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## God Doesn't Need Networks

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As man again finds himself poised on the threshold of a new millennium, he surveys human history, seeing it largely as a series of repetitive events. These events, some mundane, some cataclysmic, forever have altered the sojourn of man on Planet Earth. At this particular brink of time, however, forces are at work to usher in a series of unprecedented events. Man is undergoing (knowingly and unknowingly) a transformation. . . its' impact is felt in every area of life.

The Information Age has not only dawned, but it has grown and come to its' own, even reproducing after its' kind. It has literally catapulted the human race into a bewildering new reality. What served mankind for so many years - the old way of doing things - is no longer sufficient to meet the new demands on his existence. Wood maps can not keep pace with the quickly changing demographics. Encyclopedias are out-dated as soon as they leave the printing press.

By the time the majority of us catch on to what is happening, there have already been those visionaries who have set into motion the direction we are taking. By expertise and ingenuity they have prepared a course of action for the human race that will take each and every individual on a path with a determined future, and yes, even destiny.

At the present time there are over 50 million users on the Internet ("Net") and the numbers are doubling every year! With the daily flood of new arrivals to the Net, there are also new issues and conflicts. The Net was built without a central command authority, so in the event of a nuclear blast, it would continue. No one owns it, runs it or has the power to kick anyone off for good. There is no master switch that can shut it down. According to Clifford Stoll, a

Berkeley astronomer, "It's the closest thing to true anarchy that ever existed." Just this week on the evening news we were told that there were 280,000 attempts by hackers to access the Pentagon files and two thirds of these attempts actually succeeded! The comment made by the news commentator was that there could be a total takeover - via the Internet. Banks could crash and the economy crumble overnight (Airlines didn't seem to be affected by the "hackers" because their computer system is antiquated by today's standards!)

There was recently an interesting quote in a TIME article regarding computers and the Internet:

*"The Internet was built up by people who lived and breathed the hacker ethic - students at Berkeley and MIT, researchers at AT&T Bell Laboratories, computer designers at companies such as Apple and Sun Microsystems, "If there is a soul of the Internet, it is in that community, . says Mark Stahlman, president of New Media Associates, a research firm in New York City." (TIME, July 25, 1994).*

Networking, virtually unknown a few years ago, has become the tool of a rising civilization to bring about *empowerment*. With the advent of the Information Superhighway, new ideas are put into action almost as soon as they are born. A question can cross your mind on almost any subject and without leaving your computer, you can be linked to a global electronic library that links major public and university libraries internationally. There is seemingly no limit to the *empowerment* we have at our fingertips.

The old *paradigm* of obtaining information was from the top down - a handful of writers and commentators fed the masses. According to the same article from TIME: *"on the Net, news is gathered from the bottom up, the many speaking to the many - and it bears the seeds of revolutionary change. "*

A New Religion? Some have even dared to call networking a "new religion". According to the new age way of thinking, the earth is a global brain and networking is a scheme of binging together small differing groups and linking them with a common idea and aim. The linkage points represent the nerves of the brain. When all of the nerve cells are linked, the brain can think and act as one. In this way it is supposed that global harmony and spiritual advance can be achieved. A new age writer has described the usefulness of the network system this way:

*"You can't destroy the network by destroying a single leader or some vital organ. The center - the heart - of the network is everywhere. . . In a network, many persons can take over the function of others. This characteristic is also like the brain's plasticity, with an overlap of functions so that new regions can take over for damaged cells. . . this is a source of power never before tapped in history; multiple self-sufficient social movements linked for a whole array of goals. . ." (THE AQUARIAN CONSPIRACY" M. Ferguson, pp. 216-217).*

*"This spiraling linkage - individuals with each other, groups with groups - is like a great resistance movement, an underground in an occupied country on the eve of liberation. . . power is changing hands, from dying hierarchies to living networks ", (p. 215).*

Vocabulary Change. It is without a doubt that there is a massive re-alignment, or transition, in thinking. There is a new vocabulary for the new age, and we encounter it daily. Words have had their meanings changed. Some of the buzz words for the new paradigm are:

Absolute harmony; Acceptance; Affirmation; Balance; Blending; Building Bridges; Celebrate Diversity; Co-exist.; Collective Consciousness; Community; Communal; Compromise; Consensus; Consensual; Conflict Resolution; Connection/connectiveness; Convergence; Co-operation; Cosmic Consciousness; Diversity; Ecumenical; Empowerment; Fusion of Opposites; Harmony; Holistic; Hologram; Intermingle; Inter-connected; Mediation; Merging; Metamorphosis; Middle Ground; Multi-culturalism; *Networking*; Non-judgmental; Paradigm; Pluralistic;; Politically Correct; Reconciled; Synchronized; Symmetry; *Synergism*; Synthesis; Tolerance; Think Globally; Unity; Unisex; United Nations; Universal Mind; Unity in Diversity; Wholistic; Whole Brain Thinking (*List by Dorothy Bows. I have added in bold letters words from this article*)

One doesn't wonder at the rapidity the new thinking is finding its way in to every avenue of our society. On a subtle level, television (networks) have been a prime medium for quite a few years. The rest has fallen into place quickly.

