Church-Based Theological Education: When The Seminary Goes Bacg to Church

Russell W. West

> *"He (William Tyndale) said in a controversy with a clergyman, 'If God spare my life ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth a plough to know more Scripture than thou dost'."*[1]

Introduction

Although it is not always recognizable, educators involved in church leadership formation are caught in a predicament. They have accepted a share in the task of forming church leaders. They do so often in the hallowed halls of theological learning and tradition. However, they do so often with a serious methodological handicap. They perform their work at the distinct disadvantage of working, sometimes cloistering, beyond the walls of the operational context-the local church. Graduate pastors know better than seminarians-in-process of the delayed costs of functioning at this disadvantage. It comes in the forms of questionable confidence, competence and credibility:

> The first memorial service I ever attended in my life was as the officiant. The first time I had ever seen someone die was as their pastor. The first sermon I ever preached was before a congregation. The first couple in marriage crises I ever encountered was as their supposed therapist. The first budget I ever saw developed was as a program administrator. I may have been able to write 20-page papers on heaven, prepare brilliant strategies for church growth and articulate a clear understanding of marriage. I knew great theories of communication and the servant role of the pastor. However, no one had ever guided me in how to live out these truths. (Dearborn 1995, 7)

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[1] Merrill C. Tenney, ed., *Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1963), 119.

Although this predicament may continue for residential seminary campuses, a new breed of seminarians is rising who are prepared to explore emerging innovations on an old approach to serious ministry training. Beyond the bounds of the formal seminary establishment the Biblical Institute for Leadership Development International (BILD) of Ames, Iowa, appears to be one organization poised to offer a model of contextual leadership development that should be of interest to religious leadership educators. It should be of interest because that which functions so well within the BILD model, by contrast, represents what seminaries work hard at, but do not always achieve. It should be of interest because emerging church-based formation options may represent market shifts that evidence a preference for low-cost, in-context, just-in-time training over and against expensive, residential or delayed implementation models. Seminaries could fail to understand both of these issues and thereby miss the "disruptive technology" lessons learned by many conventional corporate institutions when they misread or were unwilling to shift focus and method to accommodate the innovation.[2]

With these factors in mind, it is my intent in this paper to explore the church-based theological education model of contextual church leadership development. I sense church-based theological education may yield insights for leadership educators who strive to prioritize missional values in their formational work.[3] Admittedly, I participate in theological education as an academic professional (more than fifteen

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[2] Clayton M. Christensen, Harvard professor of business and author of The *Innovator's Dilemma* and *The Innovator's Solution* (http://www.claytonchristensen.com), advances the term 'disruptive technologies' to describe the phenomena whereby a low-cost, even sometimes under-performing, solution displaces those technologies (and their providers) that are slow to respond to market needs and demand. Responsive and agile providers who offer low-cost or even partial solutions to neglected customers increasingly gain market share and squeeze past slower moving industries. Examples of disruptive and displaced technologies include: rail industry/automobile industry, celluloid camera film/digital cameras, long play recording albums and various cassettes/compact discs, mainframe computing/personal computers. He points to the power of organizational learning as a means for existing institutions to maintain market position by cultivating "sustaining technologies," partial responses to the innovation demands of their loyal customer bases. This concept is revisited in the final section of this article.

[3] For an excellent summary of the challenges in theological education, review Robert Banks' *Reenvisioning Theological Education* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999). He proposes a missional model of theological education as critical to resolving many of the contemporary seminary's relevance problems.

years in university and seminary leadership education work) and an amicable critic. There are places within this paper where reflection may be noticeably unrepresentative of seminary organizations which have made significant investments to locate learning experiences in the context and spirit of the local church. My highest motive is service to the church, to seminarian-customers and to the institutions to which I offer my professional loyalty. In offering this service, I offer my hard-won critique as well, not with a kind of meanness than tears down, but with an optimism that can renew and reform.

The paper is organized in two parts. In "Part One - When the Church Goes to Seminary," we explore, through a historical discussion of the traditional seminary's development, the premise for alternative models of the church leadership education. In "Part Two - When the Seminary Goes Back to Church," the church-based theological education model is presented; its claims are compared and critiqued in the light of the present state of the seminary establishment and selected relevant organizational theories. In this section, church-based theological education is presented as an innovative proposal around which self-conscious church leadership educators, in the seminary and the church, might develop conversation and partnership.

PART ONE ~ WHEN THE CHURCH GOES TO SEMINARY: THE TRADITIONAL SEMINARY MODEL

In this section, I explore the dominant approach to church leadership formation, that of the traditional seminary institution. I argue: traditional seminaries do some things well, but not all things completely. Through a brief review of selective leadership formation practices in the church through the ages, I reassert a question that has been asked and debated repeatedly by concerned participants in the church's leadership formation ministry: 'What are the means and ends of church leadership formation?' This section depicts the church going to the seminary for its leadership formation. In the next section following, through exploration of the church-based theological education model, the focus reverses to examine the differences that occur when the seminary goes to church.

THE LEADERSHIP EDUCATOR'S PREDICAMENT: THE SLOW DRIFT FROM CONTEXT

An examination of leadership formation in church history shows that the scales tip away from the context of the church, away from the life-on-life impact images so prevalent in the church era, (for example, Jesus and the Twelve, Paul and the Apostolic Band) and away from holistic focus to compartmentalized formal education. I put forward a brief review of the key modalites of leadership formation throughout the ages of the church. This outline offers a picture of shifts that occurred, for various reasons, to make up the dominant model of church leadership formation experienced in contemporary societies. This section is organized chronologically as follows:[4] *Pre-Church Era, New Testament Apostolic Era, Post-Apostolic Era, Middle Centuries Era, Colonial Era and Industrialist Era* and *Post-Modern Era.*

PRE-CHURCH ERA: WHOLE-LIFE RELATIONAL TRAINING AND OBSERVATION

The leadership formation methods modeled by Jesus and Paul may be beholden to common socialization practices in Palestine and the Graeco-Roman world. Teachers like Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, Arcesilaus and Carneades, beginning three centuries before Christ, left their mark in Hellenistic societies through pedestrian academies of philosophy.[5] Often schools for the sons (only) of aristocrats (and sometimes male slaves who attended with these sons),

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[4]   I am grateful to Dr. John Gration, then-professor of missions in the Wheaton College Graduate School for the general outline of the historical schema. I have adapted this outline from his course reader for *Contextualization,* section entitled "Contextualization of Theological Education." Another important resource for those interested in this development is Robert Ferris' *Renewal of Theological Education* (Momgraph of the Billy Graham Center at Wheaton College) wherein he offers a historical representation of forces that helped shape the present model practiced by most seminaries. He carries the study into an important area of service by offering criteria for revitalization as well as ten model schools world wide which were, at the time of writing, seeking to live out the criteria.

[5]   The concept "academy" is derived from Plato's academy. The garden in which the school was built in 387 B.C., was purchased from the hero Academos or Ecademos. Plato presided over this school until his death; it persisted for nearly 900 years until destroyed by Christian emperor Justinian in the 6th century (526-529 A.D.). Ruins of this academy are maintained by the Hellenist ministry of culture (www.culture.gr).

and sometimes no more than a one-tutor/one-room operation in a market booth, these tutorial schools offered very basic orientations in rhetoric, math, law and athletics (with a military flavor). Mastery of thought forms, and exacting reproduction by memory drills were the emphases in these oralist societies (Krallman 32). When Romans were able to have formal education, because of their class status, tutorial approaches were normative. Working and slave class tutors mentored aristocratic sons in languages, rhetoric and other essential subjects thought to be critical to the protégé's habitual development. This practice is so commonplace in the culture that Paul can allude to this formational domestic presence metaphorically to impress upon Galatian Christians, rightful heirs of the entire house, are exercised even as servants, and not sons, in their development by "tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father." (Galatians 4:1-7).

Rabbinic academies adapted transmission methods practiced by the Greek and Roman rhetorical teachers. These were rabbinic academies in the homes of presiding rabbis, or about the temple area. Jewish boys, beyond fifteen years of age, could attend 'scribal college' after their formal education. Note the life-on-life transfer implied by these excerpts concerning renown rabbis of the time: "A man must use the manner of speaking of his teacher..." and "I have received as a tradition from Rabbi Johanan bar Zakkai, who heard from his teacher, and his teacher from his teacher...." Said in praise for Hyrcanus' memorization skills of one of Rabbi bar Zakkai's student's: "He [Hycanus] was a plastered cistern which loses not a drop..." and also, "The words of the rabbi were precious, his example, more precious still...." (Krallman, 32-33).

The first training stages occurred in these mentor-understudy academies for Judaism's religious and intellectual ranks, i.e., Sadducees, Sanhedrin, Pharisees, Scribes, Zealots, Essenes and Rabbis (Krallman, 29-30). Many in the groups were "lay learners" who earned their living through the development of trade skills. The Pharisees and Zealots are particularly noted as craftsmen, and laborers. The scribes were a guild of approved lawyers. The commonality between them: most men and women in the guilds gained their trade

through direct relationship of a master-teacher to an apprentice. We should not be surprised when we see Paul relating to like craftsmen throughout his journeys, i.e., "...because he was of the same trade" (Acts 18:3). The Church's tree of leadership formation grows from the relational roots of this kind of domestically contextual association, imitation and vocational modeling. The whole life is the ideal purview of formation in this era. It should be noted, however, that some of the transmissional, while effective in forming habitual life patterns, is only as valuable as the objective and content of the training. This is an important lesson to take note of as we turn to the New Testament era, and successive eras of formational practices.

NEW TESTAMENT APOSTOLIC ERA: RELATIONAL TRANSFER.

