and one body of believers in our Lord, there are many diverse communities whose distinctives include personalities, shapes, colors, and cultures that make all different kinds of church. The Marketplace Cluster looks

like the body of Christ that operates outside of the four walls of the local church, not separate in any way but different in gathering schedule and ministry application.

The Marketplace Cluster activities are believers or non-believers gathering in the high-tech companies when they are not engaged in local church activities. It does not refer to Bible study groups and other meetings where the focus is on the local church members. More to the point, Marketplace Clusters should be ministering with people from many different local churches that work at the same high-tech companies. This proclaims that the new expression of Marketplace Clusters needs to be accepted by local churches. Marketplace Cluster must only exist for one reason and that is to see the kingdom of God come to the respective spheres and to see every part of that sphere coming under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Believers cannot separate daily work and the Marketplace from the Kingdom of God, and vice-versa. This relationship between daily work and the Kingdom of God is also not a one-way street. Dr. Francis A. Schaeffer in his book *A Christian Manifesto* says it this way: “These two world views stand as totals in complete antithesis to each other in content and also in their natural results — including sociological and governmental results, and specifically including law.”⁶⁷ It is not a matter of just what we as Christians can bring to the public marketplace; but it includes what daily work and the world of economics, for example, can bring to the work of the Kingdom of God and its daily work, as well.

⁶⁷ Francis A. Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2005), 81.

Operates in Different Cultures

There are many things that one person perceives but others may think of as wrong, simply because of cultural differences in the way one does things or the way one thinks. This is why people have two cultural rule books to do the same thing. For example, when Chinese come over to someone's house, they always take their shoes off, because that is part of their culture. When they are conducting a business transaction, there is always an exchange of gifts. This would be looked on as bribery, perks, or a lack of integrity to try and win in business. The reality is, neither way of thinking is either right nor wrong.

The local church and the Marketplace Cluster operate in two distinct cultures and use two different sets of cultural rule books. Although both operate for the glory of Christ and His kingdom, they do not necessarily function in the same way bringing salt and light to the world. Most of the local churches have a sole proprietorship culture in which both pastors and people are increasingly interested in one person shows, often either pastor, elder, or deacon doing ministry while others watch. On the other hand, the Marketplace Clusters create an unlimited partnership culture by releasing marketplace leaders into the Kingdom workplace. If everyone could be involved, then the church could move from sole proprietorship to unlimited partnership with many obvious benefits to both the church and the surrounding community.

Today, there are five-fold ministries of apostles, prophets, teachers, pastors, and evangelists serving in the local church, and many of these ministries are being raised up and released to the marketplace. Although many ministries have been out in the marketplace for years, they have been looked upon as a second-tier ministry, rather than

equally viable kingdom ministries. Every high-tech professional believer must continue to seek the whole measure of the fullness of Christ, regardless of where the Lord places him or her in different high-tech companies. The word *ministry* can be exchanged with the word *service* or *servant*. So they are to be servants as they provide service to the Marketplace Cluster or local church.

Marketplace Cluster is the new wineskin attitude and language that believers must be communicating. Unfortunately, most local church leaders are stuck in the mindsets of their traditional religious systems. It is hard for them to understand how to support and partner with the Marketplace Cluster. The Marketplace Cluster is to link up the various denominational cultures as the Holy Spirit leads, to break through the religious barriers, which exist across the boundaries in denominationalism and non-denominationalism, local church and the Marketplace Cluster. Chinese local churches today are more difficult to change simply because of the many layers of tradition and governing entities. In all cases, only those that are led by the Holy Spirit of the Lord will lead the charge toward breakthrough into partnering with Marketplace Clusters.

The kingdom of God is not confined to the four walls of the local church. Jesus said in Luke 17:21, "The kingdom of God is within you." With that in mind, the kingdom of God is not a kingdom of this world and has no territorial boundaries. The kingdom of God is present wherever one has agreed that Jesus Christ is his or her Lord. One day a week, one will find church in local denominations, and six days a week one will find church scattered all over the workplace serving the kingdom of God.

God's people are His people seven days a week in many different functions and jurisdictions. This wonderful, engaging, seven-day-a-week, twenty-four-hour-a-day church with the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ can transform marketplace, communities, and nations. High-tech professionals can bring the kingdom of God and His presence into every workplace, home, and church. They must continue to illuminate His love and grace to the world in every jurisdiction of society in Jesus' name.

Marketplace Cluster is about the presence of Jesus forcefully advancing against every work of the enemy in any sphere of influence in the marketplace. When Jesus was present, demons lost their grip and had to depart, sickness lost its power to dwell in people's bodies, ungodly values and structures were confronted and began to lose their influence on the lives of ordinary people, the oppressed and downtrodden people began to feel valued, guilt and shame were destroyed. All of these still happen because of the presence of the Church, the body of Jesus Christ. So Marketplace Cluster is the influence of Jesus through the presence of one or more of his committed followers.

New Blessing of the Marketplace Cluster

New Wine Is Found in the Cluster

The local church is all believers in one building at one time, but Marketplace Cluster is every believer everywhere at any time. This is the first part of the promise - "New Wine is found in the Cluster" - in Isaiah 65:8. Rev. Jerry Cook said, "The church as a FIELD has goals expressed in numbers, budget, and facility. The church as a FORCE has goals that are personal and individual: We want each member to come to wholeness, be

equipped and be released into the world to minister."⁶⁸ Cook has greatly stimulated thinking about the church as a field or as a force. He is referring to the local church members, who are not just people in the world trying to be good and wait until Jesus comes. They are active agents for the kingdom of God, living and working in strategic locations throughout the marketplace. He talks about God's people being "open for business," referring to their willingness to actively express the presence of Jesus wherever they are and to whomever they meet. In this way, they do reflect the very mode of Jesus himself. In looking closely at the New Testament, one sees that, while Jesus had an overall goal, he did not have an advance-programmed agenda. He followed after his Father from day to day, and circumstances presented opportunities to do "kingdom business."

Marketplace Cluster simply refers to the people of God in the "world" or the high-tech professional believers who have the intention to be the tangible expression of God's redemptive presence and plan. This is an invisible church and mostly a church that has little or no influence on its sphere of influence. If you take the worldview of many churches of previous times, the idea for a Christian was to survive the "evil world." In order to survive, believers created Sunday meetings, midweek Bible studies, cell groups, Wednesday night prayer meetings, and the like. Outside of that, church members would be advised to simply stay holy against the powerful pressure of the sinful world. During that time, they were to witness to Jesus. At best, they were persuaded to bring their friends to the sanctuary so that they could be saved and have the same ticket to heaven that the club members had. The emphasis was on surviving the effects of the world rather than on

⁶⁸ Ben van Dyk, weblog, <http://benvd.wordpress.com/2008/12/04/church-as-field-vs-church-as-force-by-jerry-cook/> (accessed September 12, 2012).

changing it – sphere by sphere. Discipleship was only something that went on after a person had become a member of the club, not before.

There are no official records to show the number of Chinese Christians in Silicon Valley but they are minority. One could call the Chinese church the “5 percent world” and the community at large the “95 percent world.” When Chinese Christian professionals get away from Sunday church buildings, they have only a few terms to use in their work situation. One of them is the term *Bible Study Group Leader*. These people represent a ministry and are generally operating “on behalf” of the local church. Some of them are doing an excellent job; usually, their mandate is to provide support to Chinese Christian professionals or the people who work in large companies. At best, they are membership scouts for one church “club” or another. The idea is that, through their influence, some of the un-believers in the workplace would be convinced to come to the local church. If they like the experience, they might join. Once again, the thrust is away from and out of the high-tech companies “into” the safe haven of the “church.”

In a Marketplace Cluster, an individual would seek to involve other believers in a particular sphere to develop a ministry to establish a “church” in that sphere. This, of course, is a different kind of church. Most of the Chinese local churches tend to think of church in vertical terms like “home” for addressing overseas Chinese people’s homesickness. While this is wonderful and carries the function of church as “one big family,” Chinese high-tech professionals need to think of expressions of ministry presence in the marketplace that go beyond an individual’s “witnessing” to his or her friends and coworkers and trying to get them to come to a local church on Sunday.

Destroy It Not for Blessing is in Cluster

The local church is trying to get un-churched people to where the church building is on Sunday, but the Marketplace Cluster is the “process” of taking church to where the un-churched people are on weekdays. The cluster is the spiritual weapon of penetration with God’s blessing. This is the second part of the promise: “Destroy it not for a Blessing is in Cluster” (Is 65:8). The fact is that there is not a ministry that is found in the local church that cannot be adapted and reproduced in the marketplace. The local church activities in worship, prayer, healing and deliverance, the exercise of spiritual gifts, Bible studies and more, come into their own flavor in Marketplace Clusters, but not the local church flavor. Not one of them is inappropriate. In fact, whereas some of them are often adornments to the local church, they are tools and spiritual weapons in a Marketplace Cluster situation. Some Christians from the local church can actually live without some of these weapons and not even notice it, but in Marketplace Cluster one needs them desperately in order to break through into the lives of needy future members of God’s heavenly family.

Marketplace Cluster is based on the fact that the gospel of the kingdom is to influence every part of “Seven Mountains,”⁶⁹ including entertainment, business, education, family, government, media, and religion, not just to rescue a few people who are going to hell so that they can go to heaven. “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast...mixed into a large amount of flour until it is worked all through the dough” (Mt 13:33). Yeast in a lump

⁶⁹ Bill Bright, founder of Campus Crusade, and Loren Cunningham, founder of Youth with a Mission, conversation with the author in 1975, <http://www.reclaim7mountains.com/> (accessed August 2, 2011).

of flour radically changes the essential nature of the whole loaf and totally takes over without asking permission, just like “seed becoming a large dominating tree,” radically growing to provide a dominating influence in the garden.

Jesus said the church was designed to destroy the gates of hell. The church is the purpose-built, gate-crashing spiritual weapon against enemy strongholds (Mt 16:18). Believers should, therefore, recognize when church is being the church and when it is not. When its focus is on self-preservation, it is not being the church, nor when it has chosen to provide a “haven” for people to survive in the “world,” nor when it chooses a detente relationship between the “kingdom” and the “world.” When it takes up an attack posture in the battlefield, though, it is being the church. Churches should be doing what they were designed for - searching and destroying gates of enemy strongholds.

Implementation Requirements of the Marketplace Cluster

Paradigm Shifts

Before implementation of Marketplace Cluster, a paradigm shift is required. A paradigm is a model consisting of shared assumptions regarding what works or what is true. A paradigm shift can be described as “aha!” and “wow!” moments when someone sees things in such a new light that one can never go back to the old ways again. Each paradigm shift takes local church leaders from a model of thinking that must be discarded to a new model that must be embraced. A new paradigm is the new wineskins that will be needed to hold the new assumptions about what is true. To maximize local church impact on the marketplace, local church leaders need changes in at least three of the paradigms with which they currently view church.

Eric Swanson has an article called “Ten Paradigm Shifts toward Community Transformation,” and three of them can be applied to this project.⁷⁰ The first paradigm shift is “from building walls to building bridges.” The purpose of this project is simple: to build bridges between the church and the marketplace. Local churches need to rethink their stance in relation to the marketplace. They need to consider whether they will remain outside of the marketplace inviting people to their church or go to the marketplace, seeking to be a transforming agent. The church is called to be separate from the world but never called to be isolated from the marketplace it seeks to influence. For many years, founding pastor Robert Lewis of Fellowship Bible Church (FBC) in Little Rock was content to be growing a successful suburban mega church. FBC then challenged themselves with the question, “What can we do that would cause people to marvel and say, ‘God is at marketplace for no one could do these things unless God were with them?’”⁷¹ The local churches have to shift from building walls to building bridges and let their light shine so that Jesus Christ is made real to the marketplace. Once a church makes this mental shift, it will make the transition from providing ministry programs for the community to forever changing its relationship to marketplace.

The second paradigm shift is “from measuring attendance to measuring impact.”⁷² In a post-modern world, most people are impressed neither with the size of a church nor with its commitment to “truth” because the faith should be observed in living out the

⁷⁰ Eric Swanson, “Ten Paradigm Shifts toward Community Transformation,” from Mission America Coalition website, <http://www.missionamerica.org/Brix?pageID=13539> (accessed September 15, 2011).

⁷¹ Eric Swanson, “Churches Moving into the Community,” from Leadership Network website, <http://www.ecdistrictumc.org/images/learning/ChurchesMoving.pdf> (accessed September 15, 2011).

⁷² Ibid.

truths. We want others to grasp the life of the Savior, and want them to know Jesus. The question, “How big is your church?” should be replaced with “How big is your life impact?” Every other measure is interesting but not relevant. Let us refuse to be impressed by numbers alone. Eric Swanson said, “There are many ways to engage the marketplace and make an impact, but the only bad way to engage in service is not to engage at all!”⁷³

The third paradigm shift is “from inward focus to outward focus.”⁷⁴ Today, most of church is irrelevant to most people. Eric Swanson said, “If someone takes away church Sunday service, then s/he takes away church's power, influence, and evangelistic effectiveness.”⁷⁵ The real power of the gospel is combining the life-changing message with selfless service. Silicon Valley is rife with high-tech professionals working overtime, absentee fatherhood, marital divorce, and family dysfunction. It is certainly not caused by the lack of churches. The problem centers on the fact that most local churches have not been serving this community. The single biggest factor in Marketplace Cluster to retain people is not the personal follow-up or joining a small group; it is being involved from the very beginning in service to others in the community. The slogan is “All high-tech professional Christians are the church, and together we are called to meet the needs of the Marketplace.”

Mentality Challenges

⁷³ Swanson, “Churches Moving into the Community.”

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Swanson, “Ten Paradigm Shifts toward Community Transformation.”

In the 1970s, well-educated and high-tech professional Chinese began to form Chinese local churches, but the Chinese local church has "come of age" today. She is respectable, complete with buildings, pastoral staff, and missions programs. However, in many quarters, the simple, single-hearted zeal for evangelism has been lost. Chinese local churches spend time and energy devising and staffing programs in the church (and in the cell group or fellowship). Today, the Chinese church in Silicon Valley faces the challenge of evangelization in a multicultural society. Indeed, the Chinese church itself is a multicultural community including Chinese and a second generation of American-born Chinese. Chinese culture itself is also changing. Cultural diversity and cultural change present tremendous challenges to the task of making disciples. Nowhere is the pressure greater than in the lives of the laity who live and work daily in the marketplace.

If Jesus called high-tech professionals to be fishers of men, they seem to fill the local church with aquarium keepers. The church needs both aquarium keepers (whose ministry is to keep the fish happy) and fishers of men (whose ministry to catch the fish from marketplace). The problem is that the ratio of fishermen to the total church population is so small that evangelism is not given its proper place. Silicon Valley Chinese community needs more high-tech professional Christians who view themselves as fishers of men, rather than aquarium keepers. If given the choice, they would opt for ministries of "out-reach" rather than "in-reach." Their whole orientation is to reach out to the un-churched with the love of Christ. There are many potential fishers of men in the marketplace. Some of them need to be trained in evangelism. Some of them need to be healed from past hurts, liberated from burdens from their past. Then, as they see and

follow examples of fishing for men, they will become amazed at what God wants to do through their lives.

Silicon Valley needs high-tech professionals' Marketplace Cluster to play a positive role in building the Chinese local churches. There are 150 Chinese churches in Silicon Valley. Several dozen are growing rapidly and multiplying. Many are stagnant. Chinese Christian professionals are found in almost every one of them. What can they do to promote their church's growth? This is not the place to discuss the strategies and methods of church growth. The crucial area, which needs to be discussed is relationships in the church. It is a well-known fact that the churches multiply themselves by splitting. Relationships between pastor and lay leaders have turned sour and bitter. Today, all the Chinese local churches together are only reaching 5 percent of the Chinese community. In the next ten years, there will be another 150 new Chinese churches started. The question is: what kind of churches will be started, local churches or Marketplace Clusters?

