JOHN ALEXANDER DOWIE AND THE EMERGENT CHURCH MOVEMENT: SHARED THEOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL DYNAMICS

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ABSTRACT

The ministry of John Alexander Dowie and his Zion City utopia is an intriguing lesson in the power of charismatic influence. He was a man used by God to perform extraordinary miracles and have widespread influence at the end of the nineteenth century. Yet he also was a very controversial figure who experienced a progressive downhill theological slide at the end of life. The Emergent Church Movement is likewise an interesting study in its effect on evangelical Christianity. It has exploded onto the scene as an attempt to evangelize in a postmodern context. However, the ECM has also raised widespread concerns due to theological questioning. A further comparison reveals that Dowie and emergents practice similar theological and sociological approaches in their attempts to recover apostolic Christianity.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Chapter

1. DOWIE AND ZION CITY

Forming a Network

Shifting Theology

The Establishment of Zion City

Zion’s Theological Structure

The Start of the Downfall

Prophetic and Apostolic Claims

Inability to Rest

Lack of Financial Accountability

Theological Extremes

Conclusion

3. EMERGENT CHURCH MOVEMENT

Emergent Theology

Beginning of the Dialogue

The Unofficial Mouthpiece: Brian McLaren

The ECM Instigator: Rob Bell

Change within the Emergent Movement

Evangelical Opposition

Conclusion

4. POINTS OF CONVERGENCE BETWEEN DOWIE AND THE ECM

Theological Dynamics

Apostolic Christianity Blended with Cultural Trends

Holistic Restoration

Social Transformation

Theological Controversy

Social Dynamics

Backgrounds

Missional Approach

Media and Marketing

Dowie and Pentecostalism

Future of the Emergent Movement

Conclusion

INTRODUCTION

The twentieth century was an era of unprecedented change. Technological advances as well as world wars, emerging forms of destructive political ideologies, and the breakdown of modernity all took their toll. Protestant Christianity, while expanding globally, began to struggle evangelically in America as it could not provide the needed answers for a world in seeming chaos. Into this environment exploded Pentecostalism, a restoration of spiritual power heralded in the ancient church. Its preparation, while being attributed to many factors, must include the influence of the ministry of John Alexander Dowie and Zion City.

John Alexander Dowie was born in the mid-18th century in Scotland. After moving to Australia with his family, he returned to Scotland at the age of 21. There Dowie studied Scottish Presbyterian theology. It was during this season that Dowie was introduced to the beliefs of Edward Irving who had renounced cessationism and led an attempt to recapture New Testament apostolic authority. Heading back to Australia, Dowie became a part of the Congregational Church and then accepted his first pastorate.

It was in 1876 that Dowie faced the crisis experience that would forever change the course of his ministry. Dowie had recently accepted a call to pastor the Newtown Congregational Church in Sydney. A wave of disease hit the city and several members became sick and died despite the prayers of Dowie and the congregation. While praying for another lady of his parish on her deathbed, God showed him that all sickness was from the devil and that he was to stand against it. From that moment on no one else in his congregation became ill from the plague.

This experience was a catalyst in leading Dowie to seek the restoration of New Testament Christianity and apostolic power. He soon renounced ties with the Congregational Church due to sorrow over what he observed as spiritual barrenness. Launching out into his own evangelistic ministry, Dowie would shortly begin to experience great success holding massive healing meetings throughout Australia. Dowie then claimed to have an encounter with God where he was told to take the “leaves of healing” to all nations (Rev. 22:2).

Always a grandiose visionary, Dowie planned to build an international ministry based out of London, England. He set out on a preaching tour that would include New Zealand, the United States, and England. However, he didn’t make it to England as he would recognize such great success in the United States that he decided to make Chicago his base of missions instead. It was during his time in America that Dowie became further impacted by Keswick and Wesleyan teachings on holiness.

Receiving initial support from the Congregational Church, Keswick leaders and faith healers for his West Coast revivalist campaigns, Dowie would eventually go on to denounce denominational institutions. Yet their influence in his life was undeniable as holiness would turn out to be Dowie’s primary message throughout the rest of his ministry. Dowie would go on to have such tremendous international impact through Zion City and his organization, the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church, that many faith healers and holiness leaders would come to Zion City to revel in the fruit of his ministry. The tens of thousands of testimonies of healings under his ministry and his extreme views on behavioral holiness helped pave the way for Pentecostalism when it would ignite a few years following. While Dowie and most of his subscribers were initially against Pentecostalism, he had been influential in laying the theological foundation that many Pentecostals would build upon.

At the turn of the twenty-first century, the world is once again experiencing extraordinary turmoil. Europe and North America are now considered post-Christian, despite Pentecostalism’s advances. Yet another movement among evangelicals has sprung up prepared to face the challenges of an ever increasing pluralistic and postmodern worldview. The Emergent Church Movement, mainly among North American young adults, is growing rapidly.

Tracing the history of what would become the ECM involves several streams from the twentieth century. Emergents espouse a belief system that developed out of nineteenth century liberal theology, the 1970s Jesus Movement, Enlightenment theology, Reformed backgrounds, and postmodernism. Yet their “movement” is difficult to fully express as one of their main tenants is to avoid labels or anything that will lead to institution. The ECM anti-foundational approach leaves nothing above questioning or criticism.

Mainly, the Emergent Church Movement began in the 1990s as an attempt among evangelicals to evangelize in a postmodern world. Many had recognized that the American religious landscape had changed and old methods of reaching out to culture were no longer effective. Made up primarily of young adults raised in an ever changing technological age, they were used to rapid change and already indoctrinated by secular humanism. Therefore, most college age students did not find it hard to skeptically critique so many fundamental orthodox beliefs.

Out of this background would flow a whole new stream of Christians attempting to reshape evangelicalism rather than start a new brand of Christianity. Instead, they promote a return to their version of ancient Christianity. Coming largely out of Reformed environments, emergents call for a renewed focus on relationships, use of the sacraments, mysticism, and social justice. And while the ECM has many leading voices, there is no one figurehead that directs the “conversation” due to their desire to allow all voices to contribute to the theological shift.

Yet Brian McLaren and Rob Bell have gained the most influence in the ECM being honored even by secular press. Both are known for their controversial questioning of fundamental beliefs including the inerrancy of Scripture. However, they claim to be calling to account the evangelical theological worldview rather than Christianity itself. McLaren sees the current state of American evangelical churches as largely irrelevant in being able to understand the questions people are asking. Bell tends to thrive on shock factor by using extreme examples to critique orthodox theology.

While Dowie and the ECM appear worlds apart in their vision for transformation and theological approach, they surprisingly converge in many areas. Each has the potential to affect an upcoming century theologically. While Dowie in no way foresaw Pentecostalism or intended to promote it, he nonetheless prepared the spiritual atmosphere for its arrival. Dowie’s intent was to start a new movement that would remain into the millennial rule of Christ. Emergents on the other hand, while not desiring to start a new movement, have still been laying the groundwork for supernatural impact in the future. Yet the jury is still out on whether the impact will be long-term and fruitful or short-term and destructive.

The intent of this thesis is to explore the shared fundamental theological and sociological dynamics of John Alexander Dowie and the Emergent Church Movement while shedding light on how they diverge on specifics. In order to attempt this, an investigation of the ministry of John Alexander Dowie and his Zion utopian community will be examined. Next, the ECM will be surveyed as to its theological claims, leadership and contemporary opposition. Finally, a comparison of Dowie and the Emergent Church Movement will be examined as to their theological and sociological approaches followed by future implications.

CHAPTER 2

DOWIE AND ZION CITY

INTRODUCTION

History reveals John Alexander Dowie as one of the most polarizing figures of early twentieth century Christianity. He was an apostle who experienced widespread influence and success in ministry, yet all the while drawing criticism. His giant ambition led him to start the first Christian utopia in America, near Chicago. While fruitful for a season, Zion City, Illinois would turn into a disaster for Dowie. However, his impact would lay the foundation for Pentecostalism and Zion would remain for years to come.

Zion City was a municipality based completely upon the Word of God. Concerning their missions focus, Zion’s followers believed separation from the world was necessary for communal living. On the other hand, they spent a great deal of time reaching out evangelistically in the worst areas of Chicago’s inner-city. Dowie’s Seventies movement had developed a reputation for showing love where no one else would. Yet to be a part of their community meant not only receiving Christ but also dedicating oneself to holy living. This chapter will examine the process of how Zion City came to be through the ministry of John Alexander Dowie.

FORMING A NETWORK

In 1888 Dowie and his family left Australia to come to the United States. His plan was to organize a world-wide ministry directed from London, the center of the British Empire.[[1]](#footnote-1) He spent the next two years holding meetings on the west coast and starting branches of the renamed International Divine Healing Association. Dowie also started producing a weekly periodical called *Leaves of Healing* to inform readers of the ministry’s success and keep in contact with his growing international ministry. He continued his crusades until 1895, organizing branches in virtually every major American city.[[2]](#footnote-2) Dowie gained favor with the Congregational Assemblies in the U.S. and his initial crusades were sponsored by both Keswick and Holiness leaders. He was hoping to unite all of the faith healers into one organization and wanted Holiness and Keswick groups to collaborate and join with him to establish God’s kingdom on earth.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Dowie experienced such success in North America that he abandoned his intention to set up headquarters in England, making Chicago the base of his operations in 1890. Chicago at the time was the second largest city in the United States and central as far as US geography.[[4]](#footnote-4) Chicago hosted the World’s Fair in 1893 and Dowie viewed this as the perfect opportunity to gain inroads to the nations. He purchased a building across the street from the main gate of the entrance and near Buffalo Bill Cody’s tent. Holding services daily, Dowie’s driven personality found it hard to cope with the minimal results he experienced initially. His tabernacle became jokingly known as the ‘little wooden hut’.

However, attention grew enormously when Buffalo Bill’s cousin Sadie was brought to him on a stretcher. After Dowie prayed for her, she was instantly healed and walked home. Crowds began to flock to Dowie’s tabernacle to witness the miraculous or see their loved ones receive healing. Yet Dowie’s sermons were clearly against the established medical and political structures in Chicago and led to serious persecution from the media. Faupel states, “As Dowie’s fame grew…the secular press….led a sustained attack on his ministry for years, trying to drive him from the city. Dowie, however, was able to turn this free publicity to his advantage. Whether it be the earnest believer seeking healing, or the skeptical critic, many left his meetings as convinced disciples.”[[5]](#footnote-5) To house the increasing numbers, Dowie rented the largest auditorium in Chicago from October 1895 to April 1896 with normal crowds of 4,000 to 6,000 people daily. Later that year he opened Central Zion Tabernacle, Dowie’s main headquarters for the next five years.