The message is not to get rid of your computer. A computer is only a "tool" that has become a necessity in today's information age. The message is to discern the time. Sadly the church is following a strange course. Many believe they have a mandate from God to do His job. They are determined to set up a kingdom here on the earth. The church is being programmed into accepting a political kingdom. Man has tried before to take on the mantle of government and has horribly failed.

Networking in the Church. Mark Noll, director of the Institute for Evangelical Studies at Wheaton College explained that evangelicals are a "network of networks". According to TIME, May 13, 1996, in the article In The Name of The Father, pp. 75:

*" . . . The evangelical population, although slower than the rest of the country to adopt the post-Vietnam adversarial spirit, caught up and produced a generation for whom, Noll says, 'ideological combat has become de rigueur.' The movement's energy, once generated by the fervor of Christian witness, appears now to flow more from the red-hot political engagement of such Christian Right warriors as broadcast executive Pat Robertson,' Christian Coalition head Ralph Reed, his protégé; and the less renowned but perhaps more influential James Dobson, head of Focus on the Family. . . . "*

Interesting that each of the groups mentioned above has formed a "network" to bring about political change. Pat Robertson boasts, *"We are seeing the Christian Coalition rise to where God intends it to be in this nation - as one of the most powerful political forces that's ever been in the history of America "*. He has not. only been successful in grass roots mobilization and "networking" among the Evangelicals, but has also drawn Catholics alongside in the "Catholic Coalition".

James Dobson is politically connected and "networks" through a variety of organizations. In our state (Michigan) alone he has (1) Community Impact Committees; (2) Michigan Family Forum and (3) Michigan Decency Action Council. He is also a part of the Council for National Policy along with Pat Robertson, D. James Kennedy, Paul Weyrich, Jesse Helms, Joe Coors, Richard De Voss and others. When they lobby, they use a name of another organization.

Networking serves political structures well. Soon after the formation of the PromiseKeepers, James Dobson promoted them widely. With the approval of this and other power networks, their success has made history. Off of the "Net" this week there were some interesting tidbits from a paper called, CONSERVATIVE CONSENSUS. Under the subtitle, "Implications for the Future" were the following interesting quotes:

*". . . While the organization is quietly turning 'the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers...' it is setting into motion political forces the magnitude of which we have never seen in our life times. . . . The nation's men, however, the traditional breadwinners, have seen themselves become serfs in their own nation. . . In nearly every case, the power that men have lost over their lives and their families has gone to the government; and increasingly, the federal government. As PromiseKeepers spreads its message of men becoming responsible for their families, churches and communities, those men will come face-to-face with a government that has grown like crabgrass and dandelions in their own backyards*

*The application of weed-killer to this unsightly mess began in the Fall of 1994. Regrettably, some of the newly seeded grass (brand name Republican) was old and had a low germination rate. We expect the weed-and-feed effort to intensify in this Fall's elections. During reseeding, we recommend a variety of brands to be tried to determine the most hearty and weed-resistant. Gentlemen: start your weed eaten."*

Agenda. It is without a doubt that there is an agenda set out by those who believe they should set up a political system here on the earth. Networking has become a powerful political tool that could indeed bring about a revolution. A college professor told us in the 60's that communism came to power by "cell" groups all over Russia that indoctrinated the "grass roots" of the populous. There were three stages that were used to "take over". Do you recognize any of these?

I. Unarmed propaganda.

A. Political education. What better way to "educate" people than through the vast networks now at the disposal of those who have a definite agenda.

B. Develop a support base. This includes financial and political (grass roots).

C. Discredit the system. When this is done the system loses the ability to control.

II. Arm the citizenry. This shows that the system can be resisted defiantly. The "cell" groups can be used for armed preparation.

III. Insurrection. (The overthrow of the present system).

There is a strong call for a political takeover of the world's systems by the Church. . . a united Church. David Bradshaw in A NEW SOUND -Occupational Christianity says:

*"This new level of Christian occupation will call forth a new level of leaders, and a new level of warfare. As we re-focus on occupation rather than evacuation, the Church will come into direct competition with the world system for the management of the planet - fasten your seatbelts, it's about to get exciting. . . . The political arena is the key power base of any culture and therefore the most difficult stronghold to overcome."*

Apostolic Network. There has been a commitment from 150 Apostolic Networks from all over the world to come together . This month they held the first Network of Networks conference.