The single most effective evangelistic methodology under heaven is planting new churches to accomplish the Great Commission.⁷⁶ Church planting is becoming a buzz-word among evangelical mission leaders. Several denominations have adopted aggressive plans to plant many Chinese churches in Silicon Valley. The concern, though, is for what kind of lay leader and church planter will be needed, in order to staff a great movement of church planting among the Chinese in Silicon Valley.⁷⁷ Marketplace Cluster needs Christians who are trained and experienced in personal evangelism and disciple-making. It

⁷⁶ Peter Wagner, *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1990), 7.

⁷⁷ Felix Liu, "T'ien kuo ti yao shih - Keys to the kingdom," *Chinese Churches Today* (March, 1982): 4-5.

is going to need love-filled high-tech companies where high-tech professionals work together in mutual respect and love. It is much easier to invite an un-churched person to a Marketplace Cluster, than to a local church.

PART THREE
STRATEGY

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS OF AND APPROACH TO BUILDING MARKETPLACE CLUSTERS

This chapter will describe the process of implementing Chinese high-tech marketplace ministry in Silicon Valley. It will include the analysis of decline that has led to the need for a new paradigm, a look at methods of change possible in the Silicon Valley context, and a comparison of ways local churches can connect with each other in ministry. It will describe the approach to understanding church from a “3C” perspective: to integrate a local church, Marketplace Cluster, and home cell to become an innovative paradigm for missions in the post-modern era. The church understanding is a celebration together in one place at one time, and the idea of a cell is typically a gathering in a home to pray and love each other. Not only should marketplace ministers have the idea of “church” and of “cell,” but this project paper will develop a dynamic notion of “cluster” as a series of relationships and communications in the marketplace.

Analysis of Changing Chinese Local Church

The Challenges of Local Church Decline

In the last several decades, most of the churches in America have been either flat or are declining. “Church attendance and involvement are no longer the norms or

expectation in American society. It has become socially unacceptable to express disapproval of other's choices or to appear intolerant of other people's life choices."⁷⁸ In Silicon Valley, thousands of Chinese high-tech professionals have become employed by industries every year since 1980. Although the Chinese local church attendance has increased, the ratio of Christians to non-Christians among Chinese has declined. As this immigrant trend grew in the latter part of the twentieth century, the Chinese local church drifted from the center of Chinese American life to the margin, and the church exists now in a post-modern era and a post-Christendom culture.⁷⁹ The rules and customs that supported the Chinese local church in the early 1980s have changed or no longer exist. The mainline Church must overcome outdated thinking to embrace healthy change. In the same manner, the institutional church must change how it views the marketplace, eliminate obsolete practices, and craft responses that will work effectively in a changing modern society.⁸⁰

To attain relevance in the Post-Christendom world, the Chinese local church in the Silicon Valley must understand the new high-tech marketplace view in which Marketplace Cluster operates. Like high-tech companies, Post-Christendom thinking advocates a transition from centralized, top-down hierarchal approaches to a flattening of the authority pyramid and an emphasis on networking. Whereas change in the modern era was more incremental and predictable, post-modern times demonstrate chaotic change

⁷⁸ Eddie Gibbs, "Decline of Denominations" (Lecture PowerPoint, Growing Churches in a Post-Christendom World, Fuller Theological Seminary, January 2008).

⁷⁹ Gibbs, *ChurchNext*, 23-27.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 13-18.

with less predictability. Marketplace Cluster planning is necessary, but chaotic change accelerates response rates and limits long-range planning effectiveness. As networking replaces centralized decision-making in the Chinese local church, change often starts on the periphery like Marketplace Cluster.

The Calling of Filling Two Boats with Fish

As mainland China has implemented an open door policy to allow more students to study in America, Chinese church attendance and involvement are no longer the norms or expectation in high-tech professional society. In 2002, I founded two organizations to reflect God's calling, "filled two-boats with fish" (Lk 5:4-7). I launched the first boat (cluster) into the deep water called Silicon Valley Harvest for weekday, lunch-time gospel ministry, and then launched the second boat (church) called Silicon Valley Church for Sunday worship and celebration. Planting a Marketplace Cluster before planting a local church re-shaped the traditional ministry legacy of the local church. As of today, five Marketplace Clusters have been built within Sun Microsystems, Inc.; Apple Computer, Inc.; Intel Corporation; Juniper Networks, Inc.; and Alpha and Omega Semiconductor – all high-tech companies in Silicon Valley.

I believe that a Marketplace ministry and church ministry partnership is an innovative paradigm for missions in the twenty-first century. I have always advocated the importance of training business leaders who could disciple the marketplace and, in turn, disciple a nation. If an entrepreneur could be won to Christ in the Silicon Valley community and trained in his Christian faith so that his business practices changed, he would become more trustworthy as a businessperson. Taking this one step further, if the

Christians in business began to address some of the social injustices perpetrated in the marketplace, then these people could disciple the community and, in turn, the nation.

Two Approaches to Building a Church

In Silicon Valley, most of the major denominational Chinese churches are declining in attendance, and many more non-denominational Chinese churches are growing at a pace that is slower than the growth of the high-tech professionals' population in the area where they are located. As the church rebirth discussion has become more angry and bitter, there are at least two approaches for church rebirth or renewal being proposed: the mega church model and the missional church model. There is often tension between those with mega church experiences and those with missional church experiences. Both models have their strengths and weaknesses, as outlined below.

Description and Critique of the Mega Church Model

The definition of mega church generally refers to any Protestant congregation with a sustained average weekly attendance of two thousand persons or more in its worship services. According to the Hartford Institute for Religion Research 2011 survey, 40 percent of mega churches are nondenominational and 71 percent of their membership's orientations are evangelical.⁸¹ Mega churches struggle with the tendency to turn inward and find it difficult to focus on their mission because it requires so much energy to maintain the system. However, the mission of Jesus should not just be owned by the small church. Mega churches face unique challenges in being truly missional, but

⁸¹ "Megachurch Definition" quote from Hartford Institute for Religion Research website, [http://www. http://hrr.hartsem.edu/megachurch/definition.html](http://www.hirr.hartsem.edu/megachurch/definition.html) (accessed July 18, 2014).

they have the opportunity to gather the people for substantial missional impact. For example, Willow Creek (Bill Hybels) and Saddleback (Rick Warren) set out to communicate the gospel in a different and effective way. We need both mega church and small church, and, if it takes all kinds of churches to reach all types of people, then they all have a unique place in God's mission.

One rather mega church model of establishing and maintaining a church uses the ways of the world and the business community. Its proponents seek ideas outside of and far from Christ, resulting in individual, then collective failure in missional purpose. Although it is valid to critique the mega church way, criticism is useless if made up of generalities. All ministries are frequently soiled with both the good and the bad; perhaps even the missional way is. Below is a summary list of descriptions and critiques of the mega church approach to establishing a church.

The first characteristic of a mega church is to find a visionary pastor, one with the right vision as well as an upbeat, contagious, and charismatic personality. He or she could lead by force of will or charisma. However, I believe the Bible calls us to be led by the character, call, and precepts of Christ. The second mega church characteristic is to add in an effective marketing strategy to make the church look appealing. However, I believe that appearance is no substitute for substance.

Next is to oversimplify the Word of God, emphasizing psychology and self-help rather than biblical instructions. The fear is that, if one teaches too deeply, people will get frustrated and leave. Therefore, the pastor must use other means, such as stories, life

issues, entertainment, and relevant psychology. I believe, though, that our call is to please God and love the people, not to please people.

Then, a church can use modern communications tools – the best, most modern tools so as to catch people’s attention. If a church does not have the best PowerPoints™ and plays, people may drift away or never come. However, I believe the techniques are less important than the substance.

Finally, there can be diminished interest in authentic worship and discipleship as the goal of the church turns to being more contagious. It wins by its numbers and not by authentic maturity in Christ. The church worships with modern music that people know and can relate to, appealing to people’s tastes instead of focusing on praise of God. I believe, though, that the point of worship is praise and gratitude to God; He is the audience – the One to seek and please.

Definition and Critique of the Missional Church

The missional church defines itself in terms of its mission, being *sent ones* who take the gospel to and incarnate the gospel within a specific cultural context.⁸² Darrell Guder said, “Mission is not just a program of the church. It defines the church as God’s sent people. Either we are defined by mission, or we reduce the scope of the gospel and the mandate of the church. Thus, our challenge today is to move from church with mission to missional church.”⁸³ The local church needs to rethink and redefine the nature

⁸² Darrell Guder, *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America, Gospel and Our Culture* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1998), 6.

⁸³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Missional_living.

of the church and create a new paradigm of being missional. Also, Alan Hirsch said, "The church itself is not only a product of that mission but is obligated and destined to extend it by whatever means possible. The mission of God flows directly through every believer and every community of faith that adheres to Jesus. To obstruct this is to block God's purposes in and through his people."⁸⁴ Instead of attracting people to churches through church programs, churches should take the gospel outside of the church and engage the marketplace with it.

Churches using the missional model have motivation to move away from the theology of the local church and redefine what church is and what a church should look like. George Barna says that "this movement is predominantly an outside-outside experience, where believers see the world as their church grounds. Many of these revolutionaries are active members of a local church, but their primary ministry effect is not within the congregational framework but in the raw world."⁸⁵ They are focusing on a growing diversity for mission because they say unbelievers are no longer interested in coming to a church building. Darrell Guder says that "we are told that we can't assume that a particular missional community should be organized as a local congregation."⁸⁶ With this concept in mind, church leadership is not required, church program really does not matter, and church membership is irrelevant. These will create weaknesses in

⁸⁴ Alan Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating the Missional Church* (Ada, MI: Brazos Press, 2009), 82.

⁸⁵ George Barna, *Revolution* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2005), 127.

⁸⁶ Guder, *Missional Church*, 234.

leadership vision and church management. Additionally, there will not be enough communication between church and cell groups.

Another weakness of the missional church model is that the outward mission will dilute the inward worship and spiritual growth. The major church functions, which include not only ministry to the world (mission), but also ministry to God (worship), and ministry to believers (growth), will be marginalized. John Roxborough says that “the church in its total mission has other valid purposes besides mission as outreach,” and that “the renewal of mission cannot secure its end by seeking to take over the entire enterprise of the Christian life.”⁸⁷ Missional church proponents attempt to say the mission should be the primary focus, which will reduce other church functions unintentionally. They also downplay non-missional activities. Actually, there is something that the large church gathered can accomplish that each individual on his or her own cannot accomplish. It is important to keep church functions in balance and not emphasize one function above the others.

For an overarching view of the missional church model, although “all believers are priests” it is not true that every new believer is a vocational missionary, just as not all Christians are pastors. George Peters says, “While all Christians are *witnesses* to Christ and gospelers of the good news, not all Christians are missionaries, just as not all Christians are preachers of the gospel or pastor-teachers of the churches.”⁸⁸ Using this

⁸⁷ John Roxborough, “*Is Mission Our Only Mission*,” Revisiting the Missionary Nature of the Church (Aotearoa New Zealand Association for Mission Studies Inaugural Conference, Bible College of New Zealand, 27-28 November 2000), 8.

⁸⁸ George Peters, *A Biblical Theology of Missions* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1972), 249.

understanding of missionaries, it would seem to say that, if every true follower of Christ is a missionary, he or she should pack up and move overseas and become a missionary. Unfortunately, this is the only thing that comes to mind when many Christians talk about missionaries. However, the essence of Christianity is that Christians live their lives as missionaries, regardless of where they live: in their hometown or overseas. In fact, Jesus left his home in heaven to come to the earth as a missionary to reach out to people for salvation. Additionally, in John 17:18, Jesus said “As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.” In this passage, he not only refers to himself as “sent” but also refers to every Christian as “sent.” The missional church needs to speed up discipleship for new believers to be missionaries.

The missional church model is young and still growing. Although some weaknesses have been identified, there is still enough flexibility to question and change the missional church model. Any weaknesses may be overcome before they are firmly rooted in the church foundations. This is especially encouraging because it is much easier to adjust the model’s shape and direction in order to create a new healthy church culture. The calling of the missional church model is still to keep gospel centered to glorify God by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus for the sake of gathering God’s people to him. Whether churches call themselves missional or traditional, their passion should be to follow Jesus’ calling in both mission and oneness.

The Current Chinese Local Church Situation

Today, most of the Chinese local churches use Christian views and Chinese traditional ideologies to create sermon messages, Sunday school materials, seminars, and

workshops to capture seekers from the marketplace. These methodologies will not satisfy the desire of the high-tech professionals in Silicon Valley. In response to this, following are a few insights that point to the need for Marketplace Cluster.

Corporate Gatherings are important to reflect the exaltation of Christ. Marketplace Ministry needs multiple forms of gatherings to reflect the fullness of the Church. This is in contrast to some in the emerging movement who prefer to abolish larger corporate gatherings. Still, the large gathering will enable the church corporately to be a preview of the kingdom.

Leaders should rethink the success of their church. A church can have a large number of people attend on Sundays, but, if this is where their connection to being the church ends, the church may only be feeding the idols of consumerism. Churches should put much more emphasis on creating disciples to embody the gospel in daily life.

Cell groups are a good idea for the local church, but, in order to reach people, churches need to form missional communities. A cell group is a small gathering of people who pray deeply, are committed to the needs of people, and express love and mercy. Cell group people need to become the cloud of witnesses in the gospel and engage in the community to build the relationship with unbelievers.

Churches that are not actively spreading the gospel to unbelievers will only reach seekers. Hirsch calls “mission going out and incarnation as going deep.”⁸⁹ Leaders need to develop a culture of mission in the church, and they need to model how to reach people

⁸⁹ Peters, *A Biblical Theology of Missions*, 235.

groups who do not respond to attractional ministries. They need to create a new Marketplace Ministry mindset in our people.

Moving from a Sunday service with some mid-week Bible studies to a church that takes Marketplace ministry seriously will be difficult. It will take people completely out of their comfort zone and require both patience and love as Christians move into active relationships with non-believers. This is difficult since many mature Christians have completely isolated themselves from the unbelieving world. For many Christians, there needs to be a complete shift in ideology and a conversion to mission in order for this to occur. Sadly, churches that go through this process will end up losing people unwilling to follow their leaders as they follow Christ. Ultimately, this transition is critical for the church to once again move to the margins of the marketplace where it began and was able to completely change the world through decentralized missional living.

Marketplace Cluster Model

In Silicon Valley, almost all of the Chinese local churches have Marketplace Ministries, but no one has the Marketplace Cluster model to implement. The meaning of model is that it is a preliminary work or construction that serves as a plan from which a final product is to be made. It could be a small object but usually built to scale, that represents in detail another, often larger object. For example, Intel Harvest is a Marketplace Cluster model, which uses the trial-and error method, characterized by repeated, varied attempts, and continues until it succeeds. The next section will describe the schematic description of a system, theory, or phenomenon that accounts for its known or inferred properties and may be used for further development of its characteristics.

Essence and Identity

A “cluster” is more than just a gathering of several high-tech professionals from the local church to form a Bible study group in the high-tech company. It is a marketplace missional community for Chinese local churches in Silicon Valley. The size of a cluster varies, but almost never reaches above sixty to seventy people. Clusters are not just a marketplace ministry strategy for large churches. They are a transformative tool in becoming truly missional. Even a small local church of thirty to fifty people could participate. Clusters are defined and held together by the vision they form and the values they share, and clusters lead to an explosion in the number of leaders from many different local churches.

For a local church to transform marketplace ministry into a Marketplace Cluster model, it needs to let go of controlling everything and instead lead by the vision and training of high-tech professional leaders. This is not a top down leadership model but a networked local churches model. The quality of the leadership is essential for the health and survival of the Marketplace Cluster. The glue that holds the local churches and Marketplace Clusters together is the leadership and the training matrix that defines the whole.