As the reader will recognize throughout the rest of his public ministry, Dowie capitalized on and viewed negative publicity as instrumental to his ministry’s growth. “Dowie’s sensitivity to public relations proved worthy of a P.T. Barnum….Like some other countercultural movements, Dowie’s band not only thrived on opposition but also interpreted it as confirmation of its own moral rectitude.”[[6]](#footnote-6) In April he converted his home into Divine Healing Home no. 1. Dowie was arrested the first time on May 1, 1895 and charged with practicing medicine without a license. He was convicted but the verdict was overturned by superior court. Dowie was subsequently arrested nearly 100 times in 1895 with most charges focusing on his healing practices, including running a hospital out of his home.[[7]](#footnote-7)

SHIFTING THEOLOGY

While Dowie’s influence continued to spread, local religious leaders accused him of religious antics and political stunts. To make matters worse, Dowie was outspoken in his sermons against denominationalism and most organizations that he viewed as spiritually dry. He constantly railed against the Methodists specifically and the Secret Societies that had penetrated many denominations.[[8]](#footnote-8) Dowie began to face as much persecution from churches as he did from the press. He recognized that his efforts to lead an ecumenical network under the divine healing banner were futile.

At the end of April 1895, Dowie officially announced something he had hinted at in several periodicals. Up to that point in his ministry, Dowie had always encouraged believers to stay within their own denominations and bring about change. In typical Dowie fashion, he proclaimed to his hundreds of thousands of partners that he was dissolving the IDHA and starting a new movement that he believed would be founded upon apostolic principles. All who were part of his previous association were invited to join. Yet, they would not be allowed to remain within their current denominations. They must make a choice as to who they would follow.[[9]](#footnote-9) This would represent a significant shift in Dowie’s theology.[[10]](#footnote-10)

Backing each word scripturally, Dowie proposed the formation of the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church. Evidence suggests that he was greatly influenced by the teachings of Edward Irving whose church was named the Holy Catholic Apostolic Church. Dowie believed he was carrying out the worldwide movement that had been entrusted to Irving but had died out because of jealousy among fellow Christians.[[11]](#footnote-11) Dowie announced, “We, therefore, believe that the Lord will “build up” in the little city of Zion, in the vicinity of Chicago, and will rapidly extend throughout the world a CHRISTIAN CATHOLIC APOSTOLIC CHURCH.”[[12]](#footnote-12)

All of the ministries the IDHA had already started including the publishing house and healing homes were to come under the authority of the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church. The IDHA was disbanded in November of that year and the Christian Catholic Church was formally recognized on February 5, 1896.[[13]](#footnote-13) Dowie, not surprisingly, was named General Overseer. Interestingly, the term Apostolic that Dowie had included in his announcement was not included until 1904 when he declared himself First Apostle.

Dowie was never one to sit still as his influence continued to expand. On May 24, 1895, less than a month after announcing the new organization, Dowie revealed that his ministry had purchased 552 acres of land outside of Chicago near Blue Island on the Chicago and Rock Island Railway.[[14]](#footnote-14) His hope was that this property would be the U.S. epicenter of his international ministry. While the purchase of this original ‘Zion City’ fell through, by the following year the CCC had established several branches throughout Chicago, hundreds in America and many internationally.

Focusing locally, the Christian Catholic Church invested a great deal in advancing their movement in Chicago. Dowie realized that the laity must be equipped to insure long term impact. Drawing inspiration from the model Jesus used, in September 1898 Dowie formally established the Company of the Seventies. Members of the CCC would be sent out in pairs throughout the entire city. “For years it has been our great desire to see this moment when having trained some hundreds of God’s own children, we should have the joy of sending them forth two by two into every street of this city of Chicago, knowing that the Lord wants to come into every street, and enter into every house in this city.”[[15]](#footnote-15)

However, Dowie was not the first to employ this evangelistic tactic of Jesus. Dowie visited Salt Lake City in 1890 and became impressed with their ‘Seventy Movement.’ Dowie would later confess, “I studied the Mormon Church. I watched that Seventy Movement of theirs and saw that they were able to send out common, apparently illiterate men into the world, who were devoted to their church, and were willing to die for it.”[[16]](#footnote-16) Dowie began with six “Seventies” and quickly developed over 40 Seventies in Chicago alone. He also instructed every branch of the Christian Catholic Church in America and overseas to employ the same strategy.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ZION CITY

With the success of the Seventies in Chicago and the fruit of thousands of healings and salvations, Dowie believed the Christian Catholic Church was ready to take the next step in his vision. Always one for theatrics, he announced on New Year’s Eve 1899 the plans to build a utopian community forty miles north of Chicago on the shore of Lake Michigan. The Christian Catholic Church was in the process of finishing the purchase of the last of the 6,500 acres that they had been buying sections at a time. In the *Coming City*, a publication authored by Dowie to keep readers informed of Zion’s progress, Dowie explained how they had secretly been able to procure the land.[[17]](#footnote-17)

Dowie had carefully planned out a campaign to keep the press and his enemies distracted. This insured that the last pieces of the mortgaging of the Zion City property could covertly be finalized-purchases that surely would have been hindered or even stopped had the media known who was procuring it. Dowie had a team of people that had been buying the properties separately in order to keep the farmers from realizing whose organization was involved and subsequently raising the prices. Yet all of the buyers were inconspicuously doing it with funds from the Zion Land and Investment Association.[[18]](#footnote-18) He had hoped to use the attention from the media to gain more followers who might be drawn to Zion City.

In the September 30, 1899 edition of the *Leaves of Healing*, Dowie printed a full page article entitled *Three Months Holy War Against the Hosts of Hell in Chicago.* In it he made clear that he planned to confront and denounce all who were against him, including sellers of alcohol, ‘medical butchers’, politicians, ‘apostate clergy’, the press, Secret Societies, etc. Between the four main Zion tabernacles the CCC operated throughout Chicago, Dowie planned to preach sermons almost nightly against the corruption he saw in the city. Commenting on that season, Philip L. Cook states, “For that period few segments of society were spared his wrath. Dowie believed the Scriptures taught that the church was supposed to protest wherever sin was found.”[[19]](#footnote-19) Never one to shy away from confrontation, Dowie publicized the titles of the sermons he would be preaching. A mob of over 2,000 medical students showed up to protest his message entitled *Doctor’s, Drugs, and Devils*.

As soon as the announcement of Zion City was made, appeals went out internationally in the *Leaves of Healing* inviting people to purchase stocks at $20 each. Dowie planned to build a tabernacle in the center of the city that would seat 5,200 with the 200 acre Shiloh Park surrounding it. The long term plan would be to construct a temple that would seat 25,000. Dowie believed the city would grow to 200,000 and would be the first of many city theocracies set up throughout the earth. Speaking on the day of the Tabernacle’s dedication, Dowie stated,

I will speak of Zion Temple. I have read the prophecy. Someone in the latter days is to rebuild the temple of God. I do not say that the Temple which we shall build here will take the place of that Temple which shall be built at Jerusalem. God Forbid! But the Temple we shall build here, God willing, shall be a precursor of that Temple, and a preparation for it. The Temple which we build here will, I hope, be the first of many Zion Temples in many Zion Cities near to the great cities of the world.[[20]](#footnote-20)

The city was to be laid out in the design of the British Flag. Four main roads would travel north, south, east and west with Shiloh Park as their starting point. Four diagonal roads would also run from the corners of Zion City into the park. The city’s engineer Burton J. Ashley had been in contact with some of America’s largest cities seeking advice for city planning and innovation. They advised him to fill Zion with alleys to connect the main roads where the sewage and water lines could run in order to keep the city aesthetically pleasing. This idea was a major engineering advance of the time.[[21]](#footnote-21)

Dowie and the Zion Land and Investment Association meticulously laid out designs for the streets and sidewalks, established a general store, livery stable, and coal and lumber yards. They planned out several warehouses and depots, a small brick factory, and businesses for a blacksmith, barber, harness maker, and cobbler. On July 15, 1901 the Zion Land Office opened several subdivisions for lease and the steady stream of those longing for a Christian community poured in. By the official incorporation of the city and completion of Shiloh Tabernacle, both on March 31, 1902, over 8,000 people had already moved to Zion City.[[22]](#footnote-22)

Next to the purchase of the land, the biggest undertaking was the buying and importing of a Lace factory from England. Intending to create a city of 200,000 people meant that jobs must be available for those who would move to Zion. Samuel Stevenson of Beeston, Nottingham, England was the owner of the giant Lace factory who became a member of the Christian Catholic Church in England. The idea of a Christian city appealed to Stevenson and he agreed to move the entire factory to Zion City. The factory was to occupy up to eighty acres, employ over 50,000 workers and be worth nearly five million dollars in five years.[[23]](#footnote-23)

The invitation was open for skilled laborers to come from all over to help the factory and Zion City get up and running. Demographics were changing across the nation as people were migrating from rural to urban centers. Cities offered shorter work hours than farms and presented more recreational activities. Farmers saw the lace factory as economic security for their families.[[24]](#footnote-24) At the same time, large areas of land around the city were leased to farmers joining the church who wished to remain in their profession.

Industries besides lace would include soap, candy, brick, and furniture. A giant fishing industry was also started on the Lake Michigan shore.[[25]](#footnote-25) Zion started its own bank and members of the city were promised to share in the businesses’ profits. Dowie began both a local newspaper and a publishing company produced from Zion. Yet he did not plan to forfeit the influence the Christian Catholic Church had gained in Chicago. Dowie stated emphatically, “Zion is not going to leave Chicago. If the Board of Death thinks that, it is mightily mistaken. We will have about a thousand Zion Tabernacles in Chicago before we get through. We will have more Zion Tabernacles than all the denominations have church buildings.”[[26]](#footnote-26)

ZION’S THEOLOGICAL STRUCTURE

The environment Dowie commanded was a result of his Full Gospel theology. He was often quoted as saying “Zion stands for Salvation, Healing and Holy Living.” History has well documented Dowie’s support and success in the area of Divine Healing. He believed sickness was still present in the body of Christ because it had been wrongly attributed to an act of God to bring about sanctification. It was Satan who came to destroy but Christ came to restore. He believed a person must first listen to correct preaching before being a candidate for the prayer of healing.[[27]](#footnote-27)

Out of the three, Faupel claims Dowie focused on Jesus as Savior the least, probably because most of those who joined his movement were already born again.[[28]](#footnote-28) Yet repentance and justification through faith were always mentioned in his preaching as Dowie had been raised in Scottish Reformed theology. While healing was constantly given major attention, Holy Living was the greatest thrust of his message. It was clear that Dowie was influenced by both Keswick “Higher Life” and Wesleyan teachings.

In fact, Dowie once commented, “If I had been born in his time, I would have been a Methodist….If John Wesley were alive today, he would have been the leader in the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church in Zion.”[[29]](#footnote-29) The glory of Zion City would be a community based upon sanctification. Zion’s followers dreamed of a city where their children could be raised in a holy environment without worldly temptation. To this end an educational system from elementary school through college was started in Zion.

