

FORCEFULLY ADVANCING THE KINGDOM OF GOD:  
TEEN CHALLENGE NEW ENGLAND—  
A SYSTEMIC APPROACH FOR KINGDOM GROWTH

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF  
GORDON-CONWELL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE DOCTOR  
OF MINISTRY

BY

RODNEY B. HART

MAY, 2008



## DEDICATION

To my wife, Lynn and my three children, Apryl, Leah & Rodney Jr., who have been my greatest source of support and inspiration in writing this thesis. Thank you.

## CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES .....	vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	vii
ABSTRACT.....	viii
CHAPTER 1 THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING .....	1
CHAPTER 2 TOWARD A SYSTEMIC PENTECOSTAL THEOLOGY OF MINISTRY AND MISSIONS .....	25
A Theology of Place.....	29
A Theology of Peace, The Mission of the Church .....	36
The Theology of Prayer.....	52
Our Struggle in a Fallen World .....	53
CHAPTER 3 LITERATURE REVIEW .....	61
Foundational Source One .....	61
Foundational Sources Two and Three .....	68
Subsidiary Literature Sources.....	73
CHAPTER 4 PROJECT DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY .....	79
Narrative of the Systemic Study.....	91
Reflection of the Process .....	94
Formatting Relevant Questions for our Study.....	96
CHAPTER 5 OUTCOMES, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS.....	113
Reflection from a Horror Movie.....	113
Spiritual Principles Learned from the Case Studies Cited in Chapter 1.....	114

TCNE is Recruiting, Training and Deploying an Army for God in Order to Forcefully Advance His Kingdom.....	119
Theology of Place Provides the Context of Our TCNE Mission .....	120
Theology of Peace Defines the Mission of TCNE .....	122
Theology of Prayer Defines the Nature of Our Struggle to Advance the Kingdom of God in a Fallen World .....	127
Next Steps/Recommendations for Further Study .....	137
APPENDIX 1 TEEN CHALLENGE NEW ENGLAND TIMELINE .....	138
APPENDIX 2 TCNE STAFF & STUDENTS AT LAKE CHAMPION 2006.....	139
APPENDIX 3 BEFORE & AFTER PICTURES OF TCNE GRADUATES .....	144
APPENDIX 4 TCNE CAMPUS WALK THROUGH .....	145
APPENDIX 5 TEEN CHALLENGE NEW ENGLAND CREDENTIALS CONFERRED .....	163
APPENDIX 6 MINISTERIAL COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR RECEIVING CREDENTIALS WITH TEEN CHALLENGE NEW ENGLAND .....	166
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	169
VITA.....	177

## TABLES

Table	Page
1. Revenue Growth.....	47
2. The Growth & Development of Leaders (From within the TCNE System).....	48
3. What Produces a Successful Teen Challenge Graduate? (Part 1: Thursday, July 28, 2000).....	82
4. What Produces a Successful Teen Challenge Graduate? (By Untitled Category).....	83
5. What Hinders a TC Student from Graduating? .....	85
6. What Hinders a TC Student from Graduating? (By Category).....	86
7. What Produces a Successful Teen Challenge Graduate? (Part 2 & 3: November 9-10, 2000, By Category).....	88
8. Revenue Growth.....	130
9. Exponential Revenue Growth.....	131
10. Capital Growth for Expansion.....	132
11. Final Budgeted Total Income- 2007.....	132
12. Forecasted Total Expenses- 2007.....	133
13. The Growth & Development of Leadership (From within the TCNE System).....	134
14. Student Bed Capacity.....	135
15. Healthy Growth & Development of a TC Center.....	136

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge and thank the following people because without their support this thesis would never have been written. Dr. Eleanor Gorse, Kathy Campbell, Mark Bates, Allison Cruz, David Lekberg, WM. James Penswick and all the TCNE family have been key contributors in the completion of this thesis. My good friend and first reader Dr. Gregg Detwiler.

## ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the process of institutionalization of evangelical ministries. As a ministry grows it must inevitably develop formal procedures and policies to guide its operations. In this sense, institutionalization is not necessarily a negative thing. On the other hand, *institutionalization* can have a dark side if the original spiritual integrity and organic vitality that gave life to the organization is lost as the organization develops. In Chapter One of this thesis we look at how this process occurred within three organizations that started out as distinctly vital Christian organizations—Alcoholics Anonymous, the Young Men’s Christian Association, and the Salvation Army. We then apply these reflections as a means of avoiding these pitfalls within the ministry of Teen Challenge New England (TCNE).

Chapter Two puts forth a systemic Pentecostal theology of ministry and applies it to the ministry of TCNE, recognizing that a deficient theology will produce deficient ministry practice.

Chapter Three offers a review and reflection on various sources of literature that have helped shape our understanding in this thesis.

Chapter Four presents findings and reflections from two “hexagon” studies that TCNE conducted on its ministry. This “systems thinking” method is a means for seeing the often hidden complexities and interrelationships at work within an organization, which both hinder and help the organization to reach its desired outcomes.

