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GLOSSARY OF SELECTED TERMS

Note: The following definitions have been derived from definitions found in *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*. Springfield: Merriam Company, 1981.

Catechumen. A convert to Christianity receiving training in doctrine and discipline before baptism; referring to the process of the training or the doctrine contained in the training.

Christocentric. Having Christ as the center; centering theologically on Christ.

Enlightenment. A philosophic movement of the eighteenth century marked by a questioning of traditional doctrines and values, a tendency toward individualism, and an emphasis on the idea of universal human progress, the empirical method in science, and the free use of reason.

Epistemology. The study or a theory of the nature and grounds of knowledge especially with reference to its limits and validity.

Epoch. An extended period of time usually characterized by a distinctive development or by a memorable series of events.

Nominalism. Of or pertaining to the mind; a theory that there are no universal essences in reality and that the mind can frame no single concept or image corresponding to any universal or general term.

Paradigm. An outstandingly clear or typical example or archetype.

Paradox. A tenet contrary to received opinion; an argument that apparently derives self-contradictory conclusions by valid deduction from acceptable premises.

ABSTRACT

Monumental change is occurring in worship across our country as we leave the modern era behind and move forward into the unknown element called “postmodern.” The modern, with its emphasis on intellect and word, is slowly but surely being overrun by the postmodern, with its emphasis on experience and symbol. Like the collision of two great landmasses, there will be friction and some earthquakes – perhaps even some fire – but in the end, the steady push of the “new” will make its mark and change the landscape forever. Perhaps the “new” is not so new after all. Many postmodern worshipers, especially youth, are turning for inspiration to the pattern and language of the ancient church. There they are rediscovering classic Christianity and learning to draw strength and spirituality from a deep, satisfying well of time-tested truth and tradition. I am convinced that many of the postmodern world’s thirsts can be marvelously and even uniquely quenched there.

This thesis and supporting curriculum advances the idea that the postmodern world has much in common with the world of the first century church. A series of five lectures, together with a number of “Outside the Box” activities and audio-visual supplements, exposes master’s level students to paradigm thinking, the problems with modernity, a basic understanding of postmodernism, and directions for both worship and the church in a postmodern world.