The city was divided into smaller sections to insure weekly home prayer meetings. Dowie had a strict set of behavioral rules he believed were necessary for Christian growth. He had long railed against the use of tobacco, alcohol, cigarettes, card playing, gambling, membership in secret societies and the use of profanity. To these restrictions he added the prohibition of theatres, dances, wearing makeup, eating of pork products and shellfish, and the presence of doctors or medicine including vaccinations for children. Interestingly enough, as many of the laborers poured into Zion from surrounding states and countries, Dowie felt it necessary to relax the restrictions for those who would not live there permanently.

Dowie also planned for Zion to be an example to the world of the prosperity of God’s people when He is the focus. The motto of Zion City was “Where God rules, man prospers.” Dowie was outspoken in his beliefs that both sickness and poverty were a result of the devil at work. He taught that if a person was sick, they had somehow given place to the enemy. If not them, either someone in their house or in the Zion community at large was at fault.[[30]](#footnote-30) His stance against poverty was just as strong as Dowie espoused that lack was proof of operating under a curse.

However, there were even deeper reasons Dowie dreamed of starting a utopian theocracy. He held an eschatological premillennial view believing that the Church was commissioned to extend the kingdom of God throughout the earth. But like Israel, the Church from the apostolic era had fallen short through apostasy and unbelief. Therefore, God was waiting for a person or movement to usher in His millennial reign.[[31]](#footnote-31) Dowie even went as far as to proclaim that if they established enough Zion theocracies they would be able to buy up Jerusalem to prepare for the coming of Christ.[[32]](#footnote-32) Gordon Lindsay postulates that Dowie felt God had raised him up to bring about a “dispensational change in God’s dealings with the human race.”[[33]](#footnote-33)

Yet Dowie believed the role of the people of Zion fulfilled other prophecy as well. In his sermon preached on February 9, 1901 entitled ‘Let Us Go Up to Zion’ based upon Jer. 31:6 and Pilgrim’s Progress, Dowie proclaimed,

*For there shall be a day, that the Watchmen upon the hills of Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the Lord our God*. (Jeremiah 31:6) Ephraim stands, in my opinion, for that portion of Israel which is found in these United States, and upon this American Continent….I am a firm believer, and have been for thirty years, in the Israelitish origin of the Anglo-Saxon race. I was led to make a number of examinations and to follow up some clews by reading of ancient history….Everything I read and see and experience confirms me in the conviction that the Anglo-Saxon race is the lineal descendant of the Ten Tribes who were scattered abroad. That in this land it is the dominant race, of course, without question. The time has come when, on the high places of this land, the call goes forth, ‘Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the Lord our God.’[[34]](#footnote-34)

Dowie felt that because God had given them the city and they named it Zion, they were literally fulfilling this Scripture. In this sense they held to British-Israel theology.

To prepare for the millennium, Zion was organized according to how Dowie believed the city would be run by Jesus during the thousand year reign. Properties were leased for 1,100 years as he believed that Jesus would return by the year 2,000. However, the lease could be revoked if a member of the family was caught violating one of the more serious city codes.[[35]](#footnote-35) Dowie already held strict standards for membership in the Zion community declaring in 1900:

“We call all Zion to remember that God hath said: ‘Woe to those who are at ease in Zion’…Let those who are fearful, if there be any left in Zion, go back to their previous associations, if they will, for we cannot tolerate a coward in Zion…. We would rather see them standing in line with the enemy, sounding the ‘ram’s horn’ and the goat’s horn of the apostate churches, than to have them in Zion to cause weakness and disorder.”[[36]](#footnote-36)

Residents would be allowed to sell their real-estate leases at fair market value, but only to fellow Christians. Everyone was guaranteed employment in one of Zion’s many businesses. Concerning wages, Dowie believed in communal sharing and yet individual profit at the same time. Speaking on wage earning in his ‘Let Us Go Up to Zion’ sermon, Dowie announced:

I have no notion, you delegoats, of a uniform wage for the toiler. I wish to lift the toilers above all your wage systems. I wish to make them partakers in the profits of their industry. I would make the toilers, by and by, to be largely the holders of the stock in Zion’s many Industries. (Amen. Applause.) All work. If there should come a time when we had to nurse you, we would nurse you when you could not work. If a man can work and will not, he has no place in Zion. We have no place for slothful men….The poor girls who now work for just a few dollars a week…I wish the arm of Zion to be around the dear girls….to see them raised up, until a woman shall get the same wages as a man, if she earns it. (Applause.) I think it is a perfect abomination that a woman should get less than a man because she is a woman.[[37]](#footnote-37)

Dowie wanted to do all he could to insure that Zion was a classless society. A welfare system was devised to provide for the needs of the less fortunate as well as a retirement home and hospice. During a time when Jim Crow laws were in full swing, Dowie promoted miscegenation as a means to regain the purity and strength of the human race. “One Negro visitor observing the conditions of his fellow Blacks stated that Dr. Dowie must be ‘the most courageous man in the nation.’”[[38]](#footnote-38) Dowie supported a world government because he felt nations caused jealousy and strife.

THE START OF THE DOWNFALL

While Dowie was ever controversial and seemed to thrive on opposition, a clear decline in his ministry and effectiveness can be traced in his later years. There are many contributing factors, but the main ones were his growing claims about himself, his inability to rest and take time away from the ministry, and his lack of accountability in the area of building and finances. The presence of some wild theology also came into play, but it was not as widely known.

**Prophetic and Apostolic Claims**

As with any man, worldwide attention raises the question of how he will handle his influence. Somewhere along the way John Alexander Dowie became convinced that if Zion and his people were to completely fulfill biblical prophecy, there were steps he must take as the leader to usher in the new era. Throughout the early years of his ministry and as late as 1896, Dowie is recorded as publicly rebuking those who would attempt to label him an apostle or find parallel with any biblical figures. He believed that he lacked the gift of tongues and the necessary humility that would qualify him for the office of apostle.

However, a significant shift took place in his life and ministry when he made three different proclamations concerning his identity. He had already been proclaimed the General Overseer of the Christian Catholic Church. Faupel states, “Dowie's expanding empire was paralleled by the elevation of his status.”[[39]](#footnote-39) In 1899 Dowie shocked many when he declared himself to be the “Messenger of God’s Covenant” of whom both Moses and Malachi had prophesied.[[40]](#footnote-40) Cook theorizes, “Evidence indicates that by 1900 the number of visible miraculous healing incidents had begun to decline. But Dowie was spending more time now in promoting other aspects of the Kingdom, so perhaps that was to be expected.”[[41]](#footnote-41) Whether as a writing tool or because he viewed himself through the eyes of his position, Dowie almost always referred to himself in second or third person in his writings.

On June 1st, 1901 Dowie took things a step farther when he announced himself to be the third and final return of the Prophet Elijah, following in the footsteps of Elijah and John the Baptist. All members of the Zion Restoration Host, formerly called the Seventies, were required to sign pledges accepting Dowie’s proclamation as Elijah the Restorer. As one might expect, this caused many Christian leaders to denounce him.[[42]](#footnote-42) Lindsay proposes, “History shows that before Dr. Dowie made this avowal of his supposed Elijah identity, his ministry had many marks of an Elijah ministry. But as soon as it was made, the marks began to disappear.”[[43]](#footnote-43)

Yet this was not to be the last of his major declarations. On Sept 18, 1904 he proclaimed:

I declare in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit, in accordance with the Will of God our Heavenly Father, that I am, in these Times of Restoration of all things, the First Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church in Zion….Clothed by God with Apostolic and Prophetic Authority, I know have the right to speak as the instructor of nations.[[44]](#footnote-44)

Dowie felt that God had been waiting for the apostolic to be put back in place and he intended to set up an Apostolic College. He went on to say, “The Church which had been restored to its primitive pattern, must receive its apostles, that the primitive power might return, in even greater measure, ‘the latter rain.’”[[45]](#footnote-45)

Dowie was not the only one to make such outlandish claims.[[46]](#footnote-46) Frank Sanford was a follower of Dowie for a short season and spent some time in Zion. He travelled to Maine to set up his own utopian community which he called Shiloh. Like Dowie, Sanford believed him and his movement to be the forerunners of the return of Christ. Taken from Gen. 49:10 ‘Til Shiloh come,’ Sanford saw his group as the catalyst to help the ten lost tribes of Israel return to Jerusalem. Also like Dowie, he felt that Shiloh was the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth.

“Having equated Shiloh, Maine, with the Old Testament Shiloh, Sanford now began to find himself in the biblical prophecies.”[[47]](#footnote-47) Less than six months after Dowie’s Elijah claim, Sanford announced on November 23, 1901 that God told him he was Elijah and that he was to ‘Testify.’ The following year on October 2, 1902, Sanford broadcast that God showed him he was David and that he was to renew David’s kingdom on earth and prepare the throne for Christ to take residence. Then in March 1904 he demanded all present in chapel to sign a scroll recognizing him as ‘the prophet Elijah, the prince David and the priest called The Branch,’ thus fulfilling the New Testament identification of Jesus as prophet, priest and king.[[48]](#footnote-48)

**Inability to Rest**

Dowie’s personality and ever-expanding influence would not allow him to slow down. Because all of Zion City, personal property, businesses, and the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church were under his care, his responsibilities continued to increase. Besides constantly writing and preaching, Dowie’s strong personality led him to micromanage. On one hand, he was successful in setting up ministers and deacons in his churches, organizing the Zion Restoration Host and Children’s Host, and allowing leaders to run virtually every area of his ministry. Yet he saw himself as the head of all branches of the ministry and desired to hold influence in each component.

Whether because of his driven outlook and dynamic gifts or because he thought only he could meet certain obligations, Dowie maintained an exhausting schedule. Yet he seemed to thrive on it. He stated,

Sometimes when it is day no longer, and the night has fallen, and I am tired, I say, ‘I think I will sleep.’ Then I see the work to do, and I say, ‘O God, give me refreshment….Then there comes to me that sweet refreshment which lengthens out the day. I go on and on and on, and the night is not long….I am toiling while others are sleeping. I am weeping sometimes while others are sleeping. I sow what others will reap…. Although the sun of earth has set, the Sun of Righteousness with Healing in His wings is flooding all my life with light. The night passes, and I often find that I have been able to do two days’ work in the four and twenty hours….So it goes on all the time. I think, sometimes, I have lived a hundred years in my fifty-three, because I have asked God to double and triple the ordinary day’s work.[[49]](#footnote-49)

It is not a far stretch to recognize the toll that years of similar toil took on his body and led to his eventual strokes and death. And because Mrs. Dowie was a workaholic in her own right, there was very little time for their marriage.

**Lack of Financial Accountability**

Dowie was very much a visionary whose dreams did not always include financial reality. His vision seemed to constantly outgrow the finances needed to sustain it. While his optimistic outlook on finances was commendable, Dowie didn’t understand the drain it put on his followers to support his vision. For instance, he believed that Zion would be able to purchase Jerusalem back from the Arabs with the profits made through the many Zion communities throughout the world. Yet building in Zion City had progressed much faster than the finances had arrived. From 1903 to 1905 the bank stopped paying interest and forbid making withdrawals. At one point Dowie demanded that everyone in the city make a deposit.