In the New Testament era, Jesus, in contrast to the religious leaders of His day, is the centerpiece for whole-life transformation. As the New Testament era emerges in the appearing of Jesus, he is first noticed for the contrastive way that he teaches: "And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (Matthew 7:29). Whereas some teachers achieved impact by memory drills so common in orality-preference cultures, requiring disciples to memorize and cite genealogies of important teachers to support their arguments, Jesus transforms the formation modality, not so much in relational form (as the last section points out), but in objective. Jesus is unlike many other rabbis of His time in that He does not emphasize memory drills, but location and purpose. He is after changed disposition in life, in all its habits (Bruce 6). He bypasses conventions that reduce learning to corrective and accumulative transactions by penetrating to matters of motive, affections and destiny. His pupils are exercised through conative reappraisals, reframing and renewals. For example, He invites a priority change in His disciples when He entertains their questions about personal ambition and leadership. Not chiding their ambition, He offers them the key for which they seek: if you want to be great or be a leader, you cannot do it as it has been

practiced by Gentile rulers—the lord-over model—but rather, you must become servants of the many and servers of the most (Matthew 20:20). Understanding what this new priority would cost the hearts and habits of these would-be great ones, He asked if they could drink the cup of suffering. Before answering them directly about seats at the right and left of His throne, He invited them to *unlearn* their conventional modalities of leadership.

In order to achieve this new focus on both inner-life transformation of the leader and whole-life transformation that impacted skill, vocation and habit, the dominant formative trend during this era is characterized by a highly relational transfer process similar to that of mentoring, coaching and sponsoring. It is instructive, that in the selection of the twelve "He appointed twelve that they might be with Him" (Mark 3:16). Since leadership selection, the appointing of elders and deacons for the young churches was a process of community affirmation at times and personalized investment by apostolic and bishopric leaders at others (1 Tim. 3; Titus 1), emerging leaders would often be developed through assignments in a ministry context (1 Timothy 1:4). This is what Gunter Krallman in *Mentoring for Mission* calls 'consociation' and what Robert Coleman in his classic *Masterplan of Evangelism* calls 'association,' that through "with-ness" these leaders accomplished "witness" ( ). The assignment-based master-apprentice model, therefore, is seen as the dominant formational modality during this time frame. Paul's affectionate use of 'son' when referring to leaders in his apostolic band, or the use of 'father' and when self-referencing in the cultivator role he played in the lives of followers such as Timothy and Silas is indicative of this relationship. It appears he appropriates this practice residually from his own formation experience with rabbis, like the great Gamaliel (Acts 22).

This relational transfer method, while certainly not functioning in the cultures of New Testament as an anachronism to proscribe other means of formation such as formal credentialing seminaries of contemporanaiety, it is not easily dismissible. When other models fail to address the way persons actually grow in character, spirituality, acquire and express skillfulness in their family social base and spiritual

community, then such models do raise the questions about what criteria *should* be used to determine appropriateness. The scripture examples *and* the results of these must be among the first considerations when developing such standards. Beginning *in* the New Testament, as a basis for the exploration trucks the central questions of the study to an epistemological source that allows (requires) us to judge between what is taken as certain, how one acts with certainty and what prescriptions follow in our administering a certain path in matters pertaining to leadership formation in the church. Also, the norms question demands that we not only consider the delivery forms and locations (congregation-based or classroom-based) but the content and outcomes as well (proposition-oriented or power-oriented). A reconsideration normative summaries of mission in the New Testament — revisit Matthew 9:38-10:3; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 10:38; 1 John 3:8; Romans 16:19; 2 Corinthians 12:12 — must inform Western and Protestant traditions of leadership formation in purpose, form, content, conation, process and outcome. After all, *this* mission seeks to destroy to works of Satan, seeks and saves the lost, makes the kingdoms of this world the kingdom of our God and of his Christ; missional leadership will demand a charismatic competence and vibrancy to match the character of the work to which such are sent (Ruthven, 5).

POST APOSTOLIC ERA: CATECHETICS AND MONASTIC ORDERS

To appreciate the institutionalizing of the formational processes which begins during this time, contemporary readers may need to be reminded of the oral quality and diasporatic social structure of the ancient church.[6] Most of the church's early documents are preserved through successive oral renditions and the intensive work of copyist. Most people, *who* could read were called upon or paid to read to groups of people. Learners learned orally. Reading and writing might have been a centralized function of learned

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[6] It is easy to take for granted, in an era where everything readable was written by the hard-to-learn art of chirography (hand writing). The contemporary equivalent would be writing emails on stones with chisels; not many, in my church, neighborhood or seminary, would be able to or prefer to do this to "get off" a message to someone. So writing and reading was the rare work of highly skilled, intentional people with the most non-trivial of messages to relate.

persons, slaves whose job was reading and tutoring. In this environment, catechisms, hymns and publicly read epistolary scripture fragments (1 Tim. 4:13) were the primary means of religious training for most. Relational transfer, necessarily, persists in this mode. However, the group's role in hearing, comparing and interpreting are prioritized. It was the small localized group that received a new convert into fellowship within the church. To facilitate this, catechetics offered lengthy periods of instruction for neophytes preceding such baptismal status. While life-on-life transfer that was so evident in the model of Jesus and Paul continued, the dominant mode shifted to the small group learning community.

Live-in bi-vocational formative communities, wherein one teacher shaped a small conclave of others under orders, becomes the predominant mode for training into medieval times. This small group modality evolved even more formally as the church expanded beyond its primary centers. As it would be difficult to for churches in diaspora to have first-hand knowledge of international itinerants or know the authority of various pseudonymical scripture fragments and letters, ecclesiastical governing bodies and councils necessarily developed. These centralizing agencies took on the forms of conveners of doctrinal discussions, endorsers of itinerant preachers and leaders, libraries of classical and spiritually important knowledge, and eventually bishop seats. As the frontiers of the church began to be charted in and beyond the Mediterranean basin, churches and their related agencies achieved trans-local identities (i.e., the church at Laodicea, library at Carthage). Such centers inform some of the ancient church's most critical matters of orthodox identiy, e.g., Councils of Hippo (AD 393) and Carthage (AD 397) adjudicated the twenty-seven canonical books comprising the New Testament. Around these centers, monastic industrial communities also developed, some supporting the scholarly efforts that resulted in conservation, preservation and extension of the church while others cultivated "secular" livelihoods from farming and craft-making. And while the mention of monasticism can awaken ambivalence many students of Church history, because of the dualistically motivated retreats from the world and society, the church

owes a great debt to these self-managed work groups.

Many monastic communities provided important contributions to church and society, some of these benefits persist throughout the history of the church. The adoption of a codex of authorized scripture required scribal schools and monastic orders for the manual copying and distribution of scripture and other important texts. Cassiodorus, (478-573 A.D.), is an example of this scholarly impetus. Historian Earle Cairns describes him as "a high government official under Ostrogoths, retired from government service "to devote himself to the task of collecting, translating, and copying patristic and classical literature. He was aided in the task by the monks of a monastery he founded" (Cairns, 155). The Book of Kells, an elaborately pictographic seventh century Latin manuscript of the Gospels by Irish Monks is another example of conservational work of monk-scholar communities. Monks acted as missioners, conducting evangelistic and church planting campaigns which expanded the borders of the church farther beyond its Jerusalem, Antiochian and Roman centers. Wherever they went, hermetic and monastic orders of specialist often convened for mutual formation; they adopted 'rules of life' in the cases of some orders and abbeys, e.g., Benedictines (Franz, 8).

MIDDLE CENTURIES ERA: CLERICAL MODEL OF MINISTRY.

Although as early as 350 A.D. Clement makes a "clergy" and "laity" distinction (Kraemer, 83), it is during the period of the enlightenment that the Latin notion for a *bright* or *learned* or *read* person is associated with the term "cleric," i.e., clergy and clerk. During this period, scientific knowledge was multiplying. Against the backdrop of increasing discontent with the Church and its increasing institutionalization, widespread corruption and indefensible cosmological commitments, and a naturalist and rationalistic worldview was displacing, primal spiritualist worldviews associated with mass non-literacy. A cleric was needed "to read" the languages of Scripture, to think scientifically and expound—writing and speaking—according to classical Greek methods. With these primary tasks that enabled one to conduct liturgical ministry, such learning is decidedly past-oriented, reason-centered,

expert-reliant and material resource-dependent. The "cathedral schools," where priests gathered around a bishop "to receive training in dogma, liturgy, and common law" anteceded Europe's first universities in twelfth and thirteenth centuries (Griffith, 46). The rationalistic emphasis within such training resulted in a social divide between the learned and unlearned; it reinforced a vocational (and status) divide between an institutionally apportioned priestly class (*cleros*) and commoner class (*laos*). The scriptures were forbidden to be translated in the vulgar languages of the common folk (laity), although the Church authorized mass in Latin-only (a practice that persisted until the mid-20th Century). The modern seminary model is most recognizable from this European form which advantages priests and scholars over ordinarily called people of secular vocation.

Arguably, one dominant thrust of the Reformation and its residual movements, especially the English and German expressions, fastened upon the inequities perpetrated through this class-divided ecclesia so informed by the literacy-driven socialization. Just as a linguistically inaccessible bible was no longer acceptable, neither was a model of church divorced from a model of empowerment-oriented learning for all people within the church. When, in 1455, Gutenberg completes the first bible with his movable type print mechanism, and locates the commercial press as a technological watershed of history, with it becomes an equalizing force that destabilizes the imperial institutional powers of the Church in Rome and further modifies how clergy are developed (Crowley and Heyer). William Tyndale meets with his peers in taverns to study scriptures. Martin Luther, during the reformation period, augmented formal seminary studies of his student with informal, "off-campus" conversation groups in his home called "table talks" (Luther). John Calvin made available a similar academy-based experience for the intensive study of Scripture, preaching and biblical languages (as well as municipal schools for the welfare of the citizenry's children). In the 16th and 17th centuries, especially in England, this model of informal training, while sticking closely to intensive Bible study, followed a book of sermons entitled "Bullinger's Decades" (Griffith, 46).

This model persists into the 18th century until the emergence of John Wesley's lay preachers. Patterned after his own innovating self-disciplining practices where he, his brother Charles, and other friends, sought to make plain the state of one's life and heart through "conferencing" around penetrating questions of character, habit and soul vigilance, and with added socio-economic reasons (to pay the municipal debts of preaching houses), this method-constrained rule of socially-engaged piety and learning, the meeting of head and heart in community (Chilcote, 69), eventually worked out into formational groups called societies, bands, class meetings (Snyder, 34-38).

