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A KOREAN PERSPECTIVE ON MEGACHURCHES AS MISSIONAL CHURCHES

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that, except for the references to other people's works, which have been duly acknowledged; "A Korean perspective on megachurches as missional churches" is as the result of my own research and that it has not been submitted elsewhere for another degree. Additionally, I take responsibility for any inaccuracies and shortcomings, which may be detected in this work.

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ABSTRACT

The megachurch and the missional church are on-going global phenomena. Under the premise that the church has to be missional, this dissertation analyses and describes if a megachurch can be missional in both theoretical and practical ways from a Korean perspective.

The megachurch is not simply a very large church in membership or size of its building. It, by the influence of interaction of socio-cultural, historical and theological backgrounds, has its own missiological and ecclesiological perspectives. The megachurch understands that the growth of an individual church is the expansion of the kingdom of God, so that the church must be functional and structural to fulfil the church growth efficiently. Thus, it is a powerful tendency that can be found not only in large size churches, but from all churches trying to achieve by all means the quantitative growth of the church and world evangelisation, through the power and material obtained from growth. The Korean megachurches represented by the Poongsunghan Church obviously display the characteristics of this tendency.

The missional church is not simply a mission-driven church sending many missionaries to other countries. It believes that all churches are sent to the world by God who wants to reconcile the whole universe to Him, so that the church has to restore its missional essence to participate in the mission of God wherever it is as the early church did. Thus, the missional church is a reforming movement to witness to God's rule by recovering its apostolic nature. The characteristics of the movement is clearly activating in the Bundang Woori Church, one of the Korean missional churches.

In this line of research, any churches that are not resisting the megachurch tendency cannot be missional. The Korean church, which is in crisis being marginalised from society, has to join the missional movement.

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A LIST OF KEY TERMS

1. Megachurch phenomenon
2. Missional church movement
3. The *missio* Dei
4. Missional ecclesiology
5. Theo-centric mission
6. Ecclesio-centric mission
7. Incarnational mission
8. Imperialistic mission
9. A Korean megachurch
10. A Korean missional church
11. The kingdom of God
12. Church growth

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A LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BECs - Base Ecclesial Communities

GOCN - the Gospel and Our Culture Network

IMC - the International Missionary Council

KFHI - the Korea Food for the Hungry International

NAE - the National Association of Evangelicals

NCD - the Natural Church Development

SAPMC - the South African Partnership for Missional Churches

TBN - the Trinity Broadcasting Network

WCC - World Council of Churches

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Chapter 1

1. Introduction

Recently, an American evangelical missiologist, Ed Stetzer, expressed his opinion regarding a missional megachurch on his blog. When asked “Can a megachurch be missional?”, he answered saying that the question itself was not correct, but that it should have been formulated like this instead “How should a missional church look like?” According to his assumption, he argued that though it could be more difficult for megachurches to be missional, it was probable that megachurches, employing some methodologies such as community transformation, global ministry, apostolic networking, holistic disciple-making, and church multiplication, could become missional (Stetzer 2008).

The word “megachurch” is a compound noun made of the word “mega”, which means big or million in Greek, and church. In other words, it means a very big church. According to Thumma & Travis (2007:xx), megachurch generally refers to the churches which have more than 2,000 people gathering for a Sunday service. In accordance with this definition, the range of a megachurch concept can be very wide. Therefore, there are some reasons to be considered as to why the church with such a big number of people gathering every Sunday is not simply called a big or large church, but called a megachurch instead.

When I served as a missionary in Africa, I often heard the same issue stated during my visits to churches in Korea. For instance when I visited a big church, in terms of having a big number of congregants, they prayed like this: “Lord, help us become a bigger church and carry out world missions with the power and materials we can generate from our members.” When visiting a comparatively small church in number, they said that they were certainly going to do more missionary work when they grow bigger, as though feeling apologetic for not doing as many missionary activities as they would have wished because of their church’s numerical size.

Both big and small churches have one thing in common regarding mission. They intend to grow bigger and carry out mission with the power, influence and materials they can mobilise from their membership. Shin (2009:19) argues that “megachurch is

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a social and religious tendency which not only few megachurches accounting for about 2% out of all churches are constituent of, but also the majority of non-megachurches taking up 98% are obviously aiming at".

If defining the missional church would simply imply that the church is doing missionary work, a great number of members and the offerings of megachurches will surely be helpful to do generally recognised mission work, in which the "haves" support the "have-nots" (Padilla 2013:70-71), both in physical and spiritual ways. But, if a missional church is simply defined as a church carrying out social service programmes, then megachurches can also be called missional churches to an extent. Non-megachurches will be unable catch up with the smaller number of members they have and the various social service programmes they are able to provide.

However, to use the words of Son (2012:45), "The mission that the missional church tries to carry out is not the one whereby the church in strong and powerful countries gives out something to the church in weak countries". And the missional church cannot be simply defined as a church doing some social service work for society. In accordance with the article *Trends in missional ecclesiology*, the term "missional church" came into broad use after the publication of Guder in 1998 (Niemandt 2012:1). Since the publication of this book, it has captured the attention of leaders in both established mainline and evangelical churches in Canada and the United States and became a movement (Sine 2008:41).

Guder (1998:40-43) points out that there have been significant changes from modernity to postmodernity whereby concepts such as enlightenment, notions of truth, self, and society have become relative, decentred, and pluralistic. Thus the missional church movement arose from a need to rebuild what the traditional church had failed to accomplish as it had focused only on winning individual souls. This was an approach which was named 'religious individualism' and 'subjectivism' by Von Harnack in the beginning of 19th century. Therefore the traditional church had failed the mandate of the church toward society which is commonly called the cultural mandate (Lohfink 1984:3).

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The theology of the missional church emphasises the fact that the existence of the church itself is the on-going mission of the incarnated Word of God who through His believers were sent to render social services and to find various points of contact in a post-modern culture.

The root of the missional church can be found in the *missio Dei* set forth by the International Missionary Council (IMC) held in Willingen Germany in 1952 (Bosch 1991:370). The director of the Basel mission, Karl Hartenstein, first used the term, the *missio Dei*, to indicate the source and aim of mission. A German scholar, Vicedom (1965:5), claimed that "the church is just an instrument in God's caring. The church itself is only the result of God's work of sending and saving." This tells us that the mission of God comes first and that the church is the result of it.

Chung (2011:233) summarised what changed before and after the Willingen IMC as follows: Before the Willingen IMC, the church was the one who took charge of missions so that it played the major role in mission. However, after the Willingen IMC, the thought of mission was redefined in relation to the nature of the Triune God and then continued developing this new connection. The *missio* Dei changes the concept of the church as the subject of mission, to God as the subject of his mission. God sent Jesus to earth. God and Jesus sent the Holy Spirit. The Triune God sent and is sent. He is a missionary God (Bosch 1991:390). From Him and from His mission, the church was born. Thus, the church ought to be missional and completely committed to embodying the mission of Jesus in any given context, as a faithful instrument of God (Chung 2011:235).

The Professors of missiology at Fuller Seminary, Gibbs and Bolger (2005:91) say "The church is first the product of mission before it is an agent of mission." The church, which is the result of the mission of God, is sent by Him to the world as an agent (Jn 20:21). This is applied not only to some chosen missionaries or special churches which can afford it, but also to all members of the church - the body of the Lord. Hendriks (2007:1006), points out that one of the church's fundamental problems is the notion that mission is an ecclesio-centric activity. He argued that the church has to have a new missional ecclesiology in which mission is a Theo-centric activity, thus agreeing with Newbigin (1989:135), who noted that all Christians have

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to play a crucial role for societies in a holistic way with missional ecclesiology.

According to what has been discussed thus far, it can be said that the megachurch is a model of the mission where the church is the subject. Therefore, any new programmes of the megachurch do not automatically qualify as missional.

The theme, “A Korean perspective on megachurches as missional churches” is based on the question, “Can a megachurch be missional?” It may be possible to lead to the answer naturally by properly setting up definitions of a megachurch and a missional church.

Two approaches are required. First, a theoretical approach supported by missiological and ecclesiastical research. Second, a practical approach with research that will compare and contrast actual megachurches with missional churches. While megachurches and the missional church are global phenomena, this research will concentrate on megachurches and missional churches in South Korea.

The question, “Can a megachurch be missional?”, in fact, comes with the premise, “the church must be missional.” from the beginning. If a megachurch is really a social and religious phenomenon, not only already-megachurches, but even not-yet-megachurches can be called potential megachurches (Shin 2009:21). Megachurches and potential megachurches are on the right path if they are missional. But those who are not missional are on the wrong path.

This research proposes that defining a megachurch and missional church in terms of missional ecclesiology is needed and is able to contribute to the direction the church should go.

1.1. The purpose of this study

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The purpose of this study is:

- To define a megachurch as a social and religious phenomenon and to find its most significant characteristics.
- To describe why the megachurch is a social and religious phenomenon through research on its socio-cultural, historical, and theological background.
- To define and describe the characteristics of a missional church through research on its socio-cultural, historical, and theological backgrounds (the *Missio Dei)*.
- To describe and compare the characteristics of a megachurch and missional church from the Korean megachurch and missional church.
- To criticise a megachurch from the missional church' perspective: missiological and ecclesiological view.
- To draw a conclusion about the theme from the comparison and contrast between the Korean megachurch and the missional church.
- To seek the best way forward for the Korean church through the result of this research.

1.2. The research questions to be asked

The research questions this research will ask are:

- What is the definition of a megachurch?
- What are the characteristics of a megachurch as a social and religious phenomenon?
- What are the backgrounds of megachurches that caused them to be a phenomenon?
- How is the definition and characteristics of a megachurch applied to a Korean megachurch?
- What is the definition of a missional church?

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- What are the characteristics and trends of the missional church as a movement?
- What are the backgrounds of the missional churches to be that movement?
- How is the definition and characteristics of the missional church applied to a Korean missional church?
- Can the research find the answer to the question whether a megachurch can be missional through a comparison of the definitions and characteristics of the Korean megachurch with the missional church?

1.3. The research methodology

The research will follow the method of a literature study and qualitative observation.

First, the study of the literature will consist of two parts:

1) The theoretical research on the megachurch and the missional church will employ literary resources on related topics from both the evangelical group and the ecumenical group.

2) The research on the characteristics of the Korean megachurch and missional church will include books written by senior pastors and from websites of each Korean megachurch and missional church.

Second, the qualitative observation will be conducted through interviews. I intend to carry out interviews with two pastors (one from a megachurch and one from a missional church). One particular method will be selected according to the development of face-to-face talk, telephone conversation and email. For any methods which will be selected, questionnaires will be prepared in advance, with such questions but not limited to the following:

- What is the first priority and goal of your ministry?
- What do you see as the merits and demerits of the megachurch?
- What is your reaction to the statement “The bigger a church grows, the more it can carry out missionary work? Elaborate on your answer.

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- What do you think is a missional church?
- Do you think that the megachurch can be missional?

The answers to the questions will be used to analyse the case studies in chapters 2 and 3.