On top of that, Dowie’s apostolic worldview gave him a love for missions. In 1903 he and over 3,000 of his Restoration Host travelled to and organized a giant crusade in New York City. While this was noble, Lindsay shows that preaching the gospel and promoting Zion was not his only goal. Having recently been tricked into an interview by another minister who was later used to slander him greatly, Dowie felt the need to attract massive attention where he could then defend himself. Blanketing New York City with advertisement, he organized the procession in which “no religious mass movement of its size and scope had taken place since the Crusades.”[[50]](#footnote-50)

Regardless of his motivation, the cost for this crusade was well over what had been allotted by Zion. Yet the finances were ultimately under his jurisdiction alone. The following year he embarked on another expensive journey, this time taking a world tour to visit many big cities where Zion had a foothold. This further drained Zion’s resources. To make matters worse, Zion City was just getting on its feet and Dowie had already made several trips to Mexico with the intention of purchasing 2 million acres for a second utopian community. He had begun promoting it to his followers around the world to move there instead of Zion City. Many of Zion’s leadership were opposed to this new venture, probably because it would take away from the people and the resources that would help sustain their city. Imagine the shock of the citizens of Zion when they finally met in April, 1906 and voted authority be taken away from Dowie, only to find out that Dowie’s personal account was overdrawn $475,000 and Zion was in debt over 2.5 million.

**Theological Extremes**

Dowie was widely known for the stances he promoted on the Word of God, both good and bad. His promotion of divine healing helped many throughout the world awaken to present day miracles in a time when very few Christians believed them possible. His stance on holy living caused many globally to move to Zion because of the purity of standards they felt would be in place. Yet Dowie also went to extremes that gave reason for concern. He taught that hell would only be temporary to atone for iniquity that took place in a temporary dispensation.

Dowie also reportedly shifted on his views of marriage, possibly influenced by his relations with the Mormon Church. In a sermon he preached in January 1901, Dowie taught:

We might argue against not merely polygamy, but against more than one marriage….There is no doubt at all in my mind that monogamy is right because it was originally so. I have not the slightest doubt that a great many thousands were converted at the time of our Lord Jesus Christ who were polygamists. It would have been cruel and unkind and wicked for the Jewish Christians who had married, in their ignorance, three or four wives, to throw all but one of these women and their children out into the streets. Apply the same principle in heathen lands….I believe that it is right that we should teach the natives, or native Christians, in all the lands where Zion goes that monogamy is right because it rests upon the original command. It is sin to be polygamous. I believe that amongst these Mormons there are thousands and tens of thousands who have been deceived by the Devil in connection with polygamy, but are profoundly desirous of glorifying God, and live infinitely better lives than a number of the hypocrites who are judging them. I consider the Mormon who has taken care of his wives and children a far better man.[[51]](#footnote-51)

Yet by the time of his escapades to Mexico, Dowie had supposedly changed views. While never making public his full intentions, leaders behind the scenes claimed that Dowie believed support from the Mormon Church was integral to his global intentions. Therefore, he planned to announce that God had shown him that polygamy was part of His last day’s move to usher in the millennium. Dowie wanted the community in Mexico to be welcoming for Mormons to come and lead their polygamous lives. Whether the previous charge was accurate, it would be used to fuel increasing discontent among Zion residents. Dowie had Wilbur Glenn Voliva come run Zion City in his place while he was visiting Mexico and recovering from his first slight stroke. After reviewing the state of affairs of Zion, Voliva felt it proper to hold Dowie publicly accountable. The accusation of supporting polygamy as well as Dowie’s extreme financial mishandlings led the people of Zion to vote that Dowie was no longer competent to lead their movement.

CONCLUSION

John Alexander Dowie was a man with worldwide Christian influence in an era when modern-day technology was not available to quickly spread his message. His *Leaves of Healing* periodical had vast readership in several continents. And thousands upon thousands throughout the globe received physical healing as a result of his ministry. Yet his years were not without controversy, at times intentionally magnified by Dowie. His dream of a Christian utopia in Zion City, Illinois started successfully and was considered progressive thinking in his day.

Multitudes either moved or planned to move within Zion’s borders to live in this Christian experiment. The Christian Catholic Apostolic Church remained evangelistic reaching out to the poorest of souls. However, their approach to missions was more one of separation from the world. Dowie hoped to found similar Christian communities throughout the earth. As the reader will recognize in our final chapter, Zion held on through many tough years after Dowie’s demise. And yet Dowie and Zion City’s influence on the future of Pentecostal theology and practice is undeniable.

CHAPTER THREE

EMERGENT CHURCH MOVEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Emergent Church Movement (ECM) has been an attempt among contemporary evangelicals in North America to make the gospel of Jesus Christ relevant to an emerging postmodern world. Made up largely of young adults raised in Reformed theology and turned off by the religious box modernism constructed, they desire to propose new theology and practice to a secular culture. Therefore, the Emergent Church takes great delight in self-labeling their movement a flexible ‘conversation’ rather than a new wineskin with clear definition. The Christian walk is to be more of a discovery and long-term adventure and less of a specific destination.

EMERGENT THEOLOGY

Theologically, emergents stress the role of community interpretation above individual objectivity. There is a natural skepticism towards “high profile individuals who say their interpretation of a particular text is ‘what the Bible teaches.’ Thoughtful persons respond, ‘as interpreted by whom?’"[[52]](#footnote-52) Travis I. Barbour summarizes, “In simple terms, the Emerging Church movement is about forming church communities that fit the postmodern cultural context.”[[53]](#footnote-53) Emergents tend to err on the side of inclusivity and protest orthodox dogma while mystery and uncertainty are heralded as axioms.[[54]](#footnote-54)

Intellectual questioning and even doubt are celebrated and viewed as healthy steps in the process of growing in faith.

The Emergent Church does not define itself in terms of any particular ideology or theology….the movement can therefore be described as *methodological* in nature rather than *theological.* The defining activity of the Emergent Church is not a quest....for indisputable theological truth, but (more modestly) a broadly inclusive, open-ended conversation that, ideally, fosters both community and theological insight.[[55]](#footnote-55)

Those who identify themselves as part of this new wave believe they are returning to the lifestyle of the early church.

However, they are not so much focused on apostolic authority and the supernatural as being a true disciple and spreading Christianity to a new culture. Ray S. Anderson presents an interesting distinction between Jerusalem and Antioch and proposes the first Christians experienced the initial ‘emergence.’ He parallels the Jerusalem church with the established religious hierarchy and Antioch as the sending point for missionaries who introduced Christianity into new contexts.[[56]](#footnote-56) To Anderson, the emergent church is more like the experiment Christians from Antioch conducted as they embraced new cultures.

Just as Peter, Paul and the Jerusalem Council finally agreed that the gospel was to be sent to the Gentiles, a new revelation at the time, so the ECM today believes that God is constantly releasing new strategic revelation in times of transition. Anderson proposes, “I want to show why a theology based on revelation, such as that emerging out of Antioch, is a more ‘vintage’ theology than a theology based on religion as represented by Jerusalem.”[[57]](#footnote-57) In other words, the Spirit’s work flexibly engaging new cultures should prove a better model than the strict religious methods of the Jerusalem Church. The first century church did not have the New Testament canon; rather, they had to trust in the Spirit to lead. Emergents hold to subjective experience before finding its base in the Word while fundamentalists believe the Word should always come before experience.

Tony Jones, influential voice of the ECM and former director of Emergent Village, suggests:

At its essence, Emergent Christianity is an effort by a particular people in a particular time and place to respond to the gospel as it breaks through the age-old crusts. And it's the shifting tectonics of postmodernism that have caused the initial fissure….the Christian gospel is always enculturated, always articulated by a certain people in a certain time and place. To try and freeze one particular articulation of the gospel, to make it timeless and universally applicable, actually does an injustice to the gospel.[[58]](#footnote-58)

Subscribers to ECM methods tend to remain skeptical concerning traditional church structure. “The Emergent Church understands its activity and growth as occurring almost spontaneously from the bottom up.For this reason, emergents do not see the need for centralized, pastoral leadership.”[[59]](#footnote-59) Evangelical church leaders are blamed for promoting a structure that many in this liberal camp feel constrains them. Yet this is clearly rooted in their deeper perspective on life: anti-foundationalism.

BEGINNING OF THE DIALOGUE

There are differing views as to the onset of postmodernism. It goes without saying that this new paradigm of worldview came into play as a protest against modernism. While the history is complex and the lead-up includes many dynamics, most believe that postmodernism emerged onto the scene in the late 1950s and early 1960s. This fresh outlook involved deconstructionism, celebration of plurality, anti-foundationalism, and objection of humanism.

In fact, the whole claim to fame of postmodernism is its lack of definition. Relativity is valued as an “anti-philosophy philosophy.”[[60]](#footnote-60) Therefore, demarcating both postmodernism and the ECM is in itself a challenge. Finding common ground is more the goal than summarizing a movement or worldview that has in itself a lack of classification. If the dating of the mid-twentieth century is accurate, one must wonder why it took so long for a postmodern movement within the evangelical church to catch fire.

The final decade of the century is viewed as the rise of what we know as the Emergent Movement. In the late 1990s, a conglomerate of pastors and church leaders called the Leadership Network held conferences and events focused on evangelizing the Baby Busters or Gen Xers. Then May 2001, six of these leaders (Brian McLaren, Doug Pagitt, Tim Keel, Chris Seay, Tim Conder, and Brad Cecil) convened a conference call to develop a new name for their network. The group chose the term “emergent,” inspired by forestry experts who study the new growth of the forest floor to determine the overall health of the forest.

Dan Kimball offers, “For me, the term ‘the emerging church’ simply meant….churches who were ‘being the church’ instead of ‘going to church’ in our emerging culture.”[[61]](#footnote-61) By the end of the same year one of the main influences that developed for this new movement was The Emergent Village, an online community of emergents committed to exploring faith together.[[62]](#footnote-62) Unlike Dowie and Zion, Illinois, this network prized themselves on having minimal leadership as they hoped to focus on the importance of the everyday believer. Ironically, Tony Jones was appointed the National Coordinator and grew into a primary spokesperson for the emergent movement. As with any organization that tries to avoid central leadership, people within their sphere of influence began to complain that his position, as well as the Village Council, was contradicting their own beliefs.[[63]](#footnote-63)

Thus, the Village Council in 2008 decided to eliminate the National Coordinator position and reduce expenses to promote grass-roots Christianity. They hoped to develop online “neighborhoods” such as ‘Anglimergents,’ ‘Presbymergents,’ ‘Luthermergents,’ etc.[[64]](#footnote-64) Individuals and communities once identifying with Emergent Village also began to branch out and form different networks. Obviously, this was viewed as a good result as everyday Christians were taking initiative to develop their own structures.