Every healthy cluster is defined by three dimensions that can be put into a triangle: “Up – In – Out” in which the “up” part, represents the link to God, the “in” part represents the high-tech professionals fellowship in the cluster, the “out” part states that the cluster is facing out to evangelize with the gospel. The original idea is from Life

Shapes Triangle, which was first developed by 3dministries⁹⁰ at St Thomas Sheffield in England. Mike Breen was team rector at St. Thomas Church at Crookes and Philadelphia Campus from 1994 – 2004. In their book on clusters, Bob Hopkins and Mike Breen⁹¹ expand these directions in the life of clusters as follows.

Clusters are mid-size groups - larger than cells and smaller than celebrations, which grow together in their relationship to God as they explore whole life spirituality (UP). Clusters build Christian community as places of belonging and participation on days, times, and places that suit - they are quite distinctly different from the inherited Sunday service (IN). Clusters gain identity and purpose from a united mission vision, being called to a clear geographic or network focus, and engaging in social patterns of that culture and context (OUT). This triangle has to be balanced as a whole if it is to be healthy. Every cluster leader needs to know and implement this, and the top leadership of the local church needs to create space for the clusters to find their own way in this by creating a leadership space with “high accountability and low control.”

Planning and Construction

In order to create a church that is still “solid” or not fully “liquid,” three types of communities are needed: first, the “cell” - 3+ people with its main function in personal intimacy; second, the “cluster” - 25+ people with its main function in social fellowship; and third, the “church” - 100 + people with its main function in worship celebration. This

⁹⁰ 3dministries, <http://www.weare3dm.com> (accessed July 10, 2013).

⁹¹ Bob Hopkins and Mike Breen, *Clusters: Creative Mid-sized Missional Communities* (Sheffield, England: 3dm publications, 2007), 14.

pattern has biblical roots and is used in both the Old Testament and New Testament. This pattern is also found through church history. The church is centered on a building and a Sunday service, and their definition of success is church attendance. Marketplace Clusters can be a solution to many of these problems within old and worn out church systems.

Introducing Marketplace Clusters to a local church can take many forms, but it always fosters major changes and transformation. It is a shift from Sunday Christianity to seven-day Christianity. There are three possibilities in transforming: the local church is transformed, a parallel expression across the local churches is started to avoid conflicts with the local churches that do not embrace the model, and there is a new planting of a Marketplace Cluster from the existing traditional local church.

Important principles for introducing clusters in a local church are that the vision must be birthed in prayer and the process surrounded by prayer; the leaders have to change first and accept major shifts in their leadership roles; change must be based on values, not structures; it is a good idea to get outside help and support; the leader should take key people to see Marketplace Clusters elsewhere. This will help raise the important leaders of the first Marketplace Clusters and prepare the new support structures of leaders. It is important at every moment to watch for and spot potential Marketplace Cluster leaders and set them free to experiment.

The planting of a new cluster can be done in many ways, but often there are predictable steps that must be taken: pray and find a vision; recognize and appoint leaders; select and call a core group of people; engage in mission and evangelism to

gather a crowd; learn how to develop plans; establish ownership for the vision; and develop small group structure, leadership, pastoral care, and discipleship.

Most questions regarding clusters are best answered “case by case” because this is still quite a new and very dynamic theory in marketplace ministry. One of the frequently asked questions is, “Can we have one social, cultural, or generational group?” This is complicated to answer, but the short answer is that we have to do our best to build bridges between cultures and people of different origin, age, and so on. This issue has to be addressed in the training of cluster leaders, and they have to be a part of an open discussion of this topic.

From Solid to Liquid

In Silicon Valley, the rules of the game are continuously changing. It is becoming clear that our church and ministry require massive, radical change. How can we even begin to accomplish this? In the face of fundamental change in the marketplace, incremental change means just doing the same thing, but doing it better, and this usually spells disaster. What is called for is radical and discontinuous change, which can involve major shifts in strategy, formal structures, work process, and culture. I found that the major concept of Liquid Church matches the Silicon Valley Church (Church) and Silicon Valley Harvest (cluster) vision.

Pete Ward clearly and coherently articulates the pulse of Western culture's shift from modernity (solid) to post-modernity (liquid). He often refers to the present as “liquid modernity.” The solid ice of modernity is melting away, resulting in some big ice

chunks left floating about an increasingly fluid culture.⁹² So how can we be a church, given post-modernity's fluidity? Silicon Valley Church people will inevitably claim: Stay firm. Keep doing the things we have been doing. The people of Silicon Valley Harvest will see what God is doing in our culture and seek to engage it.

Silicon Valley Harvest must become liquid in order to reach a liquid culture. Since Silicon Valley Church is centered on a weekly congregational gathering; it is completely irrelevant to the Silicon Valley high-tech culture, which no longer utilizes a regular, weekly, social gathering as its primary method of communication and community formation. Instead, this culture relies on networks and communication processes based on discussion forums such as Facebook and connecting with Internet nodes. Facebook is an affinity-based gathering beyond a Sunday morning service and Internet nodes are the methods of communication and participation within a network.

From Modernity to Post-Modernity

Pete Ward has an interesting take on “need” vs. “desire” and the church’s role in the debate.⁹³ The solid church has focused on trying to show culture what it truly “needs” while they ignore post-modern humanity's desires. Post-modernity is less interested in being told what it “needs.” Post-moderns are more interested in quenching their spiritual thirst. The solid church responds, "Well, this is what you need." Post-modernity's response: "But this is what I desire." The liquid cluster seeks to cater to the good, life-giving desires of post-modernity, while upholding the central, core tenets of the Christian

⁹² Pete Ward, *Liquid Church* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002), 72.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 129.

faith. I am observing Silicon Valley high-tech cultural changes within modernity that evidence increasing fluidity. Leonard Sweet draws upon the metaphor of liquid on culture change saying:

If the Modern Era was a rage for order, regulation, stability, singularity, and fixity, the Postmodern Era is a rage for chaos, uncertainty, otherness, openness, multiplicity, and change. Postmodern surfaces are not landscapes but wavescapes, with the waters always changing and the surfaces never the same. The sea knows no boundaries.⁹⁴

Not only should we have the traditional “church” thinking (which is a gathering of people meeting in one place at one time) but we also need to develop a dynamic notion of “cluster” as a series of relationships and communications. In this dynamic change, membership is determined by participation and involvement. It is continually on the move – flowing in response to the Spirit and the gospel of Jesus, the imagination and creativity of its leaders, and the choices and experiences of its worshippers. This is not a set of practical principles, nor is it a model that has been successfully implemented or even attempted. Instead, it is a reflection on the attitudes and convictions that drive a church that truly ministers to the needs of people over the passage of time without getting stuck in a rut.

The idea of rethinking one’s perceptions of “church” and “cluster” leaves “some people storming the castle with torches while others are standing at the precipice of all that they have been, ready to take a first step into a very new idea of what we call “church.””⁹⁵ Marketplace Ministry needs to embrace a dynamic change of the church,

⁹⁴ Leonard Sweet, *Aqua Church* (Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 1999), 179.

⁹⁵ Ward, *Liquid Church*, 129.

flowing in response to the Spirit and addressing the genuine needs of isolated consumer-Christians. The dynamic change is that the congregation, meeting every Sunday in the same-building, will be extended by a much more fluid network of relationships, communications, and encounters. It may draw a wider group together more occasionally for specific and creative events. In between events, there would be a whole range of connections made, focused on informal meetings. This all implies that there can be a real sense of belonging to a church without everyone meeting only on Sundays.

From Incremental to Discontinuous

Silicon Valley Church and Silicon Valley Harvest find that these two organizations are being bombarded by change, and many coworkers are struggling to keep up. We see significant change ahead, but the gap between expected change and the ability to manage it has almost tripled since both were founded in 2002. The question is: How do we create the kind of church ministry that not only adapts quickly to current trends, but is aggressive about shaping and leading change?

We have been making incremental changes in the process of continuous improvement in 2007. In the mean time, we are also working on discontinuous change, which is the kind of large-scale transformation that turns church and ministry inside out and upside down. I believe both incremental and discontinuous changes can simultaneously and constantly take place in our church and ministry. If managing incremental change can be compared to encouraging joggers to gradually pick up the pace, leading discontinuous change is like getting those same joggers to leap off a cliff and build their parachutes on the way down.

Many of the changes that our church and ministry are facing today are not incremental but discontinuous. Local church leaders need to restructure, reengineer, and transform, which will challenge our most deeply held beliefs about the past.

Discontinuous change confronts the entire church and ministry with the possibility that the very roles, actions, and attitudes that were most responsible for past success will be insufficient, and perhaps even detrimental, for the future. That concept is difficult to communicate and much harder for people to adopt.

One of the greatest challenges is to identify the practices and attitudes that need to be unlearned in order to more quickly adopt new behaviors. Here are a few questions any leader needs to consider: What do I do best? (Most proud of) Which current skills, abilities, and attitudes will continue to make me successful in the future? How does feeling competent stop me from doing things differently? (Comfort zones) What new skills do I need to learn to stay valuable to the organization? What do I need to unlearn? (Obsolete)

I need to begin by identifying the skills and behaviors that coworkers need to learn and unlearn. Then they address the topic openly: They talk about their own problems with letting go of past competencies, they empathize with the feelings of awkwardness that come with leaving the comfort zone, and coworkers are candid about the reason they decided to leave some behaviors in the past in order to better serve the future. Then they massage damaged egos by applauding the efforts that all team members are making.

Approach of Discontinuous Change

It is necessary to realize that discontinuous change is a large-scale, daunting challenge and involves significant resources, high risks, and enormous personal commitment. The prospect is sometimes so overwhelming that it is hard just to know where to start but this paper still needs to develop an approach that helps church leaders map out a strategy for successful discontinuous change.⁹⁶

Five Stages of the Change Cycle

Organizational Consultant Mercer Delta also built around a change cycle that consists of five stages.⁹⁷ Stage one is to recognize the change imperative. It is one thing to understand that Silicon Valley Church and Silicon Valley Harvest are ill-suited to meet the challenges of a changing marketplace, and it is another to be clear about which aspect of the organization should change. So the first step in discontinuous change is not only to recognize the need for change, but also to diagnose the underlying organization problems.

Stage two is developing a shared direction. As the Senior Pastor, I need to provide a clear direction for change and then build a coalition of support at the top of the organization. Stage three, then, is implementing change. This critical stage involves redefining the change strategy, making corresponding changes in work processes, redesigning the formal structures and systems, putting the right people in the right jobs, and reshaping the informal organization to support the new strategy and work.

⁹⁶ David Nadler, Robert Shaw, and Elise Walton, *Discontinuous Change: Leading Organization Transformation* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Jossey-Bass, 1994), 7.

⁹⁷ Mercer Delta, *Discontinuous Change –The Unique Challenges of Radical Transformation*, ftp://ftp.software.ibm.com/software/emea/dk/frontlines/Mercer_discontinuous_change.pdf (accessed February 15, 2013).

Stage four is consolidating change. This begins with communication and diagnosis as both Silicon Valley Church and Silicon Valley Harvest leaders find out which aspects of the change process are working and which are not. Using this information to refine the changes, both leaders then concentrate on consolidating change and applying various techniques to ingrain the changes into the fabric of the organization.

Stage five is sustaining change. Following the emotional letdown that inevitably comes in the wake of dramatic change, I need to maintain momentum and continue the local church's assessment and refinement of the change initiatives. I also need to actively scan the competitive environment for signs of new developments that could ignite the next wave of discontinuous change.

In reality, discontinuous change is never neat or linear – the stages overlap, and there is never a clear ending. In fact, the final stage of a cycle nearly always contains the seeds of the next cycle.

Critical Points of Discontinuous Change

As local churches move forward, whether or not they choose to work on Marketplace Ministry with the discontinuous change initiative they are contemplating, this project paper strongly urges them to keep a few critical points in mind. First, the leadership must be absolutely clear about the scope of change that is required. If the Silicon Valley marketplace and ministry field are in the throes of fundamental change, then heaping additional resources on incremental solutions will only speed the churches' demise.

Local church leaders should not wait too long to act on what is known. I believe that during the periods of major marketplace and ministry field upheaval, if Silicon Valley Church and Silicon Valley Harvest initiate discontinuous change at the beginning of the cycle, then they have more chance of survival than if they wait until later, when the odds of success decrease.

Additionally, there is no substitute for personal, active, and committed leadership by the top leaders in the church. In my experience, the Senior Pastor's personal leadership is the single most important factor that differentiates successful discontinuous change from the failures. In the long term, a successful church must master the art of organization agility – the capacity to consistently recognize and swiftly respond to the need for discontinuous change. If we fail to build this ability, we will keep playing catch-up until we slowly vanish from the field.

Approach of Networked Organization

We at Silicon Valley Church continue to re-think the congregational organization of our church for the sake of the gospel. We understand that the traditional centralization of church organization will destroy our church mission. We must, then, consider how we ought to lead, in light of a move from being a traditional centralized church to a networked church designed to transform Silicon Valley.

Why We Must Re-consider

According to Alan Hirsch, “Churches currently can only reach about 12% of the population. Unless the way people do church changes toward mission it will not reach

the culture. If we do not change the church will be in a state of radical decline.”⁹⁸ Here are the reasons why we must re-consider specifically the traditional Senior Pastor mentality, which includes both Senior Pastor as well as those who lead as a “plurality of elders.”⁹⁹

Traditional centralized churches will be limited by their leadership to be on mission. This is because the top-down leadership has vote, control, and power positions. The church creates a bottleneck where all decisions must go to the top to be processed by the few in order for action to take place. The church will be limited by the ability of the leaders to make timely decisions on a frequent basis. The overall organization is limited in scope based on what the leaders can support.

The traditional church model will significantly impair discipleship of the church’s people. The church creates a substantial pastor, leader, and laity distinction where the people are trained to function as second-tier Christians. Knowledge is centralized rather than teaching and sending people to make decisions and apply the gospel to different situations. For example, Silicon Valley Church would not let several young men, who were passionate about starting a college ministry, begin the work because they were not seminary trained. The local church may be great in teaching, but our people will not be disciplined to apply this knowledge on mission to change our city.

The traditional church will, on the other hand, have a natural resistance to reaching the margins of society. It is easier to create a great family atmosphere where

⁹⁸ Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, 124.

⁹⁹ Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership: An Urgent Call to Restore Biblical Church Leadership*, rev. exp. ed. (Colorado Springs, CO: Lewis & Roth Publishers, 1995), 138.

everyone is okay than to invite broken people into the kingdom. In a similar vein, the traditional church will cultivate secular programs rather than equip people for transformation. Ministry must be program driven because Christians are not free to transform the city. Programs can only deal with problems, but people on mission can transform a city.

I believe there is solid biblical case for the plurality of elders. I do not see how a Senior-Pastor-led church can ever overcome the above problems unless the church functions as a plurality of elders. Elders have the privilege of being the under-shepherds of the church. For some, this role of shepherding creates a picture of sitting around and “watching the flock.” The elder should be responsible for leading the flock on mission, teaching them theology to deal with challenges and praying, counseling, and watching out for those who are having troubles. All of this is done, though, with the emphasis on mission.

How It Can Be Done

It must be asked what it looks like to have decentralized leaders in a missional church and how to raise the bar of discipleship and create marketplace leaders who are adaptive and on mission to transform a community. Answers are found in viewing the church from the “3C” perspective, meaning the church is a *church* (Large and Celebrative), *cluster* (Medium and Dynamic), and *cell* (Small and Basic). In this way, we will make decisions that can be centralized, or de-centralized, then delegated to people on mission. The following shows how these decisions might be made.

Regarding the *church*, Silicon Valley Church (the church) should make central decisions about issues of doctrine, vision, and values. It is critical we are united in our stand on principal issues of doctrine and theology. This is like the Apostle Paul gathering with other early church leaders in Galatians to ensure there was unity on the gospel. Central decision-making on vision and values will be heavily influenced by the Silicon Valley Church involvement of church members. The goal is to install leaders who have been raised up in Silicon Valley Church and confirm that they understand the vision and values of the church.

