

1 CORINTHIANS

The Gospel
in Community

WHEN FAITH AND LIFE COLLIDE

Study 3

THE GOSPEL AND THE NATURE OF CHURCH GROWTH

I Corinthians 3:1-17

INTRODUCTION

THE PROBLEM OF DISUNITY

1 Corinthians 1:11-12 (ESV) For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there is quarreling among you, my brothers. 12 What I mean is that each one of you says, "I follow Paul," or "I follow Apollos," or "I follow Cephas," or "I follow Christ."

PAUL ADDRESSES THE UNDERLYING CAUSE

Spiritual immaturity v 1-4

**Misunderstanding nature
of the church growth v 5-22**

Spiritual immaturity v 1-4



Misunderstanding nature of church growth v 5-22



Focus on Leaders



Building on the wrong foundation



Misunderstanding the vision of the church

THE STATE OF THE CHURCH

1 Corinthians 3:1-2 But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. 2 I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, 3 for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way?

THE CONTRAST

Flesh

Spiritual

Infants

Adults

Milk

Solid Food

What is he trying to convey?

THE MEANING OF HIS CONTRAST

1 Corinthians 3:1-2 But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. 2 I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, 3 for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way?

FLESH

Flesh is aspect of your life that wants to be god



carrying out the
desires of the body and the
mind

What is natural and desirable



Flesh

Normal desires

- Food
- Comfort
- Sex
- Competent
- Love and affection
- Power
- Glory



**Achieve these
on my own
terms without
God**



UNILATERAL ACTION

Genesis 3:5 (ESV)

For God knows
that when you eat
of it your eyes will
be opened, and
you will be like
God, knowing
good and evil

THE PROBLEM WITH THE CHURCH

Flesh

1. Christians moved by entirely human drives
2. Christians moved by self interest
3. Self sufficiency

Spiritual

1. Christians moved by entirely Spiritual drives
2. Christians moved by the needs of others
3. Dependant on Spirit

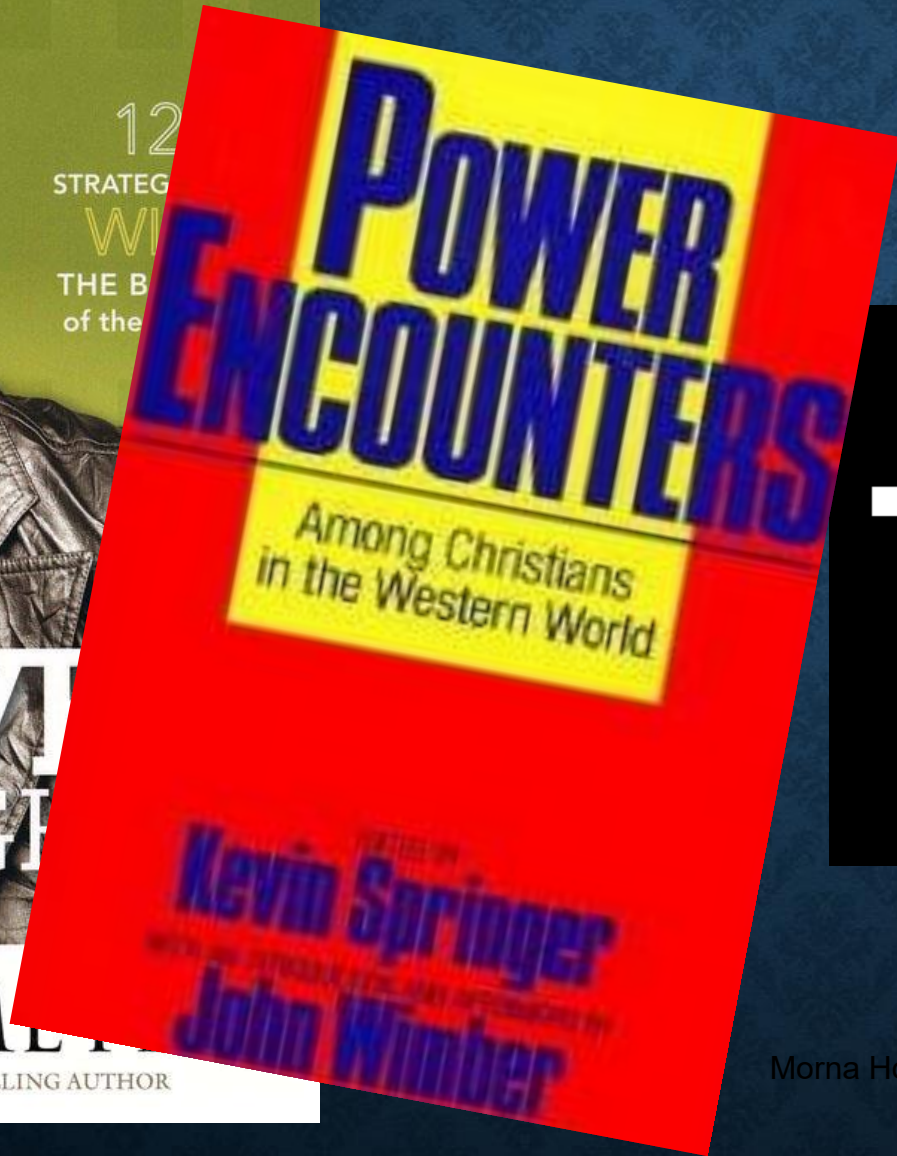
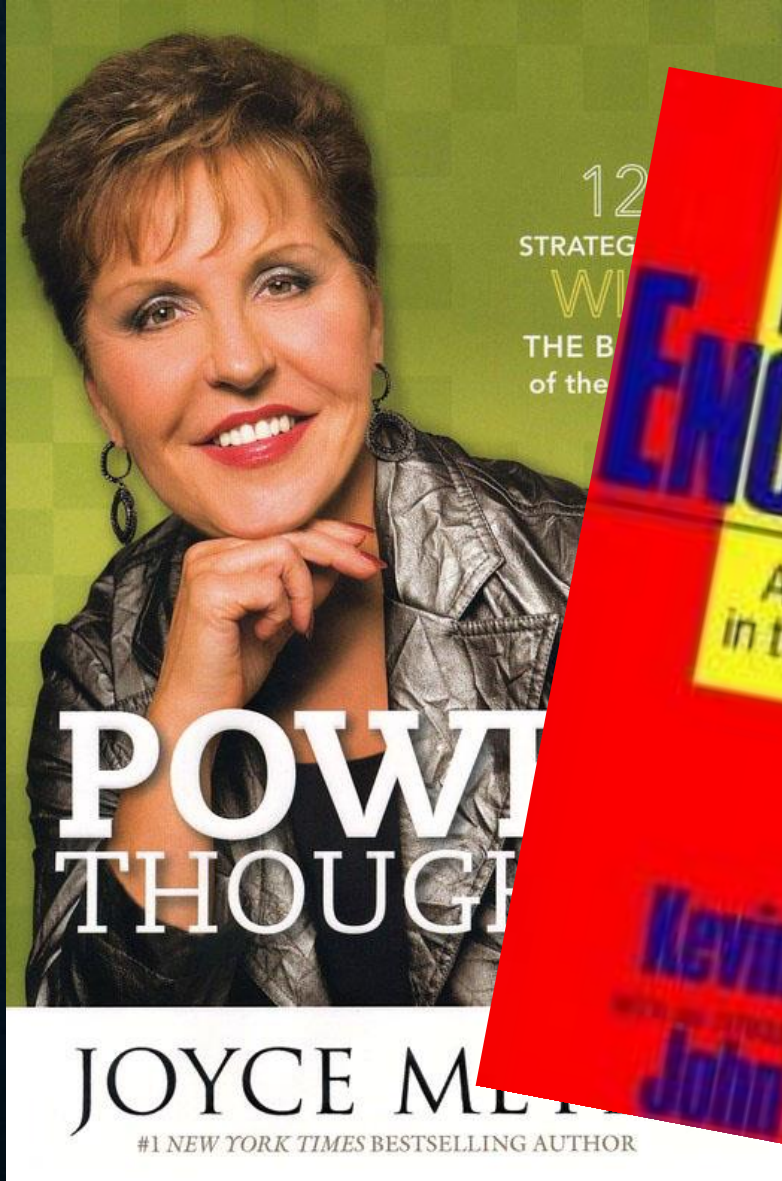