Leaders such as McLaren, Pagitt, Jones, Kimball, Bell, Shaine Claiborne, and Mark Driscoll developed into trusted thinkers for the ECM. Theologians such as Frank Viola, Stanley Grenz, N.T. Wright, and Leonard Sweet are considered emergent friendly. Popular ‘churches’ include Pagitt’s Solomon’s Porch in Minneapolis and Keel’s Jacob’s Well in Kansas City, both of which are experiential in nature and considered faces for the movement. However, Bell’s Mars Hill Bible Church in Grandville, MI is clearly the ECM flagship church with weekly attendance over 10,000.

THE UNOFFICIAL MOUTHPIECE: BRIAN MCLAREN

Brian McLaren, probably the leading voice for the emergent movement, was raised in a Plymouth Brethren home. He walked away from the faith during his teen years but recommitted himself to Christ during the Jesus Movement in the 1970s. From there, he went to college at the University of Maryland, eventually graduating with his Masters in English. After teaching English for several years at a University of Maryland branch campus, he felt called to plant a church. Enduring several unsuccessful attempts, McLaren pioneered what became Cedar Ridge Community Church in Spencerville, Maryland in 1986.

Since then, McLaren developed into a popular conference speaker, writer, and mentor for pastors. He was active in the Terranova Project as part of the Leadership Network in the 1990s. In 2005 TIME magazine recognized him as one of the ‘25 Most Influential Evangelicals in America.’ He stepped down in 2006 as Senior Pastor to devote more time to speaking and writing, even though he remains part of the pastoral staff. His first book, *The Church on the Other Side: Doing Ministry in the Postmodern Matrix*, in 1998 accomplished much in introducing evangelicals to contemporary culture. McLaren stated, “If you have a new world, you need a new church. You have a new world….We won’t need a new religion per se, but a new framework for our theology. Not a new Spirit, but a new spirituality. Not a new Christ, but a new Christian.”[[65]](#footnote-65)

In 2003 McLaren published *Adventures in Missing the Point* (coauthored with Tony Campolo) to confront what they saw as erroneous Christianity. They attempted to denounce ‘escape theology’ instead focusing on liberation from fruitlessness in the present. Along with other writings, these led up to McLaren’s most influential publication, *A Generous Orthodoxy*. Mirroring the implied universalism by the decisions of Vatican II, McLaren called into question foundationalism based upon neatly-defined exclusivism. This book more than any demonstrated McLaren’s frustration with the evangelical church.

THE ECM INSTIGATOR: ROB BELL

The most recent controversial figure in the ECM is Rob Bell. His Mars Hill Bible Church is by far the largest ECM fellowship. Bell claims to have founded it preaching only from the book of Leviticus as an experiment. He has also become popular through his short teaching NOOMA films. In 2011 TIME magazine named Bell one of the ‘100 Most Influential People in the World.’

Bell grew up in a Christian home and is the son of a federal court judge. Bell received his bachelor’s degree from Wheaton in 1992 and went on to get his M. Div. from Fuller Theological Seminary. During this time he formed what was his second band and produced several CD’s. Bell moved to Michigan to be close to family and founded Mars Hill in 1999. The church would become one of America’s fastest growing in less than a decade. Like McLaren, in September 2011 Bell announced he was stepping down as Lead Pastor in order to pursue opportunities of more influence.

In 2005 Bell published his first book, *Velvet Elvis: Repainting the Christian Faith*. Bell claims to have written the book for those who are interested in Jesus but turned off by normal Christianity. “Jesus is more compelling than ever. More inviting, more true, more mysterious than ever. The problem isn’t Jesus; the problem is what comes with Jesus.”[[66]](#footnote-66) In 2006 and 2007 Bell convened successive speaking tours in the U.S. selling out in every city.

In 2008 Bell produced *Jesus Wants to Save Christians: A Manifesto for the Church in Exile* shouting the emergent focus on social justice and rebuking Christian apathy.[[67]](#footnote-67) “I think that today many people are realizing that the highest value in the scriptures isn't a proposition, but the incarnation, the reality of the One who puts flesh and blood on the divine. The incarnation, the kingdom of God, is exploding here and now, in this place. God wants not only to put me back together, but to do this for all of creation. That's a beautiful thing.”[[68]](#footnote-68) In 2011 Bell released his most scandalous publication, *Love Wins: A Book about Heaven, Hell, and the Fate of Every Person Who Ever Lived*.[[69]](#footnote-69)

CHANGE WITHIN THE EMERGENT MOVEMENT

Influential former ECM author and pastor Dan Kimball believes the emergent conversation has begun to digress from its original intent. “When the whole emerging church discussion began, it was primarily about evangelism and mission to emerging generations.” However, Kimball feels the discussion has shifted to more theological examination. “After a while, some within it began focusing more on theology and even some core issues of theology—which is needed as theology is very important. But the whole central focus of evangelism to emerging generations was lost, in my opinion.”[[70]](#footnote-70) Yet McLaren supports this shift in the movement. “Like any good conversation, we’ve moved from topic to topic,” he says. “For a while, it was all about doing church. Then we focused a lot more on doing theology. Lately, we’ve been focusing more on justice. I think there’s an important conversation brewing about being disciples, too.”[[71]](#footnote-71) Not all who have branched out to form different networks have been a result of spreading the movement. Many have become dissatisfied and preferring a more biblically conservative faith combined with new trends in outreach and social justice. Former influential emergents include Mark Driscoll of Mars Hill church in Seattle along with Scott McKnight and Kimball of the Origins network.[[72]](#footnote-72)

EVANGELICAL OPPOSITION

The Emergent Church Movement has found itself a formidable foe in the evangelical churches. Evangelicals have charged the ECM with everything from liberalism to universalism to flat-out heresy. While appreciating the ECM’s stance on social justice and community, evangelicals have been most concerned about the lack of trust in the inerrancy of scripture and suspected inclusivism. Reformed theologian David F. Wells describes their movement as "postconservative rather than evangelical" and labels them as "doctrinal minimalists."[[73]](#footnote-73)

Yet emergents vehemently refute the charge of violating the scriptures. Rather, they stand against the fundamental construct that the modern church has developed. Rick Bartlett compares the ECM’s ‘persecution’ by evangelicals in returning to apostolic faith with the Anabaptists at the hands of Protestants during the Reformation.[[74]](#footnote-74) However, D.A. Carson, who is also Reformed and has witnessed the shift from the inside, claims the ECM is full of contradictions. For instance, they spurn universal claims while holding to their own absolute ‘truths’: “postmodern versus modern, absolute versus authentic; propositional truth versus narrative truth, certainty versus mystery, rationalism versus embodiment, information versus formation.”[[75]](#footnote-75)

Kimball admits much of the theology forming within the emergent conversation is simply a reintroduction of earlier liberal claims.

A lot of the things discussed… is pretty liberal theology. My concern is seeing younger Christians especially who don’t know these theological issues were discussed before….get caught up in thinking this is a new expression of Christianity when it is pretty much classical extreme liberalism ….We need to look back at the discussions the Church has had throughout Church history to understand some of the discussions happening today.[[76]](#footnote-76)

The ECM leader that has seemed to stir up the most ire from Evangelicals is Rob Bell, especially of late. His most recent book *Love Wins: A Book about Heaven, Hell, and the Fate of Every Person Who Ever Lived* called into question the eternal destination of those who supposedly died without converting to Christianity. Bell proposed that God’s grace goes much farther than just praying a specific prayer and that we truly don’t know whether God reveals Himself to a person who perished without ‘knowing Him’ (i.e. Gandhi). His whole point was that Christians must not be so quick to appoint people to eternal paradise or torment based on their own presuppositions.[[77]](#footnote-77)

Evangelicals bristled at the notion that Bell would question such sacred doctrines as eternal security and damnation. They accused him of universalism and concluded him a heretic. Yet not all who read his writing interpreted it as such. Peter W. Marty defends, “Charging Bell with being a universalist doesn't work. Not only does the idea never appear in the book, nothing could be less applicable to somebody with Bell's own passionate faith in Jesus Christ. He simply refuses to limit how far Christ's redemptive love can reach….The glue holding Bell's project together is the firm conviction that Jesus is bigger than any one religion.”[[78]](#footnote-78) Obviously, his Reformed roots on the sovereignty of God come into play.

However, Bell goes one dangerous step beyond as he implies that hell will not be forever. "No matter how painful, brutal, oppressive, no matter how far people find themselves from home because of their sin, indifference, and rejection, there's always the assurance that it won't be this way *forever."*[[79]](#footnote-79)He infers that the "eternal punishment" in Matt. 25:46 is "a period of pruning" or an "intense experience of correction.” In other words hell is not eternal separation from God.[[80]](#footnote-80)

Yet Bell is not alone in his controversy. McLaren tackles exclusivism head-on in *A Generous Orthodoxy*. Sean Michael Lucas suggests this writing is “perhaps the closest thing that the emergent church movement has to a ‘confession of faith.’”[[81]](#footnote-81) Toeing the line with universalism, McLaren offers that Jesus was not incarnated to create another elite religion. He states, "Ultimately, I hope that Jesus will save Buddhism, Islam, and every other religion, including the Christian religion, which often seems to need saving about as much as any other religion does."[[82]](#footnote-82)

John Bolt sums up the typical evangelical response to the teachings of the aforementioned:

For Bell, as well as for McLaren, the emphasis is on a strongly experiential, socially activist, inclusive, pluralist, pilgrims on-the-way, this world affirming community. Instead of being identified by marks of truth-content (creed, doctrine), this church is identified by its action, its practice….What we have here is a new missionary strategy of solidarity with the world to save the world….one wonders whether ECM takes the New Testament antithesis between the church and the world seriously. There is a greater fear of identifying with fundamentalism than there is with the world.[[83]](#footnote-83)

CONCLUSION

The Emergent Church Movement in North America is largely a young adult protest to evangelical foundationalism and conservatism by young adults reared in Reformed theology. Yet its impact has begun to spread to evangelicals of other faith camps as well. The emergent focus on social justice has helped raise awareness both inside the church and outside of religious circles. Their ability to embrace culture and reach out to those wavering in the valley of decision is laudable.

On the other hand, the ECM presents a danger in its anti-foundational approach to those already on shaky ground. There is not enough history or empirical evidence to reveal how many claim to have been strengthened in faith vs. those who have turned away from faith in God because of ECM influence. Regardless, their growth has been explosive among emerging leaders. The ECM is raising enough important questions that it can’t just be ignored by evangelicals.