The following megachurch and missional church in South Korea will be studied as a case study:

A megachurch:

The Pungsunghan Church is situated in the second largest city in South Korea, called Busan, and has around 6,000 church members. It has a great influence on the Korean church with its dramatic growth and specific organisational system called “the Two Wings Nurturing System”. The Two Wings Nurturing System deviated from the traditional church order and put all church members, except the senior pastor, in small groups, called “Open Cell” which is designed for evangelism only. The Pungsunghan Church organises an international conference once a year in order to spread the system throughout the Korean church, with more than 10,000 church leaders that gather to learn at every conference. The Punsunghan Church is a typical model of a megachurch with its characteristics such as pursuing limitless growth, relying on programmes, and led by a senior pastor with charismatic leadership.

A missional church:

The Bundang Woori Church was founded in Bundang metropolitan area about 10 years ago. Since its inception, it has been renting a high school auditorium instead of having its own building. Though it grew up very fast and reached about 20,000 registered church members, it proclaimed a movement called the “Sending 10,000 member” in 2012. Since then, the church started downsizing and has sent many well-trained members to small and weak churches in their vicinity.

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1.4. The structural outline of the study

Chapter 2 will describe the definition of a megachurch and its most significant characteristics. It will discuss the socio-cultural, historical, and theological backgrounds of how the characteristics of the megachurch appeared in order to understand more clearly about the megachurch as a social and religious phenomenon.

In Chapter 3, a thorough description of the characteristics and trends of the missional church on the basis of its socio-cultural, historical, and theological backgrounds will be undertaken to define the missional church as an on-going movement.

Chapter 4 will compare and contrast the definitions and characteristics of the megachurch with the missional church both theoretically and practically in order to criticise the megachurch from the missional church's missiological and ecclesiological perspective and to find out the answer to the theme question.

In chapter 5, concluding observations and comments will be made.

Chapter 6 consists of the reference list for this research.

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Chapter 2

1. Megachurch

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to answer the research questions: 1) What is the definition of a megachurch?, 2) What are the characteristics of a megachurch as a social and religious phenomenon?, 3) What is the background for the megachurch to be that phenomenon?, and 4) How is the definition and characteristics of the megachurch as applied to a Korean megachurch? First the definition of a megachurch and its most significant characteristics as a social and religious phenomenon will be observed. After that, the socio-cultural, historical and theological background of the megachurch phenomenon will be studied in order to understand more clearly the phenomenon. Finally we will deal with the definition and characteristics of the megachurch phenomenon, which has been obtained by theoretical research and practically applied to a Korean megachurch by case study.

1.2 Definition of a megachurch

To define the term ‘megachurch’ is complicated because the standard for “big”, the meaning of mega, is obscure. The meaning of “big” can be different depending on individual concepts such as the number of people that attend church regularly, their influence, and the size of a building. Thumma and Travis (2007:xviii-xix; 23-24) defined a megachurch as a protestant church that averages at least two thousand total attendees in its weekly service. In accordance with Mann (1998:1), when both social and biological organisms change significantly in size, they must also change in form. As Mann said, the reason Scott and Thumma defined a megachurch like that is because churches having more than 2,000 attendees show different characteristics as a social and religious phenomenon compared to Roman Catholic and Orthodox and even to traditional Protestant churches. John Vaughan, who holds the distinction of having the first book with the word megachurches in the title, has continually encouraged the world to focus on megachurches as a distinct phenomenon (Thumma & Travis 2007:xiv). Thumma (1996:418) describes:

> The megachurch is a new structural and spiritual organization unlike any other. In order to understand fully the dynamics of megachurches, they must be seen

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as a collective social phenomenon rather than as individual anomalous moments of spectacular growth or uniquely successful entrepreneurial ventures.

The definition of a megachurch this research proposes is also not simply a large membership church, but as a social and religious phenomenon. To understand more clearly regarding the megachurch phenomenon, this research investigates the characteristics of that phenomenon and the causes by which the phenomenon was launched.

1.3 Characteristics of the megachurch phenomenon

As a social and religious phenomenon, the most significant characteristics of a megachurch are its membership numbers and influence.

1.3.1 Membership numbers

The number of churches which have more than a 2,000 average attendance at a Sunday service has been explosively increased over the last 30 years all over the world. In the case of the U.S.A, the number of megachurches was 50 in 1970, but in 2005, it grew to 24 times as many and it keeps increasing by at least 50 each year (Thumma & Travis 2007:6-7). Given that the population of America increased only around 1.5 times as many as it was for the same period of time from 205 million to 300 million, it becomes more significant. For the same period, the number of megachurches in South Korea also increased rapidly. According to Vaughan's research (1984:71-75), there were 7 of the 20 world biggest megachurches in South Korea in 1984. According to a Population and Housing Census conducted by the Korean National Statistical Office in 2005, the overall number of Christians in South Korea reduced by 1.6% over the previous 10 years, however the number of attendees of 13 representative megachurches which have more than 10,000 members increased even in this situation. The statistics as mentioned above does not simply show a very largely grown church, but a torrent-like tendency for the whole church to be a megachurch.

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<Table 1> 13 largest megachurches' attendance number in 1998 and 2005

13 largest megachurches in South Korea	1998	2005
Youngnak Church	13,000 attendees	39,000 registered 17,000 attendees
Myungsung Church	23,000 attendees	30,000 attendees
Juan Church	18,000 attendees	70,000 registered/ 35,000 attendees
Somang Church	22,000 attendees	66,000 registered 14,000 attendees
Onnuri Church	19,000 attendees	32,000 attendees
Choonghyun Church	11,000 attendees	18,000 registered/ 14,000 attendees
Sarang Church	19,000 attendees	55,000 registered 31,000 attendees
Kwanglim Church	25,000 attendees	105,000 registered 30,000 attendees
Soong-Eui Church	11,000 attendees	60,000 registered/ 10,000 attendees
Kumnan Church	25,000 attendees	
Yeoido Full Gospel Church	210,000 attendees	750,000 registered
Full Gospel Incheon Church	12,000 attendees	40,000 registered 15,000 attendees
Grace and Truth Church	40,000 attendees	40,000 attendees

Source: Data of 1998 (Hong 2001:31); Data of 2005 (Lee 2006).

According to Bird (2012), churches which have 2,000-plus in attendance were rare but already existed in church history. Some people try to find historical models of a megachurch from the Bible, for instance the Exodus community which constituted about 2 million Israelites led by Moses in the Old Testament (Beckham 1995:33-40) and 8,000 Jews in Jerusalem converted by Peter's preaching in the New Testament (Ji 2010). Besides the above stated examples, the English preacher, Charles Spurgeon, preached to 5,311 people on a Sunday in 1892 in his Metropolitan Tabernacle. The Moody church in Chicago, which is admittedly the oldest megachurch in history with more than 3,000 attendees for over 100 years, since its

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hall was enlarged to accommodate up to 10,000 people in 1876 (Bird 2012). In 1905, at the beginning of Korean Christianity, there was a church which had 2,625 congregants in Jemulpo (Huntley 2009:623). But these congregations can hardly be seen as models of a megachurch because the paucity of examples and the members of the Jemulpo church were soon incorporated into newly formed churches. Thumma (1996:427) says “Yet at any historical period there were no more than a dozen or so of these massive congregations around the world, none of which matched the functions of megachurches in contemporary society.”

The megachurch phenomenon after 1970 refers to the soaring number of very large churches which have more than 2,000 congregations not only in the Occident, but also in the Orient after 1970. There is a noticeable difference between large churches before 1970 and megachurches after 1970. The latter is very fast growing with no limit to it, which cannot be compared with the former. A good example is the Yoido Full Gospel Church which is a typical megachurch in South Korea.

The Yoido Full Gospel Church started first in Dae-Jo Dong in 1958 with only 5 members. In 1963, it already had more than 2,000 attendees, and grew up to over 10,000 in 1972. After that, from 1979, it increased by 100,000 people each year and became a church in which 765,301 people were attending in 2007 (Yoido Full Gospel Church 2008). The growth of the Yoido Full Gospel Church happened during the emergence of the megachurch phenomenon all over the world and cannot be compared with any other large churches in the history of the church in terms of its speed. It shows the limit to church growth collapsed when a local church has around 800,000 church members, which is more than one of a city, and is still growing bigger though it is experiencing a slowing down after the retirement of the senior pastor Yonggi Cho in May 2008.

The radical growth of the Yoido Full Gospel Church is a result of the interaction among political, economic, social and cultural factors such as urbanisation an increase in information technology and it represents the expansion of a local church that goes beyond geographical limitations. A church growing beyond its regional barrier means that churches in a region are thrown into competition to grow as well as to survive.

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1.3.2 Influence

Megachurches have enormous influence though they comprise of only a small proportion of the entire church. According to Thumma and Travis (2007:6):

> The largest 1 percent of U.S churches contains at least 15 percent of the worshippers, finances, and staff in America. Across the whole of Protestantism, the largest 20 percent of the churches have around 65 percent of the resources. Money, resources, and people are concentrated in the largest churches.

Many senior pastors of the megachurches are global best-sellers for example “Purpose driven life” written by Rick Warren of Saddle back church and “Your best life now” written by Joel Osteen of Lakewood Church. They are also main-speakers of Christian television shows and to all seminars and conferences hosted by their churches, where pastors from the whole country gather like clouds (Thumma & Travis 2007:19). On account of this kind of influence, megachurches are regarded as a model of successful church. Therefore not-yet-successful-churches are consulting them on church planting and growth to become megachurches. The Yoido Full Gospel Church is a representative of clinics for church growth in South Korea (Ok 2007:339). It is helping churches which are driven to competition for growing and surviving to set the target on being a megachurch by both hosting “the International Church Growth Seminar” globally and managing an organisation “the Church Growth International” locally (Cho 2005:12-13). To borrow an expression from *Decoding the Church* by Sneider (2006), ‘not only big churches, but also small churches have megachurch DNA’. Through their influence megachurches are leading a movement to produce many potential megachurches.

A megachurch as a social and religious phenomenon which is then characterised by rapid and limitless growth which cannot be found from any other large churches before 1970 in the history of the church. It provokes most non-megachurches to become a potential megachurch through its influence. The present megachurch is the result of various factors of which the backgrounds will be investigated from a socio-cultural, historical, and theological points of view.

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1.4 Background of the megachurch phenomenon

1.4.1 Social and cultural background

The industrial revolution in England which began from the middle of the 18th century through to the 19th century A.D. not only brought a revolutionary change to the economic structure, but also to the political structure of society. The existing system of nobles and landowners collapsed, and the free market economic system gradually developed as the bourgeoisie class revised the election laws. In the meantime, rapid urbanisation started as the rural population was rushing into cities owing to industrialisation (Shin 2009:30-31, 34-36). Both urbanisation and the free-market system which were stimulated by the industrial revolution can be seen as the social and cultural backgrounds of the emerging megachurch.

1.4.1.1 Urbanisation

Industrialisation caused by the industrial revolution disturbed the balance between urban and rural life which had been sustained through the middle ages. The rampart which limited the size of a city lost its role due to the sudden influx of people into the city, and the modern city actually became a space which can possibly expand limitlessly. In the U.S.A city centres of activity became metropolises with more than a million people to become megalopolises like Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington in the north-east, and metropolitan areas which connect these huge cities emerged (eds. Jean 1957:189-200). According to the Regional Plan Association (2008), there are approximately 49.6 million people living in these megalopolises, which accounts for around 21% of the whole number of the American population, though it takes up only 1.8% of the entire land of the United States. According to Seoul Statistics (n.d.), the population of Seoul, the capital city of South Korea, was less than a million before the 1960s, but it soared after industrialisation started in the 1960s and became a metropolis with 10,610,000 people in 1990. Since then, as the population of satellite cities of Seoul is increasing very fast, the megalopolis phenomenon which connects them is becoming more serious.