CONSEQUENCES OF THE FLESH

1 Corinthians 3:3-4 3 for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way? 4 For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not being merely human?

Personal loyalty

Milk or meat?



Morna Hooker'

THE WATERED DOWN MESSAGE

1 Corinthians 2:1-2 (ESV) And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. 2 For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

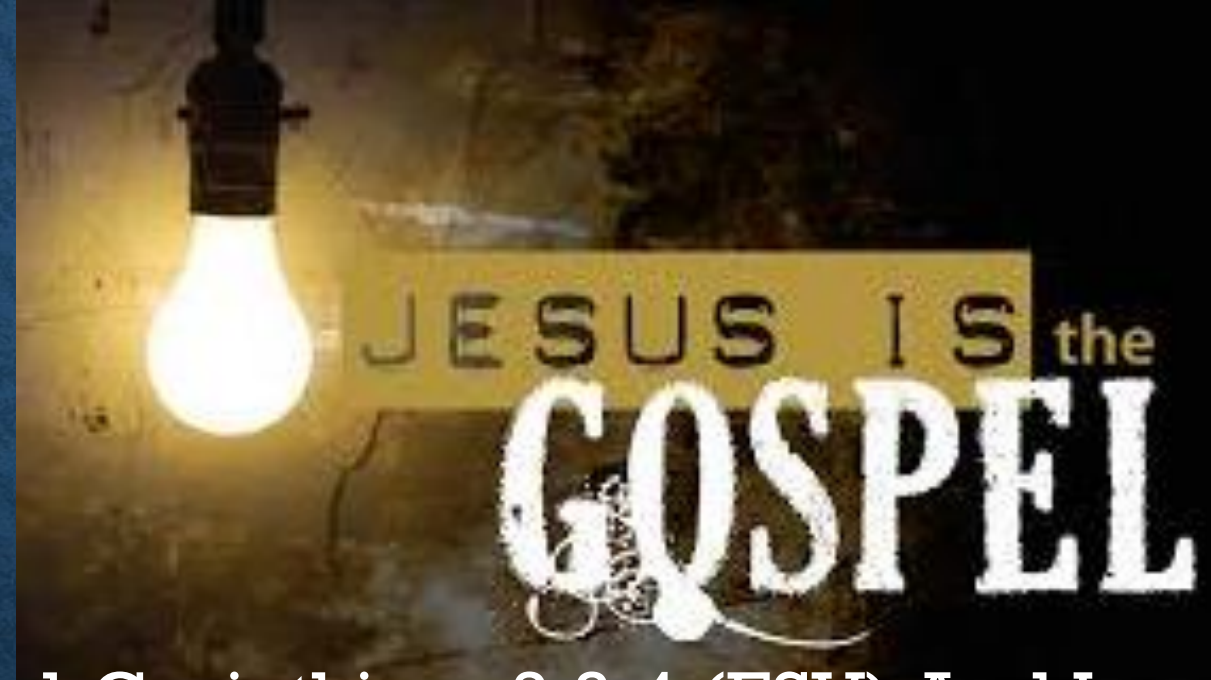
THE CONTEXT

Paul

Other teachers

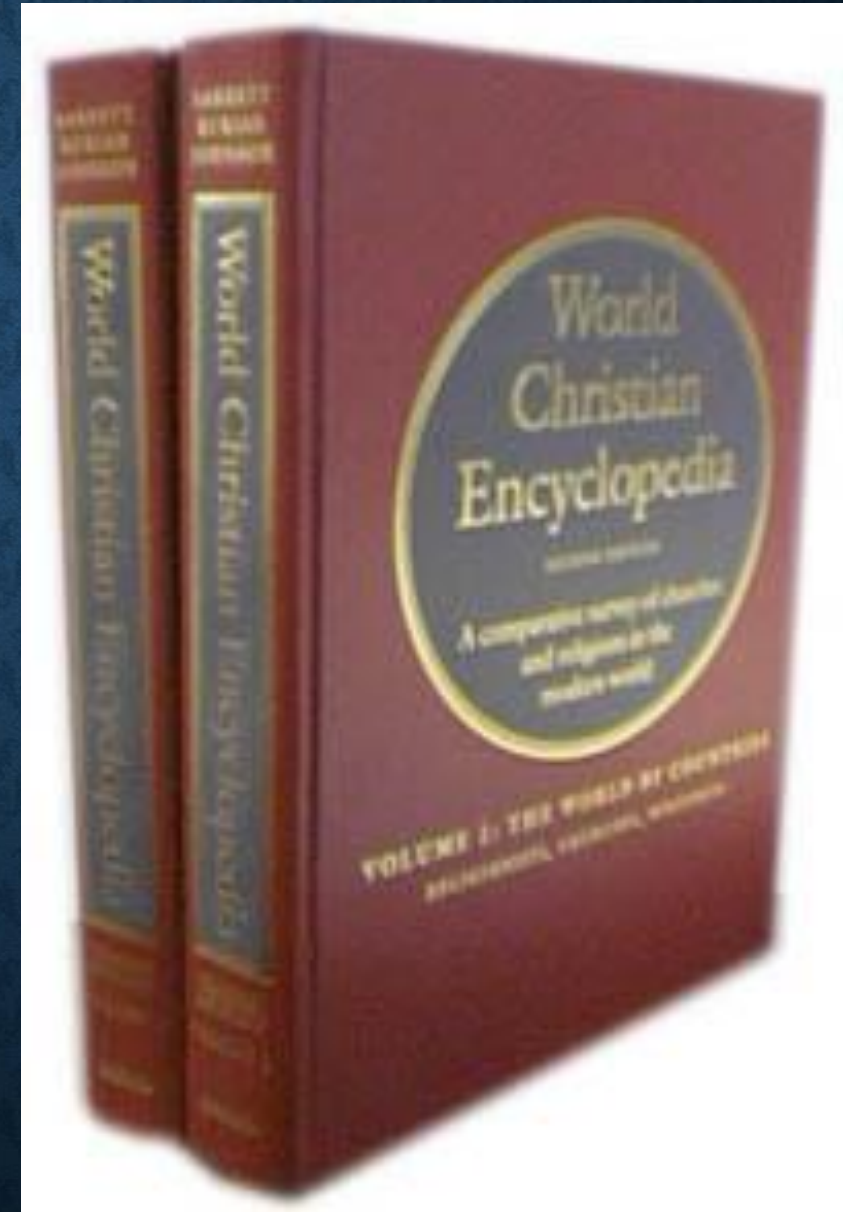


Rhetoric, sophistication,
Experiences



1 Corinthians 2:3-4 (ESV) And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, 4 and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom

33,000 DENOMINATIONS



BACK TO THE MEAT



GOSPEL-CENTERED
TEACHING



GOSPEL-CENTERED
GROWTH



GOSPEL-CENTERED
INFLUENCE

Wrong focus in church growth v 5-22



Focus on
Leaders



Building on the
wrong foundation



Focus on the
wrong motives

1. LEADERS ARE SERVANTS WITH SPECIFIC ASSIGNMENTS

1 Corinthians 3: 5 What then is Apollos?
What is Paul? Servants through whom you
believed, as the Lord assigned to each.

Servants with a specific mission or job
commissioned by God...dignity..responsibility



FARM WORKERS



Servants through whom
you believed, as the Lord
assigned to each.

Do you go back to the restaurant for the waiter?



2. GOD PAYS THEM NOT YOU

1 Corinthians 3: 8 He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor.

3. CHURCH BELONGS TO GOD AND HE CAUSES GROWTH

1 Corinthians 3: 6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. 7 So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.

9 For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building.



THREE METAPHORS

1. Leaders are servants with specific assignments
2. Leaders are rewarded by God
3. The church belongs to God and God gives the growth

Applications



THE WAY OF THE FLESH

OVERCREDITING LEADERS WITH THE GROWTH

- Datuk Baharudin Bin
- 4.28 million /year

HOW MUCH DOES HE GET PAID?



Warren Buffet
USD\$336,000/year.

- ← The financial return for the 15 most overpaid CEO's was just 3.1%.
- ← The return for the 15 most underpaid CEO's was 11.7%

Personalised authority

Apostle
*Lawrence
Khong*



THE LEAP OF FAITH

An interview with Apostle Lawrence Khong,
Senior Pastor, FCBC

It's a natural reaction to wonder sometimes, whenever you meet someone who has given his life to his faith, on what prompted that life-changing decision?

For some, it is a personal experience, for others, a powerful testimony given by someone else and for some like Apostle Lawrence Khong, both. In my interview with Lawrence, I learnt that there were two very fundamental turning points in his life and at each point, God presented Lawrence with both a direction and a choice - to take a leap of faith into the unknown, or continue in the comfort zone.

- by Edmund Tan

> Next - Port Dickson

INTERNATIONAL COALITION OF APOSTLES

- In the NT this person is a strategos, warrior-strategist, a general or governor in his assigned sphere.
- When one is sent out as an apostolos, he is the full delegate and representative ambassador of his sender. He carries in his person the full authority of the one who sent him.