Regarding the *Cluster*, Silicon Valley Church should delegate and disciple Silicon Valley Harvest (the cluster) to handle the bulk of the counseling, shepherding, and marketplace ministry. If a cluster comes to a problem they cannot handle, they can involve a church leader and escalate it to the church cluster community and eventually to the Senior Pastor. The goal is to push the active life of the church into the community.

In terms of the *cell*, certain leaders will lead people out on cell group mission from the home or corporation. These leaders may be particularly astute at mercy ministry, evangelism, apologetics, or teaching, for example. These leaders should be actively creating disciples in a leadership development process that is organic by inviting and involving people into leadership paths. For example, a cell group leader invites an attendee to lead a portion of the meeting. Over time, this develops into an apprenticeship, which eventually leads to a new community group leader. The decisions are made at the fringe of the cluster as those involved in a cell encounter difficulty.

The goal is to create a highly adaptable church body that provides flexible leadership decision-making at the appropriate level and creates a culture of people on mission. This is going to require great trust and a willingness to let people fail. It also will require us to let go of some of the control and, instead, trust the Holy Spirit. A lot of these ideas regarding structural change were triggered by two books: *The Forgotten Ways*¹⁰⁰ by Alan Hirsch and *Equipping Your Church to Reach a Changing World*¹⁰¹ by Roxburgh, Romanuk, and Gibbs.

Where That Leaves Us

One option is that local church leader can react and re-think how church is done and move to a more organic house church movement. No one knows if that is the right reaction. It seems that the church benefits from the “3C” perspective as the people of God. This is the case based on our multiple-perspective understanding of all reality described in the following.

All reality must be seen through three primary perspectives “B-C-D” - Basic, Celebration, and Dynamic. These three are epistemological lenses, which are required to see true reality. For example, the gospel is expressed in “B-C-D” perspectives as Truth (Basic), a change of identity (Dynamic) and as an alternative kingdom way of living (Celebration). To “preach the gospel” means to express all three, which goes far beyond limiting the gospel to the Western consumer mentality of “individual personal salvation.”

¹⁰⁰ Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, 208.

¹⁰¹ Alan Roxburgh, Fred Romanuk, and Eddie Gibbs, *Equipping Your Church to Reach a Changing World* (Hoboken, NJ: Jossey-Bass, 2006), 187.

This view impacts ecclesiology and the way Marketplace Ministry are looking to live this out in the church, the cell, and the cluster.

In the church, the people of God need to gather to hear the Word preached. Cell leaders are charged with preaching and teaching the people through prayer and study of the Word. These are people gathering corporately to “devote themselves to the apostles' teaching.”

In the cell, the people of God are actively involved in each other's lives through the practice of discipling, equipping, accountability, and fellowship. A small group of people may gather around shared challenges (new parents or learning more about aspects of Christianity, for example). Local church leadership needs to concern ourselves with the number of people actively being discipled as followers of Christ. These acts are often done in small groups and are often five to ten people.

The cluster is necessary as the local church needs to simplify the way to do church but also make more effective and put more effort into on how we reach out. We should be less concerned with how many people come to church on a Sunday and much more concerned with how many un-churched people are reached during the weekdays. Often the cluster is where evangelism, pastoring, and teaching are done. Marketplace Ministry is called to be on mission. As an expression of the kingdom, they are to meet locally and engage in communities and tribes of people. Here, a medium-sized group (twenty or so) gathers, praying for specific locations and sharing how to live out the gospel in a community. People live out their faith together in such a way that they are in close connection to unbelievers.

One of the dangers of new ideas is that we can often overreact and move to another extreme. Some would abandon larger “Sunday service” gatherings in order to be an emerging movement of God through a marketplace church or home church type expression. I believe we can make a strong biblical case that, for believers, corporate, intimate, and small gatherings are all part of what it means to be the church. It is through these gatherings that we can grow in the knowledge of God, live out the gospel together, and be a sent people seeking to make disciples of all nations.

CHAPTER 6

SPIRITUAL FORMATION IN A MARKETPLACE CLUSTER

This chapter will discuss further strategies for spiritual development and formation for the participant in the Marketplace Cluster ministry model so that the participant comes to have an understanding of God and a human's relationship with God. Although the various functions of the church need to be introduced to the participant to facilitate his or her preparation for entry into the church community, the Marketplace Cluster ministry model should and can continue to serve as a church outside of the local church.

It will first be discussed how to reinforce spiritual formation in the marketplace by providing a marketplace-focused, individual-focused, and corporate-focused spiritual formation program. Chinese high-tech professionals spend the majority of their time in high-tech companies, which have become the primary source for personal fulfillment in the areas of meaning and relationships. The separation of Chinese culture and spirit from technical work is a major weakness in the high-tech companies because Chinese high-tech professionals come together daily to accomplish what they cannot do on their own. Unless Marketplace ministry addresses this weakness, companies cannot benefit from the

deepest engagement of their employees, nor will they be able to achieve peak performance and creativity. Unfortunately, many of these employees are either atheists or engage in traditional religious practices with cultural spirituality and blind worship. It is extremely important to understand the Chinese spirituality before developing spiritual formation for Chinese unbelievers.

The goal for this chapter is to demonstrate the effectiveness of the new model for spiritual formation in the marketplace, which includes both spiritual direction and life coaching within the Marketplace Cluster. It will also analyze how Chinese high-tech professionals search out authentic spirituality before moving over to attending worship services in the marketplace. A more basic question is how one can search out authentic spirituality or, in fact, how one can worship the real God. This leads to the heart of the matter as the culture moves from modernism, with its worship of human reason, to postmodernism, which is more subjective in its approach to knowing.

The Reinforcement of Spiritual Formation in the Marketplace

Marketplace-Focused Spiritual Formation

The goal of the Marketplace Cluster ministry model is to continue to serve as a church outside of the local church. Today, Chinese local churches have a shortage of practical, work-based spiritual formation in the marketplace that gets beyond the generalities of daily devotionals. The Marketplace Ministry needs to provide business-focused spiritual formation programs unlike traditional models. Silicon Valley Harvest

has joined with Bizcipleship¹⁰² to provide a Chinese version of a spiritual formation program, “which is not constructed around theology,”¹⁰³ but rather around business testimonies to reflect God’s guidance in problem solving. This is the practical methodology for Chinese high-tech professionals to invest in their spiritual formation and business success. Bizcipleship also provides “life-shaping, mind-molding, faith-inspiring weekly insights for marketplace people”¹⁰⁴ for effective work-life integration. Chinese high-tech professionals will also receive a cohesive biblical worldview for their career to transform the way they work and the way they live.

Marketplace Cluster coaches are Christian business people who enjoy sharing their stories or testimonies with other business people. They are seeking to make a difference in and through business. Although they have advanced degrees and high-ranking marketplace experience, they are not ivory tower theorists to tell others what they should do in their career lives. Although they have their own busy jobs, they still coach many high-tech professionals who are unbelievers and are struggling in their daily work. When unbelievers hear the testimony and stories of people like these around the world, they are encouraged. If Chinese high-tech professionals are encouraged and work by faith every day, the marketplace ministry movement will radically change the Silicon Valley for Jesus’ Great Commission.

¹⁰² Bizcipleship, The Institute for Innovation, Integration & Impact, Inc., 15545 Quickert Road, Saratoga, CA 95070. <http://www.bizcipleship.com/what/> (accessed March 3, 2014).

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

Individual-Focused Spiritual Formation

There are four components of spiritual formation for individuals. These various components are important in the process of developing Christ-like character in an individual. “These components must be developed equally, or an individual will have a skewed spiritual life.”¹⁰⁵ The first component is knowing and loving God (Mk 12:30). Unless one knows God personally, that person is loving an image of God, which is based on the concept of biological fathers. People need to have quiet time in prayer and meditation to listen to His Word, and God will reveal Himself. The second component is knowing and loving oneself (Mk 12: 31a). It is only after becoming Christians that people can be truly themselves, to be fully human. Only God can make people authentic human beings. Spiritual formation helps Christians to discover their true selves. One first has to understand his or her own personality and the ways to connect with God. The third component is knowing and loving neighbors (Mk 12:31a). Spiritual formation is the relationship between God, believers, and their neighbors, which involves the whole world as believers reach out and bring redemption to it. The fourth component is living a life according to the greatest commandment. He taught it after He had told the disciples the parable of the tenants who were ungrateful for what they had been given (Mk 12:1-12), the parable about paying taxes to Caesar (Mk 12:13-17), and a debate about marriage at the resurrection (Mk12:18-27). Spiritual formation is not done separate from the world. Jesus did not take His disciples away from the marketplace but taught them to live among the people. Therefore, spiritual formation involves experiencing God in one’s daily life.

¹⁰⁵ Pravinkumar Israel, wikis engrade, <https://wikis.engrade.com/sf001/03> (accessed July 10, 2013). The concepts in this section are taken from Israel’s article.

Corporation-Focused Spiritual Formation

Many large companies are noting the connection between personal productivity and corporate performance. A healthy spiritual life will increase employees' mental, emotional, and physical health significantly. The human resource department is making spiritual health a part of the corporate benefits package. In order for a company and its employees to fully operate, spiritual formation should be part of corporate mission, values, and goals. Corporate employees are most effective and resilient when "their physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual capacities are balanced."¹⁰⁶

If Christian spiritual formation does not take any action, the Chi-Gong exercise will take over employees' spiritual lives in the corporation. Silicon Valley Harvest joins Corporate Spiritual Formation consultant Preston Gillham¹⁰⁷ to conduct a series of professional training programs in human growth, dynamic, and balance to assist corporations. The program is to build a spiritual formation model and to integrate Christian faith with marketplace practice.

Chinese Tradition of Spiritual Formation

Understanding of Chinese Spirituality and Worship

Traditional Chinese spirituality includes the principles of reciprocity and hierarchical structure. The principle of reciprocity is the basic psychology of traditional Chinese spirituality. The exchange relationship between humans and gods is based on

¹⁰⁶ Preston Gillham, Corporate Spiritual Formation Consultant, 2020 Wilshire Blvd. Fort Worth, TX, 76110, <http://prestongillham.com/consulting/spiritual-formation> (accessed July 10, 2013). The ideas in this section are developed from this source.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

give-and-take expectations that sacrifices offered often come with a request for a desired return. The grateful believers will generously pay more to build a temple for false gods when their requests have been fulfilled. Otherwise, they will pick another false god, and the old one will be abandoned. This attitude caused Chinese people to look for another powerful false god in the hierarchical ranking structure. As the Chinese, by tradition, have an empire system, they believe that the same structure must exist in the spiritual world, as well. Each false god has a specific job responsibility and covers a specific territory.

Chinese worship includes Heaven, Ancestor, Buddhism, and Folk, all of which fit together with Chinese culture without conflict. Heaven worship is the oldest Chinese expression of religion. It was inscribed on oracle bones and inside bronze sacrificial vessels (Zhou Dynasty, 1000 BC). The Head of the State (Emperor) conducted the heaven worship service every year on the first day of the year. This concept is deeply rooted in the hearts of Chinese.¹⁰⁸

Ancestor worship is the most important form of Chinese religion and is widely practiced across the entire society. The rituals concerning ancestor worship are very complicated and have to be followed precisely. Although it has been simplified in modern times, it will never fade away from the Chinese community. Buddhist worship is the most popular form of Chinese religion. Since its introduction in AD 400, it has slipped into and occupies every aspect of the Chinese lifestyle. “It brought into the Chinese worldview the concepts of attaining Buddha-hood, the wheel of life, punishment

¹⁰⁸ Family Search Organization, “China Church History, Church History,” https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/China_Church_History/ (accessed April 12, 2013).

and hell, as well as the depiction of Western paradise.”¹⁰⁹ Buddhism came to Southeast Asia with mystery and awe-inspiring doctrine, then mixed together with Confucianism and Daoism to form the branch of Mahayana Buddhism that has kept its roots in China.

Rodulf Otto uses a Latin phrase, *mysterium tremendum*, and presents the component of the numinous that is being experienced as comprising three elements: “awfulness (inspiring awe, a sort of profound unease), immense power (that which, among other things, inspires a feeling of humility), energy (creating an impression of immense vigour).”¹¹⁰ Along with its abundant icons and images, Buddhism came to China with “mysticism, awe, and fascination,” and its Chinese believers gained a sense of being *overpowered*. After synthesizing with many teachings and concepts of Confucianism and Daoism, the branch of Mahayana Buddhism found its home in China.

Taiwanese religions believe the spiritual forces have power to control their daily lives. They worship various local Bodhisattva and practice fengshui, visit fortune tellers, use amulets, and believe in evil spirit possession. With the mix of different religions and deities, it is not easy to distinguish the Taoist and Buddhist in Taiwan. For example, the Taiwan folk deity, Mazu (Goddess of the Sea) and the Buddhist Goddess of Mercy, Kuanyin, are frequently worshipped in the same temple.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ “Red China: The Sleeping Dragon Awakens,” http://china.jbdirectory.com/Chinese_folk_religion (accessed March 6, 2014).

¹¹⁰ Rudolf Otto, “*The Idea of the Holy*” <http://www.bytrentsacred.co.uk/index.php/rudolf-otto/the-idea-of-the-holy-1-summary> (accessed September 15, 2011).

¹¹¹ OMF International, formerly the China Inland Mission and Overseas Missionary Fellowship, founded by James Hudson Taylor in 1865, “Prayer Guide for Reaching Taiwan’s Working Class,” 18.

Challenge of Identities Integration

For Chinese high-tech professional immigrants going to a Marketplace Cluster in the Silicon Valley, three important identities – Chinese, Christian, and American - undergo construction and reconstruction. Each of these three identities has its own complexity. In other words, there are very different kinds of Christians, Americans, and Chinese. Furthermore, there are distinct aspects of these three identities that are not compatible and cannot be easily merged into a new identity that encompasses all three. There has been a long history and tradition of cultural, political, and social conflicts between Chinese and Christian identities, as well as between Chinese and American identities. The Chinese are from a nation with rich cultural and religious traditions. Then one could wonder why these immigrants convert to Christianity, if they have forsaken their own religious traditions to accept the dominant religion of the host society. Additionally, it could be asked what Chinese traditions they have inherited, if any and how the church helps the Chinese immigrant Christian in identity construction. Most Chinese high-tech professionals will face these questions in the marketplace before they enter a church.

Dr. Fenggang Yang points out the challenge to the immigrant local church of playing a role as an assimilation agency or as a bastion for preserving ethnic culture. Dr. Yang's theoretical arguments include:

- (1) that assimilation is selective in the segmented and pluralist American Society,
- (2) that the ethnic church, even with a majority of adult converts, serves both to selectively assimilate its participants into American society and to selectively preserve ethnic culture,
- (3) that Christian conversion in the immigrant church helps to retain Chinese identity and Chinese traditional culture, and
- (4) that

identities can be adhesive and multiple for some individuals in the immigrant church.¹¹²

Despite tensions and conflicts, the three identities - Chinese, American, and Christian - are merging together like three separate circles coalescing into one.

The ideal pattern of identity integration for these Chinese Christians in America is not that one identity replaces another, but that three identities adhere together. People who have adhesive integration can function fully in two or three cultures. In 1982, anthropologist Bernard P. Wong found that new Chinese immigrants commonly hoped for maintaining multiple identities.¹¹³ He reports that earlier Chinese immigrants commonly stuck to Chinese traditional culture and preferred to isolate themselves from the mainstream of American life.

In comparison, Chinese high-tech professionals in Silicon Valley commonly have multiple identities. They lament the fact that many American born Chinese have lost their cultural heritage, and they express the hope that their children will grow up with a dual identity as both Chinese and American. Today, at least some Chinese Americans are functionally holding adhesive identities.¹¹⁴

Chinese high-tech professionals came to the United States as students first and studied in graduate schools to earn Masters Degrees and Ph.D's, and then did post-doctoral research, all the time living and studying in American culture. After working for

¹¹² Fenggang Yang, *Chinese Christians in America: Conversion, Assimilation, and Adhesive Identities* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), 9-10.