The megachurch is a phenomenon which appeared together with the emergence of the modern city (Shin 2009:31). It started in America where the urbanisation rate is

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very high, and it is flourishing in South Korea, where radical urbanisation accompanied economic growth after the Korean War. The urbanisation rate of most of the advanced capitalism countries is over 80%, and South Korea has already reached the same rate of urbanisation with advanced countries. According to a report of the Korea Research Institute for Human Settlements (2006:1), the urbanisation rate of South Korea was 86.5% in 2005 and continues to grow. Urbanisation progresses in three stages: the initial stage, the acceleration stage and the terminal stage. At the acceleration stage a rapid rural to urban migration breaks out. In the terminal stage, the speed reduces and even counter-urbanisation can happen (Gyeonggi Province City Planning 2007:5). While the urbanisation progressed gradually for about 200 years in European countries after the industrial revolution, South Korea experienced a drastic one which indicates that the period from the initial stage to terminal stage was very short. The Korea Research Institute for Human Settlements (2006:2) says that the speed of urbanisation in South Korea was most severe in both 1970s and 1980s, and became slower after the 1990s, but the increase in the urban population is continuing.

Urbanisation has brought changes to the existing system and order. As the people who were living in rural areas formed large families and local communities crowded into cities, the urban environment, which is city-type mega accommodation buildings, megastores, mega transportation facilities, and so on, to cope with large numbers of people, was set up (Gyeonggi Province City Planning 2007:4). While everything becomes mega-sized with urbanisation, people get used to the mega-sized environment. According to the social and cultural streams of change, the church joined the social and cultural streams. With regard to the mega-sized church, Thumma and Travis (2007:14) stated:

> It is absolutely clear that Americans have become more comfortable with large institutional forms. Since the 1950s, hospitals, stores, factories, and entertainment centres have all grown to mega-proportions; therefore, why shouldn't churches? Americans have not only grown accustomed to large organizations, but they have even had their character and tastes shaped by them.

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The megachurches borrowed models of organisation and presentation methods from the institutions around them to handle large numbers of attendees. The great number of people coming to the megachurches was people living in mega-sized cities that adapted to its anonymity and diversified tastes. The megachurches followed ways of entertainment and technology to satisfy the tastes of the people to make them feel at home and dedicate themselves to the church (Thumma & Travis 2007:15-16). The introduction of technology helped pastors to overcome their physical limitations through the development of video and sound facilities and helped the churches to overcome their geographical limitation to one place through the enhancement of the Internet and the mass media (Shin 2009:32-34). The masses which congregated in the megachurches as a result of urbanisation made their churches like small-town communities in a city with their own distinctive culture (Thumma & Travis 2007:17). The megachurch became inherently mass-oriented, able and willing to expand limitlessly like a present day city.

1.4.1.2 The market economy

After the industrial revolution, the market was radically enlarged by urbanisation. The barrier, which had restricted the market, disappeared as the monarchy collapsed by the rapid growth of the bourgeoisie. Following this change, in the 19th century, the free market economy system appeared with its self-regulation of capital and market, derived from the principle of the invisible hand promoted by Adam Smith. The principle is that when many sellers and buyers are trying to sell and buy things, all their selfish efforts to make more profit for themselves will produce a reasonable price in the end (Arthur & Sheffrin 2003:32).

Under the influence of this tremendous socio-economical change, the church was forced to a free religious market and forced to accept the principles of the free market economy system. In other words, churches today are being driven into the market, and as a result of it, the churches and its members are being forced to sell Christianity and are being persuaded to purchase that religion. As Finke and Stark (2005:9) refer to it: “the invisible hand of the market place is also at work in the religious market and is as unforgiving of ineffective religious firms as it is of their commercial counterparts.” Thumma and Travis (2007:120) agree that the situation where other churches are troubled by megachurches is unavoidable, and it helps

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churches and religion in America to be strong and vital, by being connected to the real needs of those that seek to be connected to God in this way. In this regard, it can be said that megachurches are successful in selling competition of the market while small churches are not.

Competitions under the free market economy naturally produced consumerism which describes all kinds of efforts to support consumers' interests (Swagler 1994:350). The most conspicuous characteristics of consumerism are its consumer-orientation and customer satisfaction represented by shopping malls. Smith (2009:19-23) compares the churches which show the same characteristics of consumerism with a local mall. Not only Smith, but also a number of social observers have suggested that megachurches resemble shopping malls in their wide array of consumer-driven ministerial offerings (Thumma 1996:441). The managerial methods of shopping malls can broadly be classified into 3 parts. First, it is the economy of scale, to build a huge building at a good location in a rapidly growing city. Second, it is the effective organisational structure driven by a leader with strong leadership and a number of workers working under the leader with their assigned functions. Last, it is using all kinds of marketing strategies to make more profit such as tactical sale, various programmes like looking after children while parents are shopping, advertisement and so on (Shin 2009:45-49). To compare the methods of shopping malls with those of megachurches helps to see to what extent megachurches follow the ways of consumerism.

First of all, to see the economy of scale, megachurch buildings are as magnificent as shopping malls. Thumma (1996:434-438) says that though there are three different types of buildings which are, a spacious auditorium or stadium style, mega-sized traditional style and a blending of conventional form with the non-traditional style, the message that all the megachurches want to deliver with those buildings is “This is not your ordinary church.” The magnificent building and the people gathered in it can be a powerful attraction by itself. Shin (2012c:1) calls it mass psychology. In accordance with the premise of mass psychology which is “The whole is more than the sum of its parts”, a megachurch is the church which is taking social and psychological advantages with its huge building and 2,000-plus attendees.

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Meanwhile, Vaughan (1993:77-80) says that he found that megachurches clustered around metropolitan areas which were among the fastest growing in the U.S.A. According to Thumma (1996:432), apart from conventional “First churches” in regions, nearly all megachurches are to be found in the suburbs of large cities and located in prominent places on highly visible tracts of land. They are also situated in highly accessible places from major highways. It is the same in South Korea where megachurches are to be found near large cities. Hong (2001:32) points out that, amongst the 13 largest megachurches in South Korea, 10 are located in Seoul, the capital city, and the other 3 are found in Busan and Incheon, the second and the third largest cities in South Korea respectively. Trying to find a good location is not only a matter of already established megachurches. Lee (2011) reveals in his article that Korean Pastors who are trying to start new churches discover that the price of the church building depends not only on the seating capacity but also on the location where the building is situated. The churches that are part of the megachurch phenomenon clearly follow the market economy regardless of their size.

Next, the effective organisational structure of the majority of contemporary megachurches was either founded by or achieved mega-status within the tenure of a single senior minister. Senior pastors occupy the most prominent and highest profile position and authority, and manage the church efficiently by constituting a rational bureaucratic structure with assistant pastors working for each department and lay leaders working for small groups (Thumma 1996:444). Even though there are some churches which operate with an “Executive board”, constituted by elders and assistant pastors to avoid any imbalance of power and to pursue “Team management” like Willow Creek Church, the team is not functioning well because the senior pastor is the chief executive officer and has the final say (Thumma 1996:445).

Last, following the marketing strategy, assistant pastors and lay leaders of the megachurches are offering many well-organised programmes in the fields where they are in charge under the leadership of one man. Eiesland (1995:73) says:

> The megachurch functions like the mall owner providing stability and a common roof under which diverse ministries, seen as specialized boutiques, can operate. In addition several core ministries, like anchor stores, offer a

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continuous draw to this spiritual shopping centre.

Like shopping malls, the church buildings of megachurches are crowded for the whole week with programmes being offered to both church members and residents. On account of this, a megachurch is called a seven-day-a-week church (Thumma 1996:441). To the megachurch, even the service is one of well-organised programmes. The service cannot be left to “the flow of the spirit” because of the congregation’s size, so that most megachurches follow the prepared Q-sheet to lead praise and sermon. Apart from praise and sermon, the arts such as skits, special musical numbers, interpretative dance, video presentation are often used (Thumma 1996:441-443). As for the sermon, it is carried out as thoroughly planned and structured in advance to avoid boredom and controversial issues, which are told to be the worst sin the marketing church can commit to its clients (Ok 2007:184). Pastor Bill Hybells of Willow Creek Church is preaching in a practical and applicable way, avoiding some controversial themes such as money, religious jargon and heavy guilt trips. The reason he is preaching like this is based on the door-to-door survey conducted by him regarding what his neighbourhood disliked about church and what they would want in a church prior to organising the congregation. Hybells calls this “user friendly” preaching (Thumma 1996:434).

In addition to its considerable concern for its local neighbourhood associations with its splendorous buildings and facilities, megachurches are doing extensive advertisements through diverse publications and the mass media. Like small shops and traditional markets in a village suffer losing clients and closure in the end when a mega mart steps in, the more megachurches rapidly grow, the more non-megachurches rapidly close (Guinness 1998:112-113). According to a report of the Institute for Church Growth (2004:35-41), it reaches 76.5% of all Korean Christians who have experienced a transfer from their church. This horizontal migration mostly takes place from small-size churches to middle and large size churches. As a result of the horizontal migration, around 3,000 churches in South Korea are closing each year because of financial difficulties (Christiannocut 2008).

Megachurches’ marketing like this was imported to survive in unlimited competition under the market economy. Drucker (Ok 2007:24) defines the goal of marketing:

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"The aim of marketing is to know and understand the customer so well that the product or service fits him and sells itself." George Barna, the father of church marketing insisted, during the downfall of the American church, that the reason why American churches are failing to grow is that they failed in marketing properly. It means, like an enterprise which is not growing, the churches also face depression because they fail to cope with the rapidly changing market environment (Ok 2007:34). Barna (1988:48) says:

> Church marketing is the performance of both business and ministry activities that impact on the church's target audience with the intention of ministering to and fulfilling their spiritual, social, emotional, or physical needs and thereby satisfy the ministry goals of the church.

Barna's church marketing is concerned with meeting people's needs with goods called the gospel. In order to satisfying people's needs, he stated that "Think of your church not as a religious meeting place, but as a service agency - an entity that exists to satisfy people's needs."(Barna 1988:37). If the purpose of the church is to satisfy people's needs, a pastor as a competent entrepreneur must attract people to join the church by maintaining the church active. To Barna the church is also a business in which the gospel is its goods, a pastor is the boss and the church is a company.

1.4.2 Historical background

During the reign of Constantine Christianity not only became a *religio licita*, it actually soon was the only legitimate religion in the empire (Bosch 1991:401). Thereafter, Christianity became institutional and sanctuary-centred. It did not only originate from the era of Constantine. Bosch (1991:50) says:

> Already at a very early stage Christians tended to be more aware of what distinguished them from others than of their calling and responsibility toward those others. Their survival as a separate religious group, rather than their commitment to the reign of God, began to preoccupy them. It means the early

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church ceased to be a movement and turned into an institution.