MEMBER'S MAP



THE
APOSTOLIC
CELL
CHURCH

PRACTICAL STRATEGIES
FOR GROWTH AND OUTREACH

FROM THE STORY OF
FAITH COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH

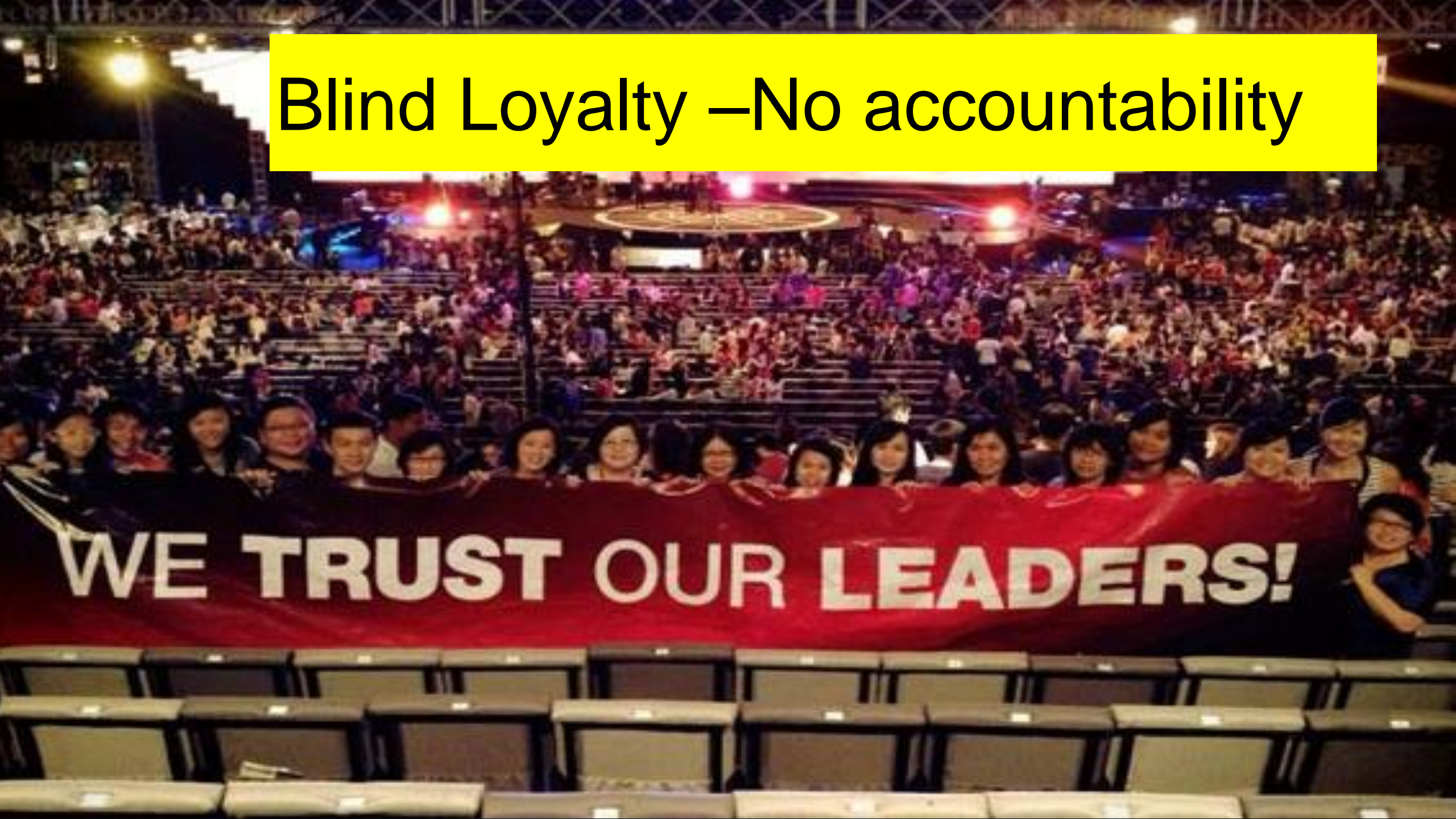
Lawrence Khong

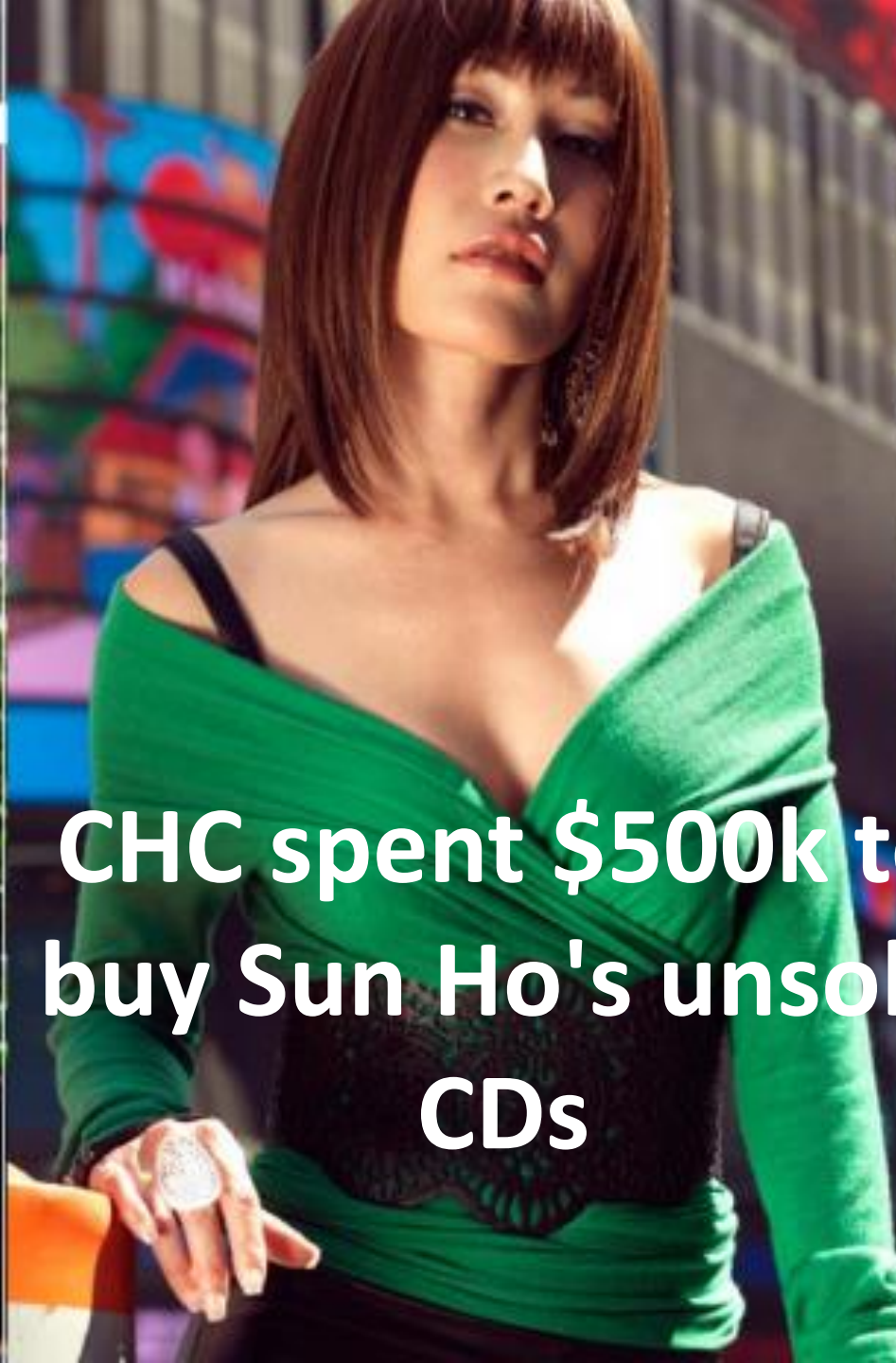
- FCBC has grown rapidly because of my strong and anointed leadership
- P 107

Exclusive leadership



Blind Loyalty –No accountability





**CHC spent \$500k to
buy Sun Ho's unsold
CDs**



SOME ONE WHO LEFT THE CHURCH

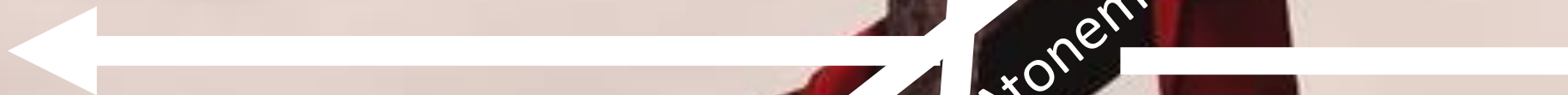
- I am a Christian and I've attended City Harvest Church for two periods in my life for a total of 2 to 2.5 years.
- But things went downhill one Sunday morning when a leader took to the stage to plug Ho Yeow Sun's new album. ... What was most upsetting at that time, was the fact that he was using the pulpit to push the sales of the pastor's wife who was more interested in cutting pop albums than say attending church service. The posters from her new album were also plastered along the entrance and lobby of the building. There were no images of Jesus.

VIBRANT TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

- Passion for God, His mission and His transforming power on people
- Leads by example and values rather than position
- Centrifugal influence...Draws people in ...Sends people out
- Promotes the mission

THREE DIMENSIONS OF GOSPEL WISDOM

Resurrection/forward-back.



Incarnation/upside-down



Atonement/inside-out



INCARNATIONAL UPSIDE DOWN MINDSET

- Shifts from one to many leaders
- Shift in value
- Expand influence rather than hold it for self



IF GOD CAUSES THE GROWTH THEN ...

- Prayerful dependance
- Word based
 - Programs in line with His Word
 - Gospel centered
- Leaders Equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, Ephesians 4:12
- Gift based
- Impossible goals

IF MAN CAUSES THE GROWTH THEN ...

Minimal prayer

Programs that attract people, entertainment ...only

Buildings rather than people

Minimal teaching of Word

No gospel emphasis

Led by leaders only

Achievable goals

Wrong focus in church growth v 5-22



Focus on
Leaders



Building on the
wrong foundation



Focus on the
wrong motives

1. BUILD ON THE CHRIST FOUNDATION

1 Corinthians 3:10-15 10 According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. 11 For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.