It is called N.A.T.I.O.N (Networking Apostolic Thrust Internationally or Nationally). Their vision is to facilitate the networking of Apostolic Leaders and Apostolic Church movements regionally, nationally and internationally. (The following are quotes from the advertising brochure).

N.A.T.I.O.N.'s is.. *"A growing network of like-minded Christian apostolic leaders, from countries around the globe, whose purpose is to encourage and strengthen one another, through Relationship Resource and Realization of Vision. Our mission is to help one another in releasing apostolic ministry to the world and bringing the apostolic movement into the mainstream of Christianity."*

The conference was held as a National Symposium on the Postdenominational Church. This conference was, *"bringing spiritual fathers and apostles together, as the Synergism of 'Networking' makes each part greater and it makes the whole greater as, 'every joint supplies'". "The Post denominational Symposium has the potential for the furtherance of the gospel primarily because of the spirit of unity. The commanded blessing that God has promised when there is unity in prayer and warfare- will be released for those who attend this historic event."*  
- Larry Lea.

*"We are excited about the post denominational Symposium! At Last the leaders of the 'streams' will combine to form a river of revelation for growth and missions worldwide. This will be a mega-conference for vision impartation "* - Larry Stockstill.

*"It finally happened! A Symposium where postdenominational leaders of all types can network, resource, and celebrate what God is doing in their lives and ministries. This symposium will activate your vision, update you in the latest post-D (denominational) phenomena and give you entrance into a networking bonanza!"* - Ed Delph.

Please note that this conference was sponsored by: The Office of Continuing Education at Fuller Theological Seminary and Global Harvest Ministries, AD 2000 and Beyond Movement's United Prayer Track. We will have much more on this subject in subsequent newsletters.]

What is Happening? In looking back at notes I made in 1989 concerning statements made by those Christians who felt themselves to be on the "cutting edge" of new revelations, and who felt that massive changes were coming for the church, I am amazed! Much of what is being proclaimed by some in the post-denominational movement today is echoed in what I quoted in my notes seven years ago:

- Doctrine divides; it is unity that will defeat satan in the world today; look for a new anointing; the church is being perfected; a mighty army is arising in the land!
- If pastors are not willing to go along with this new thing, they will be removed;
- denominations will cease to exist in view of the new move. Apostles and prophets are being raised to usurp leadership in the church;
- People do not want to hear about prophecy. The focus is instead centered on a triumphant church and a victorious and purified bride. Therefore the need to watch and pray and be ready is removed. The guard is down. The Word warns us about being ready lest that day come upon us unaware. The church is becoming careless about the signs we see around us. Jesus warned, "Take heed, lest ye be deceived", He said that, "Many shall come in my

Name!" Jesus never said that you will know that I am coming because the Church will be in a Golden Age of triumph and you will have Christianized the world. He did speak of deception, persecution, fearful things - signs in the sun and distress of nations. What these things begin to happen where do you look? Look up! Why would He say to "look up" if the Kingdom were already established here on the earth?

What Does God Say? For one thing, GOO does not need networks! Networks can be likened to snares, and the Word of God clearly delineates His mind on this:

*"The proud have hid a snare for Me, and cords; they have spread a net by the wayside." Psalm 140:5*

*...as birds that are caught up in the snare, so are the sons of men snared In an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them." Eccl. 9:12*

What Does God Want? There has been such an over emphasis placed on "higher" learning and "critical" thinking in the past generation that ministers without a degree have cowered in awe of those who have a "Ph.D". It is not the Ph.D that makes a man/woman of God. (Notwithstanding, even Ph.Ds can also be men/women of God). God is looking for those who are willing to:

- A. Seek Him with all their hearts.
- B. Willing to forsake all to follow Him.
- C. Study to show themselves approved unto Him.

When Gideon came to battle the host of the Midianites, the Lord said to him:

*"The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me." Judges 7:2.*

Then God proceeded to cut Gideon's army down to size so that He might receive the glory.

We used to sing a song as children, "Dare to be a Daniel, Dare to Stand Alone". Daniel stood his ground, fearlessly and God received the glory. The scriptures give us illustration after illustration of individuals who walked with their God. Down through history, those that made the difference were willing to turn from the status quo and stand for truth against great odds.

Networks at best are of men's making, structured for power. They have the seeds within themselves to self destruct (and destroy others as well).