## CHAPTER 1

### THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

*When the Spirit departs from a man's body he is dead. When the spirit departs from a ministry like the Energizer Bunny its life can go on and on and on!*

-Rodney Hart

The nature of doing ministry is war. There are many arenas in which the battle must be fought. Church history records many powerful advances with much enemy territory plummeted. Only then to have the enemy gather his forces and counterattack taking back the ground he lost. Many ministries have begun in the Spirit only to end up with a remnant of the power they began with or in some cases no power of the Spirit at all.

The Alcoholics Anonymous movement began in the fire of the Spirit. The God of the Bible and the Gospel of Jesus Christ was preached and signs and wonders followed. Hopeless alcoholics were set free from their addictions! Now any “god” of your own understanding replaces the God of the Bible, and the power of the resurrected Christ replaced by any “Higher Power.”

The Young Men Christian Association began in the fire of the Spirit! They began by taking Jesus to the streets! The industrial revolution created overcrowded cities where young men came to seek work. Many ended up on the streets with no money, food or shelter. The Holy Spirit lead men to reach out and preach the gospel, and one of the most powerful ministries of the gospel was born in London and spread around the world!

Today it is merely the “Y”. The *Men’s Christian Association* has even been dropped from its name! It lost its mission to preach the gospel long ago!

What makes it possible for the Spirit to be taken out of a ministry yet it continues on? History teaches that Holy Spirit born ministries can become “converted” to human secularism. The AA and the YMCA are clear examples how the forces of hell invade Christian ministries and put out the light they once had. These two organizations still have social services that are viable and worthy of respect, but it’s also clear that they are no longer a threat to forcefully advance the Reign of God like they once did.<sup>1</sup>

The Salvation Army has one of the most remarkable histories that I have ever researched! William and Catharine Booth continue to be a source of powerful inspiration to me personally. They pioneered so many social service ministries! These ministries were all empowered by the blood of the Lamb and the fire of the Holy Ghost! Is the Salvation Army still marching to the burning beat of the hearts of their founders, whose hearts beat to win the world to Christ by any and all means! God surely used them to raise up a Salvation Army around the world? They set the standard high as a group that forcefully advanced the Kingdom of God. Is Salvation Army today on the same path to secular humanism that the YMCA and AA followed? Why does the Salvation Army receive state and federal funding for their programs when other faith-based recovery ministries are excluded from such funds? Have subtle compromises to gain funding changed them?

---

<sup>1</sup> This is not meant to denigrate the good that AA still does. In fact, much of their effectiveness that is still praiseworthy resides in the fact that there are still residual Kingdom principles that are present in AA, such as public confession of “sin”, creating a safe environment to do so, etc. Still, it must be acknowledged that both of these organizations have retreated from their loyalty to the clear declaration and dependence upon the gospel which is “the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes” (Romans 1:16).

What about the future of Teen Challenge? Could history repeat itself again? Could the light of the gospel go out in Teen Challenge? If it did, would it continue to operate as a recovery home for drug addicts and alcoholics? Can we learn anything from the clear examples in history that should cause us to be vigilant because our adversary, the Devil, is surely out to destroy us?

Teen Challenge New England (hereafter referred to as TCNE) is the ministry focus of this dissertation. We will look at its historical development, considering such questions as: How can theological reflection and the discipline of systems thinking enhance our ministry? What can we learn from our past? What is the system of Teen Challenge New England? What are the mental models that shaped it? Do we have learning disabilities as an organization? How can we become a learning organization at every level of the ministry? Can a renewed vision change the culture of an organization if it's over forty years old? What can we learn from other models of like ministries such as the YMCA, Salvation Army and AA?

Particular focus will look to examine primary culture systems and secondary culture systems in TCNE. How do they function in meeting needs of the ministry? How can primary culture values continue to thrive? What are the subtle ways that the forces of hell would try to invade this ministry to put out the light of the gospel? What does it take to turn a ministry around? Is institutionalization inevitable with the growth of budgets and infrastructure? What role does board of directors have to play?

From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it. (Matthew 11:12)

Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. (Revelation 2:4)<sup>2</sup>

Biblical revelation and history teaches us that ministries born in the fire of the Spirit of God, fulfilling the great commission, forcefully advancing the king of God must contend with forces that would influence them from losing their focus. The Word of God clearly instructs us to be vigilant.

1 Peter 5:8 admonishes, “Be self controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls about like a roaring lion looking for someone (*or a ministry*) to devour” (my amplification). We will be looking at three case studies that will speak directly to the subject of this thesis: the Alcoholics Anonymous movement, the Young Men’s Christian Association and the Salvation Army. The first is the Alcoholics Anonymous movement. Early AA documents claimed a spectacular 75%-to-93% success rate in the Akron and Cleveland areas among “medically incurable” alcoholics who “really tried.” Yet today, some scholars and government experts believe AA’s success rate is as low as 1 to 5 percent.<sup>3</sup> Something has changed!

When we study the genesis of the AA movement we find that it was formed out of an evangelical movement called The Oxford Group (OG). The OG was focused upon changing the world “one person at a time.” At OG “house parties” members “surrendered” on their knees and gave testimony (or shared) of their deliverance from

---

<sup>2</sup> All Scripture quotations are taken from the *New International Version* unless otherwise noted.