360f



10f

Bedrock of truth-Christ

EXPERIENCE IS EVERYTHING

THE ELEMENTS OF
USER EXPERIENCE



USER-CENTERED DESIGN FOR THE WEB

Jesse James Garrett

THE
STARBUCKS
EXPERIENCE

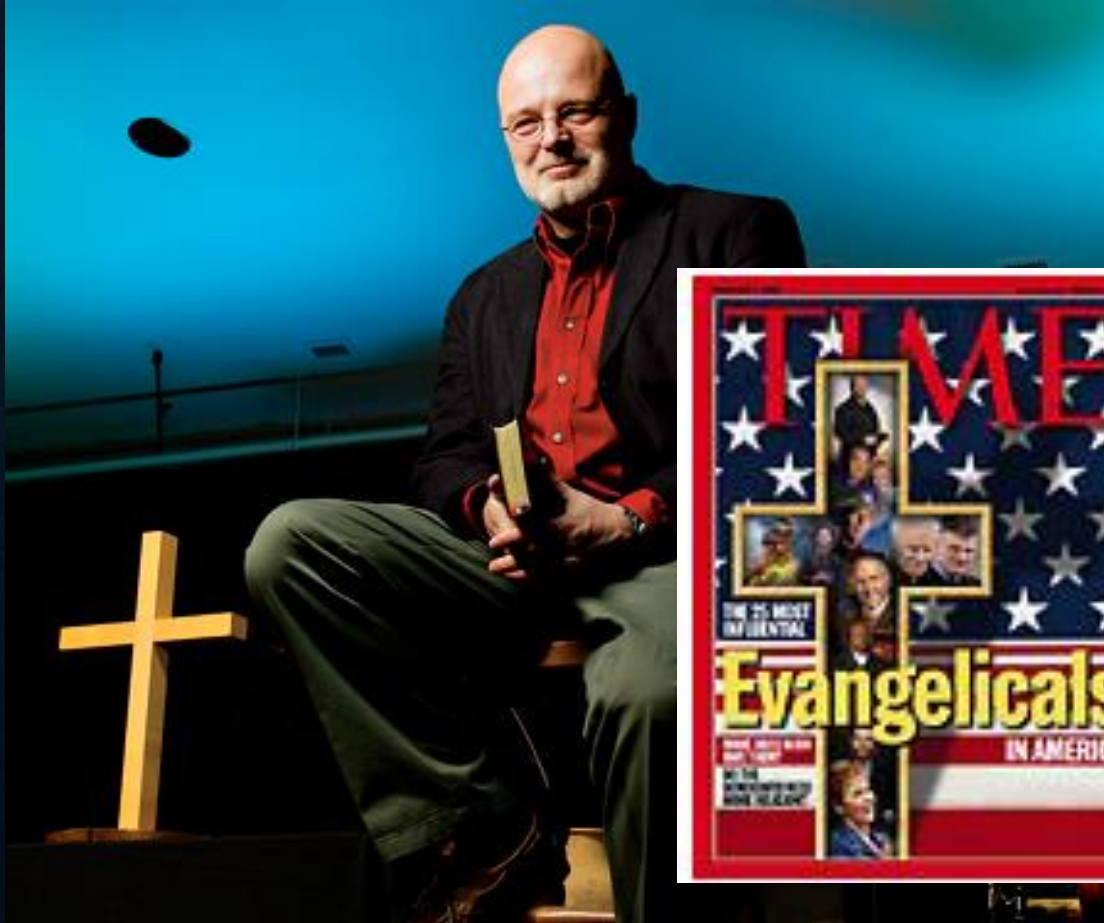
5 Principles for Turning
Ordinary into Extraordinary



JOSEPH A. MICHELLI, Ph.D.



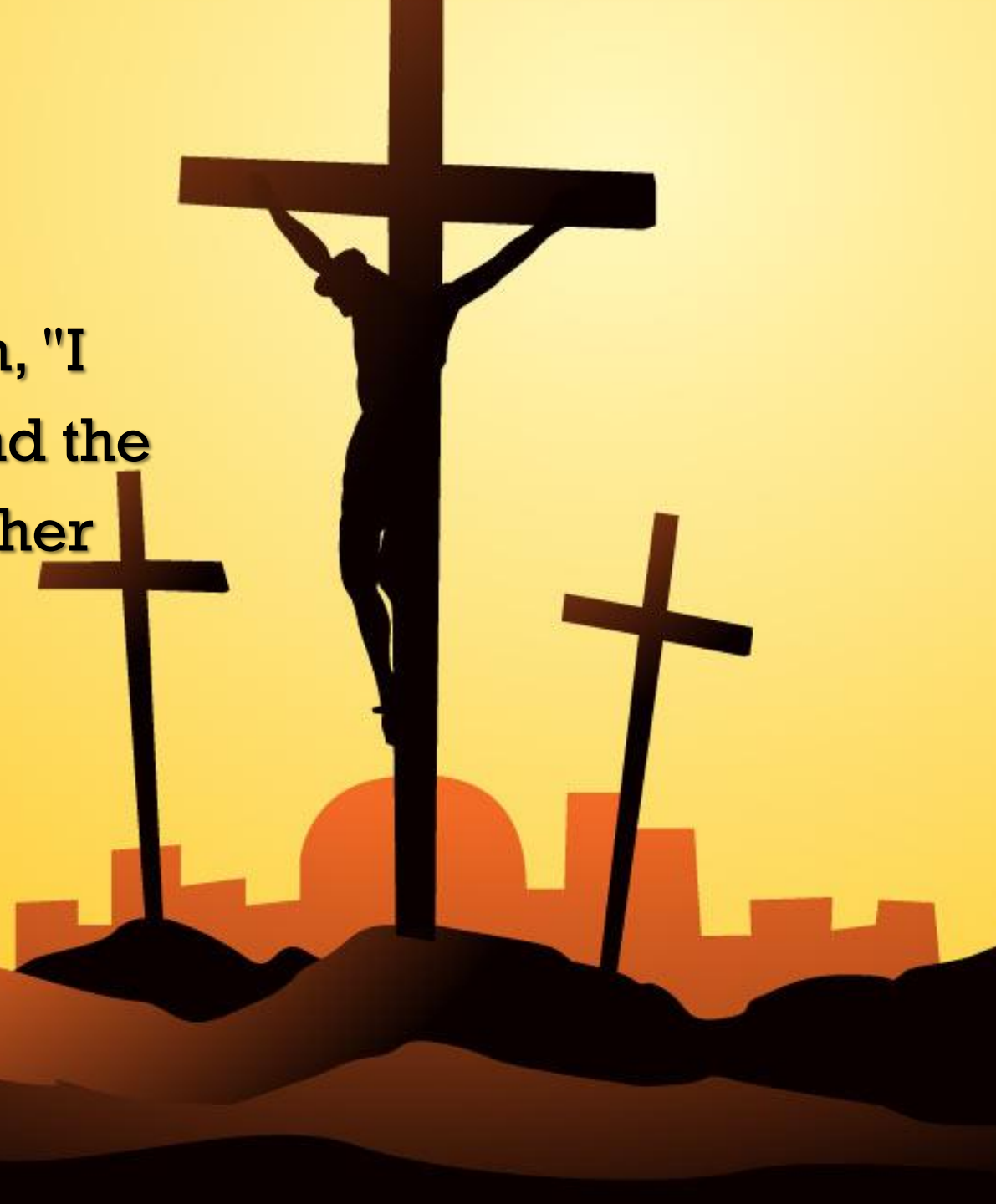
BRIAN MCLAREN-TIMES LIST OF 25 MOST INFLUENTIAL EVANGELICALS OF AMERICA



I don't hope that all Jews or Hindus will become members of the Christian religion. But I do hope that all who feel so called will become Jewish or Hindu followers of Jesus

" You might call his a kinder and gentler brand of religion"

John 14:6 6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.