So, even as the university institution emerged, the mentoring method persisted concurrently with the academy method. Innovations like "table talks" and the Wesley's missional organizing are windows into formative innovations that demonstrate that multi-contextual approaches that complemented the dominant cultural practices of formal learning. In America, these methods would blend into innovations like "log cabin colleges" and "parsonage seminaries" where both classical studies of rhetoric and logic continued to be pressed simultaneously as ministers were "reading divinity" with a piteous habit (Beale, 91).

COLONIAL ERA: THEORY-TO-PRACTICD MODEL[7]

When Christians in the new nation of America established the first colonies they developed a trans-generational view for ministry leadership formation by necessity. Following a four-fold mission ethic that had been practiced by Protestants for nearly two hundred years, colonist would: conduct public preaching, form churches, establish towns and start schools

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[7]   Admittedly, this portrayal of leadership formation history follows a Western and colonial line at this point. At this time in history, the Church is equated with a Western institution. Apostolic work is occurring in the world. However, its international missioners were often agents and patrons of their respective states. Their missionary journeys often occurred on first and second waves of imperialist-funded commercial ventures. There are some exceptional cases, such as Jesuits in the then new America which purchased indigenous people to prevent them from being killed by Europeans colonists. See Alber Wheeler Lauber's "Indian Slavery in Colonial Times within the Present Limits of the United States," (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1913).

for leaders (Mathews, 2).[8]   In its early forms, it was a modification of both the European university content and the old world "tutor-apprenticeship" model of relationship. "Rules and Precepts" of Harvard College adopted in 1646 illustrate this dramatically:

> After God had carried us safely to New England, and we built our houses, provided necessaries for our livelihood, reared convenient places for God's worship, and settled the civil government; one of the next things we longed for, and looked after was to advance learning, and perpetuate it to posterity; dreading to leave an illiterate ministry to the churches, when you present ministers shall lie in the dust....Everyone shall consider the main end of his life and studies to know God and Jesus Christ which is eternal life....Seeing the Lord giveth wisdom, everyone shall seriously by prayer in secret seek wisdom of Him....Every one shall so exercise himself in reading the Scriptures twice a day that they may be ready to give an account of their proficiency therein, both in theoretical observations of language and logic, and in practical and spiritual truths. (Newell, 156, 157)

While the making of "learned gentlemen" bode in the forefront of the curriculum, the possibility for a thoroughgoing preparation for the *theologia* task is evident in the 17th century Harvard Puritan ethic (Morison, 45).[9]   What is not obvious is the cultural constraint which required the fruits of such learning to be held in pendancy until colonists could

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[8]   Ed Matthews, "History of Mission Methods: A Brief Survey," *Journal of Applied Missiology* 1, no. 1 (April 1990).

[9]   From Edward Farley's perspective in *Theologia: The Fragmentation and Unity of Theological Education,* "theologia" captures the ideal objective of theological education. It offers a unifying center in a disunified and plural curricula which leaves ministerial candidates to develop this centered habitus within their congregational context, most often without the help of mentors or peers. He defines the notion: "Theologia is a cognitive activity that is both contemplative and deductive. It has an affective saide to it, and helps develop a propensity for action. Though the individual student is central, *paideia* is a corporate affair. It has to do with cultivating a person's spirit, character, and mind so that their faith is deepened and they are better prepared for the the practice of ministry. Development of this habitus or disposition is a decidedly intuitive and speculative affair, and takes place through the institutional culture and structure in which this learning is set" (19-20).

return to their churches. In the colonies, ministers necessarily had to hold theory and practice in tension as they would travel from New England to their assigned churches in the Southern and Western colonies. In the colonial model we see delayed application of ministerial study was separated from the context of performance for the first time. And while the strong emphasis on piety is clear under the guidance of scholarly tutors in the illustration above, these tutors fall far short of the give and take of the ministerial context. One of the demands of theologia is its communal grounding: "Development of this habitus or disposition is a decidedly intuitive and speculative affair, and takes place through the institutional culture and structure in which this learning is set" (Farley, 19). *Theologia* without *missio dei* remains fundamentally flawed, and can either delay the development of missional skills of ministry or jeopardize their realization in the congregational context. The *habitus* formed in the residential school will have a peculiar cloistered resemblance to that of tutors, professors and scholars rather than that of the earthy congregational and civic milieu. Pursuit of a specialized professional degree in a residential seminary context, often geographically removed from the church of origin, is the predominant model for training during the founding days of America. Theory and practice are necessarily separated in the Puritan model (Shelley, 42), and this, in time contributes to controversies, it is not the only approach with which colonists and early pioneers of the new nation experimented.

Given the pioneering stages of societal development and the theological storms that result in increasing denominational particularization throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, new models of leadership formation followed. In his First Great Awakening era sermon entitled "The Danger of an Unconverted Ministry," Gilbert Tennant calls for reform in response to the deformation the orthodox vision that Harvard College once represented, but had now become the center of a theological liberalism controversy:

> The most likely method to stock the church with a faithful ministry, in the present situation of things, the public academies being so much corrupted and abused generally, is to encourage private schools, or

> seminaries of learning, which are under the care of skillful and experienced Christians. (Quoted in Fraser, 3).

Tennant, a Pennsylvanian pastor who had been trained at the University of Edinburgh in 1706, introduced a novel schooling ethic to the frontier, one which was modeled on his mentored experiences in Scotland. He innovated the "Log Cabin College" movement, almost by accident as he sought to provide a means of providing collegiate training for his own sons. Using the cabin adjacent to his home, in 1727 he began to include others in the training program, usually a few ministers each year until his 1742 retirement. This pattern of "reading divinity" at this a the many schools like it that followed in the frontier Southern and Western expansion, were similar to the means of preparing physicians and lawyers of that time. George Whitefield, renown Great Awakening Evangelist commented on the spiritual and political effect of Tennent's extra-institutional work:

> The place where the young Men study now is in Comtempt call'd The [Log] College. It is a Log-House, about Twenty Feet long, and near as many broad; and to me it seemed to resemble the Schools of the Prophets - For that their habitations were mean, and they sought not great Things for themselves...From this despised Place Seven or Eight worthy Ministers of Jesus have lately been sent forth; more are ready to be sent, and a Foundation is now laying for the instruction of many others....The Devil will certainly rage against them" [sic] (Fraser, 6; Gambrell, 102).

This criticism indeed came, but not from the Devil; it came from the credential-minded churches. But this disapproval amounted to only so much as this school went on to produce revivalist preachers, college and academy presidents and most of its synod's ministers by 1758, proving that academic rigor is not the contrast point to relationally-oriented studies. Even though such schools continued to be external to a congregational milieu, they majored on an action-reflection approach that allowed the theory-to-practice delay of colonial

schools to be shortened.

In time the theological education vision accommodated the pioneering culture of the times. One of the developments during this era, due to the absence of a full-blown credentialing culture and the academic infrastructures that would eventually accrue during the industrialization period to come, was that many frontier church communions returned a context-relational model of leadership formation that recaptured the powers of intimacy, life-on-life and *mimetais* (imitation) type practices so evident in the apostolic and post-apostolic eras. These became "parsonage seminaries" wherein "a local pastor, or perhaps a college president or professor of divinity, would serve as tutor to one or more theological students, leading them through a course of studies and overseeing the exercise of their practical talents in the churches" (Gilpin, 87-88, in McFayden, 22).

The response to Harvard becoming *the* Unitarian seminary in 1805, with its withdrawal of the requirement that all students maintain divinity courses, resulted in reaction-driven innovations that rippled throughout the New England and the frontier. Yale College was founded, in part, to make way for a more thoroughgoing Calvinism and Congregationalists established the first freestanding seminary in America, Andover Theological Seminary, a seminary which established the pattern of formalized theological schooling that persists until today. Their model prioritizes sufficient funding sources, scholastic study of propositional theology in a three-fold curriculum of bible, theology and church history, a profession faculty of subject matter specialists and a large library adequate the perceived scholarly task of forming 'learned gentlemen' (Shelly, 43; Miller, 26-27). Reading divinity, at the pedestrian level of the church and community setting, and away from the setting of the classroom of colleges, staved the tide of increasing pluralism and liberalism within formal schools. It functioned less like a fixed curriculum and more like a series of educational tasks related to competence in which facilitated congregational service, met the requirements for ordination examinations, aligned apprentices with theological mentors on the side of theological and political issues within denominations and in state respectively. Ken McFayden, stresses the valuable transitional role of this

tutorial model; quoting W. Clark Gilpin's "The Seminary Ideal in American Protestant Education 1700-1808," he writes:

> Due to its simplicity and flexibility, this tutorial education served several important transitional purpose during a century when the society was gradually differentiating educational functions and distributing them from the home and the congregation to more specialized institutions: schools, colleges, and lending libraries. This elaboration of educational forms progressed at different rates for different regions, churches, and ethnic groups. But, when ministers with European educations could no longer be recruited, when colleges could not be found, or when ministerial students had no books, the theological tutor emerged to "fill in the missing pieces." (93-94)

INDUSTRIAL ERA: PROFFESSIONAL FUNCTIONALIST

From the late 1800s to the mid-1950s, theological education took on a new form, drifting farther away from the highly relational New Testament model. After the turn of the century, the industrial age of progress, automation and efficiency were combined with the influence of German liberalism in American seminaries and churches. The phrase "Schleiermacher's Ghost" has been used to describe the "four part" curriculum found in many contemporary seminaries. In 1811, Schleiermacher proposed in "Brief Outline of Theological Study," three elements for the formation of Church leaders in the University of Berlin at the point the institution was considering "excommunicating" theological studies from its curriculum in a debate concerning competing epistemologies (Kelsey, 93). His proposal saved theological study in the university, orienting the study to place professional (state) clergy on a par with other studied professions in the classical university such as doctors and lawyers. It included: practical theology, philosophy and historical studies. Over time, systematic theology emerged as a fourth element, and these four domains have been dominant in the Western seminary model ever since. Considering the conditions, the four-fold model seems like a worthy act of

institutional contextualization. However, it did not follow that this European model was necessary in the New World. The young church in the New World had an opportunity to reject the professionalized pastorate, already a reality in the nation-states of Europe, and build anew upon New Testament norms. They did not. Instead this cultural form of leadership formation crossed the ocean, found a new home on new soils but at times produced a fruit quite unsuited to the new needs of the day. This was the day of industrialization.