<sup>3</sup> Dick B., *Dick B.'s Website*, <http://www.dickb.com/JamesClub.shtml/> (accessed December 2006).

their “sin” of alcoholism, smoking, etc.<sup>4</sup> This movement was evangelical. Frank Buchman the leader of The OG simplified this life-changing program by using this expression: “Sin is the problem. Jesus Christ is the solution. The result is a miracle.”<sup>5</sup> The OG sought fellowship with God and one another in team meetings, working in groups, and sharing their experiences with others. This became the model which AA would follow. The co-founders of AA are Bill Wilson and Dr. Bob Smith. These men were both incurable alcoholics and were both miraculously healed from their alcoholism through the ministry of OG members. This group evangelized in the power of the Spirit!

Bill Wilson was hospitalized for alcoholism in December of 1934. OG member and old drinking buddy of Bill was Ebby Thatcher. He went to visit him in the hospital and the result was Bill experienced his “white light” spiritual experience.<sup>6</sup> Told in Bill’s own words,

Though I certainly didn't expect anything, I did make this frantic appeal, "If there be a God, will He show Himself!" The result was instant, electric beyond description. The place seemed to light up, blinding white. I knew only ecstasy and seemed on a mountain. A great wind blew, enveloping and penetrating me. To me, it was not of air but of Spirit. Blazing, there came the tremendous thought, "You are a free man." Then the ecstasy subsided. Still on the bed, I now found myself in a new world of consciousness which was suffused by a Presence. One with the Universe, a great peace came over me. I thought, "So this is the God of the preachers, this is the great Reality.”<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> *Alcoholics Anonymous Website*, <http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org> (accessed December 2006).

<sup>5</sup> Dick B., "Oxford Group Ideas that counted in early AA," *Dick B.'s Website*, <http://www.dickb.com> (accessed December 2006).

<sup>6</sup> *Alcoholics Anonymous Website*, <http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org> (accessed December 2006).

<sup>7</sup> "A.A. History -- Let's Ask Bill Wilson," *Barefoot's Recovery Site*, <http://www.barefootsworld.net/askbillw.html#19> (accessed December 2006).

After this experience Bill Wilson never drank again until his death in 1971. This powerful salvation experience changed Bill Wilson's life forever. He dedicated himself to reaching other drunks with the message of the gospel. Bill Wilson worked with alcoholics at the Calvary Mission and Towns Hospital, emphasizing his "hot flash" spiritual experience. Alcoholic OG members began meeting at his home.<sup>8</sup> An astounding seventy-five to ninety-three percent of the early members of AA recovered from their seemingly hopeless diseases of alcoholism. They did it by relying on God and by basing their relationship with Him on the principles of the Bible. This comprehensive history discusses the biblical sources from which AA's founders said they obtained their recovery ideas—focusing particularly on the Sermon on the Mount, 1 Corinthians 13, and the Epistle of James. For many AAs, the Bible was a standard of truth upon which they could depend for the power and guidance that they needed in their lives.<sup>9</sup>

This ministry began to grow in an exponential way. The rush was so great that new members sober themselves but a week or two, had to be used to instruct the still newer arrivals. Several private hospitals threw open their doors to cope with the emergency and were so pleased with the result.

It is important to note that AA had not formalized their identity as AA and during this initial phase were functioning as the Oxford Group. There is ample evidence of the primacy of a Bible and Christ-centered dependence within AA's early development as evidenced in the following excerpted quotes:

To the great surprise of everyone, this rapid growth, hectic though it was, did prove very successful. Within 90 days the original group of 30 had expanded to 300; in six months we had about 500; and within two years we had mushroomed to 1200 members distributed among a score of groups in the Cleveland area. Although we have no precise figures, it is probably fair to say that 3 out of 4 who came during that period, and who

---

<sup>8</sup> "A.A. History -- Let's Ask Bill Wilson," *Barefoot's Recovery Site*, <http://www.barefootworld.net/askbillw.html#20> (accessed December 2006).

<sup>9</sup> Dick B, "Alcoholics Anonymous History: The James Club and The Original A.A. Program's Absolute Essentials," *Dick B.'s Website*, <http://www.dickb.com/JamesClub.shtml/> (accessed December 2006).

have since remained with the groups, have recovered from their alcoholism.<sup>10</sup>

This is a powerful example of AA operating as an evangelical ministry. The white flash experience of Bill Wilson could be compared to the conversion of the Apostle Paul. The Apostle Paul, after his conversion, became a missionary to reach the gentiles. Bill Wilson became a missionary to reach other hopeless drunks like he himself once was. The OG ministry model of home groups became the way AA would operate even after Bill Wilson departed from them. In 1937 leaders from the OG ordered alcoholics staying at the Calvary Mission not to attend meetings at Bill and Lois Wilson's home. They were criticized by the OG members for having "drunks only" meetings at their home.<sup>11</sup>

At this point the AA group stopped attending the OG meetings.

This initial departure from the evangelical OG is perhaps the key to understanding how AA drifted from a gospel model to what is today a secular model of recovery. Bill Wilson was never really grounded in the Bible. His Christian conversion became less important to him as the years went by. Once asked if AA was a religion he completely denied it was. He went on to say that both he and the co-founder of AA Dr. Bob separated their own personal religious views from the work of AA.