WHICH FOUNDATION?

- Needs
- Need for fulfilment
- Attractive



- Sin
- Need for righteousness
- Foolishness and repulsive

2. BUILD USING IMPERISHABLES

1 Corinthians 3:12 Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw- 13 each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. 14 If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

MOTIVE: LOVE

- 1 Corinthians 13:2-3 2 And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

MEANS :FAITH

- Hebrews 11:4 4 By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks.
-6 And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

MEANS: FAITH

- Looks small
- Great cost
- Great Sacrifice



- Looks big
- Least cost
- Least sacrifice



SIZE DOES NOT MATTER

Mark 9:41..I tell you the truth, anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name because you belong to Christ will certainly not lose his reward.

LOOKS ARE DECEPTIVE

Smyrna

Revelation 2:9 9 "I know your tribulation and your poverty

Philidelphia

Revelation 3:8 I know that you have but little power,

LOOKS ARE DECEPTIVE

Smyrna

Revelation 2:10 10 Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.

Philidelphia

Revelation 3:10 10 Because you have kept my word about patient endurance,

METHOD: HIS WILL

Romans 12:2 2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

COMPARISON



Wrong focus in church growth v 5-22



Focus on
Leaders



Building on the
wrong foundation



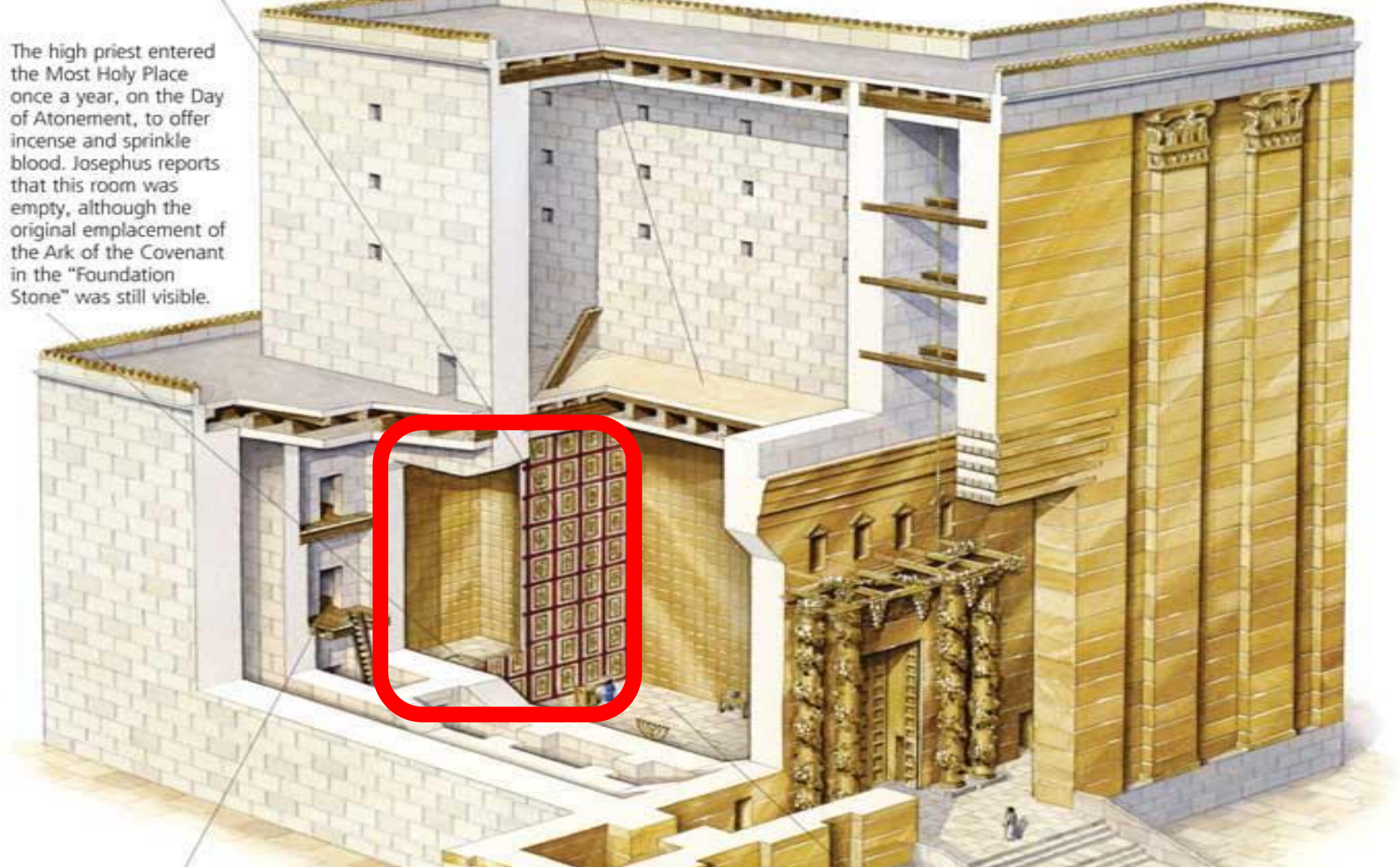
Misunderstanding
the vision of the
church

1. WE HAVE THE PRESENCE OF GOD

1 Corinthians 3:16-17 16 Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? 17 If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.



The high priest entered the Most Holy Place once a year, on the Day of Atonement, to offer incense and sprinkle blood. Josephus reports that this room was empty, although the original emplacement of the Ark of the Covenant in the "Foundation Stone" was still visible.



NAOS

High priest enter
Once a year
With rope round ankle



HOLY AND CALLED TO BE HOLY

Christ Accomplished

**Holy Ones
Saints**
(Legal Status)

“sanctified in
Christ Jesus”

Our calling Holy living



...”called to be saints”

Our ultimate glory

**Holy
Perfectly**

..” guiltless in
the day of our
Lord Jesus
Christ”.

2. GOD JEALOUSLY PROTECTS THE DIGNITY OF HIS CHURCH

1 Corinthians 3:17 If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

CITY HARVEST CHURCH

CITY HARV



GUILTY

John Lam, 47

Who: Former City Harvest Church (CHC) finance committee member.

Verdict: Found guilty of three charges of criminal breach of trust.

What he had said in court: Believed the Xtron bonds were a sound investment because of Ms Ho Yeow Sun's success with her previous music albums.