Until the reformation, the church could not even imagine the competition for quantitative growth under the institutional parish policy for around 1,500 years (Shin 2009:52). However, the church in Europe was divided into the Roman Catholic and the Protestant churches by the reformation. Since then, the protestant churches divided into various denominations such as the Anglican, Anabaptist and so forth by the different interpretations of Scripture, doctrine and handling of apostates. The followers of Luther and Zwingli could not narrow their different views on the sacraments at the 1592 conference of Marburg. Though the territorialism with the rule "each region has to follow the religion of its ruler" (Bosch 1991:241) still remained it meant that church's physical unity centred around the pope was broken, and the way was opened for believers freely to choose their denominations depending on their religious beliefs between the Roman Catholic and the Protestant churches, and especially amongst various denominations of the latter (Shin 2009:53).

A full-scale competition for quantitative growth amongst churches was started by the migration of Europeans to the New World. In the New World, Congregational church, Presbyterian church, Methodist church, Anglican church, Baptist church, Quakers and so forth advanced, centred on the early settlement of New England (ed. Van Gelder 2008:21-22). These denominations began to compete with each other driven by several factors such as the Civil War, development of suburban areas, and especially the Western pioneers to establish a solid foothold through aggressive evangelism (ed. Van Gelder 2008:34). Traditional institutions of the church such as territorialism and parish policy which limited the geographical growth of the church collapsed, and full competition was common (Niebuhr 1929:176-181).

Denominations became more interested in quantitative growth, called it revival through the influence of the first Great Awakening from the 18th to the 19th century. Outstanding evangelists such as George Whitfield and John Wesley started to use "measures" (methods) as they mobilised people or delivered the message in order to win more souls in effective ways. According to Noll (2005:198), along with the great awakening, the Methodist Church of John Wesley and George Whitfield which used measures such as field preaching and preaching tours made

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rapid progress taking up the proportion from 2.5% to 34.2% of the entire American Christianity, while the Congregational church, Presbyterian church, Anglican church experienced a decline in their congregations. The employment of measures to earn more converts became a serious trend through the second Great Awakening. Charles Finny defined revival as the state that repentance of sinners happens greatly and significantly. He argued that revival can be promoted by the use of means specifically designed and adapted for it. He called this groundbreaking methodology "the new measure" and said that whether the means and ways employed for the revival was suitable or not can be assessed by its result (Park 1996:124). Viola & Barna (2008:67-68) say:

> Perhaps the most lasting element that Finney unwittingly contributed to contemporary Christianity was pragmatism. Pragmatism is the philosophy that if something works, it should be embraced, regardless of ethical considerations. Finney believed that the New Testament did not teach any prescribed forms of worship. He taught that the sole purpose of preaching was to win converts. Any devices that helped accomplish that goal were acceptable. Under Finney, eighteenth-century revivalism was turned into a science and brought into mainstream churches.

The pragmatism of Finney as stated above has become a foundation of megachurch senior pastors' ministerial sense of values. If revival is not happening under the condition that it can be promoted anytime by proper means and ways, it means that the church does not want the revival or gets diseased. Hence, according to Finney, quantitative growth is a barometer by which a church is judged.

After Finney's revivalism, the third Great Awakening which is represented by D.L Moody expanded it to the passion of world mission under the slogan of "The evangelization of the world in this generation." Kim (1999:418-419) explains the series of processes of how the awakening movement was connected to the world mission movement:

> The series of revivals of the churches during the 18th century was converted

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into the mission movement, being connected with the two Evangelical Awakenings of the 19th century. The third Evangelical Awakening of D.L Moody produced the "Student Volunteer Mission Movement" centred on John Mott. Mission movements like this called for organising denominational mission departments, interdenominational mission bodies in the U.S.A and Europe. In the 19th century, the mission organisations held a series of mission conferences in their own countries or in mission fields in order to cooperate in the mission, to avoid unnecessary overlapping of ministries and competition amongst missionaries, and to adopt "a Comity" policy. These series of meetings in the end resulted in opening the first World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910.

Shin (2009:66) insists that the world mission movement is the bridge and bypass in between the first and second Great Awakening movements and the megachurch phenomenon in terms of offering "the Great Commission" ideology, offering a concrete goal for the church that is to spread the gospel to the end of the earth, and active use of technology. As the movement put the church's first priority on evangelism and mission in accordance with the Great Commission and set the vision of mission for that mission as the ends of the earth, it developed eschatological characteristics. The concept of "the unreached peoples" proposed by Ralph Winter in the 1970s represents the climax of the eschatological characteristics of missions.

Winter encouraged churches to evangelise the unreached peoples, which point out ethnic groups in which indigenous and self-propagating Christian church movement on the basis of Mt 24:14 is not (Winter & Koch 2002). The unreached people mission became one of most important issues in the world mission movement since Lausanne 1974. Since that perspective was introduced, a number of mission theories and strategies have been formed to reach and preach to unreached people. Those theories and strategies argue that the Lord will come or has to come when the gospel has reached even small groups of people. Bob Creson who is the chairperson of the Wycliffe Bible Translator, the world biggest Bible translating mission organisation, said in an interview in 2013, revealing his goal to accomplish Bible translation in every language by 2025, that today 4.9 billion people have access to the Bible in their first language, and they can expedite the second coming of Christ Jesus if they complete the translation in the 1,919 remaining languages

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during the next 12 years (Stevens 2013).

Ellul(1964:xxv) defines “technique” as “the totality of methods rationally arrived at and having absolute efficiency (for a given stage of development) in every field of human activity.” After the world mission movement set the ends of earth as its goal, the technical methods to fulfil their goal most efficiently were expanded during the 20th century. William Carey, known as the father of modern missions, strongly emphasised the use of methods in 1791 in his *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens*. A great number of terms and strategies were formulated, for example the 10/40 window, unreached people group adoption, gateway cities mission, and tent-maker mission. Missionaries were referred to as “soldiers”, Christian “forces” and military metaphors such as “army”, “crusade”, “council of war”, “conquest”, “advance”, “resources”, and “marching orders” abounded (Bosch 1991:338).

In the 1950s Donald McGavran founded “the church growth theory”, insisting that whether or not the goal, world evangelisation, is accomplished can be assessed by church growth. It was because he believed that world evangelisation will be fulfilled most effectively if all individual churches on earth will strive to grow themselves in a quantitative way. He accused theologians and pastors who resisted church growth by saying that church growth must be considered first. Church growth and all kinds of efforts for church growth must be focused on membership increase (McGavran 1990:267-268). After the 1970s, when the management revolution started, the church growth theory embraced Peter Drucker’s suggestions through the influence of Peter Wagner, in which Wagner argued that the church has to use secular business techniques for its growth. In accordance with Drucker (1990:3), the church must first of all find its “mission”. After that, the mission must be switched to an “operational concrete goal” (Drucker 1990:4). Once the goal is set up, effective strategies for it, such as marketing, innovation and fund development must be established (Drucker 1990:99-104). The strategies must be followed up by evaluation according to the results (Drucker 1990:107-108). To carry out all these, suitable personnel management, especially a responsible leader is needed (Drucker 1990:191-194).

When the power of denominations was getting weaker because they were random

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and crowded, Wagner converted McGavran's church growth theory, which still remained as strategies for mission, into one which was full of techniques suitable for an individual church, and thereafter it opened the way to individual churches to grow unlimitedly without the control of a denomination. The new church growth theory spread all over the world through church growth theorists centred on Wagner. The church growth theorists argue that all living creatures are growing naturally so that the church also has to grow naturally as a living creature (Wagner 1996:11). According to their insistence, because the church is growing naturally, the churches which are not growing are either dead or sick. Thereby, the church growth clinic which cures the sick churches became one of the most important ministries for the church growth theorists. Wagner explains this with an analogy from a medical model (1989:164-168).

The church growth theory, which started with McGavran, was developed extensively by Wagner, and reached a climax with Robert Schuller. Schuller's theory of church growth, which was deeply influenced by Norman Vincent Peale who emphasised active and positive thinking, is "Think big and grow big". He openly compared the church with a company, evangelism and mission with sales, and non-believers with clients. For him, ministry looks similar to selling goods, so that a denomination is a wholesaler and a local church is a retailer (Schuller 1988:299). Schuller (1988:299-314) suggests 7 principles for successful church growth:

> 1) Accessibility (The best product will not be bought if people can't get their hands on it!), 2) Surplus parking (number one criterion), 3) Inventory (large enough to meet almost every conceivable human need insures a fantastic future) 4) Service (that means trained laity), 5) Visibility, 6) possibility thinking, 7) Good cash flow (don't be afraid of debt, but know what debt is.)

Schuller (1988:201-202) says that the church, that thinks they are already big enough or there is an ideal number of attendees and size of the church, is like the bound feet of Chinese women. He insists that to suppose there is an ideal size for a church is a silly and cruel act to try to intentionally bind a growing church like the cruel tradition of China which bound a growing girl's feet to stop its growth. He often emphasises that, "When the church stops growing, it will start dying." Through

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Schuller's theory, the church started taking the growth ideology as a matter of course, and thereafter not only a small handful of very large churches, but also small churches set their first priority on the individual church's quantitative growth and started competing with each other. Schuller's theory was invited to the Korean church by pastor Yonggi Cho and by the church growth seminar conducted by Sundo Kim who is a senior pastor of the Kwanglim Church, one of the Korean megachurches. It started being applied to the Korean churches, and thereby a number of church growth programmes, especially evangelism programmes, has appeared (Kim 2006).

As observed so far, the megachurch phenomenon appeared in the history of the church gradually and unexpectedly, passed through a series of processes which have the appearance of a religious market situation in which a believer can choose his own church, caused by the separation of the Roman Catholic and the Protestant churches, the division among Protestant churches, recognition of size through the Awakening movement, presentation of the world evangelising vision through the world mission movement, quantitative growth of an individual church through the church growth theory and various methodologies to achieve it. Though no one amongst the reformers and evangelists for the Awakening movement intended the megachurch phenomenon today, the choices according to the situation of the ages have been accumulated and produced an unexpected result. Newbigin (1986:100) asks "Though much has been written about the harm done to the cause of the gospel when Constantine accepted baptism, it is not difficult to expatiate on this theme. But could any other choice have been made?" As Newbigin asked, the megachurch phenomenon has appeared as a result of unavoidable choices in church history; however it is now driving all the churches into the unavoidable situation, which is, to borrow Hobbes' expression, "war of all churches against all churches" as causing unlimited growth of an individual church.

1.4.3 Theological background

Since the megachurch as a social and religious phenomenon appeared in the 1970s, it is developing despite the negative criticism of many people. Some scholars say that the megachurch phenomenon will still clearly be at the centre of Christianity for another decade or two (Thumma & Travis 2007:190). Though the phenomenon

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emerged as a result of the mixture of many social and cultural factors and the unexpected results in the flow of the history of the church, without its theologies, it could not be an enormous movement and at the centre of Christianity as it appears today. Shin (2012a, 2012b) argues that the theologies supporting the megachurch phenomenon are the kingdom of God and evangelicalism. The theological background of the megachurch phenomenon includes the prosperity theology.