¹¹³ Wong, *The Chinese in Silicon Valley*, 81-83.

¹¹⁴ Yang, *Chinese Christians in America*, 195.

high-tech companies for many years, they have become American citizens and adapted to life in American society. Marketplace ministry needs to make some changes toward more English usage and more American worship styles. However, these changes have not been brought about by the Chinese local church; they simply reflect the growing acculturation of church members. As individuals assimilate into public spheres - mainly in schools and at work - the Marketplace ministry provides an ethnic community for private life - religious and fellowship activities. Maintaining Chinese culture will be the major focus of the Chinese local church because the members of the congregations are reading the Chinese Bible and the pastors are preaching their sermons in Mandarin. Marketplace ministry should be ahead of the immigrant local church in assimilation of American culture because Chinese high-tech professionals' working environment, colleagues, and customers come mostly from American culture in Silicon Valley.

Major Impact on Chinese Christians

Confucianism is the major impact of the tri-cultural dynamics of Chinese, American, and Christian in spiritual formation. Chinese culture and Chinese religions were powerfully influenced by Confucius (551-479 B.C.E.) and subsequent Confucian scholars, and this impacts the Chinese Christian psyche. The way of Confucius is based on two theses: “[that] goodness can be taught and learned, and that society can only be in harmony and peace under the guidance of wisdom”¹¹⁵ Confucianism was later incorporated into Taoism, then gradually into a syncretistic folk religion consisting of Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, and animism.

Many Silicon Valley Chinese Christian parents remain with Chinese folk and ancestor worship. Dr. Lit Sen Chang writes, “Confucius has been respected by Chinese people, not only as a great sage but also as an idol in their hearts, they strive to imitate him as Christians imitate Christ.”¹¹⁶ Dr. Whalen Tai also makes an interesting observation regarding Chinese and Christian identity. He states:

There is one underlying cultural link. Chinese Christians might denounce Buddhism and Taoism as pagan and superstitious but not Confucianism. Even in the most Christian of Chinese families – the notable sign of which is the greater egalitarianism between church-going spouses and generally greater freedom for the offsprings – the behavioural patterns are still very much Confucian.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ X. Z. Yao, *An Introduction to Confucianism* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 23.

¹¹⁶ Lit Sen Chang, *Asia's Religions: Christianity's Momentous Encounter with Paganism* (Cambridge, UK: P & R Publishing, 1999), 40.

¹¹⁷ Alex Tang, “Chinese Christian or Christian Chinese?” http://www.kairos2.com/chinese_christian.htm (accessed April 12, 2013).

The result of this, the ambiguous identity phenomenon of Christian and Confucian, also occurs among high-tech professionals in the Silicon Valley.

In the Silicon Valley, most of the Chinese Christian parents and children's behaviors are very traditional. The Chinese second generation still keep the Confucian tradition in filial piety, a greater stress on school studying, familial loyalty, and hard work than is typical of Western culture. Both Chinese and English speaking Christians still make use of Confucian philosophy and ethics to reformulate Christian theology. For example, most Chinese Christians applied the Confucian way of *ren* to the fruit of Holy Spirit, patience. This analogy error makes them more concerned about personal ethics than Jesus' salvation. The major impact of Chinese Christians is that they are Christian on one end, but Chinese on another end. As Alex Tang questions, "Are you a Chinese Christian or a Christian Chinese?"¹¹⁸

The New-Model of Spiritual Formation in the Marketplace

Essence of Spirituality in Marketplace Cluster

Defining the term spirituality in such a way as to encompass the full spectrum of understanding from Eastern Chinese religions to Western Christian traditions is an impossible task in Marketplace ministry. Mitroff and Denton state that, "in contrast to conventional religion, spirituality is not formal, structured or organized. It is broadly inclusive, embracing all faiths, all religious experiences."¹¹⁹ Gregory Pierce, in his book

¹¹⁸ Tang, "Chinese Christian or Christian Chinese?"

¹¹⁹ Ian Mitroff and Elizabeth Denton, *A Spiritual Audit of Corporate America: A Hard Look at Spirituality, Religion, and Values in the Workplace*, J-B Warren Bennis Series (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999), 23.

Spirituality@Work, defines it as “a disciplined attempt to align ourselves and our environment with God and to incarnate God’s spirit in the world.”¹²⁰ Webster’s Dictionary defines the word *spirit* as “the intelligent, immaterial and immortal part of man; the soul, in distinction from the body in which it resides; the agent or subject of vital and spiritual functions, whether spiritual or material.” Thus, for the purposes of this final project, spirituality will be defined as the expression of a person’s “intelligent, immaterial and immortal being.”¹²¹

The essence of spirituality is that there is more to life than the physical and the material. The spiritual needs are met only when people discover their identity and understand their destiny. The goal is the development of the highest human potential in body, mind, and spirit. Everyone is unique and gifted with the ability to reflect weaknesses and then develop ways to achieve the fullest expression of “who they are” (their identity), and “what they were designed to do” (their destiny). “Who am I?” and “Why am I here?” are the fundamental questions for which people seek answers. Spiritual formation is the discovery process of finding the answers, and the marketplace is the society setting of the search for these answers.

According to Mike McLoughlin, who wrote the paper “Spiritual Formation in the Workplace: God’s Spirit at Work,” there are different approaches to spiritual formation. He said, “The God-within approach calls for awakening the god within people, and they

¹²⁰ Gregory F. A. Pierce, *Spirituality @ Work – 10 Ways to Balance Your Life on-the-job* (New York: Springer, 1996), 16.

¹²¹ *Webster’s Dictionary*, 1913, <http://humanities.uchicago.edu/ARTEFL> (accessed April 23, 2010), s.v. “spirit.”

think their identity is that they are little-gods on the way to becoming God!”¹²² This causes problems in their relationships with people: co-worker tensions, company layoffs, and other workplace realities, which will distract their inner spirituality. Most of the high-tech professionals have this attitude due to their high ranking when they were in school. The “superman” approach defines self as a superman who is effecting his or her own spiritual formation and concentrating on self-improvement techniques. This causes problems in entitling one’s own belief system and holding that there are no ‘good’ or ‘bad’ beliefs, which means “I am who I am,” and they believe themselves. Also, this approach is based on the survival of the strongest as in evolutionary theory; those who are not successful at self-empowerment find themselves in a quandary.

The majority of Chinese high-tech professionals have Ph.D.’s or at minimum a Master’s degree in many different areas; otherwise, it is very difficult to get a job in Silicon Valley. With their pride, they easily fall into either the “God within” or “Superman” approach to spiritual formation before they know Jesus. Marketplace ministry needs to introduce “God for Man” through the Marketplace Cluster. This is the essence of the Christian message: that God created human beings who would become fully human but not God.¹²³ Humans defiled the image of God, resulting in their death, by choosing to be independent from God. God restored humanity through the incarnation when God became a human as Jesus Christ, who accomplished this restoration through

¹²² Mike McLoughlin, “Spiritual Formation in the Workplace: God’s Spirit at Work,” *Youth With A Mission, Marketplace Mission*, A ministry of YWAM (BC) (May 2002): 5.

¹²³ Michael Green and Paul R. Stevens, *New Testament Spirituality – True Discipleship and Spiritual Maturity* (Surrey, United Kingdom: IPS, 1994), 23.

his death and resurrection. People discover their identity in relationship with God, and their destiny is to become fully human. However, as Dietrich Bonhoeffer states, “Man is unable to bring about his own spiritual formation. It is God through the agency of the Holy Spirit who forms Christ in Man, so that Man may become fully Man.”¹²⁴ This is God’s promise of spiritual formation. It is a promise that can be fulfilled in the marketplace.

Life Coaching in Marketplace Cluster

In the journey of spiritual formation, Silicon Valley Chinese high-tech professionals are facing three particularly dangerous potholes: cynicism, competition, and suffering. In cynicism, they have being lured into the mentality that they have studied and mastered all they need to know. This mentality can cause stagnation in their relationship with God in daily life. In competition, they create a compulsive desire to present a perfect image to the public so that everybody will admire them and nobody will know them. Living an authentic life and not comparing oneself to others is important. In suffering, they are facing economic downturn, unemployment, and new technology challenges. Remembering that God’s grace is sufficient for all the unpredictable things in life, getting enough rest, and exhibiting proper self care are critical contributions toward maintaining a balanced and godly approach to suffering.

Life coaching began in the late 1980s, probably reflecting the “Inner Game” approach to sports coaching which Timothy Gallwey popularized in his book *The Inner*

¹²⁴ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, 1st Touchstone edition (New York: Touchstone Publishing, 1995), 145.

Game of Tennis.¹²⁵ It was applied to organizations by Sir John Whitmore and others.¹²⁶

Andii Bowsher said “Life coaching is a profession-in-the-making which aims to facilitate a client’s progress toward fulfilling goals in such a way as to respect their autonomy and honor their innate ability and resources.”¹²⁷ Its major tools are counseling skills such as listening, reflecting, creating empathy, questioning, and commitment to the client’s agenda.

Silicon Valley Marketplace Cluster will provide marketplace life coaches, which means one life investing in another life in a conversational coaching relationship. The coaching brings change by helping high-tech professionals see where they are and then helping them move forward spiritually, emotionally, relationally, financially, and more. Coaching helps them discover and live out new choices that lead to the new life change they want. The coach with both spiritual and marketplace experience is ready to come alongside high-tech professionals to discover the insights and solutions that tap into their hidden potential, passions, and purpose. As a mentor, teacher, compassionate listener, or someone to bounce ideas off, it is a coach’s heart to help high-tech professionals by providing quality and productive coaching sessions.

Silicon Valley Harvest teams up with many Christian business leaders from high-tech companies to form a life coaching team. High-tech professionals will meet with a

¹²⁵ Timothy Gallwey, *Inner Game of Tennis: The Classic Guide to the Mental Side of Peak Performance*, rev. sub ed. (New York: Random House, 1997).

¹²⁶ Sir John Whitmore, *Coaching for Performance: Growing Human Potential and Purpose – The Principle and Practice of Coaching and Leadership*, 4th ed. (London, UK: Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2009).

¹²⁷ Andii Bowsher, “Spiritual Direction and Life Coaching Culture” (master’s thesis, Anglia Polytechnic University, 2005), 101.

life coach perhaps every two weeks to start and then once a month. Christian life coaching can be an incredible tool in the real life of Chinese high-tech professionals but most especially those who have specific goals in mind, things in which they wish to see changes, issues they wish to address. Coaching can cover a wide variety of areas, for example life coaching, career coaching, business coaching, leadership coaching, and performance coaching.

A skilled and insightful coach will evaluate Chinese high-tech professionals and hopefully be proficient in the specific disciplines to help them address particular issues, barriers, and limitations, working with them to address these issues as they relate to clear goals. Through a collaborative process, the coach assists in the distillation of a clearly defined goal, mapping deliberate incremental steps towards the goal, and provides the support, encouragement, and accountability to achieve it. In the end, the goal will be realized, and Chinese high-tech professionals will have overcome some barriers in their lives and have some practical tools in place for the next challenge.

Achieving a life goal is exhilarating. Life coaching escorts high-tech professionals around the rocks and through the dark waters as they move toward accomplishing their goals. A Marketplace life coach team will discover new goals or achieve existing ones through five different types of coaching.

The first type is spiritual formation coaching. Spiritual formation is growth and development by an intentional focus on high-tech professionals' spiritual life and practices, such as: prayer, the study of Scripture, fasting, simplicity, solitude, and

confession. It is the life-long process of growth for disciples and disciple makers and is vital in the process of leadership development.

Second is leadership development coaching. As is noted in material distributed by The Master's Seminary, "Ministry leadership is a serious, limited, compelling, responsible, worthy, demanding, and holy calling."¹²⁸ If high-tech professionals are leaders in any capacity, they have some unique challenges. Leadership development coaching will help them navigate through it in a way that produces growth, not only in them, but in the lives of those they lead.

Third is life purpose coaching. Life purpose is the reason high-tech professionals live on this planet. It is the thing they are made for, the gift they bring to the world. Life purpose coaching guides them through a discovery of their unique life purpose. Together with a coach, high-tech professionals will look at their life roles, experiences, passions, and clues to identify exactly what they were created to be and do.

Fourth is suffering recovery coaching. Grief is a natural process of responding to suffering or loss of any kind. However, unresolved grief can interfere with the functioning of one's heart, body, mind, and soul. Suffering recovery coaching provides help with decision-making, taking growth steps, and creating a healthy new normal and more.

Last is group coaching. Group coaching provides the benefits of both coaching and group support. Each group will work through exercises and assignments in a buddy-program with email support. The area of development is the group's choice. Topics can

¹²⁸ The Master's Seminary, informational brochure, http://www.tms.edu/pdf/brochures/tms_brochure_calling.pdf (accessed August 24, 2013).

be any of the above or a topic developed specifically for their group. There is a limit of four per group for optimal effectiveness. Group meetings are held via tele-conference.

Spiritual Direction in Marketplace Cluster

The aim of spiritual direction is described as the art of discernment of the leading of the Holy Spirit in a person's life. The person in the role of spiritual director is really just an assistant in the process of finding direction for persons.

In Silicon Valley, most of the high-tech professionals are interested to explore the deeply personal and very sacred questions that deal with the core values of human beings. Unbelievers frequently ask: Who am I? Who is God? Why do I exist? Do I matter? What is truly important to me and why? Can I overcome feeling guilt and shame? Believers frequently ask: How do I live with integrity what I believe? How can I cultivate a healthy relationship with God and others? Where is God when I hurt and things go wrong?

While the term "direction" can be misleading as though one's will is surrendered to another, which is impossible for intelligent high-tech professionals, the individual is actually looking for personal responsibility for his or her own faith journey. Spiritual direction does not seek to provide "answers" to tell people what to think but rather to "help" people ask questions in a genuine way. It deals with one's relationship with God and the implications of that relationship to all of life. It helps people to connect in a way that is meaningful to their lives to address the hurts and discover their identity. This may or may not deal with all issues directly, but all issues have their root in a healthy relationship with God.

In Silicon Valley Harvest's team approach, there is a spiritual direction team, as well as a life coach team. High-tech professionals will meet with a spiritual director perhaps every two weeks to start and then once a month. The spiritual director will be a compassionate, gentle, non judgmental person to walk with high-tech professionals through their exploration and provide some helpful tools. As these spiritual tools become part of the person's life, this will provide opportunity to grow in one's faith journey in a healthy life.

Spiritual direction differs from life coaching in that it is not problem centered but it is relationship centered. Also, life coaching will address specific issues where spiritual direction cultivates relationship and life at the core level. Silicon Valley Harvest provides both life coaching and spiritual direction, which can be complementary tools toward a deeper richer life. Neither is a magic wand, and both require deliberateness. It takes some wisdom to discern where high-tech professionals are at their particular stage of life to determine which is tool is right for them.

Searching Authentic Spirituality in the Marketplace

Critical Issue of Acceptability and Confusion

In Chinese high-tech professionals' community, one thing a Chinese high-tech professional must not say is that his own religion is exclusively right. As it is, everyone is allowed to believe what one likes about God as long as one is willing to accept what others believe about their God as well, even if it contradicts what someone believes.

The New Age is very popular in Silicon Valley, and this religion or spirituality is "pick and mix," with no thought of relating personally to God. For the marketplace minister, the search for authentic spirituality becomes a critical issue for marketplace

Chinese high-tech professionals. The New Age philosophy causes high-tech professionals to believe it is not possible to know God for certain; even if people decide there is a God, it is not possible to know him intimately, only at a distance. Josh Moody said “They have three ways to make up their minds in spiritual searching: first, the area where God does not exist, second, the area where “gods” are fashionable, and, third, an area called confusion.”¹²⁹

Most Chinese high-tech professional unbelievers do not think that God can be known on a personal level. Among the large community that the Marketplace ministry serves, there need to be different tools to focus on knowing God in cell, cluster, and church. Today, many Christians are confused about what “spirituality” is. It is not clear whether all spirituality is good, or whether there can be “bad spirituality.” A basic question is how unbelievers can know God.