CHAPTER 4

IMPACT ON ITS CENTURY

A comparison of John Alexander Dowie and his Christian Catholic Church with the Emergent Church Movement show that both gained momentum at the end of successive centuries. A closer look reveals that these two value many of the same dynamics concerning theological and sociological approach, despite diverging in definition of application. Both ‘emerge’ out of Reformed theology and developed anti-institutional perspectives. Dowie’s theological slant for a recovering of apostolic Christianity entailed a revivalistic ethos. The Emergent Church Movement, like Dowie, also desire a return to ancient practices but instead place great emphasis on liturgy and societal justice. This chapter will deal with the points of convergence between the two movements while highlighting the different methodologies.

THEOLOGICAL DYNAMICS

**Apostolic Christianity Blended with Cultural Trends**

Both Dowie and the ECM desire a return to apostolic Christianity and employ cultural strategies to meet their goals. For Dowie, to revert to ancient Christianity meant the recovery of spiritual power. He had a movement driven mission as he initially attempted to unite faith and holiness leaders before regrouping and forming the Christian Catholic Church intending to usher in the renewal of all things. Dowie utilized cultural trends such as anti-creedalism when he left the Congregational Church to start his own ministry.

He was anti-institutional in approach as he condemned denominations for spiritual apathy, especially the Methodists.[[84]](#footnote-84) Dowie’s healing homes and blueprints for utopian communities were by no means original at the end of the nineteenth century.[[85]](#footnote-85) He testified of looking to the Mormons’ contemporary ‘seventies’ movement for inspiration. Dowie even prophesied the coming of both the radio and television that would allow him to preach simultaneously throughout the world!

The ECM sees a return to apostolic Christianity as being a true follower of Jesus. They tend to focus more on reaching out to present-day culture. Emergents are anti-institutional in mission as they value relationship over dogma and believe evangelical orthodoxy too constrictive.[[86]](#footnote-86) Yet in their honor of liturgy they give special place to early creeds. For example, Brian McLaren claims his faith to be a synthesis of Catholic, Protestant, and Evangelical doctrines.

However, emergents are also movement driven in mission as they migrate mostly out of Reformed circles, although they are gaining a following among other evangelicals as well. Yet their hope is to retain their own ethos while reshaping the evangelical landscape rather than forming a new structure. That would defeat the purpose of their whole rejection of hierarchy. Relational discipleship is greatly emphasized as emergents foster community above individualized spirituality.

**Holistic Restoration**

Dowie’s restoration theology holistically included salvation, healing, and holy living. Spiritually, a person is awakened through salvation while physical overhaul takes place in supernatural healing of the body. The needs of the soul are met as a Christian behaviorally lives a holy life. All of these occur within Dowie’s vision of man as a social being living in a community oriented environment.[[87]](#footnote-87) Dowie employed revivalist tendencies such as nightly healing meetings towards this end.

The ECM’s restorative aim is also holistic in nature. The ECM promotes a return to mysticism, liturgy, and social justice. The spiritual component is experienced through eastern influence, a return to mysticism and encounter. Liturgical practices and sacraments are employed to meet the needs of the soul for divine empowerment. Holy living is proved by involvement in social justice. Unlike Dowie, emergents give very little attention to charismatic dimensions.

**Social Transformation**

Dowie’s theological vision for social transformation included developing a classless society and racial integration. Guaranteed employment, profit sharing, and equal wages for women drew a large number of Christians to Zion. The city included a welfare system, retirement home, and hospice care. Estimates show as many as 200 Blacks living in Zion at the turn of the century. Dowie promoted interracial marriage as a means to restoring the human race to her original glory.

The ECM’s theology for transforming society centers on social justice and environmental issues. More liberal in theology and politics, emergents are quick to tackle issues such as human trafficking, feeding the poor, protesting war, welfare programs to help families get on their feet, and gay rights.[[88]](#footnote-88) Their environmental agenda includes focus on stewardship of God’s creation. Current attention on climate change has gained a huge following in the ECM. Digging wells in Africa and other places of drought is both a social and environmental issue for emergents.

**Theological Controversy**

Dowie and ECM leaders could sit and swap stories about persecution from contemporary Christians in their day if Dowie was still alive. Dowie, Bell, and McLaren have all been labeled heretics for their claims of hell being temporary punishment. Dowie comes from a dispensational point of view preaching that temporary iniquity can’t render eternal reprimand. Bell and McLaren base their outlook more on Enlightenment theology calling into question evangelical views of God’s justice.

Dowie also drew tremendous ire for other dispensational stances. His megalomaniac assertions were clearly the most destructive. Yet Dowie’s teachings on British-Israel theology would have caused even more controversy had his plan for international utopian communities gained tangible momentum. As Zion and the CCC grew, Dowie’s understanding of self-importance to dispensational change also magnified drawing constant criticism.

While Dowie’s anti-institutional methods probably enhanced their attacks, the ECM rile opponents by taking rejection one step farther. They not only promote democratic spirituality but take an anti-foundational approach. Emergents attack inerrancy and assurance of any theological beliefs. As mentioned above, they are products of the Enlightenment, influence that Dowie never seemed to give credence to. Paul Timothy Jensen puts it this way in quoting some of the common vernacular: "What we hear from many of the emergent church leaders who are most aware of the (post)modern ethos ... is a studied uncertainty: "We do not know', ' Knowing beyond doubt is not what Christianity is about', 'Christianity is about the search, not about the discovery.’”[[89]](#footnote-89)

SOCIOLOGICAL DYNAMICS

**Backgrounds**

Dowie and the ECM share religious upbringing as both emerge out of existing religious movements. Both are involved in Reformed environments that blur denominational and confessional boundaries. For Dowie, he cocooned out of Scottish Presbyterianism, Keswick and Holiness teachings. Many emergents are likewise raised in evangelical Presbyterian arenas. Affected by liberal and postmodern Christianity, the ECM supports pluralistic inclusion of truths found outside typical Reformed orthodoxy.[[90]](#footnote-90)

**Missional Approach**

Emergents and Dowie differ in methods when serving their mission. The ECM strives to remain free of institution in order to increase their influence and bring reform to evangelicals. The best example of this is both McLaren and Bell being honored by TIME magazine for their influence not just in North American Christianity but in society as a whole. Emergents expend a great deal of energy attempting to preserve their ‘non-movement movement.’ Their reorganization of the Emergent Village was evidence of their model maintaining an egalitarian feel.

Dowie on the other hand was clearly focused on growing an international empire. The proof is obvious in Zion’s struggles after Dowie began his downhill slide. Dowie dreamed of ushering in the second coming of Christ and all of his decisions were based out of this eschatology. His healing homes, Mormon-influenced seventies, and utopian proposals were all tools for advancing his Kingdom mission. The dedication to the vision and loyalty of his followers to Dowie was exemplary during Zion’s early years.

**Media and Marketing**

One final aspect Dowie and the ECM have in common is a love for theatrics in mass-marketing. Dowie in the September 30, 1899 edition of the *Leaves of Healing* printed a full page article entitled *Three Months Holy War Against the Hosts of Hell in Chicago.* He advertised this campaign in order to confront what he saw were the ills of society and distract them from recognizing Zion’s secret purchases of land. Faupel claims, “Dowie’s flamboyant style and pointed tongue soon alienated him from Chicago’s power structure. The press, medical community, clergy and politicians all sought to put him out of business….The more headlines that denounced him, the larger his following grew. Though many would come out of curiosity or to heckle, they would often stay to pray.”[[91]](#footnote-91)

Many cities Dowie travelled to in America and internationally drew massive angry mobs attempting to cause him and his followers harm. Yet Dowie seemed to flourish on the negative publicity. He rarely kept quiet his upcoming adventures choosing instead to advertise and invite controversy in order to garner a larger response. Dowie also infamously began to dress as an Old Testament priest in the later years of his ministry to support the self-proclamations he had made concerning his calling.

Rob Bell likewise recently provoked angry internet and media mobs by publicizing his book *Love Wins* before it was released. Leaders of the evangelical church already skeptical of Bell branded him a heretic. Yet Bell utilized all of the marketing, albeit negative, to appeal to curious onlookers. He has built his ministry by being willing to cross theological lines that many evangelicals would not be willing to even approach. Because many followers of the ECM are young adults who have grown up in this technological age, mass marketing is an area the ECM is able to excel in. The Emergent Village’s influence spread internationally both from its theological diversity and its marketing appeal.

DOWIE’S INFLUENCE ON PENTECOSTALISM

Although the members of Zion City would go through tremendous hardship and embarrassment, it is clear they remained hungry for the Lord and many would turn out to be catalysts in the next move of God. During this time, Zion City went into receivership from 1907 to 1911 because of numerous debts. Wilbur Glenn Voliva, Dowie’s successor who led Zion in ousting him, took over the Theocratic Party while opponents formed the political Independent Party. During the season of Dowie’s health issues, 1,500 moved away from Zion.

By 1911 Voliva had secured Zion City financially and sought to return it to its former glory. The Zion Industries were able to operate as a single proprietorship until the 1930’s when they finally collapsed. Voliva died in 1942 and Zion started to develop a democratic environment, remaining to this day. Gordon Lindsay appropriately surmises, “When at last the newcomers exceeded the Zion people, a change in city laws became imminent.”[[92]](#footnote-92)

However, when Pentecostalism exploded in Zion and the Chicago area, it became second in influence to Asuza St. in the United States. Known internationally for its healing ministry, Zion was of great interest to developing Pentecostals who believed in healing. Many church leaders in the Pentecostal movement trace their roots to early days of Zion City. Pentecostal leaders looked to Zion City and Dowie as evidence of the spiritual power available in the name of Jesus. Dowie’s focus on sanctification had already led many pastors who would embrace Pentecostalism to visit Zion City in its early days.

Edith Blumhofer rightly surmises, “Those of Dowie’s followers who identified with Parham’s Pentecostal message concurred that in Pentecostalism the real significance of Dowie’s message was preserved and expanded….Dowie’s essential focus on the full validity of New Testament Christianity for 20th-century believers found….it’s logical and fullest development in Pentecostalism.”[[93]](#footnote-93) F.F. Bosworth, B.B. Bosworth, John G. Lake and the Apostolic Faith movement in Africa, Raymond T. Richey, many early prominent leaders in the Assembly of God, and several Pentecostal denominations trace their lineage to Dowie.

FUTURE OF THE EMERGENT MOVEMENT

Unlike Dowie’s CCC, the emergent movement is not defined by one person’s influence or theology. In the historical pendulum swing of Christian theology, the emergent reformation, if it can be labeled as such, has attempted to swing closer to the liberal end of the spectrum. Barbour declares, “Since bursting onto the American scene in the 1990s, the Emergent Church has been hailed as the next Great Reformation, condemned as nothing short of heretical, and dismissed as a passing trend that will soon fade away.”[[94]](#footnote-94)

Positively, one must appreciate their focus on community in a western culture so obsessed with individualism. Their promotion of mysticism and experiential spirituality is a breath of fresh air to many predictable church settings. The emergent value of the sacraments and ancient church life is commendable, though it has led to accusations of embracing Roman Catholicism. Commitment to the spiritual journey in its entirety, in the midst of struggles, doubts and failures is attractive to a society so turned off by religious bigots. The emergent ability to honor others and their contribution to the overall spiritual conversation is drawing many fundamentalists in a post 9/11 world to search for answers outside of traditional religion.