Dr. Bob, my co-partner, had his own religious views. For whatever they may be worth, I have my own. But both of us have gone heavily on the record to the effect that these personal views and preferences can never under any conditions be injected into the AA program as a working part of it. AA is a sort of spiritual kindergarten, but that is all. Never should it be called a religion.<sup>12</sup>

This statement establishes that AA had completely lost its roots as an evangelical outreach. It continues today as one of the most well known models for rehabilitation. It is fully endorsed by the medical community as the best long term recovery treatment for all forms of addiction. Even though AA claims no religious affiliation the dynamics of

---

<sup>10</sup> "A.A. History -- Let's Ask Bill Wilson," *Index of AA History Pages on Barefoot's Recovery Site*, [www.barefootworld.net](http://www.barefootworld.net) (accessed December, 2006).

<sup>11</sup> *Alcoholics Anonymous Website*, <http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org> (accessed December 2006).

<sup>12</sup> "A.A. History -- Let's Ask Bill Wilson," *Barefoot's Recovery Site*, [www.barefootworld.net/askbillw.html#20](http://www.barefootworld.net/askbillw.html#20) (accessed December 2006).

its fellowship, derived from scripture, demonstrate the highest values of Christianity. AA's unconditional love and acceptance of its member's challenges any evangelical church where intolerance and judgment for missing the mark amongst its members is often found.

This is clearly a primary culture, meeting its member's needs through relationship. AA never developed a secondary culture, needs met through economics, which diminished its relational focus. It remains today a primary culture organization; people committed to reaching and helping others caught in the trap of addiction. Their original sole purpose to help others without any consideration for monetary gain remains today. This is the strength of its organization.<sup>13</sup> However, AA is no longer a force to advance the Reign of God as it once was! The mission to sober up drunks is different from proclamation of the Gospel to set the captives free. The gospel proclamation results in advancing the eternal purposes of God by building a priesthood of believers. This can only be achieved when Christ Jesus is proclaimed as the only Lord and Savior for mankind. He is the only mediator with the Father of heaven, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved than Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12).

---

<sup>13</sup> Doug Hall uses the terms, primary and secondary culture, in his lectures. These two terms are used to describe how needs are met in each culture group. A primary culture group is a relational culture where needs of the group are met primarily through relationships. A secondary culture group meets the needs of the group through economics. To illustrate this further a tribal culture in Africa will use the village or extended family if they need a baby sitter. In Manhattan, NY they would probably use a nanny service and pay for it. Doug also makes the point that Christianity thrives in a primary culture and struggles and declines in a predominant secondary culture.

Now let us look at our second case study, the Young Men's Christian Association.

The YMCA, or the Y as it is known today, has a rich history of an evangelical mission that was forcefully advancing the Reign of God. The following excerpts show that history clearly:

The YMCA was founded in London, England, on June 6, 1844, in response to unhealthy social conditions arising in the big cities at the end of the Industrial Revolution (roughly 1750 to 1850). Growth of the railroads and centralization of commerce and industry brought many rural young men who needed jobs into cities like London. They worked 10 to 12 hours a day, six days a week.

Far from home and family, these young men often lived at the workplace. They slept crowded into rooms over the company's shop, a location thought to be safer than London's tenements and streets. Outside the shop things were bad—open sewers, pickpockets, thugs, beggars, drunks, lovers for hire and abandoned children running wild by the thousands.

George Williams, born on a farm in 1821, came to London 20 years later as a sales assistant in a draper's shop, a forerunner of today's department store. He and a group of fellow drapers organized the first YMCA to substitute Bible study and prayer for life on the streets. By 1851 there were 24 YMCAs in Great Britain, with a combined membership of 2,700. That same year the YMCA arrived in North America: It was established in Montreal on November 25 and in Boston on December 29.

The idea proved popular everywhere. In 1853, the first YMCA for African Americans was founded in Washington, D.C., by Anthony Bowen, a freed slave. The next year the first international convention was held in Paris. At the time there were 397 separate YMCAs in seven nations, with 30,369 total members.

The YMCA idea, which began among evangelicals, was unusual because it crossed the rigid lines that separated all the different churches and social classes in England in those days. This openness was a trait that would lead eventually to including in YMCAs all men, women and children, regardless of race, religion or nationality. Also, its target of meeting social need in the community was clear from the start.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> "A Brief History of the YMCA movement," *YMCA Website*, [http://www.ymca.net/about\\_the\\_ymca/history\\_of\\_the\\_ymca.html](http://www.ymca.net/about_the_ymca/history_of_the_ymca.html) (accessed December 2006).

The YMCA reached North America in 1851 when the organization established branches simultaneously in Montreal and Boston. Once established in the United States, the YMCA movement grew rapidly. By 1860, more than 205 YMCAs throughout the United States offered identical services to those in London.

Early YMCAs were evangelistic. Many young men spent weekends and evenings in street evangelism distributing tracts and Bibles. Others served in city missions and preached from soap boxes on street corners. This evangelical outreach with its primary purpose of prayer and Bible study became the passion of one of America's greatest evangelists Dwight L. Moody.