From Biblical Knowledge to Practical Experience

Marketplace Cluster should focus on “how the seeker can know God” in its weekday gatherings. The high-tech professionals begin by looking at different kinds of knowledge, for example, mathematical, scientific, and personal. Then, they recognize that different kinds of knowledge are appropriate in different situations. One of the weaknesses of the Enlightenment legacy is in thinking that, if something cannot be known mathematically or scientifically, it cannot be known at all. Marketplace Cluster

¹²⁹ Moody, *Authentic Spirituality*, 85.

needs to set out a biblical way of knowing, which is based on the fact that God is not hiding; there is enough evidence to be persuasive, yet knowing God depends on faith.

The local church focuses on “core Christian beliefs” in training classes during the weekend. The class shows that, first, people can know God because He has spoken revelation; second, believers need to restore the reality and importance of sin; third, Jesus Himself is both the heart and guarantee of the Christian faith; and, fourth, that the death of Jesus is what guarantees His uniqueness and supremacy. Then, Marketplace Cluster deals more directly with the practical experience of “spirituality.” In light of what was mentioned before, it must deal with what authentic spirituality is, as opposed to what is false; what a true spiritual experience is like; and what the biblical models of spirituality are.

From Individual Relationship to Community Faith

As the cell is the smallest group, there is a sense of transitioning people from individual thinking to functioning as a part of a group. We often hear home cell group people say, “I’m spiritual, but not religious.” Some other related comments are: “I do my Sunday morning worship on the golf course,” or “I can worship just as well in my living room as I can in a church sanctuary.” It all goes back to a sugary “spirituality” that is rampant in our culture. They may also say, “I’m a very spiritual person, but for me that is an individual thing.” The only possible Christian response to such a ridiculous statements as those above is “No, you cannot worship God just as well by yourself, and there is no such thing as an individual spirituality.” Since we are the body of Christ and individually members of it, we are called to physically gather together as a church. Through

fellowship and communion with the incarnate Lord, we recover our true humanity, “and at the same time we are delivered from that individualism which is the consequence of sin, and retrieve our solidarity with the whole human race.”¹³⁰ It is pride because it is a way of saying, “I can define my relationship with God, and I will allow no one else to.” It is also a form of laziness, in that people who espouse it want to have God on their terms and do not want anyone else telling them that their notion of God might be mistaken or misguided.

This, then, should be clear: it is the Church, not the cell, that tells us who God is. The Church is a community of faith, which across time has maintained a constant witness to the God of the Old and New Testaments. The Church makes that God intelligible to humans, which would simply not be possible for them to do on their own. The Church is the community in which Christ himself has determined his followers will find their lives until the final consummation. I would like to see a local church that is alive and faithful, making a powerful witness in the world and Christians engaging their faith on a deep level. There can be no renewal of the church without a deep understanding of how much being disciples of Jesus is at odds with life in the world. That discipleship calls us to recognize that the church is a community where “I” makes no sense without “us.”

From Corporate Culture Value to Whole Person Development

High-tech company cultures will also influence the spiritual formation of employees. Much has been written on the importance of organizational culture in shaping

¹³⁰ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (Washington, DC: Touchstone, 1995), 302.

and influencing the attitudes and behaviors of the people who work in the organization.¹³¹ A company must make the development of the whole person -- body, mind, and spirit – a priority for their employees or face the consequences of poor judgment as an outgrowth of poor character.

Spiritual formation at the company can either be increased or prevented by the widespread culture of work. The company's cultural value in building a community of faith, hope, and love will provide a context within which spiritual formation can and will happen.¹³² Allowing the values of faith, hope, and love to shape workers' relationships will create the situation in which the gospel can spread through the work environment. Company management with commitment to grace and truth will provide the freedom for workers to make mistakes.¹³³ Grace is the act of showing favor toward every person, no matter what their performance. Trust is the concrete acknowledgment of the reality of people in their situations, strengths, and weaknesses.

Silicon Valley Harvest had planted a Marketplace Cluster within a large public Chinese high-tech company called Alpha and Omega Semiconductor Incorporated (AOS) in Sunnyvale, CA. This company facilitates spiritual formation and also seeks to align the company purpose with God's mission to develop the whole person of its employees. This does not mean this company has "religious" terminology in their mission statement,

¹³¹ E. H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership: A Dynamic View* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991), 244.

¹³² Interpreted from 1 Thes 1:3.

¹³³ Interpreted from John 1:17.

although many successful companies do have such a statement.¹³⁴ It means that, just as it is God's intention to "bless the nations," so it is consistent with the mission statement to "bless the company,"¹³⁵ which goes beyond maximizing the profit of the company, to include the welfare of its employees and their families. In fact, the Old Testament figures such as Joseph, Daniel, and Esther, were known and respected by the pagan kings because their character and excellence were above those of their peers. Thus, the purpose of spiritual formation is to build the company as a place of extraordinary service or product offerings that goes beyond the average experience provided by most companies. This is the essence of God's heart to bless "the company."

For companies to facilitate spiritual formation at work, they must be able to envision the "BIG" picture of God's purposes in people's work. Chinese high-tech professionals' destiny is not only as workers but as worshippers, as well. The work place will be the worship place where employees go to work, create, and express who they have been designed to be, and the fruit of the spiritual formation will be offered to God. Thus, a company should recognize God's intentions for the world and for people, and the vision statement should include the growth and development of workers' potential and creativity.

¹³⁴ Service Master Corporation includes in one of its four founding objectives the statement: "To honor God in all we do. -- We believe that every person — regardless of personal beliefs or differences — has been created in the image and likeness of God. We seek to recognize the dignity, worth and potential of each individual and believe that everyone has intrinsic worth and value. This objective challenges us to have commitment to truth and to deliver what we promise. It provides the basis for our belief in servant leadership. It is not an expression of a particular religious belief, or a basis for exclusion. Rather, it is a mandate for inclusion, and a constant reminder for us to do the right thing in the right way." http://corporate.servicemaster.com/overview_objectives.asp (accessed September 20, 2010).

¹³⁵ This promise, in Genesis 22:17-18, is called the Abrahamic covenant, and it is an unconditional commitment by God to bless all people. This is God's mission in the world.

CHAPTER 7

IMPLEMENTATION OF MARKETPLACE CLUSTER

The last chapter of this final project will discuss the implementation of Marketplace Cluster in Silicon Valley. Implementation is improved with alliance, and is near and dear to the hearts of Chinese local churches. Each Chinese local church is autonomous—self-governing under the lordship of Jesus Christ. It may decide to form an alliance with other likeminded churches to engage in Marketplace Cluster planting. Chinese local churches working together in marketplace ministry can accomplish more than churches working individually. This is called synergy implementation, which includes strategy, process, tools, management, and challenges. All of these will be described in this chapter. The material presented in this chapter is designed to help Chinese local churches find and take those next steps to define their particular role as a planting church or supporting church. It will help them to develop the knowledge and skills needed to partner with Marketplace Cluster to produce a healthy, cooperative, reproducing marketplace ministry. It provides a step-by-step partnering process that is adaptable to any local church environment, no matter how large or how small the church.

Implementation Strategies

There are five implementation strategies in the success of building marketplace ministry in Silicon Valley. These are strategic alliance, being partner driven, sharing of resources, customization model, and cross-company ministry. These strategies transform the traditional Bible study group into a contemporary Marketplace Cluster.

Strategic Alliance

In Silicon Valley, there are five Chinese mega churches that have more than one thousand church members, but others remain limited in size and resources so that they cannot reach out to unchurched Chinese high-tech professionals. Although there are many Bible study groups within high-tech companies, each one of them is dominated by a single mega church, so that other local church believers are resistant to join. In order to solve these two challenges, Silicon Valley Harvest introduced @Cloud Marketplace Ministry, which is comprised of marketplace ministries from many different Chinese local churches so as to implement the Marketplace Cluster in the high-tech companies. It allows Chinese local churches to meet together regularly to take common action, develop programs, implement ministry, and keep high-tech professional laity accountable in high-tech companies.

This ministry paper will describe the @Cloud in the context of marketplace ministry partnership within Chinese local churches in the Silicon Valley. The Marketplace Cluster Alliance is a gathering of local church and ministry leaders sharing a common vision, strategy, resources, and system for planting Marketplace Cluster in high-tech companies. This synergistic effort of existing Chinese local churches is undertaken

for the sake of the gospel and marketplace ministry to Chinese high-tech professionals. The tier one members of @Cloud include Bread of Life, Home of Christ, Agape Vineyard, Forerunner, and Church in Christ – five mega Chinese churches who play the key roles and work with medium and small Chinese churches in marketplace ministry. It is essential to describe some of the clarity consensus items needed to establish a healthy and vital @Cloud, and the following section will serve that purpose.

Partner Driven

In marketplace ministry, all of the activities and programs carried out in church life have two marketplace missions: to bring God’s people into a growing, personal relationship with Him and a right relationship with one another; and to bring those who do not know Christ personally into His presence. When local churches lose sight of this dual missionary mandate, their focus will turn to trends, growing numbers, or receiving awards and accolades. If local churches’ focus remains on God and others, though, they will better understand why they exist as a church and why they must partner together to plant Marketplace Cluster. In the last decade, the marketplace ministry of the Chinese local church has focused on the workplace Bible group as “standalone church ministry” without other churches participating. This represents only one side of the marketplace ministry, but the other side is “partnering church ministry,” which is vital if local churches are to reach all the unchurched people together in Silicon Valley. In recent years, Silicon Valley Harvest has begun the Marketplace Cluster planting journey in Intel, Apple, Google, Cisco, and Oracle companies’ Chinese groups and is now taking the

next steps to invite other Chinese local churches to become effective “partnering churches.”

There are significant differences between being partner-driven, and church-driven in Marketplace Cluster planting. The local church can choose to become either a planting church or a supporting church in the planting process. In the partner-driven model, the planting team identifies the ministry focus group, the core group, the cluster model, and the strategy used to plant the Marketplace Cluster. The planting team usually raises the needed funds and identifies and recruits any planting partners that may be needed. It will take the responsibility of carrying out these tasks. A local church may already have planted a Bible study group before the Marketplace Cluster planting process. In some cases, the Bible study group leader may be identified earlier in the Marketplace Cluster planting process and becomes part of local church leadership team. Openness and vision are critical for the partnering churches, just as they are with the Bible study group leader. The local church may become involved in the planting process without serving as a planting church. The local church may also choose to become a supporting church that provides prayer, resources, and people to help the planting church be more effective in the planting process endeavors.

There are very real benefits to partner-driven planting. Among these are: development of new leaders and ministers, the fostering of a new vision of God’s desire for His Church, greater commitment of giftedness and abilities, a healthier and more vibrant membership, new reliance and faith in God’s provision, the joy of seeing God’s kingdom coming in power, and the excitement of experiencing what we thought was

impossible. In John 15:5, Jesus said, “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.” That is what being a partner in church planting is all about – abiding in Christ and walking with Him among His lost creation. As a local church takes the next step and begins partnering, its members may see more clearly God’s vision, His kingdom multiplying with power through their community, because they have joined together with Him and others as partners in Marketplace Cluster planting.

Shared Resources

@Cloud is important for providing shared resources to accomplish tasks and achieve dreams. The primary planting church and secondary supporting church need to cooperate in the Marketplace Cluster while they celebrate, worship, and fellowship. Although the operating processes and decision making are not the most important issues for a Marketplace Cluster, as things increase in the early stages of growth, they are important factors. It is vital to clarify what time and financial resources each local church can and will bring to the Marketplace Cluster and who will function as a convener, leadership mentor, marriage counselor, and career consultant. The more sacrificial and mutual the resource sharing becomes, the deeper are the relationships. The more high-tech professional Christians participate, the more the velocity of the marketplace ministry movement will increase.

The critical resource issue facing every Marketplace Cluster is how to recruit, assess, train, mentor, and deploy new Chinese high-tech professionals into the movement. They tend to be younger and are like new wood on a fire – keeping the energy

strong and bringing a dynamic to an aging existing fellowship. Wherever possible, it is good to grow Marketplace Clusters to include tent-making¹³⁶ high-tech professionals, management, and business people who can contribute to a “kingdom-minded” goal. The energy from lay people will also influence the marketplace ministry movement as local church clergy are embraced.

The purpose of the Marketplace Cluster is to extend the marketplace ministry edge of the local church. While Marketplace Clusters reach more lost people than existing local churches, the love of Jesus Christ must be the key foundation of the marketplace ministry, and more unchurched people will return to the life and fellowship of the church through a Marketplace Cluster. The synergy of the Marketplace Cluster and local church is an important reason for both to team up together for marketplace ministry. The results are exponentially higher than when an individual organization works by itself. The Holy Spirit will unify believers from church and cluster in kingdom-minded efforts to greater effect than an individual can imagine. Marketplace Clusters engaging with many different local churches also open windows of opportunity for existing churches to better engage their communities.

Customization Model

One should understand the implementation process is not the cookie cutter to set up Marketplace Cluster from one company to another company. The customization model requires marketplace ministry to shift its marketing strategy from seller’s believer-

¹³⁶ Dennis W. Bickers, *The Tentmaking Pastor: The Joy of Bivocational Ministry* (Ada, MI: Baker Books, 2000), 16.

centric to buyer's unbeliever-centric. In Silicon Valley, there are so many different types of high-tech companies in hardware, software, networking, biotech, applications, and IC. Every company has its own company policies, culture, and employee social environment. From the earliest stages, it is really important that the Marketplace Cluster members begin to pray about their marketplace ministry. They might ask what God is leading them toward and what is truly needed in the Marketplace Cluster. A vision statement should emerge with ambitious goals, such as a monthly outreach event and the beginning of one shared ministry in which all the high-tech professional Christians can be involved.

Although dreams, vision, and even mutual commitments are important, they are not enough for setting up a Marketplace Cluster. The team leaders must develop a time-dependent, goal-specific strategy that all members can agree on. For instance, one cluster has said its desire is to plant two new cells and a marketplace ministry by next year. Each of the churches planted also wishes to have a strong organizing and development component in its ministry.

Cross-company Ministry

The goal of @Cloud is to get many-high-tech professional Christians from different local churches involved. They would not only be involved with each other at their own company's Marketplace Cluster, but they would also help other nearby companies' Marketplace Clusters if necessary. In terms of relationship, high-tech companies have the great opportunity of "nearness," which is a critical factor in the success of any social movement. Christianity is the individual relationship between humans and God who created them. Like logs on a fire, entities that are closer together

create more energy and thrive. Moving a fire log away from the others will reduce the heat within a few minutes.

In Silicon Valley, different companies' Chinese high-tech professionals already have homogeneous backgrounds, and when they get together, cross company, in fellowship, they evidence the fuel of any type of Marketplace Cluster multiplication movement. The gospel of Jesus Christ is a relational story about God reaching out to people, connecting them to Him and then to each other in Jesus. The spirit of a Marketplace Cluster is expressed through a loving fellowship with deep interpersonal relationships. It must look more like the Acts 2 church than a corporate business gathering hoping to start franchises. Good relationships are founded on companies' nearness and regularity of contact. The activities of Marketplace Clusters are intentional with regularly scheduled gatherings of one and half hours per week.

Implementation Process

Basic Startup

The time comes to "Go and make disciples" by starting a Marketplace Cluster in the high-tech company. A few details are needed in the basic process of how to get this started. It is simple, and the basics should be nearly the same, but each company will be a little different.

First is to pray for God to show the marketplace missional plan. This involves praying for wisdom, direction, and that God will show the plan step-by-step and help to build the Marketplace Cluster. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith" (Jas 1:5). He loves to help. Those who pray

will get His help, and will not be condescended to when they ask for it. Believers should pray with expectation, waiting for God to reveal where He is already working. They should ask earnestly, boldly, believingly, without a second thought.