1.4.3.1 The kingdom of God

Bosch (1991:32-33) says that God's reign can be characterised with two features in Jesus' preaching. First, God's reign is not understood as exclusively future but as both future and already present. This means that God's kingdom has arrived through the first coming of Jesus, and yet is still to come. Second, God's reign launches an all-out attack on evil in all its manifestations. This means God's kingdom arrives wherever Jesus overcomes the power of evil. With regard to these characteristics, Lohfink (1984:26-29, 75-80) says that the kingdom of God will certainly be fulfilled by his people (in the singular), and that the people of God is the church.

> God selected out of many peoples of the world a single people, precisely in order to make this people a visible sign of salvation. According to biblical theology, God establishes his eschatological rule, which should in principle encompass the entire world, precisely by beginning very small: with a family (in biblical terms: with Abraham), a clan, a group, a small people. According to this divine pedagogy, the reign of God does not mean subjugation of the world but a call into freedom – a call, actually an alluring, according to the model of those called first (Lohfink 1984:28).

Throughout the Old and the New Testament, the kingdom of God can be defined as God fulfilling his reign through his people, and the church is the result of God's action in his people through the Holy Spirit. The church should not be equated with the kingdom of God, but at the same time should not be separated from it (Padilla 2010:203-205). It is because the kingdom of God is being revealed to the world by the church (Han 2011:10). The early church served the world as the light and the salt of it and as a divine contrast-society on the basis of that understanding regarding the

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kingdom of God (Lofink 1984:157-162). Bosch (1991:49) says that “Jesus’ ministry of erecting signs of God’s incipient reign was emulated by the early church. Christians were not called to do more than erect signs; neither were they called to do less.” However, since Constantine and later Augustine this view of the church and God’s kingdom was converted to the one that an institutional church is the kingdom of God thereafter (Sneider 2001:70).

The people of the middle ages saw the church as the kingdom of God as present and regarded the territories ruled by the church, which were whole countries, as “Christendom”. In contrast to this, they regarded the heathen who did not belong to Christendom as enemies of Christians, so that they regarded it as an expansion of God’s kingdom when Christian kings conquered those enemies (Bosch 1991:224-226). Bosch (1991:236) says since Augustine interpreted Luke 14:23 that ‘the Donatists had to be forced to return to the Catholic fold,’ the medieval Roman Catholic missionary paradigm became “compel them to come in”. In interpreting “compel”, Augustine argued that to provide the individual with the opportunity to flee eternal damnation could not be wrong and certainly justified the use of pressure (Bosch 1991:224-225). This provided a basis for the expansion of God’s kingdom by power, which was gradually moving from indirect missionary wars to that of direct wars (Bosch 1991:222-224).

Medieval missiology was not substantially modified by the Reformers. The Reformation, except in its Anabaptist manifestation, did not really break with the medieval understanding of the relationship between church and state (Bosch 1991:373). The Reformers believed that the “Great Commission” had been fulfilled by the apostles and was no longer binding on the church (Bosch 1991:249). After their separation from the Roman Catholic Church, they did not have any strength left to do missionary work. They poured all their efforts in establishing correct doctrines (reforming the church) and continuous separations among themselves caused by internal strife (Bosch 1991:245).

On the other hand, the Roman Catholic Church pioneered with zeal to recover what they had lost to the Protestant movement in some regions of Europe. On the strength of the development of science such as the Copernican theory and

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navigation, the Roman Catholic mission, conducted by the Jesuits, was flourishing. However, the Roman Catholic mission, which was still in the medieval missionary paradigm, was strongly inclined to imperialism, and even the Protestant mission was not different from it. Especially the Protestant mission of the 19th century often turned into cultural imperialism which destroyed indigenous cultures on the mission field and transplanted Western culture and civilisation (Lim 1998:111-112). Bosch (1991:237) says that the medieval missionary paradigm of the expansion of Christendom embodied by Augustine reached its summit with Thomas Aquinas, and in spite of the fact that it experienced several crises, it manifested itself supremely within the context of the European colonisation of the non-Western world.

Sneider (2001:72) insists that the medieval perspective of God's kingdom as mentioned above is presented repeatedly even to the modern Protestant mission and the church growth theorists. According to what he pointed out, "it is clear that church growth advocates in fact see the numerical growth of the church as the front line of kingdom advance and, therefore, a key sign of the kingdom." (Sneider 2001:73). McGavran (1990:27) says:

> At base, the trouble is that mere search, detached witness-without the deep wish to convert, without wholehearted persuasion, and with what amounts to a fear of the numerical increase of Christians-is not biblically justified. Mere search is not what God wants. God wants his lost children found.

McGavran (1990:30) insists that a Christian must most of all pursue the harvest of souls, which is church growth, and establish and implement strategies for it, saying "fantastic increase of churches is obviously the will of God." He named his mission theology as "the theology of harvest" compared to the existing one, which he called "the theology of search" (McGavran 1990:23-24). Wagner (1989:57) defines McGavran's search theology as:

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> Search theology means that our goal in evangelism and mission is to go to the lost, help them in every way possible and, in most cases, make known to them the gospel message. Whether or not they actually become followers of Jesus

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> Christ is inconsequential.

While the search theology believes that church growth is the result of delivering the gospel, McGavran believes that spreading the gospel cannot be performed well until church growth is to be considered first. Through the influence of McGavran and the church growth theorists following him, all churches started regarding church growth in the same light as the expansion of God's kingdom, and it became the impetus with which the megachurch phenomenon was started, intensified and maintained. All megachurches have its visions, and most of them are world evangelisation. It means that they are expanding God's kingdom with the power and influence they earned through the quantitative growth of the church. The medieval missionary paradigm, which tried to convert heathens even if it had to use physical power because the church is God's kingdom, remains the same in today's megachurch phenomenon, which tries to bring more people to the church even by means of using the power of capitalism under the capitalistic market economy.

Many pastors equate the kingdom of God with the church, and most of the believers cannot recognise its difference. From its beginnings the Korean church experienced persecution in their non-Christian society, and formed a view of faith which emphasises the church. The most favourite view of the church in the Korean church is the concept of "the ark of salvation" or "the city of refuge" (Han 2011:4). The three-self principle: self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating churches, was emphasized by the missionary John L. Nevius, and the Korean church was the one where the principle was most successfully implemented (Bae 2008:13). Han (2011:2) says:

> Church individualism has formed in the Korean church in the process of the complicated interaction between non-theological factors, like its non-Christian and multi-religious society, the period factor of persecution during the colonial period; cultural factors: Confucianism, Buddhism, shamanism, and so on; the spirit of age: capitalism, competitive socialism, realism and pragmatism; theological factors which are the views of the church, salvation, mission, the world, layman, etc.

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Church individualism connected with a minister-centred faith is seen as the reason for so many charismatic-leader-style-megachurches in South Korea (Hong 2011:57-61).

1.4.3.2 Evangelicalism

Being evangelical has various meanings in accordance with the historical period, but can broadly be separated into "Traditional Evangelicalism" and "New Evangelicalism". At first, the traditional evangelicalism, which began with the Great Awakening movement in the 18th century, comprised of all denominations including the Reformed churches. This evangelicalism followed the conservative and orthodox theology line with 4 characteristics: Conversionism, Biblicism, Crucicentrism, and Activism (Shin 2012b:3). Webber (2002:14) defines this evangelicalism as all kinds of revival movements that are trying to return to the genuine teaching of the Bible from a historical point of view. The new evangelicalism indicates all denominations which appeared after Fundamentalism was defeated (legally it won, but it actually lost in society) by Liberalism in the Scopes Trial, known as "the Monkey Trial", and which emphasised evangelism and pursued the practical line between fundamentalism and liberalism (Webber 2002:26).

New evangelicals united by establishing "the National Association of Evangelicals" (NAE) in 1942, and tried to separate themselves from fundamentalists, saying that they can communicate with Catholics and progressive Christians if those groups of people believe in salvation through faith in Christ. The new evangelicals founded the Fuller Theological Seminary in 1947 and started publishing "Christianity Today" in 1956, which is taking a moderate course and avoids extremes in 1956 (Shin 2012b:3). Evangelicalism emphasises evangelism more than any other factor as it suggests by its name. The fact that the first publisher of Christianity Today was Billy Graham who is a world renowned evangelist, and that the Lausanne covenant emphasises the word evangelisation, are examples of this.

The identity of evangelicals is established at the Great Commission of Mt 28:18-20 (Webber 2002:26). The Great Commission was greatly featured by William Carrey at

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the end of the 18th century, became prominent in Protestant missions, and by the end of the 19th century it completely superseded other verses from Scripture as the principal "mission text" (Bosch 1991:340-341). Through International missionary conferences at the beginning of the 20th century, the emphasis of evangelicals was shifted from "winning souls" of the Great Awakening movement to "preach the gospel to all nations", and connected to Ac 1:8, it became "preach the gospel to the ends of the earth" (Shin 2009:71). It can be said that as "saving souls" expanded on the global level, the door for world mission was opened widely.

Donald McGavran, who was born the son of a missionary in India, established the church growth theory in the 1950s based on the questions: 1) What are the causes of church growth? 2) What are the barriers to church growth? 3) What are the factors that can make the Christian faith a movement among some populations? 4) What principles of church growth are reproducible? (Hunter III 1992:158-162). McGavran who was a professor at Fuller theological seminary, which was founded by evangelicals, raised many church growth theorists such as Peter Wagner who was teaching church growth theory, and they formed a school of church growth theory.

This school had a great effect on world mission, and dramatically shifted the emphasis of evangelicals from world evangelisation to church growth. McGavran (1990:39-40) insists that today's paramount task, opportunity, and imperative is to multiply churches in numbers in order to obey the biblical imperative called the Great Commission. Wagner (1989:35) who was taught by McGavran, when asked, "Why aim for church growth?" answered, "If we concentrate on church growth we get to the heart of the Great Commission". If growing of the church itself is to fulfil the Great Commission, it becomes the Great assignment which has to be accomplished at any cost. Therefore, in order to conduct this Great assignment effectively, various methods of approach have been developed and theologically established. Wagner (1989:29) says that he likes to call these approaching methodologies "Consecrated pragmatism".

Starting from the church growth theorists, evangelicalism was converted into a church growth movement and techniques to fulfill the church growth ideal. According to the Hartfield Institute's research (Thumma, Travis, and Bird 2005), 56% of

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American megachurches regarded themselves as evangelical, and 95% of them strongly emphasise evangelism, in particular 58% of them are emphasising evangelism as the most important activity in the church. For this reason, Webber (2002:18) calls the megachurch phenomenon "Pragmatic evangelicalism". In accordance with Thumma and Travis (2007:27), 16% of all American megachurches are Southern Baptists, being the biggest group after the non-denominational. Finke and Stark (2005:156-160) sees the reason for this is that they focused more on propagation of the gospel than other denominations.

The kingdom of God and evangelicalism as a theological background can be a strong defence mechanism for megachurches to be protected from opposition groups. This is the same with the conservative appeal for the Great Commission, which became a kind of last line of defence, in an almost conclusive manner, against the invading spirit of liberalism, saying "How can you oppose mission to the heathen if Christ Himself has commanded it?" (Bosch 1991:340-341). To oppose the megachurch phenomenon can be disruptive to the expansion of God's kingdom or giving up the Great Commission of making disciples of all nations, to baptise them, and to teach them, these are the last commands of Jesus Christ (Shin 2012a). If the kingdom of God and evangelicalism are a strong defence mechanism for the megachurch phenomenon, the prosperity theology can be the other theological background which can sustain and support the unlimited growth of a megachurch.

