

The Great Emergence

**How Christianity is Changing
and Why**



- **READ Introduction to Part 1**
- **Key Concept: The Great Emergence**
 - *Like every “new season,” this one we recognize as the Great Emergence affects every part of our lives. In its totality, it interfaces with, and is the context for, everything we do socially, culturally, intellectually, politically, economically.”*
- **Guiding Questions**
 - What is this thing?
 - How did it come to be?
 - Where is it going?

READ & REFLECT

◉ **READ Chapter 1**

- In table format list, date, and make note of at least one key person and one key event associated with each great “rummage sale” in Church history.

◉ **Question for Reflection**

- What are some of the characteristics of a Church “rummage sale” and what are some of the consistent results of this type of major upheaval?

◉ **Read Chapter 2**

◉ **Key Concept: The Cable - A Holy Tether**

- *“Looked at as generic rather than personal, religion can be most easily or accessibly described as a kind of cable – a cable of meaning that keeps the human social unit connected to some purpose and/or power greater than itself.”*
- **The Cable**
 - **Waterproof Covering** = the story of the community
 - **Mesh Sleeve** = consensual illusion or common imagination of the community
 - **Inner Strands**
 - **spirituality** = *those experiences and values that are internal to the individual or to the individuals who compose a society*
 - **corporeality** = *all the overt, physical evidences that a religion exists*
 - **morality** = *the externalization and/or objective enactment and application of values and experiences of the individual or individuals who compose a society*

- ◉ **Read Introduction to Part 2**
- ◉ **Synopsis:** Benefits to Perceiving Emergent Pattern
 - Allows those who are living through the current upheaval to
 - *more accurately evaluate and more wisely address changes*
 - *diminish the sense, either corporately or individually, that somehow, “This mess must be our/my fault.”*

◉ Read Chapter 3

◉ Synopsis: the Great Reformation

- Protestant Reformation
- Catholic Counter Reformation
- Contributing Factors
 - Intercultural and interreligious clashes of the late 14th and 15th centuries
 - Rediscovery of classical writers
 - Increased centralization of governments
- Resulting Shift in Locus of Authority
 - Before = the Pope and the Church hierarchy
 - After = *sola scriptura, scriptura sola*

◉ Read Chapter 4

◉ Synopsis

- How we got from where we were to where we are
 - Darwin & Faraday
 - Evolutionary theory and electromagnetic fields
 - Freud, Jung & Campbell
 - The opening of the human unconscious, and the collective unconscious
 - The advent of radio and television
 - The birth of the new “self”
 - *From cogito, ergo sum* – I think therefore I am
 - To?

◎ **Focus on pages 72-75.**

◎ **Essential Questions of Re-formation**

- Where, now, is the authority?
- What is human consciousness and/or the humanness of the human?
- What is the relation of all religions to one another?

◎ **Question for Reflection**

- As you look at the emerging world around you today, how would you answer the 3 questions listed above: 1) Where and/or to what or whom do we now look for authority? 2) What makes human beings human? 3) What is the relationship of all religions to one another?

◉ **Read Chapter 5**

◉ **Synopsis:** Shaping People/Events of the “Century of Emergence”

- Albert Einstein and the Theory of Relativity
- Albert Schweitzer and the Quest of the Historical Jesus
- Azusa Street Revival and the Rise of Pentecostalism
- Introduction of the Tin Lizzie, Model T and other affordable cars
- Karl Marx and the Influence of Communism
- Alcoholics Anonymous and the Introduction of “Spiritual but not Religious”
- Asian Spiritual Experience and Expertise
- Sex, Drugs & Rock n’Roll
- Rosie the Riveter Burns Her Bra

◎ **Question for Reflection**

- Choose one of the shaping people/events from the previous slide. Re-read that section in the book. Reflect on how that particular person's contributions to the "Century of Emergence" or that event has impacted your own faith journey.

○ **Read Introduction to Part 3.**

○ **Key Concept: The Great Emergence**

- *“Like its predecessors, this one too is a phenomenon initiating in the Western experience; though unlike the preceding reconfigurations, the Great Emergence is not limited to the Western world in its expectations, expression, or exercise.”*

○ **Read Chapter 6**

- Draw your own emerging church quadrilateral. Within each of the 4 quarters of the quadrilateral write the name of a group/category of North American Christianity in bold letters. Include in each quarter other “historic” names used to describe that group/category . Under each named group/category write other key words that best describe that group/category.

◎ Questions for Reflection*

- Where would you currently place yourself and/or your faith community within the emerging cruciform pattern of churches. Are you at the gathering center of the rose, on one of the petals, or among the surrounding currents?
- If, as Phyllis Tickle asserts, “*one locates oneself or one’s faith community on the map in terms of that which is more, or most, important in one’s Christian practice,*” what particular practices of faith play a significant role in your personal experience?

* *For those respondents who are not members of Christian faith communities, consider how these emergent characteristics are at work in your own faith community.*

◉ **Read Chapter 7**

◉ **Key Definitions**

- Orthodoxy = right/correct belief or doctrine
- Orthopraxis = right/correct practice
- Orthonomy = a kind of “correct harmoniousness or beauty”
- Theonomy = theos (God) + nomos (harmoniousness or beauty) =
“*only God can be the source of perfection in action and thought*”

◉ **Question for Reflection**

- According to Phyllis Tickle, how may the Quakers be able to serve as a guide for emergent Christianity in the pursuit of a “networked authority”?

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RENEW

- 1) Complete the create-a-table exercise for Part 1, Chapter 1.
- 2) Respond to the Question for Reflection in Part 1, Chapter 1.
- 3) Respond to the Question for Reflection in Part 2, Chapter 4 concerning the essential “questions of re-formation.”
- 4) Write a 1-3 page reflection paper exploring how a shaping person or event from the “Century of Emergence” has impacted your own faith journey.
- 5) Complete the emerging church quadrilateral activity for Part 3, Chapter 6.
- 6) Respond to the Questions for Reflection for Part 3, Chapter 6.
- 7) Respond to the Question for Reflection for Part 3, Chapter 7.