Professional actualization, not especially "calling," in this environment becomes a legitimate motive for seminary studies. This might have made more sense in the context of a dominant state sanctioned church, such as Germany. One could choose the ministry as a vocational choice, learn to think scientifically, speak classically, and be degreed appropriately to fill positions in the church. However, when professional actualization could displace actual profession of faith, then seminaries would be in collusion with the credential society's fomenting of "organizational careers," "guild gate keeping" (accreditation/compliance bodies), "mobility barriers" (for those who could not afford, or were of the "wrong" type, e.g., denomination, ethnicity, gender, etc.), positional stratification (the equivalence of "seminary-trained ordained clergy" as "leader" in contrast to "laity") and market development (Collins, 22-48). The organizational model of the large denominational theological education school, more reminiscent of the assembly line at times than an organic *seminarius* (a nursery for small plants to be protected until development would be assured), affected the outcomes. When the intimacy of the small group models that had been so characteristic of leadership formation practices in the church until this era opted for large group educational models, similar to most other academic and professional schools in America, then something of the school's ability to attend to the *habitus* of its individual charges was lost. And that they may have no institutional mechanisms to measure, discuss, expose what is going on deep in the spiritual life, soulful and social engagement and the healthy physical existence of a ministerial candidate should be considered an exigence of the highest order. This is the cause of a vicious circle of dissatisfaction between the local church and the

seminary (Gration Cassette no. 12). The dominant model during this time ceases to prepare a candidate to *be a person*, but rather prepare such a one to *be a professional*.

POST MODERN ERA: A RETURN TO CONTEXT

The present era is characterized by the familiar themes of the post-modernity thesis and the information age society. Some of the polarities that frame the discussions of leadership and leadership formation relate to: fragmentation/synthesis, complexity/unity, relativism/universalism, dysfunction/ effectiveness, corruption/authenticity, generalist/specialist, theory/application. Even as leadership studies wrestle with the reconciliation of these polarities within its discipline through post-modern proposals (Boje; Boje and Dennehy; Hatch), it follows that theory-intelligent leadership formation, within and beyond the church, should not follow far behind. A treatment like Brian McClaren's "Dorothy on Leadership: How a Movie from our Childhood Can Help us Understand the Changing Nature of Leadership in the Postmodern Transition," Claus Otto Scharmer's "Presencing: Illuminating the Blind Spot of Leadership" or Robert Terry's spirituality-driven proposals in *Authentic Leadership* and *Zones for Leadership* may be a harbingers of such leadership reconsideration projects to come.

The present era of complexity in one wherein trenchant leaders are discovering many of the old rules of bottom line management have changed; senior executives are leaving the top offices in search for significance having tasted the banality of success. Emerging leaders are unwilling to play by old rules of their parent's generation, rules which yielded lots of material toys, but left spirit suppressed, families broken, women and ethnically described peoples marginalized and society and environment unattended to, these emerging leaders are looking for something new from their leadership moment. These leaders are prioritizing roots, mentors, belonging, synthesis and authenticity beyond efficiency, effectiveness, bottom lines and benchmarks. In the enlightenment-informed modalities of modernity, having the "right" propositional answers lacks value if those answer are not in response to the deep questions that real people are

asking. Learning in the post-modern modality deemphasizes the mastery of taxonomies, conjugations and true/false exams. Problem-based and virtual immersional experiences raise the question, the answers, and more questions that have no age-old apparent answer. Not the 'one student paper' created in a library in isolation matters, but the 'group project' where multiple perspectives, ethnographically developed, becomes necessary to engage the learning texts (these are not necessarily books anymore, in this modality, but people, organizations, systems, films,etc. (Rosile and Boje, 1), become necessary classroom methods. The tide of relativism is stemmed by grounding conversation and application in context. Because information is ever-expanding, there is no attempt to master the schematics, but rather specialization in a few things becomes the goal. Relationship (buster, x-er, millennial thinking) precedes task, structure and results (boomer thinking).

In this era, seminaries which are geared to answer the questions of yester-year, in the manner of yester-year, will be by-passed for those options which are relational, meaningful, contextual and nurturing. These emerging realities within the market place of theological education may explain why church-based models are making more and more sense than 'leave-home and read books about the past' models of seminary.   The sociology of the training environment is emerging as a new factor in decision-making about leadership formation.   Daniel Alshire, President of the Association of Theological Schools, offered this answer, when asked his major concerns with today's seminaries:

> Mainline Protestants have assumed the value of
> theological education, and for most of the 20th
> century had sufficient cultural status and
> membership strength that the assumption was never
> challenged. It is different now. Sometimes, people
> ask if it is "just" to have students spend three years
> in graduate, professional education, given the
> earning potential of ministerial careers. Or questions
> are raised about whether seminaries educate
> students adequately for the practices of ministry in
> increasingly complex congregational work. And
> some ask whether graduate-level ministerial training

is an elitist form of education that excludes racial-ethnic and other culturally marginalized candidates. This question, in its many forms, requires a compelling answer. In my judgment, the only satisfying one will be demonstrating that theological education adds enough value to religious leadership that it is worth the effort, time and money (Dart, 4)

Many new breed seminarians, second careerists, pre-professional leaders from mega-churches and emerging churches are keen on this value question; many are finding the traditional model's answer to Alshire's concern wanting. Seminary seems to be making a return to context, the context of the local church from whence it came. If my accounting of dominant patterns is correct, leadership formation comes full circle in the present era. The life-on-life tutorship, on-the-job training, church-on-mission approach, so evident in the New Testament, is being preferred by some over traditional seminary options. An exploration of this phenomenon comprises the second half of the paper.

PART TWO ~ WHEN THE SEMINARY GOES BACK TO CHURCH: EXPLORATION OF CBTE

In the paper to this point, I have emphasized the good but often incomplete preoccupation of church leadership formation in the West, one in which cognitive theological development often was removed from the context of the community of faith. If the foregoing discussion supports one notion clearly it is this: when church leadership formation is un-harnessed from its missional context, the formative process is compromised, and additive renovations, while possibly commendable in moving in right directions, will not render it complete. In the next section, I turn to an exploration of church-based theological education as a functional model that may be useful to Church leadership educators challenged to appropriate contextual and missional approaches into their theological and leadership instructional practices. I also ask questions of context, by probing the relationships shared between church-based theological education and the higher education institution represented by the formal seminary.

THE LEADERSHIP EDUCATOR'S TASK: CONTEXT-RELATIONAL FORMATION

'Contextualization' and 'contextuality' are taking on new semantic careers as field educators alter the missiological application of these terms — to translate the gospel's meaning relevant, near and clear in the context of receptor cultures — for service in the leadership equipping task of church (Hesselgrave, 139).[10] Now 'context' points to the 'the church,' or 'place of service.' It is usually in contrast, albeit implicitly, with 'the classroom' or 'campus.' Many seminaries are exchanging shingles outside their field education offices for new ones that read: 'office of contextual education.'[11] Steven Kemp, writing as Dean of External Studies as Moody Bible Institute, outlines in several articles, the difficulty of this additive, but no substantial change challenge in "Learning Communities in Distance Education" and "Mobilizing Learning Communities." At least one dissertation can be found that seeks to prepare field education participants in the ways and means of contextual education.[12] Contextualization also refers to the case made for "faithful leadership formation" according to biblical and cultural considerations as well, not only missionary messages (Stackhouse, 83).

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[10] Hesslegrave, David, "Great Commission Contextualization Transformation," *International Journal of Frontier Missions* 12:3 (July - September 1995). Bruce J. Nicholls offers a classic definition in "Theological Education and Evangelization:" "[T]he translation of the unchanging content of the gospel of the kingdom into verbal form meaningful to the peoples in their separate culture and within their particular existential situation." See J.D. Dougles, ed., *Let the Earth Hear His Voice* (Minneapolis: World Wide Press, 1975), 647.

[11] A unifying concept emerging from situated learning research is that of "communities of practice," the concept that learning takes place through the sharing of purposeful, patterned activity. Learning is considered "an integral and inseparable aspect of social practice" within the classroom community. In sum, learning represents the common purpose of the community as members of the community grow to value learning and feel that their educational needs are being satisfied through active participation in the community. It is used here to refer to those professional guilds that seek self-consciousness and mutual accountability to be learning communities. Eitenne Wenger, Personal Website. www.eitennewenger.org.

[12] See Jeffrey D. Curtis, "A Model for Increasing Teaching Competence Among Selected Instructors in Contextualized Leadership Development Centers," (D.Min. diss., Golden Gate Seminary, 2000), entitled which described the need for specializes training for unit leaders of the 70+ North American Baptist Mission's (NABM) church-centered leadership development center leaders. He intertwines the conventional missiological use of biblical and theological contextualization themes with those of the NABM strategies to offer training to ethnic church planters with localized high quality post-secondary training experiences; Web

This move toward contextuality is as welcome as it is predictable. It appears that the traditional seminary engages in context compensation. Administrators of theological education processes seem to be aware that the residential approach to formation literally leaves some things to be desired, like on-the-job training and other means to determine if candidates can really confirm their ministerial identities, callings and gifts in the incubator (and crucible sometimes)of supervised practice. To internships and supervised practicum experiences, some professors make the educational experience less theoretically weighted by adding case studies, problem-based learning, scenario planning and endless "small group" work.[13] Others, still, require online dialogue, a battery of tests to sort out personality, social and learning styles, abbreviated immersion field trips and panels of guest practitioners to bring "real live" ministers into the classroom.