God is calling forth a people *out of this world*. He wants those who will *love not their lives - even unto the death*. Are you willing to stand before God today and declare:

TAKE MY LIFE, AND LET IT BE  
CONSECRATED, LORD TO THEE;  
TAKE MY SILVER AND MY GOLD;  
NOT A MITE WOULD I WITHHOLD:

TAKE MY INTELLECT, AND USE  
EVERY POWER AS THOU SHALT CHOOSE.  
TAKE MYSELF, AND I WILL BE  
EVER, ONLY, ALL FOR THEE.

## THE GREENING OF THE CHURCH: Report Update

**Lannette Irwin**

Former Soviet Union Leader Vladimir Lenin's birthday was the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April. He was born in 1870. 100 years later on April 22, 1970, Earth Day was born. Does the celebration of Earth Day around the world have any connection to Lenin's birth date? In January, 1990, a conference was held in Moscow for the call of joint action by religion and science. More than a thousand religious leaders and political and scientific leaders from 83 nations attended the conference including Soviet Mikhail Gorbachev. The First State of the World Forum was held in San Francisco on September 27, 1995. Gorbachev was a featured speaker. George Shultz and Alan Cranston were there with new agers such as John Naisbett, Carl Sagan, Peter Hesse and many others. As far as the church is concerned, is this purely a political movement launched by Senator Gaylord Nelson and other Anti-Vietnam demonstrators and adjoining liberals that New Agers have embraced or is there a religious movement couched in politics and concern for the Earth to hide a real agenda of Ecumenicism and Religious Unity that makes the Church easy prey? Although the politics they are trying to install is Globalism, they understand that the one thing in their way is the Church!

This is an area of real concern for the Church. The main goal stated over and over again is unity of religions, with churches and affiliated organizations being the target of infiltration. In May, 1990 on C-span, at the Inter-Continental Conference on Caring for Creation, Prince Philip the Duke of Edinburgh, was a featured speaker and revealed some interesting information that we will be sharing. He said that in 1979 the Pope declared St. Francis of Assisi to be patron saint of Ecology. In 1961, Prince Philip was invited to be the International President of the World Wide Fund for Nature (W.W.F.) which is sometimes known as the Wildlife Fund. In 1986, the founding of W.W.F. was celebrated in Assisi as it was believed to be the best place to hold the celebration because of the Patron Saint Francis. Prince Philip admitted that he does not like to be political or to be involved in politics, but has agreed to take the position of the president of W.W.F. He also stated the W.W.F. is the largest environmental organization to date. However, he failed to disclose his 30-minute meeting with the Pope. In an article titled 'Vatican Joins Wildlife Fund', PITTSBURGH CATHOLIC, April 20, 1990.

*“The World Wildlife Fund, headed by Britain’s Prince Philip, said the Vatican, has joined it in the effort to protect the global environment. The agreement came during a 30 minute meeting between the prince and Pope John Paul II at the Vatican April 10, in which the Vatican accepted the fund as a consultant on nature conservation, the organization said in an April 11 statement”.*

Prince Philip said on C-Span:

*“At the 1986 meeting in Assisi, there were two areas of concern for change. One was economics and the other scientific. A third dimension had to be added if their efforts were going to succeed. The moral/ethical dimension – and here is why they decided religion had to be involved.*

*We might be able to mobilize new potentially important allies in the struggle to prevent extinction of species and the care for the natural environment. After all, there can be little advantage in attempting to save souls or to seek enlightenment or salvation if humanity’s very existence on this earth is threatened by our own destructive activity.*

*So, we therefore suggested to the Minister General of the order of the Franciscans that he might invite leaders from the other four Faiths that the Jewish, the Muslim, the Hindus and Buddhist meet together in Assisi to discuss among themselves whether there was a religious aspect of the conservation of nature and what their scriptures individually have to say about the relationship between humanity and the natural world.*

*Furthermore what might be termed the revealed religions have been concerned about many other things to draw people away from what they have seen as the pagan worship of natural phenomenon. It is now apparent that the ecological pragmatism of the so-called pagan religions such as that of the American Indians, the Polynesians and the Australian Aborigines was a great deal more realistic in terms of conservation ethics than the more intellectual monotheistic philosophies of the revealed religions.”*

The outcome of this meeting in Assisi, according to Prince Philip, has been most encouraging. Each of the faiths represented and produced their own Declaration on Nature and these Declarations in turn, stimulated theologians to give much closer attention to their perception of the natural world and what part they should play in its protection. The five faiths represented in Assisi decided to form a loose and informal association with W.W.F. Network on Conservation and Religion and since Assisi it has been joined by the Bahais and the Sikhs, while the Jaines and the Taoists are expected to join this year. Among the many initiatives that have been sparked by the network is the North America Conference on Religion and Ecology. This initiative is seeking to link up religious communities in the U.S. to what is called Bio-regions. The idea is that the religious community in a given Bio-region, such as the Mississippi River system, might combine together to plan programs of environmental action based upon a common ecological problem situation. This is all in hopes for religious churches of all faiths to come together for common problems. These movers and shakers of the Environmental Movement are using environmental concerns to establish world-wide religious unity. Prince Philip stated, *“People will do a lot for self interest, but when it comes to their religion they will go to their stake.”* It was realized that theology must play an important role.