Millions of dollars were raised to purchase property in major cities before the turn of the twentieth century. These properties and the facilities built upon them were paid for by the generous donations of evangelicals. D.L. Moody became secretary and then President of the Chicago YMCA. He served in leadership from 1865 until 1871. Under his leadership the YMCA prospered greatly!

Moody raised large sums of money to build the first hall for YMCA in Chicago. September 29, 1867 the building was dedicated. In his speech on this occasion Moody recounted the blessings the YMCA had received and how God had led them from small beginnings to their present position of influence. He made a characteristic plea for an aggressive attack upon the strongholds of sin, saying Christians had been on the defense too long. He confessed his belief that by the Lord's blessing a religious influence was to go out from this YMCA that "should extend to every State in the Union, and finally crossing the waters, should help bring the whole world to God."<sup>15</sup>

Moody had a vision to win the world! Under his leadership and influence the YMCA grew exponentially. He raised millions of dollars to buy property and build facilities across America and Great Britain. He was an "out of the box" leader who had incredible passion and energy that he dedicated to forcefully advance the Kingdom of God! Even though he was an incredible fundraiser his passion was the spiritual focus of the YMCA.

---

<sup>15</sup> William R. Moody, *The Life of Dwight L. Moody* (Amsterdam: Fredonia Books), 116.

In every city in which he worked, on both sides of the ocean, his work and words summoned to the YMCA a group of consecrated layman, and with them the financial resources which everywhere promoted the extension and usefulness of our work for young men.<sup>16</sup>

This front line evangelical ministry was a force around the world to advance the Kingdom of God! How can we explain how it became converted to secular humanism?

The YMCA is all over the world! If you were to ask 100 people today if they knew the YMCA was a street preaching, Bible teaching ministry in its beginning, how many would say “yes”? I was at a meeting with several YMCA staffers and asked them if they knew the roots of the organization. The all said yes, but none of them really did. Their understanding was that it began as a social outreach and grew and developed as such. They were shocked to hear that prayer, preaching, and Bible study saturated every part of its social outreach program.

One of the many websites dedicated to the YMCA stated,

Although the YMCA has changed considerably since it was founded 160 years ago, our guiding principles remain the same. From small beginnings, the YMCA Movement has grown to become one of the biggest Christian charities in the world working in over 120 countries with 30 million members worldwide.<sup>17</sup>

The size of the YMCA is incredible! I do not agree that the guiding principles remain the same. The guiding principle of the YMCA was as Moody put it, “to win the world for Christ.” This is no longer even a consideration.

All of the social programs of health, lodging, sports, reading rooms, lectures and all of its outreach in the developing years of the YMCA were focused on evangelism and

---

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.,118.

<sup>17</sup> *YMCA Website*, <http://www.ymca.com> (accessed December 2006).

discipleship! Today Christ has been removed from any part of its mission. This did not happen suddenly. The removal of the gospel from its mission was a subtle shift of focus.

Whereas AA's growth and development sprang from and retained primary culture approach with very little secondary culture infrastructure, the YMCA's growth was very much a revival movement. Its growth did include the developing of a very large secondary infrastructure of buildings and budgets. Was it the demand of these large budgets and infrastructures that turned the focus and attention from the spiritual to the secular? It is my belief that this is the case, but one thing is for sure; the YMCA today has had the Spirit of Christ taken out of it.

The next case study we will look at is the Salvation Army. This ministry began in 1865 as an outreach post in the east side of London. The purpose of this new work was to bring the salvation message to those the church had failed. God had laid on William Booth's heart the plight of those the church had written off as not worth reaching. "To me," Booth declared, "men, especially the worst, possess the attraction of gold mines."<sup>18</sup> This passion to reach the worst of sinners by any and all methods often met with criticism from other church leaders.

The Booths would have been content to do this ministry under the auspice of the Methodist Church. Their departure from them was due to the Conference president's refusal to allow them to continue their evangelistic campaigns. After considerable struggle and much prayer William handed in his resignation. Their formal connection

---

<sup>18</sup> Trevor Yaxley with Carolyn Vanderwal, *William & Catherine: The Life and Legacy of the Booths* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2003), 124.

with any of the Methodist groups was over.<sup>19</sup> This departure is evidence of how a denominational system in an attempt to control ministry inside of their “box” sometimes provoke separation movements.

This is a tell-tale sign of institutionalization. How ironic is it that the founder of the Methodist movement, John Wesley, was forced to leave the Anglican Church for some of the same reasons! Why is it that church denominations struggle to accept the anointed ministries lead by individuals, advancing the Reign of God, with signs and wonders following their efforts? The East London Christian Mission began July 5, 1864. William never imagined it would become an army!

Although William had originally regarded his work as in East London as a link between the unchurched masses and the churches, he quickly discovered that his idea of getting people saved and sending them to the established churches was not practical. For a start, the new converts refused to go when sent; second, they were neither welcomed nor wanted; and finally, William himself wanted at least some of them to work with him in his mission to save others in East London.<sup>20</sup>

The East London Christian Mission became The Christian Mission as other ministries in other cities were established. Evangelists were sent to conduct meetings and campaigns and new opportunities for expansion grew more and more. The congregations in East London alone were reaching eight thousand by 1870. The Christian Mission faced a critical challenge after thirteen years of growth.