1.4.3.3. The prosperity theology

The prosperity theology is the theology of the Faith movement. The Faith movement was started by Essek William Kenyon. He insisted on positive proclamation, influenced by the New Thought Movement which started in the beginning of the 19th century when he attended Emerson College of Oratory (Hanegraff 2009:59-60). The point of his teaching is "*Was ich bekenn, besitze ich*"(I will possess as I confess) (Ryu 2010:8). His teaching in the 1940-1950s, just after the Second World War, was marching in line with the explosive growth of the American economy, and had great influence on many preachers, especially evangelists of the Pentecostal movement. After that, prosperity theology flourished under the television shows of Oral Roberts, a famous evangelist in the 1960s.

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In the 1970s, Kenneth Hagin was inspired by Kenyon's radio broadcasting and propagated the prosperity theology movement. He taught that people can be healed and gain what they need if they say words of faith. He opened the Rhema Bible Training Centre in 1974 and passed on his theology to more than 10,000 students for the next 20 years (Coleman 2000:29-30). In accordance with his influence on the Faith movement, he was called "Dad" Hagin. He made Doyle Buddy Harrison, his son-in-law, organise the International Convention of Faith Churches and Ministries, and that organisation ordained Charles Capps and Benny Hinn who are spiritual healers of the Faith movement (Hanegraaff 2009:62). In the 1980s, the Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN), a religious T.V programme founded by Crouches, a disciple of Hagin, spread the theology wider through Faith Movement ministers like Benny Hinn. At the onset of the 21th century, Joel Osteen spread the Faith Movement to the whole world through his ministry at the Lakewood church, the biggest church in the U.S.A with 47,000 attendees every Sunday, and by publishing several best-selling books relevant to prosperity theology (Hanegraff 2009:83).

Ryu (2010:43-46) says "the characteristics of the prosperity theology are an unusual theism and Christology, and faith as a means." According to the prosperity theologians, "God is the one who saves people from the hand of Pharaoh and blesses them because he does not want the people to live poor, sick, and desperate lives, but wants them to live materially prosperous lives." Hagin (2008:9) calls this material blessing "the better covenant". Their Christology is in the same light. They argue that Jesus was rich and solved people's poverty on the Cross, so that all believers have to be as rich as Jesus was. As for the appearance of Jesus they insist, as Hagee (2004:232) says "*Jesus wore fine clothes! Jn 19:23 says, 'He had a seamless robe.' Roman soldiers gambled for it at the foot of the cross. It was a designer original! It was valuable enough for them to want it!"*

All prosperity theologians emphasise faith as a means for affluence. They have found a way to receive material riches from the rich God, which is the way to have people's needs and wishes realised. To them active thinking or the power of positive thinking became equivalent to the religious term, "faith". This way of positive thinking started with Kenneth Hagin, and then through Norman Vincent Peale and Robert H.Schuller, it was connected to T.D Jakes and Joel Osteen. They are all leading figures whose churches grew to megachurches through positive thinking. This is how

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Ryu (2010:14) summarises their teaching and concept of faith as a means:

> First of all, set your dream and goal, and visualize in your heart that your dream has come true with active thinking and positive words, and confess it with your mouth repeatedly, and strengthen your faith with reciting everyday over and over the scriptures which can help you have positive thinking such as "I can do everything through him who gives me strength."(Phlp 4:13), "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you." (Mt 17:20), "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Rm 8:31), and so on, then you can fulfil the dream and goal of yours.

This prosperity theology was introduced to pastor Yonggi Cho by Schuller, and propagated through the Yoido Full Gospel Church which has grown to be the biggest church in the world, with its International Theological Institute established in 1978. It has influenced the Korean churches extensively. In accordance with the International Theological Institute's homepage, the object of its establishment is to systematically research and organise a fivefold gospel and a threefold blessing according to pastor Yonggi Cho and to propagate it not only in Korea but all over the world. The fivefold gospel means the gospel of salvation, being filled with the Holy Spirit, divine healing, blessing, and the Second Advent. The threefold blessing, as a practical part of the fivefold gospel, means "1) As your soul is getting well, 2) you will enjoy good health and 3) all will go well with you." To sum up, it means if a person believes in Jesus, they will enjoy good health and everything will go well and they will be blessed (Kim 2008:93). Cho (2005:24-28) states the following regarding his understanding of the prosperity gospel:

> While I was preaching every week in a poor village, I used to deliver the message which drags people down and blame them for more than a year. During that period, I could not lead even a single person to the Lord. People could not receive Jesus because they came to the church with their wishes, but left after being criticized by me. However, when I changed my preaching into full of positive message, before long, 600 people were saved. Since then, the centre of my preaching has always been "As your soul is getting well, you will

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> enjoy good health and all will go well with you" of 3John 1:2 so far. I call this the threefold blessing. In Korea, I am the first one who preached about blessing. My preaching has been for the people who are suffering from absolute poverty.

The reason Pastor Cho preached prosperity theology was to satisfy the needs of the poor. It was for the poor to have hope through a positive message in the 1970s when South Korea was at the peak of urbanisation and industrialisation. This seems to be the same way as the prosperity theology started in the U.S.A just after the Second World War in the 1940s. This is also the reason why prosperity theology is flourishing among the third world developing countries. According to Jenkins (2011:99):

> In the 2000s, churches teaching prosperity theology saw significant growth in the Third World. Poor citizens of impoverished countries often find the doctrine appealing because of their economic powerlessness and the doctrine's emphasis on miracles. One region seeing explosive growth is Western Africa, particularly Nigeria.

As for the sermon which satisfies people's needs, Cho (2005:48) mentions the following:

> The pastors who are not satisfying the needs of attendees are preaching like drifting over the clouds alone. However, they must know that the congregations are living on earth where it is full of troubles. If the pastors do not come down to earth, they cannot communicate with the saints. Do not simply think the communication is going on well even if pastors and church members are using the same words. If pastors are not satisfying the needs of congregations, they are now speaking in a language which the people cannot understand.

The prosperity theology was stimulated by a motive to meet the listeners' needs. Thumma (1996:442) says it is inherently a seeker-oriented and seeker-sensitive sermon. The preaching which tries to satisfy the listener's needs concentrates on the

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favourite issues of its listeners such as money, good health, success (Pritchard 2001:385-387). Not all pastors of megachurches are following a prosperity theology. Rick Warren of the Saddleback church does not hesitate to accuse prosperity theology (Biema & Chu 2006). But he is also deeply affected by prosperity theology as can be seen from what he stated:

> Today, “preaching to felt needs” is scorned and criticized in some circles as a cheapening of the Gospel and a sell out to consumerism. I want to state this in the clearest way possible: Beginning a message with people’s felt needs is more than a marketing tool! It is based on the theological fact that God chooses to reveal himself to man according to our needs! Both the Old and New Testaments are filled with examples of this (Warren 1995:295).

While a prosperity theology satisfies its audience by offering them what they need, it motivates them to come to church. The Jesus that prosperity theology propagates is not the one who asks a man to deny himself and follow him, but the one who blesses man by solving all kinds of problems on the Cross, so that man no longer needs to be sick and poor. The church of those Jesus followers has to be huge, splendorous, and boastful. Thus prosperity theology provides the theological background for the megachurch to grow unlimitedly.

1.5 Conclusion

The characteristics of a megachurch and the background to how those characteristics appeared have been observed. A megachurch does not simply mean a church which has more than 2,000 attendees, but is a prominent phenomenon and movement which has emerged as a reaction to various social and cultural factors in the history of the church and has been supported by firm theologies. Bae (2010:6-7) says:

> The concept of a megachurch cannot be simply limited to number, but should be understood as all local churches which mobilize various measures and methods for church growth under the perception, “A healthy church must grow,

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> and can grow", that is affected by the progressivism of the Enlightenment.

A number of scholars who are researching megachurches come to an agreement that a megachurch is an obvious social and religious phenomenon. The phenomenon the scholars are explaining is one which is unavoidable as another mainstream in the history of the church, and non-megachurches should take part by studying what they can learn from megachurches (Thumma & Travis 2007:xxiv-xxv). However, the phenomenon this research has observed is the strong tendency which all churches are trying to be, "bigger" and "higher", or which forces all churches to have no choice but to follow regardless of their present size.

Shin (2009:90-94), inspired by the fact that Babylon symbolises the Roman Empire in the Bible, defines the megachurch phenomenon as the Babel tower of greed which keeps on trying to be bigger and higher, comparing the spirit of the megachurch phenomenon and its managing style: huge building, senior pastor-centred, small group, vision-focused with the Roman Empire: building the Empire by Cesar, dictatorship, local autonomy, emphasis on a "Tolerance" spirit. Thumma and Travis (2007:17) who researched cultural causes behind megachurches' fast growing say:

> The size of the megachurch proclaims the power of religion, exhibiting the prominent place of religion in the modern world. It is powerful in its influence on politics, in the courts, and in the national religious community. The success of the church translates into the success of each individual attendee. It is what they aspire to be. As such, it is a motivational element and inspirational ideal for many within the congregation.

The megachurch can be defined as a tendency of all churches, or the spirit of the age, which has appeared when internal religious restrictions have disappeared (Historical background) and external restrictions were removed by the market economy situation, urbanisation, development of technology (Social and cultural background); is supported by evangelicalism and the expansion of God's kingdom (Theological background); is pursuing or is forced to pursue prosperity (bigger and

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richer) with influence and power as the result.

How the definition and characteristics of a megachurch is actually applied to an individual church and how it works in a case study of the Poongsunghan Church, one of the Korean megachurches, will be investigated.

1.6 Case study of a megachurch in South Korea

According to Thumma and Travis (2007:30-41), megachurches can be sorted into four different streams. The four streams of megachurches they suggest are as follows: 1) Old Line/Program-based, 2) Seeker, 3) Charismatic/Pastor-Focused, 4) New wave/Re-Envisioned.

The characteristics of each type are:

Old Line/Program-based

- is traditional and denominational, and is mostly located in the downtown urban and older suburban parts of a city as the established First Church in its locales. Churches in this stream are more likely to use pianos, organs, and choirs in their services.
- is more likely to celebrate communion frequently compared to other types and keep it devotional rather than exuberant. The senior pastor does the role of administrator and preacher. It uses Sunday morning Bible classes as the primary “Christian Education” experience, and manages various programmes for the members’ good health and hobby.

Seeker

- is among the four streams it is the most focused on evangelism for seekers and unchurched. Churches in this stream differentiate themselves from existing traditional churches and their religious burden, emphasising that “We are different”.
- is mostly located in suburban areas and near the main road for accessibility. It is more likely to be nondenominational or loosely connected to denominations.

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- has a broader leadership base than Charismatic/Pastor-Focused. The senior pastor is both chief evangelist and preacher. Churches in this stream were founded during, or have grown rapidly during the 1980s and early 1990s.
- avoids formal factors such as choirs and Communion and pursues informal, joyful and exciting worship services so that the members often participate in worship order like with dramas and musicals.
- is more likely to focus on small group meetings in houses rather than offering various programmes like Old Line/Program-based. Churches in this stream are the churches most strongly influenced by current corporate business practices and values. On account of this characteristic,
- attracts the most press coverage and criticism.