Second, anyone initiating this should clarify the plans with the human resources department and one's manager. This is a courtesy that should help ensure tolerance at the least and may even garner support. Title VII Civil Rights Act of 1964 provides general rules for workplaces. It stipulates that a company that allows employees to engage in non-work related conversations, such as those about politics, family, sports, or other topics, may not prohibit voluntary religious discussions between employees either. This applies in informal settings, such as break rooms or hallways, and at times when workers voluntarily interact about non-work issues. Employees may discuss their religious views or voluntarily pray together. The same rules apply as would to any other private conversation.

Third, it is necessary to build up a believer team before the launch to unbelievers. To do this, those initiating will need to start talking first to Christians who may be interested in joining and then to people they think have zero interest. Both can be important but for different reasons. Those supporters will encourage initiators to keep going. Those with zero interest are the ones the group is trying to reach. The best time to lay out the ground rules is at the first meeting. A group of believers from different churches, made up of different views and backgrounds, only works as long as there is an understanding that respect is the most important rule. There are other rules that will make the group more effective and enjoyable for everyone, but the one that cannot be

compromised is respect. Right or wrong, discussion is only possible as long as everyone involved treats every member with respect.

The next step is to define the plan to encourage believers and attract unbelievers. Since it is easier to advertise Marketplace Cluster with the plan in hand, it is important to define the plan before the group meets. This is another area that needs prayer for direction. It is easiest to begin with Christian basics or certain pieces of Christian life without heavy study burdens. Silicon Valley Harvest will provide reading material for leaders and discussion handbooks for group members. One of the elements of success is the convenience of the lunch hour, time that can easily be given to join. At the beginning of the meeting, it is good to choose a topic that does not require intense study. It is good to just open up the discussion with a subject that gets people talking.

Last, it is necessary to find the best time slot and location to meet together and get started. As soon as there is a group interested, it is time to find a location and plan the first meeting. This meeting may function to determine the best time to meet or just to get to know everyone. The best day and time to meet is, of course, when it will be easiest for everyone involved. Before or after work might be best, but lunchtime is a natural time, a great break in the middle of the day to remember what is really important. As far as days of the week go, both Monday and Friday are difficult to work with, so another day would be better, and Wednesday at noon is a good slot. Once the members, the materials, and the schedule, are determined, the group is all set. There will be encouragement in the group and what God does through each person. Before finishing this first meeting, the

group should probably be thinking about the next. Some of the group will be eager to find out more.

Development Phase

Marketplace Clusters implementation processes are linked together by a network of support and accountability to a diversity of other Marketplace Clusters, recognizing that clusters are not isolated units, but part of the wider church alliance. The majority of Marketplace Cluster gatherings will include elements of worship, fellowship, and mission, whether or not they are influenced by any local church. Marketplace Cluster plays the role as a vehicle for mission that drives the life of the local church.

There are three main types of cluster development phases. The first is the sprout phase, whose style is to multiply through small groups of people sprouting and gathering fresh members from among borderline Christians as well as those outside-church Christians. The second type is the incarnational phase. This is comprised of a central core of people working in the same company, and other cluster members come to help during the weekdays. This type is based around programs and is fairly high maintenance. The third type is the apostolic phase, based around strong leadership. It grows quickly by inviting people in and multiplies by splitting down the middle. Groups with this organization have the potential to generate a lot of growth.

Each group needs to practice and emphasize building Marketplace Cluster by serving others as Christ served us, making friends and inviting people to join, looking for and developing gifts in each other, identifying the needs and sharing the resources, and exalting Jesus as Lord daily and corporately. When each Marketplace Cluster gathers for

worship, participants talk about the practices, which allows people to see how the theme works out in everyday life. The practices are very new but they are important because the things that are most reproducible are the same in the smallest as they are in the largest. If on the smallest level, each person is connected to each other by those practices, then each expression is connected and the Marketplace Cluster as a whole is connected.

Types of Cluster Cultivation and Growth

What is really happening is that the cell groups are growing out from the church and the cluster is more like a small church within the marketplace. Often, high-tech professionals start a cluster, and @Cloud should then grow them organically, not organizing them. Those who have caught the vision and are doing Marketplace Clusters have more of an apostolic gifting and really want to reach out. Most small church clusters meet together weekly and usually eat together.

There are three ways the Marketplace Cluster can be cultivated. First, organically grown clusters occur when someone starts a small Bible study group, and it multiplies to become a cluster. Because the small groups all have a common source, they share the same vision and values. The second type, missional vision gathering, often occurs through people already serving in the marketplace. They are responsible for recruiting a team. When they share the vision to start a cluster, enough people come forward to begin a cluster immediately, and then the clusters are organized. The third type is a composite gathering, which involves two or three small Bible study groups from different companies that are asked to come together to form a cluster. This is often used as a tool at the beginning to get people in the local church to sense what a cluster is, but these

clusters are almost always barren and do not go on to reproduce and form new clusters.

Growing Elements

There are three elements required to make a Marketplace Cluster into a marketplace ministry movement. They must develop diversity. This occurs by allowing low control and high accountability through a loose structure to encourage diversity among people coming from China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, as well as people with different demonizations. The next element is to cultivate community. The Marketplace Clusters are meeting together once a week during lunchtime. This allows a rhythm and structure for high-tech professionals to keep the connections, even as they start growing in their lives. Third, they need to counter conformity. The members must constantly ask why we have to do this. They need to be encouraged to break into a new thing. A leader's job is to ask why, and maintaining accountability is to say this is why we are doing it.

One of the Marketplace Clusters has the vision to be salt and light in Silicon Valley and get to know people and build relationships. They meet all together for Bible sharing every other week, and the alternate week they have what they call 'Round Table' when they talk and pray together. However, they have grown now to the point where they have to meet every week for 'Round Table.' The mission field is so big, but the local churches have not reached it in the traditional way. Marketplace Clusters really have potential to reach new people, not just that people will come to Christ but that they will be disciples and flourish in the gifts God has given them. We need new ways.

Implementation Tools

Re-Engineering Evangelism Tools

Traditional training for church planters hoping to make disciples often focuses on preparing to launch worship services. The intriguing idea, though, is for Marketplace Cluster planters and their teams to focus on making disciples who make disciples first - even before starting worship services. Jesus did not train His disciples to start services to make disciples, but rather to make disciples to start churches. Silicon Valley Harvest will prepare marketplace discipleship classes for Chinese high-tech professionals. We need to make marketplace “business leaders” become “ministry leaders” and equip them. As a pastor and Marketplace Cluster planter of a Chinese-American, multicultural, Silicon Valley, urban congregation, I have learned some valuable lessons about ministering to Chinese high-tech professionals. There are three key areas that need re-engineering to be fruitful in reaching them: worship, messaging, and relationship.

In worship, Marketplace Cluster is the most important tool for evangelism and for keeping Chinese high-tech professionals as active participants in the corporate body. In Marketplace Cluster, leaders have received very positive responses to the use of alternative Christian music during the worship. Perhaps this is because so many Chinese high-tech professionals identify with the rage and melancholy present in today’s rock music. Marketplace Cluster encourages personal and expressive participation from the congregation and is not afraid to use applicable secular music that speaks to us theologically and spiritually.

Messaging is very important to marketplace ministry. At the Marketplace Cluster, we tackle lifestyle issues and current events from a biblical perspective, followed by a question-and-answer period. We are not afraid to hit the hard issues. Sex, dating, marriage, parenting, gender equality, consumerism, homosexuality, and environmental issues resonate well as topics for us. Seekers hunger for answers, direction, and balance concerning difficult real-life issues. People are not turned off by the idea of God or organized religion as much as they are by the hypocrisy with which the church has often responded to these hard issues. Many seekers are desperately searching for that which is real and lasting.

Thirdly, relationship is crucial to young people. Many Chinese high-tech professionals grew up in dysfunctional Chinese families, so they found their stability within friendships. The values of relationships go to the core of who they are. It is not enough just to preach and teach Christ to them. They need Christ's love modeled for them. Small groups and accountability are important. They respond best to those who show concern for their holistic well-being. To the young people of a broken generation, 2 Corinthians 12:9 speaks, "My grace is sufficient for you; my strength is made perfect in your weakness." As a pastor, my life's passion is to invite others into the place of humanity's brokenness and, at the same time, reach out to meet them in their brokenness. Despite uncertainty, we can find salvation together.

Re-Energizing Devotional Tools

Tools are needed for starting or re-energizing a marketplace ministry. Silicon Valley Harvest has developed many tools to achieve marketplace mission and help

people fulfill their calling. We encourage people to utilize the tools and ideas to help expand the reach of marketplace mission, which is to inspire, educate, and equip believers to walk out their calling in the workplace.

The first tool is a daily devotional. Silicon Valley Harvest encourages others to subscribe to a free daily devotional. Each day they will receive an email of Scripture with a teaching relevant to their daily lives. Some options are given here: for Gmail subscribers, pastor.herbert.wu@gmail.com; a blog visit in which people can visit <http://herbertwu.blogspot.com/> to see a collection of the daily devotional database; an iPhone application (people can also install an AppleApp and the devotional message will be updated automatically every day); and Facebook chatting in which Facebook subscribers will regularly get the newsletters, updates, or daily emails with directly interactive chatting with pastor.

The second tool is on-going learning. The world is searching to understand what it means to experience Christ in every aspect of life. Silicon Valley Harvest staff members have had life experiences that have encouraged many to seek God's calling on their own lives as it relates to their vocation and viewing their work as ministry. They speak at many Marketplace Clusters, local churches, luncheons, retreats, and other events and also teach dynamic workshops. If any marketplace ministry of a high-tech company needs an encouraging word, Silicon Valley Harvest would love to be part of their ministry. Silicon Valley Harvest also encourages high-tech professionals to learn more about fulfilling their calling, work as a ministry, hearing the voice of God, ethics in the workplace, and

more. SVH offers free handbooks, CD's, DVD's, study materials, and more at its bookstore.

High-tech Business Incubation

High-tech business incubation encompasses programs designed to support the successful development of entrepreneurial Christians through an array of business support resources and services. These have been developed and orchestrated by incubator management and are offered both in the incubator and through its network of contacts. Incubators vary in the way they deliver their services or products, in their organizational structure, and in the types of clients they serve.

Incubators differ from research parks in their dedication to startup and early-stage business. Research parks tend to be large-scale projects and do not offer business assistance services, which are the hallmark of a business incubation program. Also, small business development managers only offer general business assistance, but an incubator manager will provide life coaching, spiritual direction, and business strategy for entrepreneurial support. In God, any business vision can transform from innovation to realization.

Incubation management is a dynamic process of entrepreneurial development designed to increase business success through consultation services, coaching, and access to shared resources. The purpose of an incubator manager is to create a business atmosphere that encourages the development of businesses that promise a public or private good, have the potential to create single or multiple additional jobs, and which

contribute to the economic development of the region once they are formally established.

Incubator benefits are as follows.

The Spiritual Director Team assists in discerning the Holy Spirit in one's life and finding the direction for one's destiny. It deals with a person's relationship with God and the implications of that relationship to all of life. It does not seek to provide "answers" to tell people what to think but rather to "help" people ask questions in a genuine way.

The marketplace coach team assists in clearly defining a goal, mapping deliberate incremental steps toward the goal, helping to address specific issues and limitations, and providing the support of encouragement and accountability to this end.

The entrepreneurial advisor team assists in startup businesses, sharing successes and challenges to help entrepreneurs in facing unexpected issues. It connects to programs, funding opportunities, confidential reviews of financial documents, and resources that accelerate growth and profitability for the business.

Implementation Management

The entity @Cloud is made up of local churches that choose to join with other local churches to plant a new Marketplace Cluster. The strength of a partnership comes from each partner local church doing its part and contributing from its own abilities for the benefit of a common purpose. In exploring the risk management for @Cloud, if critical checkpoints are not achieved, the Marketplace Cluster plant will probably not be completed, so it will be stunted in its beginning and initial growth. The following are the critical checkpoints.

Committed as a Partner

Local church commitment as a partner is not only to those one seeks to reach, but it is also a partnering with God. As Paul writes, “For we are co-workers in God’s service; you are God’s field, God’s building” (1 Cor 3:9). At this point, the local church, or some authorized body, has taken action to officially commit to the process of Marketplace Cluster planting, but the commitment milestone may not be achieved.

While building a climate for a Marketplace Cluster planting, some specific actions may need to be taken to strengthen awareness of the need for Marketplace Cluster planting, get local church staff and ministry leadership on board, and achieve total local church buy-in to the task of planting the new Marketplace Cluster. Normally for this to happen, a point person must be identified to lead the process, and the pastor must give full and unqualified support to the planting process.

Not every Marketplace Cluster plant is the same. Based on the planting strategy, the Marketplace Cluster leadership team will determine what resources will be needed and communicate that need to supporting partner local churches. These may include such things as teaching, ministry, evangelism, and worship resources. The Marketplace Cluster leadership team will also determine if any financial resources are needed. The planting local church will work with the Marketplace Cluster to negotiate the needed resources and commit to providing them at the time and place they are needed.

Prayer Strategy Implemented

While the local church is building the climate for the commitment, it must realize it is entering a new level of spiritual warfare. Ephesians 6:12 says, “For our struggle is

not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.”

Because of this fact, the local church needs to develop and implement a prayer strategy that will guard and guide them through the planting process. This strategy will focus on calling out the believers to be involved in the Marketplace Cluster planting activity and will seek the Holy Spirit’s leadership in cultivating the new field and convicting and converting new believers. The local church needs to think about who should be involved in the prayer ministry of the marketplace ministry, what are the prayer activities that can be planned and conducted, and what resources could be brought to bear on the planting process.

Leadership Team Deployed

There is a healthy interdependence among the local church members in the Marketplace Cluster. This interdependence is developed and enhanced by the work of the Marketplace Cluster leadership team. This team is responsible to develop and carry out the marketplace ministry strategy, and enlist, train, deploy, and support the Marketplace Cluster team’s activities. Thus, two-way communication between the Marketplace Cluster leadership team and the local church leadership team is critical.

The church’s planting leadership needs to expand from a point person to a church leadership team. Each local church will have its own leadership team to nurture and relate to the church planting effort. Prayer should be the foundation from which the local church leadership team is selected. The specific Marketplace Cluster planting needs and needed capabilities addressed by each local church provide the framework for prayer.

The local church leadership team engages with the Marketplace Cluster plant as the overall local church ministry strategy is implemented on the field. It is important to clarify each team's role and order of activities or projects. Each team member will have a specific task or series of tasks, but no team works in isolation from the other teams. To be effective, the team members need training in the Marketplace Cluster planting process, and they also need to develop a communication plan within the local church and the association partner church.

Focus Group Study

Sometimes when local churches join together and commit to plant a Marketplace Cluster, the commitment is in a specific company or among a targeted people group. This is not always true, though; some local churches make a commitment and then seek God's direction as to who and where. In either case, the church needs to do a study to understand more clearly who and where to plant the Marketplace Cluster. The Marketplace Cluster leadership team needs to develop a profile for the marketplace ministry focus group. In addition to this profile, the Marketplace Cluster leadership team needs to understand the marketing view of the ministry focus group.

This information will be used in three ways. First, the Marketplace Cluster leadership team needs to consider issues that surface on cultural diversity and how these issues will impact the relationship between the partner local churches. Second, the Marketplace Cluster leadership team may need to be reconfigured or expanded to give greater sensitivity and include persons from the ministry focus group's background. Third, the Marketplace Cluster leadership team needs to process all this information in

the development of a Marketplace Cluster planting strategy. Some of this will be done by studying demographic, lifestyle, and religious background information. Other parts of this can only be done by interviewing people in the community.

Strategy Development

The Marketplace Cluster leadership team begins by reviewing the profile and marketplace view study. From this, the Marketplace Cluster leadership team begins to develop the foundational strategic planning components that include vision, core values, and a mission statement for the new cluster. From the profile and the foundational planning components, the Marketplace Cluster leadership team develops the profile for the new Marketplace Cluster and a growth projection. The final component of the planting strategy is the completion of a planting exercise for the first year.