The slow, tedious process of government by conference was not only restricting the growth and expansion of the mission, it was threatening to destroy its life altogether. After great consideration and prayer, William decided to act. In Jan. 1877 he called a meeting for all mission leaders

---

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 112.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 129. This is a common challenge that para-church ministries often face when they do evangelistic work independent from a local church. It will be discussed further when we look at the Teen Challenge Model.

and evangelists to discuss the constitution and future of the organization. It was agreed unanimously that the mission had outgrown the committee style of government and that it should come under the direct authority of the General Superintendent William Booth. They concluded that theirs was a war and as such, the annual conference should be a council of war, not a legislative assembly.<sup>21</sup>

The organization that had begun thirteen years earlier had come of age. A new name, The Salvation Army, a new governmental structure that was revolutionary, and the methods were considered outlandish, but the results were astounding!

By 1885, The Army was operating a total of 802 corps in England and 502 corps in ten overseas nations.<sup>22</sup> The number of officers already serving full time in the Army was close to three thousand. This was a revival movement! This type of powerful growth was due to the fact that they were operating in a very systemic way. Every new convert was immediately incorporated in the whole system.

New converts were put to work immediately... “Every man saved...and every man at work, always at work, to save other people” quickly became the aim of the mission.<sup>23</sup>

The Booths understood that a new convert needed to understand the plan and purposes of God right from the start. Salvation was not to be for individual benefit.

They need to be brought to see that they are not only called to the adoption of sons, but to the work of servants-not only to feel the privileges of the kingdom but to be actual co-workers for God in bringing others to share these blessings.<sup>24</sup>

---

<sup>21</sup> Trevor Yaxley with Carolyn Vanderwal, *William & Catherine: The Life and Legacy of the Booths* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2003), 145.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 193.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 130.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 129.

Today the Salvation Army is all over the world. They recently received a 1.5 billion dollar donation from the Krock Family Foundation. This donation is one of the largest single donations ever given to a charity in the history of the world! Yet, the Salvation Army has developed such a huge secondary culture infrastructure that each year the pressure to produce the dollars needed to keep their programs going is formidable! The attention and focus of this once thriving Army of God forcefully advancing the Reign of God around the world is in a constant struggle to just survive another year. The evangelistic thrust to reach the worst of society with the gospel produced a program for rehabilitation.

This ministry of rehabilitation was Christ-centered, faith saturated, and was totally dependant on the Word of God for its authority to inform all of its practices. Today there are still many consecrated Christians serving in the Salvation Army. However, these dedicated Christians are no longer free to lead their rehabilitation ministry programs proclaiming Christ as the only solution to their life controlling problems. In order to gain federal dollars to operate its programs they can no longer proselytize those coming to them for help. Their methods have been converted to medical model rehabilitation. Their methodology is without Christ. The blood of the lamb and the fire of the Holy Ghost which permeated all that the Army did have been replaced by the practices and methods of secular humanists. The Salvation Army still operates churches as a part of their organization. I'm specifically referring to the social outreach and relief programs that they receive government funding for.

These case studies illustrate how a ministry can lose the very spirit from which its life came and yet still continue on functioning. The survival of the institution becomes

the focus of leadership. The process can be so subtle and gradual that nobody sees it happening! It gradually becomes about maintaining programs and keeping the machine running. Meeting the budget becomes the dominating force that paves the way for the institutionalization of a ministry.

Having examined these three case studies we now want to turn our attention to the ministry of Teen Challenge. We will look briefly at its birth and development as a ministry in the United States from 1958 to 1999. Then we will narrow our focus to the development of Teen Challenge in New England from September 1999 until the December 2006.

The ministry of TC began in 1958. David Wilkerson went to New York City prompted (compelled) by the Holy Spirit to share the gospel with a gang on trial for murder. He never got to speak with this particular gang, but he did go to the streets of Brooklyn where he preached to several different gangs. The conversion of a notorious gang warlord, Nicky Cruz, is told in the bestselling book *The Cross and the Switchblade*.<sup>25</sup>

TC has since become one of the largest worldwide networks of faith-based rehabilitation centers in the world. The transition from a gospel street ministry among gangs in the streets of NYC to a residential faith-based recovery ministry occurred as drug use in the USA was exploding during the decade of the sixties. David Wilkerson and many others dedicated themselves to reaching heroin addicts and gang members,

---

<sup>25</sup> David Wilkerson, *The Cross and the Switchblade* (New York: The Berkley Publishing Group, 1962), 165.

believing that the salvation message of Jesus Christ would set them free from their addictions and transform their lives.

A residential discipleship model of rehabilitation was developed through trial and error. By the late sixties, a model was developing of how to operate the ministry. A network of centers began to be established in the United States. The ministry became a twelve month residential program divided into two phases; the first phase, *induction* and the second phase *training*. The induction phase was three to four months and the training phase eight months. The first training center was established when David Wilkerson purchased a dairy farm in Rehrersburg, Pennsylvania.