Charismatic/Pastor-Focused

- had its founding or rapid growth date from the 1960s to the 1980s, and is mostly based on a Pentecostal or charismatic theological tradition.
- The key distinctive feature is that the churches rely greatly on personal “charisma”, the presence and authority of the senior pastor.
- is formed around the vision and passion of the founding ministers.
- congregations are from various age groups, income levels, and religious backgrounds; however, having a commitment to the powerful vision and personality of the senior pastor is common. The senior pastor is both preacher and decision maker. Various spiritual gifts are allowed in the service, and loud God-and Spirit-focused contemporary praise is sung with fervour, with arms outstretched to God. Though some cell and small groups are managed for Christian education, it does not receive a big emphasis.
- is more likely to use larger auditoriums-style church buildings than the others.

New wave/Re-Envisioned

- was founded in 1990 and has grown to thousands of attendees in a very short time, and is more likely to be multisite and multi-leader churches. Many of these churches have intentionally rejected a Seeker approach, with its nontraditional language and mind-set. Instead, they overtly embrace

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traditional, and even ancient, Christian symbols, language, and teaching, for example using creeds, journaling, fasting, and meditation for personal spiritual practices. Meanwhile, these churches often utilise cutting-edge technology in terms of lighting, music, and sound, while eclectically combining it with ancient practices to make those dramatically applied on the congregations.

- is more likely to be located where young people are moving in, and uses comparatively small buildings.

It is not easy to categorise the Poongsunghan Church according to the standards and on the basis of American megachurches. It is because the Korean megachurches tend to benchmark all factors that seem helpful for church growth after visiting American megachurches or reading American megachurch pastors' books. Sueng-Kon Kim (2005:191), the senior pastor of the Poongsunghan church, says that he benchmarked the worship styles of the Willow Creek Church, the Saddlebag church, the Calvary Chapel, the Grace Chapel, and so on. For this reason, it is not clear to say to which stream the Poongsunghan Church belongs to, however it demonstrates more Seeker's characteristics than any other type. It also has some characteristics of the Charismatic/ Pastor-Focused type, on account of the patriarchal and authoritative Korean culture compared to the American one and the characteristic of the Korean church which puts great stress on spirituality. Therefore, according to the classification of Thumma and Travis, the Poongsunghan church can be sorted as a Seeker with many characteristics of the Charismatic/Pastor-Focused type. Characteristics like those of the Poongsunghan Church will be observed in more detail.

1.6.1 The Poongsunghan Church

1.6.1.1. Characteristics of a Seeker

The Poongsunghan Church belongs to the Korea Christian Presbyterian Hapdong denomination. The denomination is the biggest one in Korea and is founded on the basis of reformed and Calvinist theology. The denomination manages regions divided into presbyteries. The Poongsunghan Church is affiliated to the West Pyongyang Presbytery, but the connection with the denomination is very loose. On

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its homepage, it says that they belong to it, however, that is just a defence against the accusation of heresy because of its radically different methods of church growth. This can be clearly seen by the fact that, since it was founded in 1994, the church has had only one elder, while elders as characteristic of the Presbyterian Church (Cho 2010a).

The Poonsunghan Church was established in May 1994, located in Geoje-dong Yeonje-gu Busan. Yeonje-gu is one of most highly dense areas in Busan, the second largest city in South Korea. Geoje-dong is located in a suburb of Yeonje-gu, and the church is situated near the main road for accessibility. The worship service of the church begins with several Contemporary Christian songs led by a praising team which is equipped with various modern instruments and cutting edge lighting and sound system, and has many special programmes such as skit drama, musicals, testimony, and so on, to induce the audiences to take part in the service. The service is well organised by a Q-sheet on a minute basis to avoid boredom. For its smooth progress, the service department gathers every Saturday and rehearses the service three times. If there is a special testimony on that Sunday, the content of the testimony has to be thoroughly rehearsed, even to the performer's tone of voice (Kim 2005:198). To the question whether, "Isn't it too artificial?", pastor Kim (2005:198) answers that "Even singers in the world practice again and again even up to the point of bleeding from their throats and correct one single action and facial expression over and over before they stand on a live stage. We are actors of the Lord. The service being offered to God needs even more thorough practice."

The Christian Education of the church is operated by small groups. They have two types of small groups. One is for registered members called "Closed Cell" and the other is for saturation evangelism namely "Open Cell". Seung-Kon Kim, the senior pastor, is both preacher and chief evangelist. Pastor Kim, the founder and senior pastor of the church, took charge of several open cells to demonstrate the spirit of an outreach-focused church to the congregations for 3-4 years after planting the church until it became too big for him to carry on the demonstration (Kim 2007). The Poongsunghan Church has had a great influence on the Korean church with its fantastic growth since it introduced their entrepreneur-like church structure. This is constituted with a senior pastor, administration pastors, assistant pastors, and lay leaders, and the thorough planning and management style of the great group and

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the small group which is called “The two wings system”. Like most of the churches in the seeker stream, the Poongsunghan Church received extremely different evaluations as an innovator as well as a target of accusation.

1.6.1.2 Characteristics of the Charismatic/Pastor-Focused type

While seeker style churches have a broad leadership base, the Poongsunhan Church relies greatly on the spiritual gift of an individual, pastor Kim, and the congregation completely obeys his vision, which is characteristic of Charisma/Pastor-Focused types. The church asks absolute obedience from the congregation for its 2,000-20,000 world vision, which is launched by the visionary of the church, pastor Kim. It means “Change all nations by sending two thousand missionaries and transform a region and a country with twenty thousand cell leaders”. For that obedience, it operates the D-12 nurturing system. Pastor Kim argues that he received his world evangelisation vision directly from God as did other leaders in Charisma/Pastor-Focused stream (Thumma 1996:439). The people who are being trained by that programme have to have the same word, purpose, and thought as the senior pastor, which was given directly by God on the basis of 1Corinthians 1:10, and when the training finishes, which takes around 1year and 3 months, they have to take an oath that they will devote themselves as life-time cell leaders and be loyal to pastor Kim, the chief evangelist (Cho 2010a).

Kim (2005:213) says that God gave him divine healing powers from the time the church was planted and allowed him to heal many church members. Depending on this divine healing power of the senior pastor, they offer a special programme on Friday nights, called “Healing night”. Pastor Kim confesses that he had experienced the Holy Spirit and had God’s calling in “the Osan-li Fast Prayer House” before he started his ministry. On account of his experience in that institute and another experience which when he was trained as a lay leader for three years under a mission organisation, “The Navigators”, he emphasises the experience of the Holy Spirit and discipleship training in his ministry rather than theology. Despite the Poongsunghan Church’s Seeker characteristics of the main worship service on Sundays, under the influence of pastor Kim who often emphasises that “Knowledge cannot change a man” (Kim 2005:37), it shows some charismatic characteristics like speaking in tongues in various other services.

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1.6.1.3 The Two Wings Nurturing System

The reason the Poongsunghan Church has similar characteristics to the Seeker and Charismatic/Pastor Focused types at the same time is on account of the Two Wings Nurturing System which the church emphasises as different from other churches. The Two Wings Nurturing System is a festival worship in the big group, and the smaller cell groups. Kim found (2005:127) the theoretical background for the Two Wings from William A. Beckham. According to Beckham, the small group in the early church played a role as a small church in which evangelism, settlement, nurturing, and reproduction of another small group were actively working. The members of small groups who had gathered in their places during the week gathered together in a chapel and held a festival of worship on Sunday, which is what Beckham (1995:25-32) called “Two Wings”. However, it is doubtful that that thousands of people could freely gather under the colonisation of the Roman Empire at that time. It is also unlikely that the Jerusalem church used the Two Wings System to grow unlimitedly like an individual church at present.

The reason pastor Kim started the Two Wings system is to obey the Great Commission and to expand God’s kingdom (Kim 2005:39). This is the same concept with the same theological background as the megachurch phenomenon. To fulfil that goal, he had to start his own church. As most of the newly started churches do, he rented the fourth floor of a business building just in front of a marketplace, inconvenient for traffic, when he started in 1994. One day, struggling for attendance, one of his church members invited him to a famous restaurant, not in a highly visible spot, not with sufficient parking space, but people were waiting outside the restaurant in a long queue because of the good taste of the food. When he saw that, he had an inspiration that “If it is tasty, people are coming no matter how bad its conditions.”, and he started “designing”- to borrow his expression- for a seeker-centred service from the benchmarking American megachurches’ worship services (Kim 2005:185).

He abandoned the tradition to decorate the pulpit with flowers, and installed lights instead. For the smooth progress of service, he started using Q-sheet which is being used in broadcasting. In his sermon, he focused on solving real life matters through

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Jesus rather than repentance of sin, in order to satisfy seekers' needs. As for this view on preaching, Kim (2005:192) says that "People want to listen to the sermon continuously only when there is a prophetic message in it. To be a prophetic message, the sermon has to meet people's needs. A sermon has to give pleasure, joy, and peace to the listeners as well as blessing and conviction about the good things which will happen in the future." This is almost the same as pastor Cho's view of a sermon, and gives an example that pastor Kim's ministry was affected by the world's largest megachurch in the Charismatic/Pastor-Focused stream, the Yoido Full Gospel Church.

In the 1990s, when pastor Kim planted his church, the most popular church growth programme was "Total Mobilising Evangelism Day". The total mobilising evangelism day is one of the modified features of "Crusade Evangelism" that Billy Graham started in 1948. According to this programme, the church sets a certain day as D-day and makes the congregations decide how many people they are going to invite on that day. The congregations have to establish a good relationship with the people they chose by calling, giving presents, serving a meal, and so on, and bring them to church. On D-day, the church tries its best to open the invited people' hearts by inviting popular singers, offering various touching flash movies and special programmes, and so on and then appeals to them to be converted with a well-prepared gospel message (Kim 2010:95-103). Pastor Kim tried the programme to encourage his church to grow, but failed. After analysing the cause of failure, he invented an evangelism method by combining Billy Graham's event-style evangelism and Kenneth Strachan's saturation evangelism. This kind of evangelism was first suggested by Wagner, which he called "Body Evangelism" (Wagner 1989:142-143).

Wagner's Body Evangelism was converted by pastor Kim to suit his ministry and became the evangelism method of the Poongsunghan Church namely "Open Cell". The Open Cell is constituted by 3 to 4 lay leaders and carries on for 12 weeks. They go to where people live and work instead of calling them to the church. In the field, the lay leaders appoint a certain place to meet, and for the first 4 weeks they pray and look for the people they are going to invite, whom they call "Best", in the appointed place. This is the same way with Saddlebag's Sam, unchurched Harris and Seeker (Thumma 1996:439). From the fifth week, they separate the Best into two groups, which are A-type targets (positive to the gospel) and B-type targets

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(negative to the gospel) and start establishing a good relationship with them by serving a meal, giving presents, and so on, following the schedule prepared in advance. If the Bests open their hearts, open cell members invite them to the church on the last week Sunday of that 12 week programme. The 12th Sunday is called "Invitation Day", and the church does the same on that day as the full mobilisation evangelism does on D-day (Kim 2005:172). The Open Cell obtained the desired results, but pastor Kim saw that many people could not settle down and soon left the church. To solve that problem, he introduced another programme called "Barnabas helper" and through it he could, to use his expression, "close the church's back door". He changed the name of the programme from "Barnabas Helper" to "New Family Helper" (Kim 2005:175-178).