At this point the Marketplace Cluster leadership team needs to do some pointed evaluation. One question to be answered is, “Do we need additional short- or long-term assistance?” If the answer is yes to long-term assistance, then the Marketplace Cluster leadership team needs to enlist other local churches into the Marketplace Cluster. If the answer is yes to short-term support, the Marketplace Cluster leadership team needs to enlist supporting local church partners. If the answer is no, the Marketplace Cluster leadership team should communicate with partnering local churches and other field partners about specific prayer and resource needs related to the Marketplace Cluster planting strategy and the focus group.

Implementation Challenges

Evangelize with Seeker Mentality

In Silicon Valley, the first challenge of Marketplace Cluster is to change one's mentality from inviting the seeker to becoming a seeker. Since unchurched Chinese seekers reject the concepts of authority and truth that previous generations have assumed, the Marketplace Cluster approach cannot remain the same but must contextualize the gospel and integrate the culture. Christians are called by God to be Christ's ambassadors. In order to fulfill our glorious calling, the Marketplace Cluster needs to step outside insulated local church circles to make connection between Christ's Church and the secular world.

We need to understand the first impression when Chinese high-tech professional seekers walk into local church. Some of them may simply see another religion, and others may encounter a Christianity that is relevant in the workplace and makes good rational sense in every area of their life. As Jesus took on the context of human flesh, so believers must enter into the context of their daily activities. Therefore, the basis of the Marketplace Cluster is not only found in sharing the truths of the gospel, but also in utilizing our own humanity as an actual channel for relating these truths.

Jesus demonstrated two different examples to a highly educated teacher and an ordinary woman in book of John. In John 3, Christ confronted Nicodemus with some deep theological insights. However, in John 4, as Jesus had a casual conversation with the woman at the well about her immoral past, he used the well as a simple illustration of the Living Water. In each case, Jesus showed respect for that person's background and

mindset by using appropriate illustrations. Likewise, Christians must have a seeker's mentality and show respect to seekers.

As evangelists in marketplace ministry, we need to understand what seekers believe, how they think, and how they have been impacted by the secular world. Then, the Marketplace Cluster will become the connection between the local church and the high-tech company by communicating the gospel in the context of the seekers' science and technology mindset. Today, Silicon Valley Chinese high-tech professionals have become very secular, developing a mixed Chinese-American culture of their own with an arrogant ideology. Understanding another person's worldview or belief system is the starting point for communicating the gospel.¹³⁷ By showing interest in Chinese high-tech professionals' beliefs, the Marketplace Cluster will gain credibility and integrity before seekers join the meeting.

In contrast to the Marketplace Cluster model, the Sunday-only "Rabbit-Hole Christians"¹³⁸ pop out of their safe homes, hold their breath at work, scurry between and Bible studies, and finally end the day praying for unbelievers. They safely avoid criticism all day and often make a "Sharp Division"¹³⁹ between the spiritual world and the material world. Marketplace ministry needs to find out how one's spiritual life works in the secular world by developing a biblical worldview, and it needs to tell seekers how the gospel applies to their lives.

¹³⁷ David Hesselgrave, *Communicating Christ Cross-Culturally* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1978), 121.

¹³⁸ Jan Johnson, "Escaping the Christian Ghetto," *Moody Monthly*, 1987, 81-82.

¹³⁹ Francis A. Schaeffer, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer*, vol.V (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1982), 424.

The Gospel Needs to Be Understood

If Marketplace Cluster wants its message to gain a hearing, the message must be communicated in a way that the hearers can relate to and understand. The world has changed, and, if ministers refuse to change with it, the gospel will get left behind. Like Paul, I rejoice that Christ is preached (Phil 1:18). Any marketplace ministry should think critically about evangelism so as to communicate the truth to a perishing world. Marketplace ministers should use words that make sense to seekers and should explain essential theological terms. They should be empathetic enough to consider whether the messages are flying over the heads of the unsaved and un-churched. The goals of marketplace evangelism should include clarity as well as accuracy, whether it be preaching a sermon or speaking with one's neighbors.

However, regardless of the audience, the basic approach is still confronting sinners with God, sin, Christ and believing repentance. The vocabulary and illustrations may change a bit, but the essence of the message must not. Marketplace ministers have no right to alter the gospel; to establish common ground with unbelief; or to debase the gospel by tying it to ungodly speech, events, or associations. Regardless of whether people lived in first-century Kidron Valley¹⁴⁰ or in twenty-first-century Silicon Valley, God's message is still the crucified and risen Christ. His method remains the love of the gospel, and God's final decision is still eternal judgment, and his command, that all people repent.

¹⁴⁰ John 18:1 “[*Jesus Arrested*] When he had finished praying, Jesus left with his disciples and crossed the Kidron Valley. On the other side there was a garden, and he and his disciples went into it.”

Integrating the Bible into the High-tech World

In order to connect the local church and the high-tech world, marketplace evangelists need to be educated about both local church and high-tech cultures. They also need to know how to integrate biblical principles into today's culture. The high-tech marketplace ministers not only need to develop a thorough knowledge of the character of God and the salvation message, but they also need to understand the people in the high-tech world. This includes the biblical nature of humans, the prevailing Silicon Valley culture today, and how these worldviews show their faces in today's technology, media, attitudes, education, government, marriage, and children, for example. They also must know what are the needs of the world today. There are physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual needs to consider. To address these needs, a high-tech marketplace evangelist must be educated. R. C. Sproul's book *Lifeyes*¹⁴¹ provides not only a better understanding of the American culture, but also helps bring the faith into that culture.

As high-tech marketplace evangelists begin to dialogue with seekers within their technical fields, they will learn how to use those fields as channels for biblical truth. Seekers need to see that a biblical foundation works within their own field of interest before they adopt this foundation for their entire life. High-tech marketplace evangelists need to become thoroughly educated regarding the biblical foundation of their own field, whether it is science, marketing, education, medicine, law, or factory work. Eventually,

¹⁴¹ R. C. Sproul, *Lifeyes* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1986), 154.

they will develop a specific strategy for ministry within their educational or occupational field, turning it into a mission field.

The question high-tech marketplace evangelists must face is whether or not this sort of education and hard work is really important. It could be said that the Chinese local church has lost its place as a dominant force within Silicon Valley culture simply because high-tech marketplace evangelists have neglected this sort of study and replaced it with unbeliever's emotionalized and trivialized Christianity. One must consider making a commitment before God to educate high-tech marketplace evangelists in such a way as to turn their occupational or educational field into a mission field. There is nothing more thrilling than living a life modeled after the incarnation of Jesus Christ.

Equipping Marketplace Ministry Leaders

There are so many talented leaders in Silicon Valley who are willing to serve the Lord in marketplace ministry. The biggest leadership challenge is to help marketplace leaders become effective ministry leaders. Sometimes local churches have higher expectations of great marketplace leaders and have put them into a high level role in marketplace and church ministry. As they bring major leadership contributions to the Marketplace Cluster, they need to understand more deeply the vision, mission, and value of the marketplace ministry and demonstrate Christian values in their personal lives. They also have spiritual authority with their followers, who have been developed holistically or mainly in the area of work output.

At the core, I search my motives for such dynamic determination and activity as one who has been making the transition from marketplace to ministry since 1993. I had

been in high-tech engineering management for ten years and strategic marketing and sales for another ten years. When I became a Christian in 1980, I began volunteering in the church right away. Ultimately, I joined a large Chinese church as a deacon, and today I work in marketplace ministry and the church as a full-time pastor. During those twenty years, I began to recognize the important differences between corporate life and church life. I witnessed people who did not embrace those differences, and I saw the pain they caused their followers. Local churches require a different kind of authority. Here are the principles that help strong leaders from the marketplace become effective in ministry.

Marketplace ministry leaders should have the willingness and ability to put people first and the task second. I have learned to ask, Is Christ dictating your thoughts, emotions, personality, and will? Are you willing and able to put people first and the task second? Can you speak the truth in love? Some leaders focus on the task because people are not easy to love. I might say to the person, "Share an example of a situation where it was hard to love someone." I listen for how the leader handled people and the others involved. Was there resolution? How does this person feel about the hard-to-love person today? If I do not ask these questions, I may put someone into a leadership role who will only hurt others and not build Christ-likeness in them.

The marketplace leaders should have the willingness to take time to be trained for ministry leadership. Leaders who have built success in the marketplace may feel that they have all they need for success in ministry. Taking time out for training appears to be almost an insult, a step back in their career. To be trained for church leadership, therefore, requires humility. However, leaders who are willing to stop constant

productivity to receive good training bring humility to their new leadership role. Marketplace training focuses on goals associated with a profitable bottom line. The church has a different bottom line: training people in Christ-likeness. Therefore, new leaders need to learn skills in developing others. If my potential new leader is less than willing to get additional training, I will be concerned.

The marketplace ministry leaders should be held accountable for decisions as well as motives. Strong marketplace leaders can use activity and success to keep from looking below the surface of their lives. They have been paid and rewarded for great feats of doing. Often they have not taken the time or made space to get in touch with their motives and attitudes. I am guilty of this, but I am also in the lifelong process of discovering my unprocessed motives and emotions while learning to let God work on those. Disciples James and John had unprocessed motives: they wanted to be great and get positions of honor ahead of others. Jesus did not keep their motives quiet; he exposed them and even brought the situation to the other disciples in order to teach them.

The marketplace ministry leaders should have surrendered strategy to the Spirit's leading. God has given humans great capacity for ideas and processes. In ministry, great capacity must come from God. The Holy Spirit brings the most creative ideas and processes, and human agendas must constantly be surrendered for the Holy Spirit to work fully. When major decisions or pressures arise in ministry, I want to model a willingness to surrender our strategies to the Holy Spirit. I do not want to sacrifice key values to accomplish what seems humanly important. Often our agenda sets people in motion quickly and creates the appearance of progress or resolution. Usually, the Spirit's plan

requires taking time to pray and to address the root issue, which means praying and waiting, even when it is difficult.

The marketplace ministry leaders should focus on people transformation as ministry mission. The role of the marketplace and church ministry is to bring people into a transforming relationship with God where Jesus becomes Lord over all areas of their life. Thus, leaders in key roles need to model lives that are being transformed by God holistically. Key leaders are responsible not only for tasks; they are also responsible to lead people toward Christ-likeness.

I have had the opportunity to watch a number of marketplace leaders who have made this transition to ministry. Some have gone in the direction of task-based ministry, but the role and position became idols in their lives. I have watched them struggle, burn out, and search for something missing from their lives. The leaders who make the transition to ministry successfully learn to focus not on feats of doing but on developing others. I recognize that I have set high expectations for marketplace leaders, but this is with a purpose in mind: to bring us leaders to our knees and more deeply realize our need for Christ's work in our lives. As Silicon Valley Harvest works with leaders transitioning from the marketplace to ministry, we must remember that it is all about finding and selecting people who have open and humble hearts.

CONCLUSION

The Past and Present

The mission of this project has been simple: to take the church to the people who are not going to church. As we in Silicon Valley Harvest ventured out to minister in the Silicon Valley marketplace, we were immediately challenged by high-tech companies who said, “You’re invading our territory. Get back into your church building where you belong.” Today, Silicon Valley Harvest is a marketplace church movement of Marketplace Clusters within five high-tech companies in Silicon Valley. People come to Christ through this transformational ministry during weekdays. Lives are being touched and changed. The church should and can make a huge difference in the marketplace.

Silicon Valley Harvest began the Marketplace Cluster planting ministry ten years ago. Today, our legs still shake when we pass out tracts or when we do evangelistic calls, but the good news is that God has put people out there who not only need the gospel, but even desire it. The best way to get to them is through Christian laypeople as they reach out to their friends, relatives, and colleagues. Evangelistic training such as Evangelism Explosion can really instill boldness in the lives of participants, but the key is the commitment by each Christian to reach out in love to friends, relatives, and neighbors.

For the past ten years, Silicon Valley Harvest has joined with other Chinese local churches and hundreds of volunteers in Silicon Valley and served high-tech companies by building Marketplace Clusters. They began reaching out to the high-tech professionals through lifestyle classes (on marriage, parenting, wellness, and communication, for example) in public forums with over several hundred people attending.

Looking to the Future

Today, there is a quiet movement of the Holy Spirit causing Chinese local churches to re-examine how they “do church.” Some of the Chinese local churches are throwing out the old measures of success. They no longer consider merely size, seeker sensitivity, spiritual gifts, church health, or the number of small groups. Rather, they think about making a significant and sustainable difference in the lives of people around them in the marketplace. There is a growing awareness that Chinese local churches cannot continue to do the same old things and expect a different result. If Chinese local churches want to be salt and light, they have “to do” and “to be” something different!

The Marketplace Ministry movement has made major contributions to the local church over the years. It has opened the minds and challenged the perceptions and approaches of many local church pastors and leaders. Unfortunately, although every local church in Silicon Valley has a marketplace ministry, all of the local churches are focused on church growth instead of marketplace growth. Regardless of the number of Chinese local churches, it is impossible to have “one single church building” that can accommodate all of the Chinese believers and unbelievers. The purpose of this project has been to design the new model of marketplace growth in gathering Chinese believers and unbelievers in “many company buildings.”

This marketplace ministry project challenged us as Chinese local church leaders to be better, to rethink how and why we do things, and to improve the way we do marketplace ministry, especially in the areas of evangelism and missions. These aspects have been good, but emphasis on church growth among Chinese Christians has been

harmful. This thinking has caused churches to chase trends to the detriment of what God calls us to, and concentrate on pleasing people and not God. The focus has been on human-made principles deduced from business paradigms and comparative thinking. Those principles have not always been based on what God clearly defines in His Word. Though there have been some good ideas and some of the marketplace growth principles are biblical, what is needed is to define what the Scripture teaches - the *wheat*- and then get rid of the rest - the *weeds*.

Two mistakes were being made by the Silicon Valley Harvest team during the early project phase. The first mistake was in comparing different Marketplace Clusters with each other. No one can compare one Marketplace Cluster to another because God may have a different call and purpose for each. This is supported by 1 Corinthians 2:9: “what no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived — the things God has prepared for those who love him.” The second mistake was the concentration on and overzealous adoration of numbers over discipleship. A bigger Marketplace Cluster has meant a better Marketplace Cluster. This is far from true. The success of a Marketplace Cluster is based on the spiritual maturity of its leadership and members and what they are doing with their call. I have seen a few large Marketplace Clusters that attract people because of the dynamism of the leader and the entertainment of the service, but they were immature and un-disciplined, a very sad sight. On the other hand, I have seen many small Marketplace Clusters that are on fire with the Word and their call from the Lord, growing in their faith. There are many reasons a Marketplace Cluster can grow that may not be from God’s blessings.

One misconception is that what works in one Marketplace Cluster must also work in another. This is not true; most Marketplace Clusters have failed under these principles. Some believe that numbers and models signify God's presence, but this is not true either, nor is it biblical. Numbers and models can be misleading, and what we may see as a winner, God sees as pathetic and foolish. God looks for faith, devotion, love, and obedience, which are missing from the marketplace ministry model. Strong leadership never means a strong willed personality, but a servant's heart after God's heart, which is contagious to others. That is God's winner.

God is at work in the Post-Christendom world, and it will become Silicon Valley Harvest's responsibility to understand what He is doing among high-tech companies so Chinese high-tech professionals can be used by the Holy Spirit to grow Marketplace Clusters. They need to understand the unbelievers, specifically the marketplace seekers, and offer them the blessed truth of the gospel in a way they can understand so they do not turn it off as noise. Silicon Valley Harvest needs to give them opportunities to worship and fellowship in ways that minister to their souls. Chinese local churches need to make sure they are disciplined in ways that help them to develop a deep and abiding relationship with Jesus Christ. Frankly, I am excited by the challenge.

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