TC Boston was incorporated in 1964, began in rented facilities, and then in 1968 purchased property in Brockton, Massachusetts. I entered the TC ministry in Brockton on July 7, 1975. At that time a new Executive Director had recently been hired. There were only three other students in the program. The ministry was hanging on by a thread. There had been very little sustainable growth and development of the ministry since its incorporation ten years earlier.

For the next twenty-four years there was moderate growth and development. During those years a dormitory for thirty men was built, three multi-family homes were acquired for staff housing, and a gymnasium was built. These properties combined made a nice campus. The ministry had established economic stability to sustain its budget. The name had been changed from Teen Challenge Boston to Teen Challenge New England. The name change created a single-campus monopoly in the six-state region.

There was not a vision for expansion beyond Brockton. In fact, there was fierce opposition against any other ministries being established in New England using the name

Teen Challenge. In 1982 my wife and I moved to Boston and began Outreach Ministries, a street ministry and residential recovery home for men. At the time we were not allowed to become affiliated as a Teen Challenge ministry because the Teen Challenge New England Board of Directors would not approve it. (*I will reflect on this later in this thesis.*) Outreach Ministries Inc. opened another ministry in Providence, Rhode Island for men and women in 1994. After seven years establishing these ministries, my wife and I felt the call of God to go to South America to pioneer TC in that region of the world. We left the ministry in Boston and Providence in very capable hands and eventually Outreach Ministries Inc. became a fully accredited TC ministry.

I will not elaborate at this point about our ten years on the mission field establishing TC ministries in various Latin American countries. Suffice it now to say that I learned a whole lot more about the essentials of TC ministry while having a whole lot less to work with in a third world country. After the tragic death of the TC Brockton Director, we were asked if we would be interested in returning to New England to assume that position. My wife and family never longed to return to the USA, but we both knew in a powerful way that it was the Lord's will to do so. Therefore, we returned to New England and I was installed as Executive Director of TCNE in September 1999.

While we were in Paraguay South America, Outreach ministries officially became a recognized TC organization. They were operating a men's facility in Dorchester, MA and a Women's ministry in Providence, RI. In 1996 another TC center was opened in New Haven, CT. There were a number of presenting challenges at the time. Overall there hadn't been any growth of these ministries in a decade. There was a high level of dysfunction and institutionalization permeating the whole organization. Leadership focus

was to secure enough funding to maintain programs. There was no compelling vision for the region, status quo became the norm. There also was the tragic death of the Brockton Director and allegations of drug use among the leadership in Brockton MA.

The Outreach Ministry's TC Director had recently resigned because of allegations of drug use as well. The New Hampshire Director had only recently opened the ministry but was having great struggles, primarily with staffing, and was ready to close the ministry down. He was suffering from burn out and felt all alone in his battle. The only bright spot was the New Haven, Connecticut TC. This ministry began in 1996 and was developing well for a new ministry.

There was a history of contention and distrust between each of these ministries. Some might say they hated each other. Each of these ministries was independent, each with its own Board of Directors. After I became Director of the Brockton ministry, I met with the other Directors to discuss how we could work together. Rev. Otis Stanley, Superintendent of the Southern New England Assemblies of God, had a strong desire for there to be one Teen Challenge New England. We all agreed with him and decided to reorganize into one TCNE with only one Board of Directors. This was a significant step forward in the right direction. I was named the Executive Director of the newly organized corporation.

At that time TCNE was made up of the following:

- Almost a million dollars in combined revenue
- 48 students in the program
- 13 salaried staff

After seven years TCNE has grown to become one of the largest TC ministries in the USA!

- 2007 revenue will exceed seven million dollars
- 460 students in the program
- 125 salaried staff, 95% of which are graduates of the program

The discipline of systems thinking is the single most contributing factor producing the dynamic growth of our organization. We needed to discover the indivisible whole system of TC. How could we see everything we do working together to produce one outcome? What is our compelling vision that connects all the different departments of our organization? We certainly have not arrived but we have begun to function as a learning organization. Our vision is empowered by and defined by the central teaching of Jesus to *forcefully advance the Kingdom of God* until he returns (Matthew 11:12). We understand our mission of rehabilitation not as an end in of itself, rather a strategic part of our mission to recruit, train and deploy an army for God.

TC will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2008. One of the predictable problems of a 50-year old organization is to believe its programs and methods are set in stone. This is how ministries begin to become mechanical. In TC this occurs when leadership positions are filled to just run a department. Students become part of the machinery to get their job done. But there is a big difference between merely running a department and leading a dynamic part of a ministry that has as its aim to *forcefully advance the Kingdom of God!* When a TC ministry becomes institutionalized there is a big separation between students and staff. A tyrannical leadership culture is created when staff feels that they are to be heard and obeyed and never questioned.

Financial pressure to meet budget can become a task master. While it is true that every organization needs to produce sufficient revenue to operate, it doesn't mean that finances need to become the one and only concern of leadership. The most important area of stewardship for leaders of a ministry is not financial. When the bottom line of the financial statement is the primary concern for leadership in a TC ministry institutionalization has already taken root.