COMING TO TERMS WITH CHURCH-BASED THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

The church has sent its emerging leaders to seminary or at least way to some form of formation experience beyond its walls for hundreds of years. Perhaps the compensatory changes just-mentioned, occurring in the administrative offices of seminaries to appropriate best practices of field contexts into classroom contexts, could be reversed. Is it time for seminaries to go (back) to church? To this question, CBTE emphasizes: the responsibility for leadership formation has never left the church; rather the church has not always embraced her role in forming the people of God for the work of the ministry in ways which were adequate to the cultural context. The emergence of seminary-type organizations, physically and often psychologically remote from the activity and ethos of church life, a may be statement about the

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searches on the phrase "contextual leadership development" yield evidence that the term is becoming increasingly linked to the field localization into churches of training experiences for seminarians, departments which are formerly identified with field and supervised ministry training and internship/placement practices of theological education institutions.

[13] While writing this paper, a student in my "Leading Groups and Organizations" course all but begged to be allowed to consolidate his many group assignments (of which my class required one group experience); he explained he was accountable for high-level participation in seven formation-related groups. He was taking four classes in this semester (Spring 2004).

church's abdication of its duty. If the rising interest in church-based theological education means something sociologically, it may not be that a new competitor seeks to threaten seminaries, but that the church seeks to take its rightful and primary place in doing what it should have been tending all along (see Eph. 4:10-16).

So to the question, *"What is Church-based Theological Education?"* there are three answers: One answer: CBTE is a particular service agency's transferable programmed resources (a program).   The second answer: CBTE is a ministry leadership development ethic practiced by many churches and organizations (process).   Finally, it appears BILD may warrant the descriptor: missional church movement (paradigm). Each of these is so inextricably related that any answer would be incomplete without addressing each direction in turn. For the purposes of clarity this discussion is organized under the headings a *program,* a *process* and a *paradigm.*

CBTE is a *program.* BILD International organizers offer several important distinctions when describing their CBTE strategy. They admit CBTE, in order to be understandable, has to displace in the minds of people more conventional approaches in contemporary theological education.   Reed makes a distinction between "church-based theological education" with all lowercase letters, and the formal title of BILD's organizational mission strategy: "Church-Based Theological Education."   The former describes all instances where churches, regardless of their affiliation with BILD International, undertake the process of forming leaders and laborers for missional service within their own local contexts. It is expected that any church that reads well the scriptures on this matter will become convicted that is should have a programmed means of forming all of its people for the work of ministry and the apostolic extension of the church. In this respect, BILD International would be better understood as a church strengthening movement, rather than a theological education market competitor.   This kind of church-based theological education is considered congruent expression of biblical norms of "church establishing"[14] found particularly in Pauline practices of leadership selection and formation that both strengthened (think: gave them steroids) the churches

and enabled them to be self-replicating for generations beyond his apostolic influence.

It seems legitimate, from verses recorded in Acts and Paul's letters to the church to use the word "establishing" to represent a concept that was central to Paul ministry. Paul understood that he had a two-fold job description (Ephesians 3:8-10). First, he was to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. Second, he was entrusted with bringing to light Christ plan for the church-the administration (i.e., management of house order) of the mystery (i.e., the new believing community was to be made of both Jews and Gentiles). After he preached the gospel in a city, Paul gathered new Christians into a community, strengthened them in their faith, and appointed elders in every church. He then continued to strengthen (i.e. establish) the churches around them as a base for taking the gospel to new frontiers. If a church was encountering major problems, Pail continued the process of establishing by sending letters and making personal visits. He also gave priority to strengthening churches over then expansion of the gospel (2 Corinthians 2:12-14). (Reed, "Establishing Series Modules," 1)

Reed makes another important distinction regarding CBTE. Some may confuse "church-based theological education" with "church-housed theological education by extension." Church housed training refers to instances when a church hosts theological education programming that is conducted by an external organization, such as a seminary that seeks to offer courses using the church facilities as a localized classroom. In this case, the church is offering space, but not actually shaping the theological education experience. The church may, or may not, have members of its own staff and church involved (beyond unlocking and locking the building) for local registrants of that sponsoring school. Church-housed models, while offering convenience-focused opportunities for those who desire seminary training, but who cannot attend a residential degree program, can be an ideal solution, offering such a person the opportunity to remain

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14 Passages offered to support the strengthening "steridzein" (*steridzein*, "to strengthen", e.g. steroids) vision include: Acts 14: 21-23, 15:36:36-16:5, 18:22-23; Romans 1:8-15; 16:25-27; I Thessalonians 3:1-13, especially v. 2; 2 Thessalonians 2:17.

close to the context of family, service and responsibilities. However, they should be viewed for what they are and are not; they are not throbbing with missional fervor from within the church's being and mission.

Given BILD International's commitment to providing resources churches, participating churches have available to them these core element of the BILD process:

- A 10-year church-based training strategy guide
- A 30-course core curriculum and life-long learning update system: comprised of more than 10,000 pages, 400 authors from the liberal arts and theological classics
- A comprehensive church-based assessment plan which measures a learner's growth through a life development portfolio, reflecting at least seven years of ministry
- A comprehensive seminar training network with an online resources center
- A publishing and translation network for international partnerships
- An international network of resource scholars, individual and church associations
- A credit-granting interface strategy with seminaries, Bible colleges and programs
- The cultivation of church-based regional and international resource centers, a *new generation of seminaries* which aid participants with information technology, libraries, scholarly writing, conducting councils and consulting (emphasis, mine)

CBTE is a Process. Church-based theological education enters the leadership formation fray with the high advantage of context on its side. In essence, CBTE is a means for designing an extended apprenticeship and subsequent leadership development program. Its core elements include: a local church environment (possibly a cluster of small churches, church planting team, etc.); a leadership team committed to overseeing the process and commending apprentices into the ministry; a well-constructed CBTE program. Critical elements of the process require churches to satisfy these two requirements: adopt five guiding tenets of the BILD CBTE philosophy. The process must: (1) be based in the life of local churches or a movement of churches; (2)

be viewed as a process of entrusting sound doctrine to faithful men; (3) must take place in the context of establishing churches; (4) must be viewed as a vocational need for all men and women regardless of station in life; and (5) begin with first principles of faith.

These guiding elements raise contextual questions that may make adoption of a BILD approach to CBTE difficult for some local churches and participating seminaries. Locating the experience in the local church is understandable, but it is unclear how many seminary resource centers would participate in supporting the church-based process. The emphasis on "entrusting to sound doctrine to faithful men" raises the questions as to what role church-based training might have for capable and faithful women in church ministry. More clarity is needed about how training for *all* of the church, regardless of station of life, is accomplished in those churches where women are authorized to provide leadership. Are the first principles, as stated by BILD, universal first principles for churches in every cultural context? Finally, the literacy-base of the process, while understandable, raises questions about whether non-literacy adopters can be viewed as leaders or experience the same formation experience as those who prefer print-based modalities for training.[15]

BILD supplies its resources for these three dimensions: lifework skills for preparing for future "tent-making" needs in ministry (a commentary on counter-cultural but emerging demand for bi-vocational ministries), an integrated ministry experience and theological study program for carrying out serious ordered learning in community; a portfolio system to guide mentors and leaders-in-training through the development and assessment process. BILD coaches churches through intensive three-year developmental

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[15] The interview process with CBTE-participating churches is incomplete. One of the objectives of the long-term research process with BILD International will involve extensive conversation around these and other issues that pertain to the intercultural and interchurch contextualization of the training process. The BILD International leadership welcomes this dialogue and carries a self-awareness of the mono-cultural context in which the materials and process developed. It was never Jeff Reed's intention to start an international service agency, rather he merely sought training from his own pastor-mentor. After other learned about it, they wanted to experience this too (Reed, personal interview (November 2002)).

processes that allow churches to contextualize unique expressions of the guiding principles of the CBTE process. Over the three-year experience church's participants experience forty days, 240 structured seminars, church development skill-building and "D.Min.-level" paradigm[16] transformation workshops such as "the church as theological education," "the church doing theology in culture," "the Church as Missions," "the Church as Hermeneutical Community" and "The Church as Christian Education." (Reed, Training in the 21st Century, 101)

The designers of the BILD process have been intentional to adopt sound adult education principles. After a presentation of Bloom's taxonomy of higher order thinking, Reed introduces the basic educational plan of the CBTE process: study the scriptures (biblical passages); consult the scholars (theological readers); think through discussions (Socratic discussions); apply the principles (personal projects) (Reed, Training for the 21st Century, 92-103). The portfolio approach is defended in contrast to the degree-gaining approach. In it, participants document ministry experiences, skills and gift assessments, ministry philosophy, vision and goals; personal and family development and character development; creative display of academic competency and emerging theological work; letters of assessment and recommendation (Reed *Training for the 21st Century*).

CBTE is a Paradigm. Five key concepts are core to the CBTE model: a distinctions between church-based and church-housed; an appreciation of Pauline practices of both entrusting and establishing; a formative training objective of the study of theology informed by habitus; and an ordered and democratic approach to learning so that everyone in the church, regardless of station, can be formed theologically for vocation (Reed *Training for the 21st Century*). These under girding values distinguish the BILD church-based theological education process from other which may also seek to grow leaders within their church contexts such as those within the *Alliance for Church-Based Theological Education* (ACBTE) (Getz, "ACBTE" website), or Dale Rumble's *Diakonate* model

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[16] BILD International currently is working in partnership with Gordon-Conwell Seminary to offer D.Min. credit for qualified pastors involved in the "Paradigm Transformation Projects."

(59-90).   The new paradigm is a way to look at church, content (encyclopedia, rigorously academic), objectives (*habitus*), process (extended bi-vocational apprenticeships) context (in community where family, gifts, callings can be affirmed) and outcomes (multiplied churches).