Compare that with current statistics of today’s young adults and one can appreciate the draw emergents are having towards spirituality: only four percent of the current generation in the U.S. born between 1978 and 1994 is predicted to be evangelical Christian, down from sixteen percent of Generation X.[[95]](#footnote-95) Recent Barna reports show between 5 and 20 million Christians in North America are pursuing spirituality outside of a local church.[[96]](#footnote-96) Some theologians claim the ECM is the fastest growing group in U.S. Christianity. Varying estimates put them as high as 20 million-more than recent Jews, Muslims, Buddhists and Mormons combined.[[97]](#footnote-97) Dr. David Barrett and Todd Johnson predict that Christians internationally who have no church affiliation will grow from 111 million at the turn of the century to 125 million by 2025.[[98]](#footnote-98)

Yet with all of the potential growth among the younger generations, evangelicals wonder if the ends justify the means. Having already suffered defeats in the twentieth century on abortion and separation of church and state, the evangelical church is understandably disturbed by the liberal stance of many emergents on abortion, gay rights and politics. In a day of globalism when the lead of Christianity has been taken by Asia and the global south, Europe and North America are viewed as post-Christian. A defensive posture has largely been embraced as evangelicals hope for another Great Awakening or the return of Jesus. An additional liberal movement within their ranks is viewed more as an attack than a correction.

Emergents have become despised as devil’s advocates instead of reformers. Barbour suggests the ECM take a less aggressive approach. “The Emergent Church would be more consistent with its commitment to emergence if, rather than a revolutionary disruption, it would participate in a gradual evolution of the church from a modern to a postmodern worldview.”[[99]](#footnote-99) Yet the evangelical church is already viewed as out of touch with contemporary culture and one can’t help but wonder if there is time for such a cautious stance?

Much still has to be accomplished within this non-movement conversation before it will have reached its goal. Barbour offers Wikipedia as a pattern for emergent success. It started with a leader but decentralized and empowered subscribers by participating in the writing and editing of wiki articles, directly influencing the product. He frustratingly states, “The Emergent Church….seems to have merely knocked out its top leader without adequately empowering emergents to become leaders themselves. It also failed to provide any clear rationale for the church beyond the vague goal of conversing about theology….it will have rejected the monologue of modernity without being able to offer a viable alternative.”[[100]](#footnote-100)

On the other hand, McLaren believes it a positive that the ECM has not been so quick to produce its own staunch confessions. “I actually think a beautiful and coherent theology is in the early stages of emerging, but it won’t be held in the pocket of any single group….I think it will be a coherent, narrative, ecumenical, conversational and intentionally in-process theology ... that seeks to learn and keep learning rather than settle everything and market a prepackaged product.”[[101]](#footnote-101)

CONCLUSION

John Alexander Dowie was a unique figurehead in North American Christianity. His personal ministry in the United States lasted less than twenty years, yet his successes and failures are still causing reflection a century later. The creative miracles that God performed through him in physical healing were largely unparalleled for his day. Yet Dowie was also genius when it came to integrating contemporary ministry models to grow his influence. His ability to utilize media to his advantage is worthy of applause. Dowie’s utopian community experienced initial momentum but failed to fulfill their vision due to his shortcomings.

The Emergent Church Movement is also gaining attention both among North American Christians and the secular press. Coming largely out of Reformed theology, this new wave of evangelical young adults has also had impact about twenty years. Emergents promote a rediscovering of ancient Christian practices. However, they also have clearly been affected by Enlightenment beliefs and liberal theology. Up to this point they have succeeded more in raising questions and suspicions rather than providing spiritual answers. Yet emergents would take delight in this effect as they desire to be more of a conversation than give a defined set of beliefs. Brian McLaren and Rob Bell are two of the main voices that help pioneer the wave of Emergent claims. But their hope is that all Christians recognize their addition to the conversation.

Together Dowie and the ECM share common theological and social dynamics. Both emerge from Reformed theology and desire a return to apostolic Christianity. Each espouses anti-institutional practices while emergents go farther into anti-foundationalism. Dowie and emergents preach a holistic message that includes spiritual, behavioral, and communal dynamics. While light years apart on charismatic focus, both provide a blueprint for societal transformation: Dowie through a classless society and racial integration, and the ECM through social justice and environmentalism. Theological controversy has been familiar to both of them, yet Dowie and emergents have been able to use criticism to their advantage through media.

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5. Faupel, “World Conquest: The Missionary Strategy Of John Alexander Dowie,” 200-201. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Grant Wacker, Chris R. Armstrong, and Jay S. F. Blossom, “John Alexander Dowie: Harbinger of Pentecostal Power,” in James R. Goff, Jr. and Grant Wacker, *Portraits of a Generation: Early Pentecostal Leaders* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2002), 5-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Dowie testifies of being arrested over 70 times by the end of August of that year. *Leaves of Healing: A Weekly Paper for the Extension of the Kingdom of God* vol. 1 no. 48 (Aug 30, 1895), 754. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Many pictures remain of crutches, braces, wheelchairs and other items ‘stolen from the enemy’ by those who no longer needed them after being healed under Dowie’s ministry. Dowie took it one step farther and hung up on the wall membership papers and certificates of those who were part of Secret Societies when they were saved under his ministry. They would renounce their participation in these organizations and surrender the documents that had given them access to these societies. Dowie would later state, “Zion never has sought and never will seek the approval of the World, the flatteries of the Flesh or the help of the Devil. Zion leaves it to the apostate Masonic-Methodist Church and to other similar apostasies to find their joys in pitiable, contemptible imitation of worldly manners, customs, principles and practices.” *Leaves of Healing* vol. 7 no. 1 (April 28, 1900), 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Faupel, “World Conquest: The Missionary Strategy Of John Alexander Dowie,” 205-206. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Grant Wacker, Chris R. Armstrong, and Jay S. F. Blossom, *Portraits of a Generation: Early Pentecostal Leaders*, 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Faupel proposes several parallels between the ministries of Dowie and Irving. Faupel, “Theological Influences on the Teachings and Practices of John Alexander Dowie,” pg. 241-243. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Dowie, *Leaves of Healing* vol. 1 no. 29 (April 26, 1895), 479. See also *Leaves of Healing* vol. 3 no. 38 (July 17, 1897), 606. The irony is clear to the reader by the use of the word ‘Catholic’ while limiting membership to his organization alone. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Faupel, “World Conquest: The Missionary Strategy Of John Alexander Dowie,” 205 n. 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. *Leaves of Healing* vol. 1 no. 33 (May 24, 1895), 524-525. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
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17. *The Coming City* vol. 1 no. 1. (June 27, 1900), 4-5. Edited by the Rev. John Alexander Dowie. Chicago: Zion Publishing House, 1900. Online: http://www.johnalexanderdowie.com/attachments/File/the\_

    coming\_city\_the\_story\_of\_zion.pdf [29 September 2011]. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. *The Coming City* vol. 1 no. 1, pgs. 4-8. Gordon Lindsay reports that Dowie himself on occasion disguised himself as a tramp and travelled to inspect prospective farmland they were hoping to buy. See Gordon Lindsay, *John Alexander Dowie: A Life Story of Trials, Tragedies and Triumphs* (Dallas, Christ For The Nations, 1986), 170-171. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Philip L. Cook, *Zion City, Illinois: Twentieth-Century Utopia* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1996), 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. *Leaves of Healing* vol. 7 no. 13 (July 21, 1900), 395. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Cook, *Zion City, Illinois: Twentieth-Century Utopia*, 41. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Cook suggests, “Zion City was the natural outgrowth of Dowie’s fertile imagination for Christian community. Neither Dowie nor his followers were serious students of socialism in its various forms. Rather, his views simply evolved from his lifelong Bible study, his experiences as a preacher in the slums of Australian cities, his belief that the community described in the book of Acts could be realized, and from the healing ministry of Jesus along with the amazing success of Dowie’s own healing efforts.” Ibid., ix. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Cook, *Zion City, Illinois: Twentieth-Century Utopia*, 35. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Ibid., 44. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. William D. Faupel, “World Conquest: The Missionary Strategy Of John Alexander Dowie,” 208. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. *Leaves of Healing* vol. 8 no. 16 (February 9, 1901), 500. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Faupel, “Theological Influences on the Teachings and Practices of John Alexander Dowie,” 232. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Ibid., 232. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Quoted in Faupel, “Theological Influences on the Teachings and Practices of John Alexander Dowie,” pg. 237 n. 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Faupel, “Theological Influences on the Teachings and Practices of John Alexander Dowie,” pg. 233 n. 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Ibid., 236-237. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. *Leaves of Healing* (June 7, 1902) quoted in Lindsay, *John Alexander Dowie: A Life Story of Trials, Tragedies and Triumphs*, 183. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Gordon Lindsay, *The Life of John Alexander Dowie*, 208-209 quoted in Faupel, “Theological Influences on the Teachings and Practices of John Alexander Dowie,” 236. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. John Alexander Dowie, Sermon entitled “The Everlasting Gospel Declared,” preached January