It is my conviction that our primary stewardship concern should be authentic and lived-out biblical spirituality! Spirituality starts at the top of a TC ministry. If TC leadership neglects or takes biblical spirituality for granted TC will become one more example of a Christian ministry that gets converted to secularism. The whole purpose and culture of TCNE has become defined by forcefully advancing the Kingdom of God in every thing we do at every level of the ministry.

TCNE is not a merely a faith-based program to rehabilitate drug addicts and alcoholics. Our greatest identity is found in being a part of the Army of the Lord Jesus Christ! Those who come to our doors seeking rehabilitation have been sent to us by divine appointment. Our task is defined by the Great Commission: Preach the Gospel and make disciples! Everything we do needs to be understood in this way. We need anointed spiritual leadership at every level of our organization.

TC becomes mechanical when leadership compartmentalizes the ministry. If the prevailing view is that spirituality and discipleship take place in the chapel and the classroom, and vocational training is to prepare students to re-enter the work place when they graduate the program, we are headed down a perilous path. This view has some fundamental systemic flaws to it. Spirituality must permeate every aspect of the ministry.

All leadership must be pastoral and anointed. We want pastoral leadership in the kitchen and not just the chapel.

Personal mastery is a core discipline of systems thinking. This means that we are all committed to life-long learning. TCNE has established its own Bible Institute to provide continuing education for all its leadership. This education is mandatory and is intended to build leadership capacity at every level of TCNE. The core curriculum of twenty four courses meets the academic requirements for receiving ministerial credentials. This in service training institute has been the primary source of developing our staff throughout New England. This has resulted in 35 men and 10 women receiving their credentials as ministers. This has been a key leverage point enabling TCNE to have a continually growing reservoir of developing leaders to meet the needs of an expanding ministry. Only five percent of our salaried staff has been hired from outside of TCNE. This is not typical of the majority of TC ministries.

The mental model that is most prevalent in TC is that of a para-church ministry. A para-church ministry is understood to function along side of the church with a special function and role as its mission. In the case of TC that role would be to provide for a twelve month residential discipleship program for people caught in the trap of addiction. It is assumed that the traditional church is not equipped to provide for this highly specialized type of ministry, though there are exceptions.<sup>26</sup>

Para-church ministries are specialists in a particular field. Examples would include Prison Fellowship, Campus Crusade for Christ, Youth for Christ, and some

---

<sup>26</sup> There are some churches that do operate very effective rehab ministries. One such example is Victory Outreach, founded by a TC graduate, this is a worldwide fellowship. For more info see <http://www.victoryoutreach.org>.

would include TC in this list. I have heard it said that para-church ministries produce para-church Christians. This speaks about the tendency of converts and disciples of a para-church ministry that tend not to assimilate in the life of a local church.

This is true of TC graduates more often than we want to admit. There has been debate about whose fault it is; the blame game ensues. The local church blames TC for not preparing students to be good church goers. TC blames the local church for not being “on fire” for God. This is a systemic problem that has no simple solution.

TCNE has begun to plant churches. The Salvation Army began as a para-church ministry with a primary focus on evangelism, but they became a church movement that took responsibility to raise up their own leadership and plant their own churches. TCNE has embraced this model and the results speak for themselves. I have been asked by my peers, “Where did you get all your staff?” My response, “They were in our dormitories!” We have been able to open new ministries every year because we have been consistently producing leadership embracing the call to fulltime ministry. TCNE sees everything we do as a ministry and leadership training at the same time.

The Apostle Paul made tents to support his missionary team. We have started many micro industries to generate the revenue needed to sustain the ministry. We own and operate two full service car washes. These are “churches” as much as they are businesses. The men all are in the car wash tunnel for chapel at 6:00 in the morning. They begin with vibrant praise and worship. Then there is prayer and preaching. The managers of these car washes are pastors. They carry on the full duties of a TC Director and run a car wash at the same time. The men pray for God to use them to be a light and

testimony to all that enter. We have gained a reputation for being the cleanest and the best car wash in town.

We have also opened and are operating two thrift stores, a professional catering service, a painting business, a roofing company, a professional commercial cleaning company; we do snow removal and any kind of general labor work. All of these industries are ministries. At TCNE you will hear people refer to the kitchen ministry, the maintenance dept. ministry; everything is a ministry! These ministries are training men and women to work hard and study hard at the same time. We have established a standard of excellence in all that we set out to do for the glory of God.

TCNE is now operating ministries in seven states. Every last Friday of the month we gather together at the Brockton campus to celebrate a graduation service. There is an hour of corporate prayer before the service begins. There is a powerful time of praise and worship. When each graduate is called to receive their diploma there's a thunderous roar of applause celebrating their achievement.

We also gather three times a year for spiritual emphasis. We meet in January for three days, in April we rent a camp for four nights and five days, and in August we host a three-day spiritual emphasis. These gatherings are centered on building community, anointed teaching and preaching, and great food and fun. There is no doubt that the Lord is forcefully advancing his Kingdom in and through the ministry of TCNE.

In the next chapter, we will explore more deeply the theological foundation and framework upon which TCNE builds its ministry.