In a section entitled "summary of a *movement*" (emphasis mine), founder and president, Jeff Reed unambiguously carves out the movemental territory BILD intends to inhabit: "We are not calling for the abolishment of seminaries but for the radical ("return to roots") reform as church-based resource centers. We are calling for a shift from a *residential for-service model* to a *church-based in-service model* of ministry preparation" (Reed, *Training Leaders in the 21st Century,* 77). He writes to a far-flung mission consistent with institutional context theory when he writes: "It is a biblical idea that 'provides a philosophy and a framework for solving the worldwide problem of a lack of leaders...for returning serious ordered learning to every believer.' " (Reed, "Establishing Series Modules," 80)

Its strengths: it is a biblically-normed method for multiplying churches; it makes significant *theological education* available to every believer, albeit at different levels; it facilitates making theology a lifelong habit of learning and growing in wisdom; it places responsibility of every church to grow and multiply; it affords many, many more men the opportunity to training as leaders; it helps ensure an appropriate balance (character, ministry and academic) and motivation (establishing and shepherding churches) in the development of leaders" (Reed, 81).

The essence of the BILD approach seeks to re-center the local church and all its people in missional enterprise. Interviews with participants in the network engaging the CBTE processes indicate that overtime, entire framework of programming undergoes change to accommodate the formation of members as a central purpose of the church's life.[17] (Personal Interviews with Torquette (November 2002) and Dion (November 2002)). CBTE, in this respect, does not appear to be a mere add-on program to many competing agendas within churches. Like a Trojan horse, this gift bears within its belly a serious challenge to re-think contemporary

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[17] Personal interviews with Torquette (November 2002) and Dion (November 2002).

society's philosophies of *doing* church.

BILD designers are unapologetic in their assertion that churches in the West are declining for lack of well-formed people-leaders and laborers.   For this reason, the starting place for church-based theological education in the BILD approach is a serious engagement with scriptures around Paul's method of establishing churches in the biblical books of Acts and the Epistles.   No little emphasis is given to development of a theology of contemporary culture. References to "declining Western culture" pepper the BILD materials.   Learner-participants are taught to exegete culture, read primary resources of the great books of all time-from ancient sources like Plato and Aristotle and Church fathers, councils and creeds; to orthodox library-makers like Luther, Calvin and Wesley; to relatively contemporary cultural interpreters such as Lewis, Chesterton and Muggeridge, Toffler, Naisbett, Schaeffer, Guiness and Barna.   In fact, through extensive copyright permission-gaining, a mini-library or primary resource copies are placed in each binder of materials that participants purchase and study.   Each unit of learning is framed with Socratic questions that demand the leaner reach deep within cognitive, conative, cultural and contextual awareness to participate of assignments, projects and discussions with mentors and peer apprentices. The ideal is this: each church would develop such facility with this learning process, as well as develop a cadre of so-conditioned learners that from that church, they could launch training assistance to other churches with natural network of relating, as well as become resource churches to partner with emerging 2/3rds World churches which have begun or are interested in initiating this form of training.[18]

Reformation, not renovation, is implied in the church-based model.   But what exactly should be reformed?   To begin with, the church is the first context that must undergo

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[18] There is no shortage of these potential international partnerships to be developed. BILD is currently resourcing multi-denominational networks of varying theological traditions and backgrounds in churches throughout Australia, Cambodia, Canada, Central Republic of Africa, China, France, Honduras, India, Japan, New Zealand, Nigeria, Peru and Portugal. These, in most cases, are denominational networks, church planting movements and existing seminary systems. A BILD stewardship campaign brochure projects service to 20 million church leaders by the end of the current decade. See www.bild.org for profiles of each on the nation-based church-

significant re-thinking in order for this mode of mission to be embraced and implemented. Church-based theological educators, from my interviews with them, show little interest, if any, of reforming seminaries. This is not their domain of influence, nor is it their stewardship assignment. Rather, these educators are focused on church health as described by New Testament themes and values.[19] For all of the success stories in the BILD network, Jeff Reed points out he can tell of many stories of churches that never succeeded, usually for reasons related to organization culture, implementation problems or change readiness factors.[20] My interviews with the leadership, staff, and participants in the CBTE process indicate, a definite pro-seminary stance, rather than an anti-seminary one, as one might expect if they were to misconstrue the "church-based" focus as an anti-establishment mood. Rather Reed writes: "Our Western seminaries are enormous resource hubs, with a wealth of resources but they are virtually untapped by the evangelical church" (Reed, 1992, 11). Reed points to the influence of legacy-leaving seminary and missional innovators in the formation and development of BILD as a service organization and CBTE as its primary program and process; his mentors are Drs. Walter Kaiser (Gordon-Conwell, President), David Hesslegrave (Trinity Evangelical Seminary, retired), and Ted Ward (Trinity Evangelical Seminary, retired; continues to join each of the annual Church Resource Gathering; serves as a board member).

EXPLORING CBTE THROUGH LENS OF INSTITUTIONAL THEORY

But how does church-based theological education and the traditional campus-based seminary education relate to one another? Why isn't this a matter of 'apple and oranges' or personal preference for some people who desire formal training that is degree-focused and accredited by wider

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based theological education projects. It is extremely significant that in every case, BILD was approached by national network with Macdonian requests for help in their missional efforts to establish their churches through the establishing of their leaders. There is no indication, from interviews with BILD staff, participants and associated networks that BILD has ever made first contact. This is truly a" pull," rather than "push" strategy of response.

[19] Personal interviews with Jeff Reed (November 2002) and Doug Shiplett (November 2002).

[20] Reed, personal interview (November 2002).

societal processes, and those who desire on the job training? It is because both of these processes profess to be about the same outcome, and each professes its structured institutional means achieves similar ends. In this section I consider church leadership formation through the lens of a type of organizational analysis called "institutionalism" or "institutional theory." There is not *one* institutional theory but rather a family of interdisciplinary theories, (although most are centered in sociological and organizational studies) that seek to explain the phenomena of "how social choices are shaped, mediated, and channeled by institutional arrangements" (Powell and DiMaggio, 2).[21] Because theological education modalities are institutional arrangements affecting patterns of theological commitment, social choice, professional behavior, and technological preferences, in ways that have impact upon a wide array of common constituents within the church, an analytical exercise of institutional auditing seems justifiable if not overdue.

Church Leadership Formation is an 'Institution.' Church leadership formation, referring to the entire range of formal, non-formal and informal leadership education options within the church environment, fits the description of an institution in that it is "a natural product of social needs and pressures-a responsive adaptive organism." This is in contrast to an organization that "suggests a certain bareness, a lean, no-nonsense system of consciously co-coordinated activities...a rational instrument engineered to do a job" (Selznick, 5). Peter Selznick, considered father of institutional theory (Hatch, 83), confesses such descriptions are functional for the sake of analysis on one hand, and are likely to be resisted by the objects of such descriptions on the other hand as "most living associations resist so easy a classification. They are complex mixtures of both design and responsive behaviors" (6). While some may not immediately associate seminaries and church-based theological education providers

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[21] Institutionalism is often attributed to Peter Selznick in his *Administrative Leadership*. The study of organizations in the light of their institutional contexts is experiencing resurgence of interest, research and publication. A new application of theories and methodologies are being termed *the new institutionalism*. The first four essays are considered classic introductions for this field. See Walter W. Powell and Paul J. DiMaggio, ed., *A New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1991).

as part of a common institution, since 'institution' is often synonymous with a particular 'organization,' rather than an entire field or practice, others may more easily concede seminaries and CBTE as "networked" around the same objectives, or to be communities of practice or knowledge management systems.[22] A continuum of leadership formation's institutional ecology is pictured in Table 1.1:

INSTITUTIONAL CONTINUUM OF LEADERSHIP FORMATION APPROACHES

It is of note that the less individualized the demands of the leadership formation experience, the more formal the structures and the more compliance- and resource-dependent

Formal	Non-Formal	Informal
▪ Seminaries	▪ CBTE	▪ Mentoring
▪ Colleges, Bible/Christian	▪ In-Service Training	▪ Coaching
▪ Continuing Education	▪ Learning Communities	▪ Tutorials
▪ Field and Distance Ed.	▪ Conferences	▪ Retreats
▪ Ministry Institutes	▪ Seminars, Study Centers	▪ Self-Directed Study

TABLE 1.1

these organizations become. The formalized training structures become subject to larger social, cultural and environmental conventionalizing forces that impinge upon execution of the operations. In other words, as organizations contend with societal forces, they a more difficult time tailoring service to the needs to individuals. Selznick links this end of the spectrum with "institutionalism:"

> ...when an enterprise begins to be more profoundly aware of dependence on outside forces, its very conception of itself may change, with consequences for recruitment, policy, and administrative

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22 One branch of institutional theorist call their scholarly interest "network institutional theory," "a novel approach to the debate on institutionalisms and neo-institutionalisms in organizational sociology, in political science and in economics" (Newsletter, 1).

> organization at many levels. As a business, a college, or a government agency develops a distinctive clientele, the enterprise gains stability that comes with a secure source of support, an easy channel of communication. At the same time, it loses flexibility. The process of institutionalism sets in. (5, 6)

Seminaries cannot deny their environmental orientation to audiences and auditors. At once, seminaries relate to many different types of publics, such as: various types of student-customer groups (prospective, matriculating, alumni), internal membership groups (administration, staff and faculty), industry participation groups (professional guilds and associations) and compliance groups (boards of trustees and reference, accreditation agencies, financial auditors). These relationships, many of which are considered internal to the organization proper, have bearing on institutional functions. They mark out elements of the environment all similar organizations share. They indicate common problems and solutions with which similar organizations contend; they provide agents through which responsiveness within the environment occur.

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES TO TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS

Since institutions develop through refined and repetitive patterned responses to problems, and since technologies do the same, it is important to probe the interactions between technologies in the context of institutionalism. Given the possibility for commodifying of educational experiences, and the vested interests institutions have in remaining bounded, the locating of CBTE and seminaries in the same institutional space is an interesting prospect, especially through the application of an institutional theory of disruptive change. Church leadership formation, in this vein, is a technological entity. Anthropologists describe technologies as structured solutions to a life problems; tools or systems for harnessing energies in the setting (Crapo, 28-29).