Thus, eco-theology was born and now, just as with every other fad, Christians are buying into the new “religion of the earth”. One wonders what will be the next ecumenical move of the “unholy” spirit.

Prince Philip continues:

*“I believe that a new and very powerful group could be mobilized to support measures designed to protect the environment on which they depend for their survival, indeed this is already proven to be the case. Last year the sacred liturgy trust was launched at the United Nations headquarters in New York with the object of getting the most important sacred text of a number of religions translated into a common language and the first will be English. Now the Buddhists have made great strides in the production of teaching materials in ecology for their schools. Many Christian Churches have used such traditional events as the Harvest festival as an event to draw attention to the sacred nature of God’s creation and the need to care for it. They developed conservation projects on church lands in Kenya and have introduced ecological themes in their Sunday Schools.”*

CREATION SPIRITUALITY, March/April, 1992 ran an article entitled, “The Earth Charter: A Religious Voice.”

*“THE ROLE OF RELIGION”*

*Assumptions have begun to shift, moved by the crisis they have caused and re-directed by the discoveries of human science, religion, therefore, will undergo a radical reformulation; a ‘cosmicization’ of its own traditions and insights.*

*Religion is the paramount storyteller that links us to one another, to Creation, and to God.*

*Out of such unity can come the special kind of inspiration and direction that the religious world can offer throughout present time of crisis; a common statement of principles, a collaboration for deeper understanding, and a joining of forces for effective action. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) which will be held in Brazil this June offers an opportunity for such combined effort. The UN conference is actually asking the religious world to help in the creation of an Earth Charter, which it sees to be in the tradition of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; only, this time, raised to a new level to embrace the rest of Creation, the rights of other species with whom we share the Earth.*

*This will mean basic changes within each religion, from worship, through study, to action.*

*Worship refers to facilitating the experience of a New Story, while study means that people need (re)education in order to understand the ramifications of a new world view.*

*Their world view includes a new life style of change, it covers personal habits, eating, energy consumption, values, use of property and financial investments. . . .*

*New legislation, new economic policies, new international trade agreements all come under this aspect of implementation. The religious institutions have enormous potential, both at the spiritual/moral level and the socio-political level.”*

As you read this you might think, “no Christian could fall for such an obvious deceptive delusion.” However, it is sobering to realize that many already have fallen for this.

April 23-25, 1995 was the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Earth Day. Christians were invited to celebrate Earth Day at the National Student Colloquy on Global Stewardship. The Celebration was hosted by Seattle Pacific University. Featured speakers were from the World Bank, World Vision, Fuller Theological Seminary, National Wildlife Federation, Regent College (CBN), Youth With A Mission and The Christian Environmental Association. Attendees were invited to dialogue with environmental policy makers and advocates on population and consumption issues and the Christian Theological Foundation for Responsible Global Stewardship. This event was sponsored by World Vision, U.S.A.

The Church has once again entered into a NETWORK of lies and we pray that there will be some who will understand what is happening and return to the simple truth of the Scriptures. The Word of God tells us about what we should be concerned:

*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplications, with thanksgiving, let your request be made known to God. (Philippians 4:6)*

The cares of this world must never distract us from the reason we are here and Who is responsible for our salvation. We have been set free from a yoke of bondage. This world’s system would love to entangle the Church with one more bag to carry. There are those who are preaching the Gospel of the Earth who would love to blame Christians for the environmental problems. There are even new Bibles being written that are “environmentally correct”. The true environmental impact study is found in Revelation 6:12 and 8:12:

*And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became as black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;*

*And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.*

That does seem to be the impact that the “world changers” want to stop. The world is infected by sin. In spite of all the efforts of Christians and non-Christians alike to involve us in what they see as the evolution of their world, we must retain our FIRST LOVE and look to Jesus Christ for our salvation. AS never before we must continue to preach the gospel and exhort and rebuke with all long-suffering. Hide the Word deep within your heart. One day that may be the only place where IT CAN BE FOUND.