What judge said: Lam's role was evidently less substantial in conceiving and executing the plan to channel church funds through Xtron. But he had his own part to play as a board member and investment committee member.

What next: Lam is considering whether to appeal. He said: "I'm obviously disappointed, but it's been a very long trial, and someone prudent would have been prepared for conviction. But of course we were always believing in our acquittal."

Chew Eng Han, 55

Who: Former CHC fund manager.

Verdict: Found guilty of six charges of criminal breach of trust and four charges of falsification of accounts.

What he had said in court: Called the Crossover Project and Ms Ho's music career the "real shams", not the bond investments he designed (based on Kong Hee's album sales projections) to support them.

What judge said: Chew played a substantial role in the plan to channel church funds through Xtron. He hid the truth about the Xtron bonds to give auditors the impression that CHC and Xtron were independent of each other. In fact, he knew that Kong made all decisions on Xtron's behalf.

What next: Chew told reporters: "I didn't expect it. It's a shock for my family. Of course I will appeal."

Kong Hee, 51

Who: Founder and senior pastor of CHC.

Verdict: Found guilty of three charges of criminal breach of trust.

What he had said in court: Kong always maintained that he had sought and received assurance from lawyers and auditors that all financial transactions were above board.

What judge said: Kong played a substantial role in conceiving and executing the plan to channel CHC's Building Fund through music firm Xtron, which managed his wife Ho Yeow Sun for the Crossover Project.

What next: His wife said in a Facebook post that "we are disappointed by the outcome". His lawyer Edwin Tong said they will be studying the grounds of decision before deciding whether to appeal.

Tan Ye Peng, 42

Who: Founding member and CHC deputy senior pastor.

Verdict: Found guilty of six charges of criminal breach of trust, and four charges of falsifying the church's accounts.

What he had said in court: Tan insisted he never thought what they had done was illegal, also admitted previously he was not trained in accounting.

What judge said: Tan played a substantial role in the plan to channel church funds through Xtron, and kept round-tripping transactions from auditors. Although "a leader in his own right", he trusted Kong's leadership completely. However, this does not exonerate him from criminal liability.

What next: His lawyer said he has to wait for the grounds of decision before deciding on the next step.

Serina Wee, 38

Who: Former CHC finance manager.

Verdict: Found guilty of six charges of criminal breach of trust and four charges of falsification of accounts.

What she had said in court: Wee, who handled the accounts for the Crossover Project, claimed it never crossed her mind that what they were doing could be violating the law.

What judge said: Wee played a substantial role in the plan to channel church funds through Xtron. He was unconvinced that Wee and others had genuinely believed in the success of Ms Ho's US Crossover Project, and said she had readily conceded that Ms Ho's Asian Crossover albums all made losses.

What next: "As you've heard, the judge said it's not that they are morally wrong or used the money for personal gains. It's too early to say what our next course of action is," said her husband Kenny Low.

Sharon Tan, 40

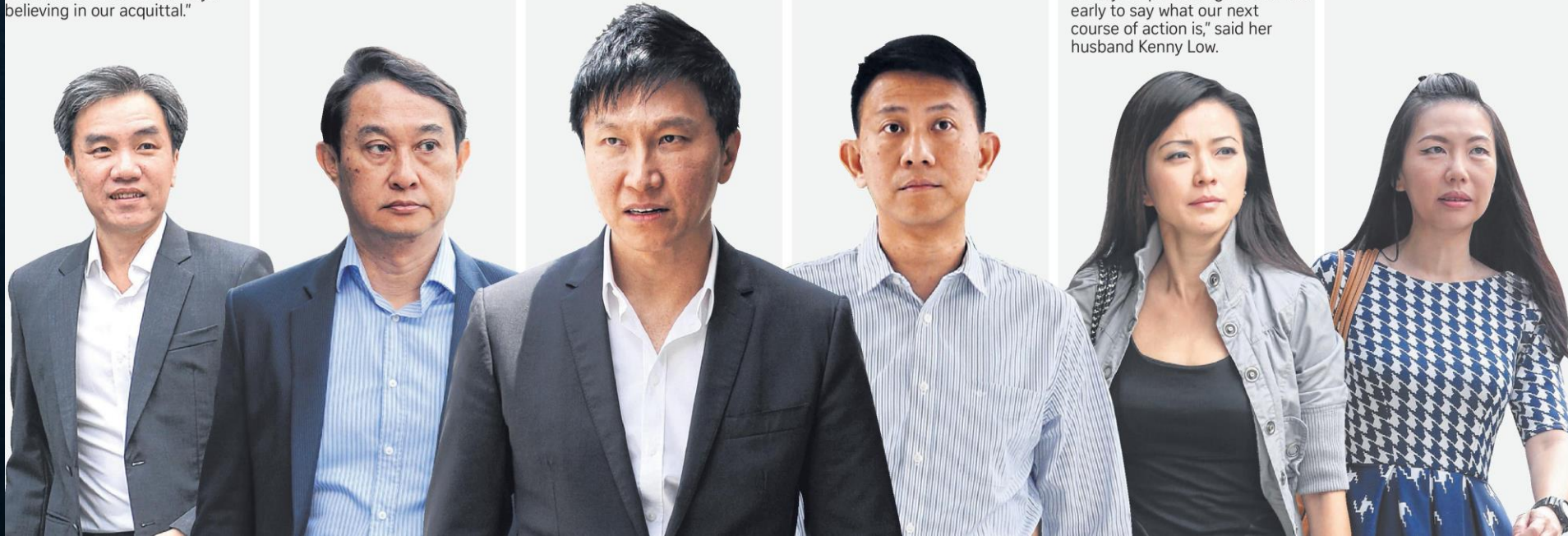
Who: CHC finance manager who took over from Wee.