How can a seminary or an educational structure in general, be a technology? What kind of technology is it? In

an effort to map extant theories guiding leadership development, I have noted six typologies that have technological connotations. They are: filtering, farming, filling, focusing, fixing and fashion plate approaches.[23] Although all seminaries have guiding philosophies, theologies and theories informing their programming choices, as technologies they seek to solve the basic problem of forming leaders for church service through systematized mediated education *en masse*. Seminaries seek to address the church's need for ministry leadership that is well-furnished in heart, hand and head.[24] This concatenated arrangement of practices is as much a technological solution as an airport or a subway system of transportation, each enabling customers and providers to negotiate and navigate multiple origins and destinations in quality-assured ways that are coordinated, systematic and predictable.

How would BILD's CBTE approach compare as a technology? In this work, it qualifies as an "innovative technology" signaling an emerging preference in the market place within a common institutional context. Notions of disruptive changes, threats or innovations have recently been popularized by Harvard Business professor, Clayton M. Christensen in several works on this theme. He asserts: "disruptive technologies are about certain types of market and technological change" (ix). While his work is explicitly illustrated by the disruptive change dynamic when for-profit David-type corporations disrupt or displace Goliath-like

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[23] See Appendix B "Leadership Development Theories: Six Technological Models" for elements of my lecture on the metaphorical ground of these different technological types.

[24] Through a classroom-based curriculum delivered through selected faculty, candidates accumulate awareness, perspectives, understanding, often with textbooks at the center of this interaction. They are also exercised in pastoral care skills and practices through classroom, case study and field-based assignments. These experiences are tested through examinations, essays, reflective reports and interviews with key participants in the seminary and supervisors within churches. Extracurricular experiences frame the seminary process. Chapel participation, community-based ministries, local church membership, accountability small groups and mentoring requirements are illustrative of some of these activities in best case scenarios. After successfully navigating 75-96 semester hours of this kind of formation, often lasting over a three to five year period, candidates graduate. Depending on the denominational polity of learners, the completion of the Master of Divinity degree may qualify candidates for ordination credentials and pastoral leadership service in churches.

companies, the disruptive innovation lessons are just as obvious and accessible for service sector agencies. Any well-run organization can fail through their response/non-response patterns to environmental or technological change, including a seminary. In fact, counter-intuitively, most of the organizations that do fail are *well-managed* ones for the features that make organizations strong also have a disabling affect on them in the face of innovative opportunity, e.g., stability over hyper-flexibility. This is important as one would guess most seminaries assume themselves to be well-managed; the absence of an immediate standard to prove otherwise, such as daily stock price averages (the collective purchasing-based affirmation of consumers to indicate otherwise) makes this presumption of organizational effectiveness possible. In fact, if most non-profit organizations meet budget adequately, boards of governance, which may desire better performance on other service-related areas of a balanced scorecard may mistakenly assumed that all is well from a management perspective. If it is not apparently broken, according to the feedback loops from bottom lines, student-customer suggestions cards or physical plant deterioration, then why fix it? However, disruptive technologies have a way of vexing good managers. They can be difficult to identify successfully as these technologies seldom appear to be related to the form of business the player seems to be in. Thus, they are missed often until it is too late:

> Companies stumble for many reasons, of course, among them bureaucracy, arrogance, tired executive blood, poor planning, short-term planning, short-term investment horizons, inadequate skills and resources, and just plain bad luck. But [The Innovator's Dilemma] is not about companies with such bad weaknesses: It is about well-managed companies that have their competitive antennae up, listen astutely to their customers, invest aggressively in new technologies, and yet still lost market dominance (ix).

While seminaries do not, outside the closed doors of the executive board suite perhaps, confess a desire for something

like 'market dominance' (especially since competitive ambition is not the ostensible par lee of the ministerial types), they do not glory in failing to maintain a comfortable solvency. In the not-for-profit world of theological education, extensive service to denominational constituents, reaffirmation of accreditation and the positive feedback that black ink provides are some of the closest benchmarks of success that seminaries need concern themselves. However, in the early '90s, the *Murdock Charitable Trust* funded a major study of seminary effectiveness; a study focused on theological education in the Pacific Northwest but in time had implication for the North American seminary establishment. The study discovered that graduates who became pastors "found that 70 - 80% of their seminary education did not apply" to their duties in church ministry and that "48% of the students believed that seminary education had impacted their personal life and values to a significant degree" (Murdock Report). Lessons like these took on dramatic quality when Christianity Today popularized the Murdock report in "Re-Engineering the Seminary: Crisis of Credibility Forces Change." Seminary institutions learned they were not excused from the demands of a consumer public when seminary professors and lay members of churches were asked to list 'the five most important characteristics of an ideal pastor.' (Morgan and Giles, 75). The church, according the lay population of the study, just was not getting 'the product' that missional norms demanded. These disparities were reported:

A programming consideration of the extreme variation of the three lists raises question of not only *what* should be

Ranking	Lay People	Pastors	Professors
First	Spirituality	Relational Skills	Theological Knowledge
Second	Relational Skills	Management Skills	Character
Third	Character	Communication Skills	Leadership Skills
Fourth	Communication Skills	Spirituality	Communication Skills
Fifth	Theological Knowledge	Theological Knowledge	Counseling Skills

taught but *how* these capacities are developed (suggesting, for the purpose of this study, *where* as well). Leadership educators must hear Dan Ayleshire, director of the *Association of Theological Schools,* the accrediting agency for most North American seminaries. To the question: "What is the major issue facing mainline theological educators?" Ayleshire questioned: [Do seminaries really add] "enough value to religious leadership that it is worth the effort, time and money?" (Dart, 35). Sometimes, the unwillingness of seminaries to view themselves in the light of market realities disallows them to taking advantage of even the most natural feedback loops, such as the local church's expectation or the scriptural norms that inform these as institutional "dashboard" gauges or shifts in 'user' preference.[25] And the rising trend, that more people are relying on training within their local church context, is one of those facts that existing seminaries dashboards have no dial for gathering information, interpreting its meaning or monitoring its fluctuations. In this way, church-based theological education can be the innovative threat that, over time, can make seminary-based instruction seem unwise unto irrelevant to this market. Seminaries have many elements of a "Failure Framework" built into them so that a disruptive technology like CBTE can unsettle them. Christensen describes three dimensions of the framework: *technological expertise, change tolerance and structural momentum.*

FAILURE FRAMEWORK FEATURE #1 ~ TECHNOGICAL EXPERTISE.

Seminaries, in contrast to church-based models, are

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[25] Recently, during this time of this writing, I was engaged in a faculty committee discussion regarding the development of a navigational scheme to help participant-students makes sense of the entire seminary experience from a Christian Formation perspective. One proposal was ladened with prescriptive and proscriptive imperatives, e.g., "the student *shall* go the chapel, be involved in a local church, etc.; the faculty in that small committee room would establish the complete menu. To the suggestion that a more democratic and consumer-choice driven model be adopted, where the student-participant expressed their healthy and growing spirituality from a multiple of options that the people in the room might not think of, the reply given was: "the student don't know what they need; we have to tell them. There is too much choice; what is wrong with obedience?" The two themes in this conversation illustrate extremes related to the role of consumer choice in the seminary setting. (Anonymous Committee Meeting: Discussion of Formation, Asbury Seminary, March 2004).

obligated to continuous process improvement by their accrediting associations. Incremental refinement, often in response to partial system breakdowns or repositioning to participate in some sort of opportunity, engenders this sort of improvement and change. Online education illustrates how distinctive technological expertise can create failure or slowed response to innovations. In the last 10 years, seminaries (and the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) have had to reckon with the increasing demand, availability and pressure that internet-based theological education presents. In doing so, seminaries have had to assess and retool their information technology visions and resources in order to participate. Even so, while many schools desired to get involved, the compliance agency, ATS, was not so sure about this new medium.[26] However, information technologies, in response to online training opportunities, are examples of sustaining technologies, those which enhance and improve basic performance of organizations.

Disruptive technologies by comparison, however, are of a different order as they reduce the performance within the institutional context initially. Yet, they appeal to a segment of customers seeking some quality that the conventional solution does not address. In time, they tend to out perform and even contribute to raising industry standards and spin-off other sustaining technologies from which the entire industry benefits. Disruptive technologies are distinct from sustaining ones in another way: they are "typically cheaper, simpler, smaller, and, frequently more convenient to use" (xv). Church-based ministry training solutions fit this description perfectly; this explains their growing popularity also. This is the first part of the failure framework.

FAILURE FRAMEWORK FEATURE #2 ~ CHANGE TOLERANCE

The second part of the failure framework asserts the *pace*

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[26] I have been personally part of several seminary-to-accreditation agency conversations centered on permission-getting to raise the level of off-campus distance education from 1/3rd of an M.Div. to 2/3rd of one. For nearly a six - year period, after requesting permission to serve students at-distance in this way, the accrediting agency conveyed ambivalence. Several schools eventually were granted permission to proceed under a pilot study model. Recently, the 2/3rd of program has become possible.

of technological progress can limit, and often does, outstrip what markets need. This means that the relevance and competitiveness of different technological approaches can change with respect to different markets over time. If seminaries consult only with those within the conventional market flow, those types of customers with whom they are used to transacting, how would they come to know or learn about need patterns of other markets, or acknowledge that other training organizations exist that may be offering a comparable solution or product or doing a better job? If the existing paradigm reports that the right way to obtaining training to be a minister involves getting an M.Div., and constituents of such a paradigm are asked 'what is the best way to make a minister?' it is very likely they will reply: 'send them to seminary for an M.Div..' This is the self-fulfilling feedback loop in which many schools find themselves. Yet data regarding experiences of recent graduates, after they leave the classroom, must be gathered and fed back into the organization's self-learning matrix and be made to bear on seminaries and agencies which accredit them:

> Can you imagine a medical school retaining its certification if its graduate's first exposure to surgery was as the surgeons? They may have brilliant lectures on anatomy and oncology. They may have seen colour slides of brain surgery. Possibly they were provided with cadavers upon which they could practice. They successfully complete difficult written examinations, and at graduation are given their first stethoscopes and scalpels. Now, for the first time in their life they see human flesh being cut into. They watch surgical saws cut through human skull bones. And their hands are wielding the weapons. Tragically, that's the scenario of most of our seminaries and theological schools are still following. (Dearborn, 7)

FAILURE FRAMEWORK FEATURE #3 ~ STRUCTURAL MOMENTUM

The third dimension of the failure framework explains how the very structures of the organizations eliminate certain types of "entering firms" (of which BILD would be one as

BILD asks no permission from the dominant compliance agencies such as ATS or regional accreditation associations) to enter and service the market. Cost/benefit analyses of both organizations and customers color decision-making toward the sorts of investments that appear to be attractive to them. "Most companies with a practiced discipline of listening to their best customers and identifying new products that promise greater profitability and growth are rarely able to able to build a case for investing in disruptive technologies until it is too late" (xvii).[27] Joseph Monane, author of *Sociology of Human Systems,* argues that systems within institutional networks respond to change differently. He illustrates how structuration contributes to failure; he categorizes the choices between internal and external responses. Internally institutions tend to respond by *expulsion, confinement* and *conversion.* Changes within the operational environment also call forth different external structural responses from institutions, mainly: *tightening of gatekeepers, conjunction, disintegration* and *re-systemization* (Monane, 143-162).