    5, 1901. Online: http://sites.google.com/site/leavesofhealing/leavesofhealingpartthree%3Athemessage [18 November 2011]. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Faupel, “Theological Influences on the Teachings and Practices of John Alexander Dowie,” 234. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. *Leaves of Healing* vol. 7 no. 1 (Chicago: April 28, 1900), 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Online: http://sites.google.com/site/leavesofhealing/leavesofhealingpartthree%3Athemessage2 [18 November 2011]. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Faupel, “Theological Influences on the Teachings and Practices of John Alexander Dowie,” 235. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Faupel, “Theological Influences on the Teachings and Practices of John Alexander Dowie,” 231. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Recorded in *Leaves of Healing* vol. 7 no. 14 (Chicago: July 28, 1900), 436-438. This was part of a message that Dowie preached on July 22nd, 1900 in which he also announced that the Kingdom of God had now come and that the world was now to be subject to it and to Zion. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Cook, *Zion City, Illinois: Twentieth-Century Utopia*, 59. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. It is interesting that even though Dowie proclaimed himself as ‘Elijah, the Restorer of All Things,’ see *Leaves of Healing* vol. 9 (June 2, 1901), 214, on his preceding editorial comments he highlights the proclamation as referring to ‘we’, or of Zion collectively as the great Restorer. (see pg. 196) [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Gordon Lindsay, *The Life of John Alexander Dowie*, 191. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. *The Zion Banner* vol. 5 no. 52 (September 20, 1904), 414. Edited by the Rev. John Alexander Dowie. Chicago: Zion Publishing House, 1904. As previously stated, this was the instance when Dowie first started to include the name Apostolic in the Christian Catholic Church. Also, he stopped using his last name and went by John Alexander, First Apostle. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. *Ibid.*, 414. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Dowie on many occasions did infer that he made these identifications out of obedience rather than for his own good. Whether or not this was true, one gets the impression that he truly believed he was doing what God wanted him to by making such claims. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. James R. Goff, Jr. and Grant Wacker, *Portraits of a Generation: Early Pentecostal Leaders*, 63. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Ibid., 65. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Taken from the sermon Dowie preached on February 9, 1901 entitled ‘Let’s Go Up to Zion.’ Online: http://sites.google.com/site/leavesofhealing/leavesofhealingpartthree%3Athemessage2 [18 November 2011]. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Lindsay, 224. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Preached in Chicago on January 19, 1901. The title of the message was “He is Just the Same Today.” Online: http://sites.google.com/site/leavesofhealing/leavesofhealingpartthree%3Athemessage2 [18 November 2011]. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Rick Bartlett, “Why I can't Write an Article on the Emergent Church,” *Direction*, 39 no 1 (Spr 2010), p 103. Online:http://0-web.ebscohost.com.library.regent.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=5&

    hid=15&sid=8243c6c5-be99-4766-88da-0cd3142cf3ee%40sessionmgr10 [28 March 2012]. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Travis I. Barbour, Nicholas E. Toews, “The Emergent Church: a Methodological Critique.” *Direction,* 39 no 1 (Spr2010), p 32-40*.* Online: http://0web.ebscohost.com.library.regent.edu/ehost/

    pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=2&hid=122&sid=0f2e2cde-8e47-4674-bf69-86b781853dde%40sessionmgr111

    [01 January 2012]. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Paul Timothy Jensen, “Review of ‘The Courage to be Protestant: Truth-Lovers, Marketers, and Emergents in the Postmodern World’ by David F. Wells,” *Restoration Quarterly*, 53 no 3 (2011), p 187-188. Online: http://0-web.ebscohost.com.library.regent.edu

    /ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=4&hid=15&sid=8243c6c5-be99-4766-88da-0cd3142cf3ee%40sessionmgr

    10 3-28-2012 [28 March 2012]. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Barbour, 34-35. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Ray S. Anderson, *An Emergent Theology for Emerging Churches* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity

    Press, 2006), 13-15. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Ibid., 24-25. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Tony Jones, *The New Christians: Dispatches from the Emergent Frontier* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008), 37, 96. Quoted in Bartlett, 100. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Barbour, 33. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Thomas Storck, “Postmodernism: Catastrophe or Opportunity-or Both?” *Homiletic and Pastoral Review,*vol. 101, no. 4 (Jan 2001), 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. “The Emergent Church.” An Evaluation from the Theological Perspective of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, January 2011. Online: http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&

    source=web&cd=1&ved=0CCQQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.lcms.org%2FDocument.fdoc%3

    Fsrc%3Dlcm%26id%3D377&ei=OSN6T6z5PI3Ntgeb3fjuDg&usg=AFQjCNFZ5gou2YqfbUYMTKJHczV4Nt-hLQ [28 March 2012]. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. “Many of us were disillusioned and disenfranchised by the conventional ecclesial institutions of the late 20th century….we became convinced that living into the Kingdom meant doing it together, as friends.” Emergent Village: History. Online: http://emergentvillage.org/?page\_id=42 [06 April 2012]. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. “The Emergent Church.” Online. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Brian D. McLaren, *The Church on the Other Side: Doing Ministry in the Postmodern Matrix*

    (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000), 11, 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Rob Bell, *Velvet Elvis: Repainting the Christian Faith* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing

    House, 2005), Intro. pg. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Rob Bell and Don Golden, *Jesus Wants to Save Christians: a Manifesto for the Church in Exile* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2008). [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Taken from interview soon after the release of this book. Debra Kortmeier Bendis, “Bell's Appeal: Ministry to Young Adults,” *Christian Century*, 126 no 6 (Mr 24 2009), p 24. Online: http://0-web.ebscohost.com.library.regent.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=3&hid=18&sid=406221f9-f3ed-4dd9-b04f-05fcee031898%40sessionmgr4 [13 March 2012]. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Rob Bell, *Love Wins: A Book about Heaven, Hell, and the Fate of Every Person Who Ever Lived* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 2011). [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Adam Smith, “The End of the Emergent Movement?,” *Relevant Magazine Online*. Online: http:// www.relevantmagazine.com/god/church/features/21181-the-end-of-emergent [27 March 2012]. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. “The Emergent Church.” An Evaluation from the Theological Perspective of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, 2-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Quoted in Jensen, 187. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Bartlett, 103. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Discussed in John Bolt, “An Emerging Critique of the Postmodern, Evangelical Church: a Review Essay,” *Calvin Theological Journal* 41 no 2 (Nov 2006), p 208. Online: http://0web.ebscohost.

    com. library.regent.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=3&hid=111&sid=23aa1147-3c4e-4eff-ab73-6cf

    4656659cc%40sessionmgr113 [06 February 2012]. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Quoted in John D. Hannah, “ Review of ‘The Courage to be Protestant: Truth-Lovers, Marketers, and Emergents in the Postmodern World’ by David F. Wells,” *Bibliotheca sacra*, 167 no 666 (Ap-Je 2010), p 242. Online: http://0-web.ebscohost.com.library.regent.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?

    vid=4&hid=15&sid=8243c6c5-be99-4766-88da0cd3142cf3ee%40sessionmgr10 [28 March 2012]. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Bell stated in 2009, “The evacuation theology that says, ‘figure out the ticket, say the right prayer, get the right formula, and then we'll go somewhere else’ is lethal to Jesus, who endlessly speaks of the renewal of all things….I like to say that I practice militant mysticism. I'm really absolutely sure of some things that I don't quite know.” Mark Galli (Interviewer); **Rob** Bell (Interviewee), “The Giant Story: Rob Bell on why he Talks about the Good News the way he does,” Today, 53 no 4 Ap 2009, p 36. Online: http://0-web.ebscohost.com.library.regent.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfview er?vid=3&hid=18&sid=406221f9-f3ed-4dd9-b04f-05fcee031898%40sessionmgr4 [13 March 2012]. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Peter W. Marty, “Betting on a Generous God,” *Christian Century*, 128 no 10 (My 17 2011), p 24. Online: http://0-web.ebscohost.com.library.regent.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=3&hid=13

    &sid=9b50cd21-a87b-4316-ae4a-2b1f434f33bf%40sessionmgr14 [28 March 2010]. He continues, “Bell has given theologically suspicious Christians new courage to bet their life on Jesus Christ.” [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Rob Bell, *Love Wins: A Book about Heaven, Hell, and the Fate of Every Person Who Ever*

    *Lived*, (New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 2011), 86. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Discussed and quoted in Glenn R. Kreider, “Review of ‘Love Wins: a Book about Heaven, Hell, and the Fate of every Person who ever Lived’ by Rob Bell.” Bibliotheca sacra, 168 no 671 (Jl-Sept 2011), p 353-356. Online: http://0-web.ebscohost.com.library.regent.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=3&hid= 18&sid=ebeb0209-a900-4977-a280-3e0e9d9a0cf6%40sessionmgr13 [20 March 2012]. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Sean Michael. Lucas, “Review Essay: Brian D. McLaren's ‘A Generous Orthodoxy,’” *Presbyterion*, 32 no 2 (Fall 2006), p 83-92. Online: http://0-web.ebscohost.com.library.regent.edu/ ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=7&hid=13&sid=9b50cd21-a87b-4316-ae4a 2b1f434f33bf%40sessionmgr

    14 [28 March 2012]. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Quoted in Lucas, 88. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Bolt, 218. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Here the reader can’t help but notice the irony as Dowie’s CCC became hugely hierarchical and members accepted Zion’s ‘all or nothing’ ultimatum.

    [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Robert S. Fogarty proposes at least thirty-nine utopian communities in America that formed in the last decade of the nineteenth century. See Cook, 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. Traver Dougherty concludes, “In this regard, the emergent ideal fell short for me; emergents tend to err on the side of relationship because truth, they posit, is likely a philosopher's construct with no counterpart in the real world.” Traver Dougherty, “Review of ‘The New Christians: Dispatches From the Emergent Frontier’ by Tony Jones,” Missiology, 38 no 4 (Oct 2010), p 490-491. Online: http://0-web.ebscohost.com.library.regent.edu/ehost/

    pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=f97ad4fd-4962-4837-8e2d-c405775f23f1%40sessionmgr111&vid=4&hid=110 [01 January 2012]. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. An example of how interchangeable Dowie saw these requirements was the aforementioned issue of a person not receiving physical healing through prayer. Either the person or someone in the Zion community had allowed sin to enter the camp and must be dealt with for healing to manifest. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Hannah sees the liberal movement of the early twentieth century as parallel with emergents. “Liberals denigrated the role of theology in the life of the church mistaking social relevancy for timeless truth, and promised numeric strength through concession….Today evangelicals, called 'emergents', are walking down the same dangerous path by downplaying the role of theology in the churches, without which there is little that is identifiably Protestant.” Hannah, 242. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Jensen, 187-188. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Lucas comments on McLaren’s inclusivism, “What exactly does this mean? That Jesus will cause Buddhists or Muslims to follow him (to save them) but remain Buddhists or Muslims and so ‘save’ the world religions…In addition, such language seems to betray McLaren's insights on the importance of community and common liturgy for the formation of Jesus' followers. Do those in Muslim countries not need Christian community or Christian worship?” Lucas, 88. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Faupel, “Theological Influences on the Teachings and Practices of John Alexander Dowie,” pg. 230. Dowie would boast in the Spring of the next year, “The secular press has grown tired of the fruitless fight and, as a venerable brother stated in one of our recent issues, ‘The Chicago press has ceased to attack us from sheer exhaustion.’” *Leaves of Healing* vol. 7 no. 1 (Chicago: April 28, 1900), 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. Gordon Lindsay, *John Alexander Dowie: A Life Story of Trials, Tragedies and Triumphs* (Dallas: Christ For the Nations, 1986), 269. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Ibid., 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. Barbour, 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. Thom S. Rainer, *The Bridger Generation* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2006), 169. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. “The Emergent Church.” An Evaluation from the Theological Perspective of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, 1-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. News article, http://cbs2chicago.com/topstories/local\_story\_191215254.html (July 10, 2006) in essay by Roger Oakland, *The Emerging Church and Bible Prophecy*, Online: http://ncbiblechurch.com/

    Documents/Oakland.pdf [10 April 2012]. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. “The Emergent Church.” An Evaluation from the Theological Perspective of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, 1-2 n. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. Barbour, 36. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. Barbour, 37-38. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. Smith, Adam. “The End of the Emergent Movement?” *Relevant Magazine Online*. Online: http://www.relevantmagazine.com/god/church/features/21181-the-end-of-emergent [27 March 2012]. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)