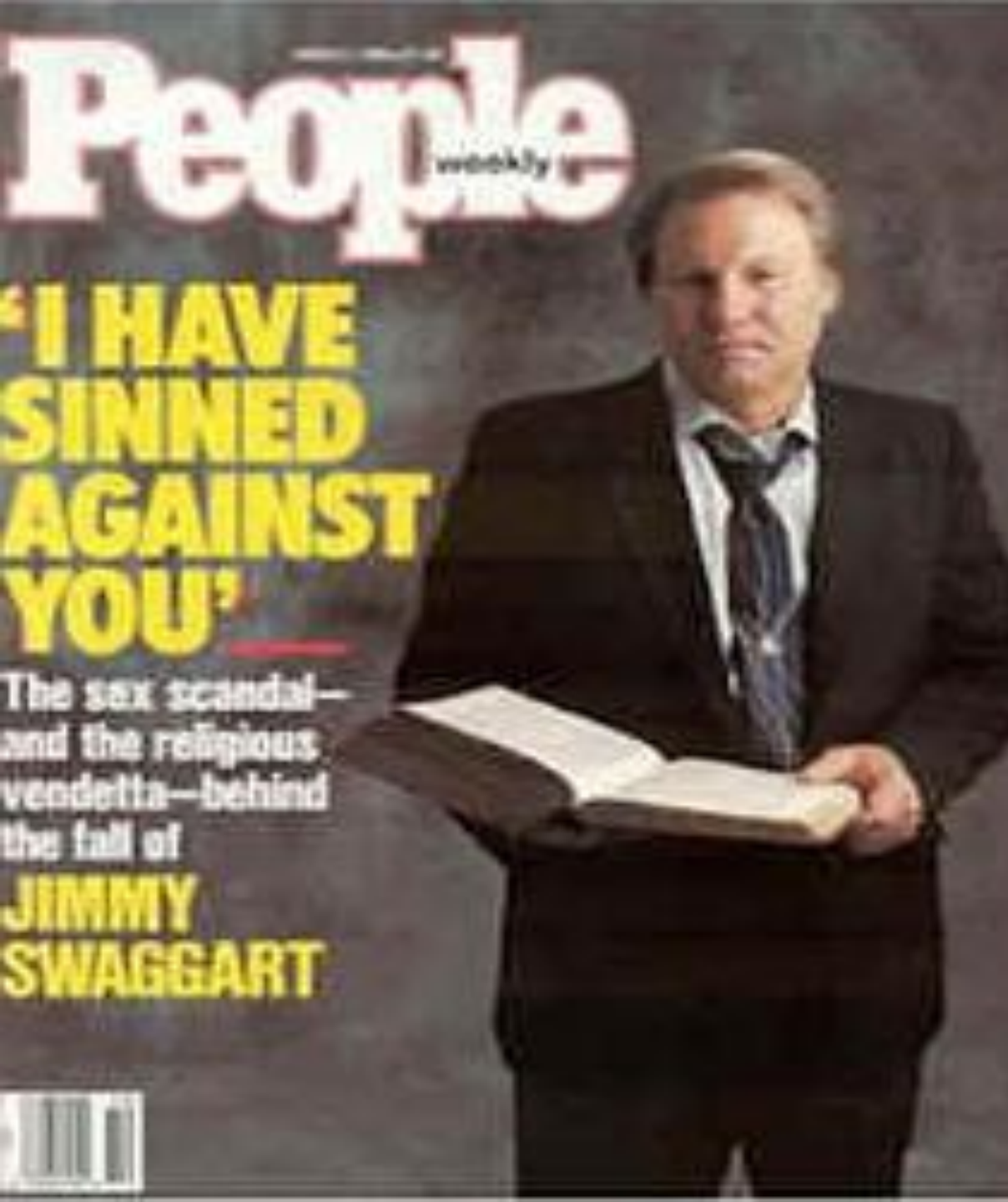
Verdict: Found guilty of three charges of criminal breach of trust and four charges of falsification of accounts.

What she had said in court: Claimed she had flagged concerns about the alleged round-tripping of church funds but was assured by the others that everything was "okay".

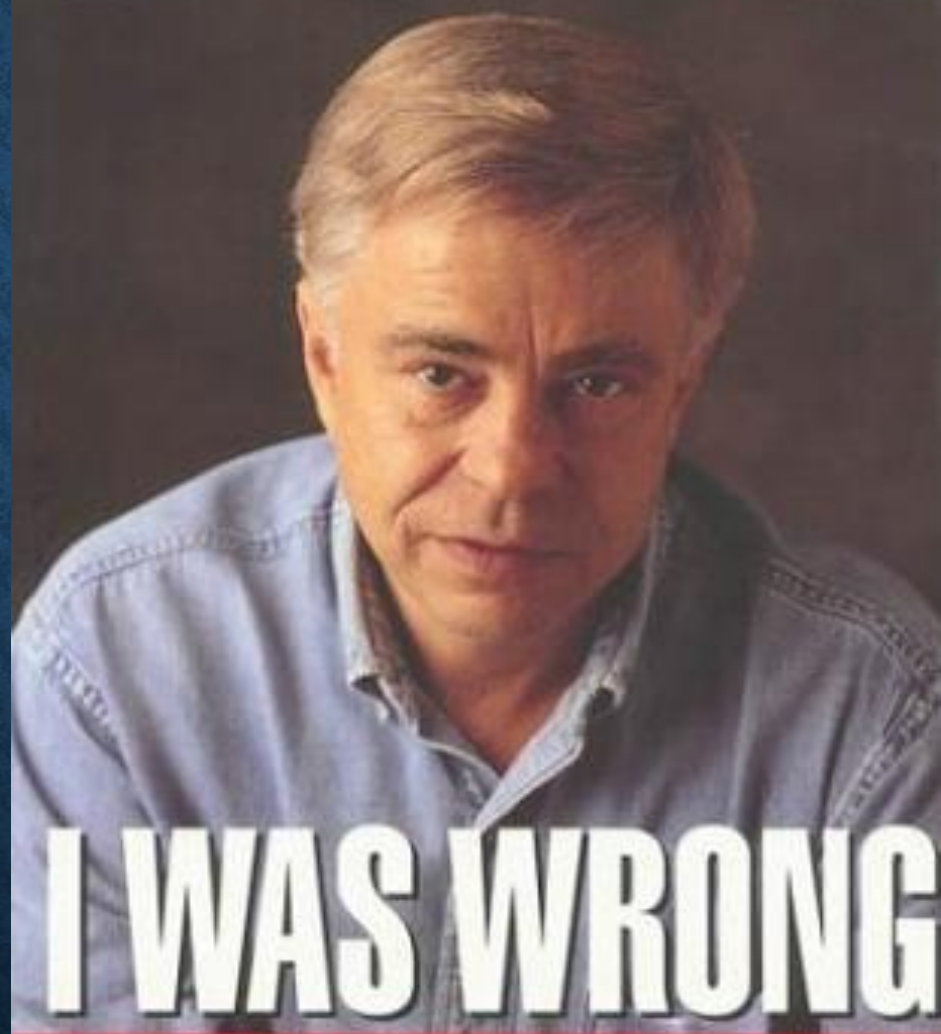
What judge said: She was aware of the round-tripping transactions and false accounting entries, including a redemption of Xtron bonds in the form of a set-off against advance rental.

What next: Tan said she will speak to her lawyer today to decide if she would be filing an appeal. "I will keep on praying."





JIM BAKKER



I WAS WRONG

The Untold Story of the Shocking Journey from PTL Power to Prison and Beyond



TULLIAN TCHIVIDJIAN,

PASTOR OF CORAL RIDGE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN FORT LAUDERDALE, FLA

- Last week I was approached by our church leaders and they asked me about my own affair. I admitted to it and it was decided that the best course of action would be for me to resign
- are heartbroken over our actions,"

Wrong focus in church growth v 5-22



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Leaders



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Misunderstanding
the vision of the
church

THREE METAPHORS FOR CHURCH UNITY



1. Leaders are servants with specific assignments
2. Leaders are rewarded by God
3. The church belongs to God and God gives the growth



1. Build only on Christ
2. Only imperishables will survive impending judgement



1. Our destination is holiness
2. God protects the holiness of His Church