This spectrum of responses to CBTE is apposite as it may be qualify as a "disruptive threat" or a "disruptive technology" on the seminary end of the institutional continuum. The external and internal distinctions made by Monane become very important as the CBTE proposal is considered by leadership educators. It is conceivable that accrediting associations and their inter-seminary counterparts (gatekeepers) may have a different appreciation (expulsion and confinement) of CBTE than leadership educators who focus on missional models of leadership formation (conjunction and re-systemization). What may be a disruptive threat to one may be advantage-giving adaptive technology for the other. However, an inability to consider emerging paradigmatic forms within the leadership formation context may hasten lessons that other types of institutions have learned by their unwillingness to admit what business they were in, e.g., consider: vinyl records vs. compact discs, (disintegration). I am arguing this resignation is avoidable.

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[27] Christensen illustrates the relationship between resource dependency theory and disruptive change theory in the decision-making process of managers to customers. They are: (1) Companies depend on customers and investors for resource; (2) Small markets do not solve the growth needs of large companies; (3) Markets that don't exist can't be analyzed; and, (4) Technology supply may not equal market demand (xviii-xxiii).

The post-modern moment offers seminaries and accrediting agencies an opportunity for a more thoroughgoing contextualization of its leadership formation ethic. Inasmuch as the present climate is an equalizing one, where seminaries cease to have much advantage in forming leadership, but in fact seem to be aggregating more field, continuing, distance, online, extension and contextual education components in order to adequately address dimensions of development beyond the cognitive (such as the conative, behavioral, character dimensions), I raise the question whether it be time that more seminaries make the leap from campus-based solutions to church-based ones. This would involve partnering with teaching churches that function like teaching hospitals. This would involve church-commissioned faculty who have their psychological, vocational (and perhaps actual physical) residence in the mission of the church. In *Reenvisioning Theological Education: Exploring a Missional Alternative to Current Models,* Robert Banks considers, as incomplete, any new proposal that make mission a by-product of the training process. In order for these proposals to be complete, mission must be more than compartmentally present in the model, or left as an afterthought, but must be present throughout the model as an expression of the missional nature of the church. The most promising models involve theological education as: (1) mission-focused; (2) a ministry-centered; (3) apprentice-based (4) praxis-oriented (129-141). This is exactly what my colleagues and I argue in our co-authored *A Well-Furnished Heart: Restoration of the Spirit's Place in the Leadership Classroom.* A convergence of all facets of an organization's values and structures are necessary in order to strategically align purpose with practice with product. Glenda Hope's far-reaching model is presented as an example of theological educators seeking to appropriate a more holistic model:

> This could take the form of students doing ministry in a parish or agency for twenty hours a week while taking several classes a semester across the whole curriculum. Ministry and classes then interact with one another, with some courses being taught by practitioners, and each student working on site with a field-faculty person. This re-envisioning and

restructuring of theological education leads to (1) faculty and students cooperating in and outside the academy, (ii) abandoning tenure in favor of alternating periods of time in the seminary and in a parish or agency, (iii) reappraising the goals, recipients, sources, processes and materials of theological scholarship, (iv) seminaries divesting themselves of their property, (v) replacing comfortable intellectual and therapeutic approaches to learning by the uncertainties of public communal discipleship (Banks, 133).

Proposals such as these seek to close the gaps between what happens inside the campus-based model of training and the church-based possibilities, expectation and norms. Could a seminary/church-based theological education partnership after BILD's seminary-as-resource center model, be a segway solution to more radical solutions, solutions that could displace the seminary from serving sectors of the church?

Conclusion: Complementary Sociologies in Leadership Formation Practice

In this paper, I have sought to explore the case study of BILD International and its associated strategy Church-Based Theological Education (CBTE) in the context of historical trends, institutional and technological innovation realities in church leadership formation. BILD, as a exo-seminary participant in leadership formation internationally, has been making notable strides in offering rigorous contextualized leadership development in local churches that is in many respects comparable to that offered by conventional seminaries, and since 1986 is becoming increasingly preferred by those who might ordinarily matriculate to the traditional residential seminary for an Master of Divinity or Doctor of Ministry leadership formation experience. In this way, church-based theological education could threaten to disrupt and even displace, in some markets, traditional models of theological education. However, is this necessary? Church-based theological educators like BILD International say 'no.' if it occurs it would be because of the response patterns within

the seminary structures, and not from an anti-seminary competitive mindset with church-based educators. As mentioned earlier, Robert Monane describes succinctly a range of organizational tendencies that come into play when faced with innovations that disrupt the equilibrium of the ecosystem: *expulsion, confinement* and *conversion* (internally) or *tightening of gatekeepers, conjunction, disintegration* and *re-systemization* (externally). These responses are important ones for theological and leadership educators as they frame the kinds of choices to make on behalf of the church, the seminarian and their institutions. While disruptive change theory portends a set of aversive possibilities (expulsion, confinement, gate-keeping and disintegration), I propose that leadership educators opt for *conversion* internally and *conjunction* and *re-systemization* externally.

Regarding *conversion*, I do not think it practical at this stage to expect that seminaries will turn out of their campuses and take up residence within the life and campuses of local churches, but I can idealize a modest partnership and recombining of contextual training approaches (those like field education, distance education, supervised service and BILD apprenticing processes) which make central the authority, mission, spirit and formative competence of the *ecclesia*. I can envision the curricular inculcation of CBTE perspectives which orient and obligate new breed seminarians to tool for establishing parsonage seminaries in their own contexts of service after seminary as a means and end of cultivating missional churches. In this way seminaries can impact, directly in their graduates and indirectly by their graduates, whole generational layers. Such contemporary "log cabin colleges" could address needless clergy/laity dichotomies that result in empowered participants throughout the life of the church, cut through permission-dependent bottlenecks within church administrative systems and even reduce degrees of clergy burnout and dysfunction. Alumni, continuing education and Doctor of Ministry program, due to their modular natures seem like fitting nurseries or demonstration plots — again, this is the truest meaning of 'seminary' - locations for experimentation with such partnerships. Another important area for seminaries to

wrestle, as it relates to conjunction, is within its sociology. I like the message of David Teide, president of Luther Seminary, when he stressed the missional choices before to his constituents as they contemplated their future.[28] In response, a rather blunt letter — Of course, I do not single out this seminary, most anyone one could have received such a letter — from one of their pastors chided: "Quit preparing your graduates for a church which no longer exists," the seminary accepted that it began as an *abbey* in its founding years when pastor-students would first spend years on campus in reflection and later go to congregations as chaplains (Jones and Paulsell 140-141). In the mid-50s, after many of its brightest attended German universities, mastered historical-critical method, neo-orthodoxy, the seminary transitioned to an *academy*. With the decline of the mainline and popularization of religious feeling beyond the liturgical norms of her tradition, such as New Age on one hand and Charismatic/Pentecostalism and the other, and the concomitant dawning of globalization, it is time to reckon with the biblical imperatives of the *apostolate*. The wrestling this seminary began to undergo through naming the business it is in is exemplary, and commended to all seminaries. These images raise interesting questions about the governance and sociology of leadership formation models. If the seminary is an abbey, then it follows that its sociology might be characterized by such monastic or hermetic practices, retreatant values toward society, reflective environment for studied liturgical sensibilities. If it is an *academy* in its assumptive system, then it follows that the cultivation of intellectual acumen is closely linked to the institution's functions, its curriculum, and its measurements of success. And if it is an *apostolate* however, an agency with the twin duties of incubation and mission, then its learning structures will pulsate with those commitments that forge a bias toward missional action in its participants. This commitment will be evident in its faculty, organizational governors, in its outreach beyond seminary walls, the strategic extension of its resources and its emergence as a commissioning context for its transient missioner-matriculants. The church-based model invites

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28 See article by Lois Malcolm, professor of systematic theology at Luther Seminary, in *The Scope of Our Art.*

seminaries to experience conversion in their self-referencing from abbey-only or academy-only, to holistic expressions of apostolate-centered concerns.

Pertaining to *conjunction* and *re-systemization,* it is practical to consider that leadership educators can become "friends of the church" through identifying with the church-based theological education networks or teaching churches that may be functioning near them.   Conceivably, such faculty-mentors could serve, not only the church-based cohort of apprentices, but take along with them, their own mentees from the seminary setting that so desired to learn in context (if the churches would have them in conversation this way). Much could be done with BILD International's invitation to work with seminaries as partnership resource centers, similar to the great learning centers at the libraries of Alexandria and Carthage of antiquity. These natural starting places what do no violence to existing accrediting standards and would do much for churches which have taken responsibility for the formation of their own leaders.

Lastly, concerning conjunction, one easily-missed value is how disruptive technologies have a way of improving sustaining technologies (and even generating new ones). If leadership educators and seminary systems would have it, a close re-look at the centrality of the missional church to their formative aims is the beginning of wisdom as a means of improving all that they do.   In this way, both leadership educators and church theological educators, join partnership forces in that Pauline apostolic ethic, that church-based theological educator's so emphasize and enjoy: strengthening the church.

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