For all those programmes, ministers take on the role of director, and lay leaders are carrying out the actual ministries. Pastor Kim needed the participation and commitment of the laity for the various programmes and adopted the "Discipleship Training Programme" which was the most prevailing lay training programme in the Korean church in the 1990s. The discipleship training programme was usually used by mission organisations before the 1980s, and the church gradually followed it after the 1980s. Since the Sarang Church succeeded to grow in numbers with that programme in the 1990s it opened an institute called "Disciple Making Ministries International". It became one of the most widely renowned laity training programmes in the Korean church (Ok 2007:7-8). The core value of that programme is to break the traditional system of the church in which the ministers become actors and the congregations become a large audience. It trained the laity to work with the ministers, following a legacy of the Reformation's, "Priesthood of all believers". The lay people trained in the programme became leaders to lead small groups and help the ministers. Pastor Kim saw that most of the churches who tried the program failed because they could not mobilise the lay leaders of the ministries, thus he established "World Vision Disciple School" which is a system that a trained person is compulsorily put in a working field in the church (Kim 2005:76-83).

The World Vision Disciple School consists of 3 sessions: Disciple training, Soldiership training, and Reproduction training. If a new comer wants to enter that school, he has to first finish a complete four-week-course in the "New Family School". In order to take care of church members, Pastor Kim discarded the traditional system

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of the Presbyterian church and introduced a “Cell” system to the church after researching the books of William A. Beckham and Ralph W. Neighbour (Kim 2005:125-126). The newly registered person has to join a cell according to the cell managing style of Cesar Castellanos, a senior pastor of MCI church in South America. When a new comer completes the “New Family School”, he is to be included in the Closed Cell and treated no longer a guest for the church but as a family member, and has the mandate to be trained in the “Nurture Class” (Kim 2007:20).

During the 12 weeks of the Nurture Class, a trainee has to serve for four weeks in the New Family Class after s/he is trained in the “New Family Helper School” and is then allocated as a server to a department of the church according to his/her talent which is noticed as a result of the “Gifts Discovery Seminar”. With the 12 weeks Nurture Class completed the trainee is enrolled in the first session of “Disciple Training”. While training in that course, the trainee has to join an Open Cell meeting and learn how it is actually being processed. When the trainee is trained in “Soldiership Training” after s/he is finished the Disciple Training, s/he is to lead an Open Cell as a leader. The trainee who is leading an Open Cell is to help the people s/he won in the Open Cell to settle down to the Closed Cell which s/he belongs to as a member. The trainee who finished the Soldiership Training and the third session of “Reproduction Training”, and the average attendance of the Closed Cell s/he belongs to exceeds 12 regular members, s/he is then qualified to manage his/her own Closed Cell as leader.

In the meantime, the cell leader who set up a branch cell continues to prepare another cell leader in his/her Closed Cell and another reproduction by helping the settlement of members and encouraging them to be trained. The Poongsunghan Church calls the Closed Cell which reproduced another cell a “Mother Cell” and the cell that came from the mother cell as a “Daughter cell”. Through this series of processes, a mother cell leader who produced four daughter cell leaders becomes a “Super Cell Leader” and is to be treated in a different way from other cell leaders. They meet with the senior pastor at a weekly meeting and instruct and supervise the four cell leaders they produced. When a person is appointed a super cell leader, s/he receives before all the congregation a special ring from the senior pastor on which the church logo is engraved. But a Closed Cell which does not reproduce within a

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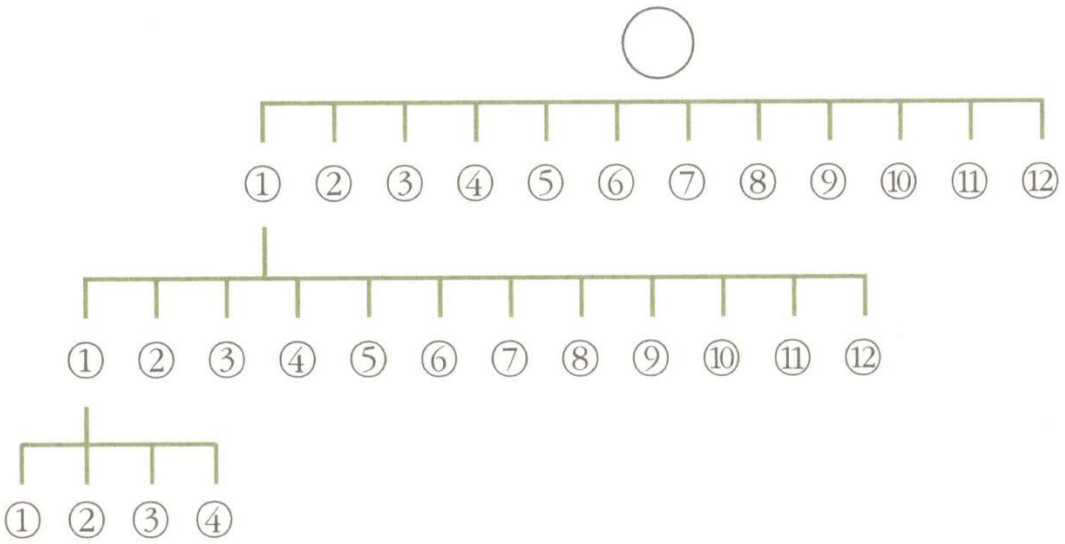
year is to be cut out as a “cancer cell” and is merged with other cells. The leader is demoted to a lower rank and has to be re-trained (Kim 2003:71). In the Poongsunghan Church, only a man who has worked for five years as a cell leader can be a candidate as an elder of the church, which is the reason why the church has had only one elder so far, although it is a Presbyterian church. Over the lay super cell leaders, there are 12 direct disciples of the senior pastor called “Director”. Directors, who are full-time ministers, directs and manages the lay cell leaders and have a mandate to produce 12 cell leaders each while the lay cell leaders have to produce 4 cell leaders each as part-time workers. This is called “D12·4 Vision” (Kim 2005:146-148).

<Chart 1> D12·4 Organisation



The Two Wings Nurturing System is the programme where existing programmes were put together and were combined. Kim (2005:43-48) says he realised that “Process” means using programmes after compounding and organising those as well is of more importance than individual programmes. He emphasises that it is time to shift the paradigm from “Program Ministry” to “Process Ministry”, saying that there has been no one who applied that “Process” in their ministries (Kim 2005:47). Each programme in his “Process” is developed for church growth. Therefore, “Process Ministry” which is composed of optimised programmes and is then effective for

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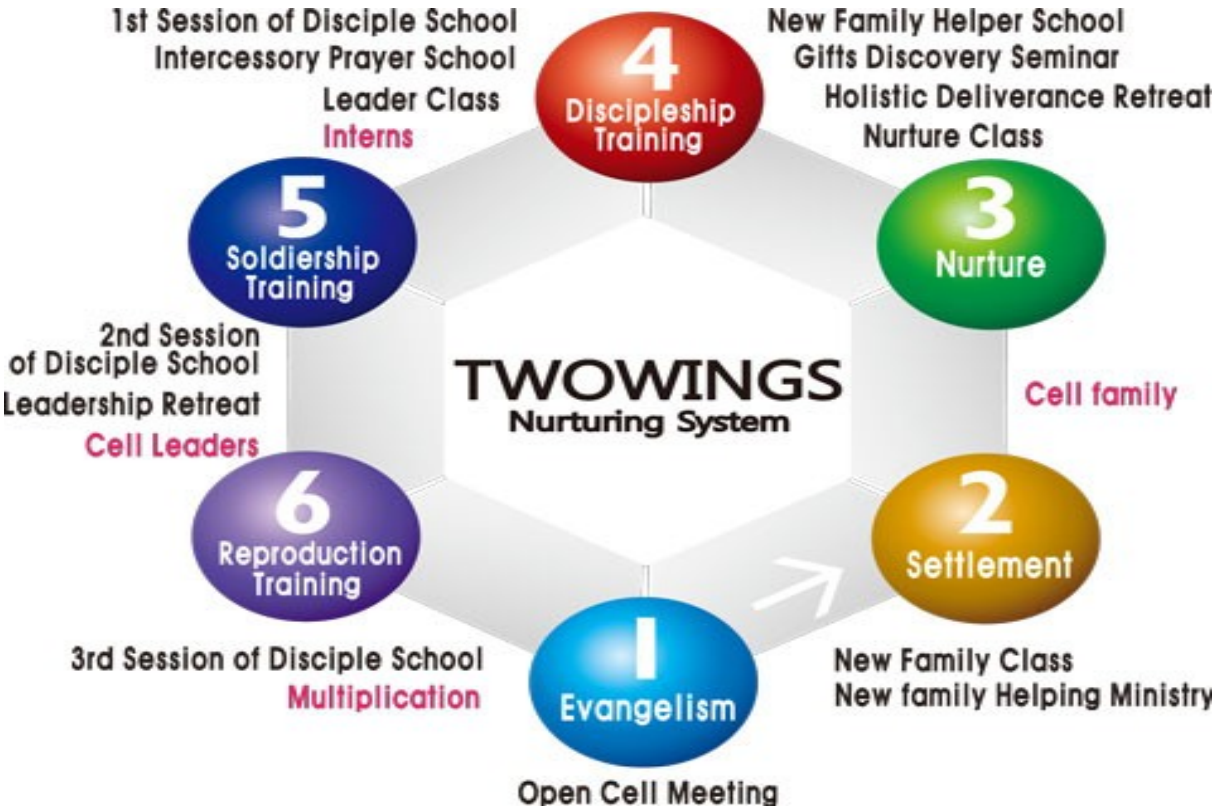
church growth. Due to the Two Wings Nurturing System, in the Poongsunghan Church, despite its denominational background, the only thing that the members could focus on is winning more souls and bringing them to the church under the individual charismatic leadership of the senior pastor. A characteristic such as this is the same as the one of a shopping mall which is seeking the largest profit through the most efficient organisational structure. The Poongsunghan Church is a consumerism-oriented church.

<Chart 2> THE TWO WINGS NURTURING SYSTEM



The Poongsunghan Church has rapidly grown since it started in 1994. The church exceeded 2,000 people in attendance in 2006 with around 3,000 registered members (Kim 2007:28). Because the church counts only registered members as “Poongsunghan men” who agree to join a closed cell after they met with the senior pastor on the fourth week of the New Family Class, the actual attendance number

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will be more.

1.6.1.4 The Two Wings International Conference

Six years after planting the church, pastor Kim took part in a seminar hosted by the Natural Church Development (hereafter NCD) in November 1999. In that seminar, he learned about the 8 characteristics of a healthy church and consulted NCD about his church's health gradation (Kim 2005:22-24). The 8 essential qualities of healthy churches which Christian Schwarz (1996), the founder of NCD, insists on are: 1) Empowering leadership, 2) Gift-based ministry, 3) Passionate spirituality, 4) Effective structure, 5) Inspiring worship, 6) Holistic small groups, 7) Need-oriented evangelism, 8) Loving relationships. Schwarz (1996:38) concludes that when all eight characteristics operate above a 65% level of effectiveness, it is 99.4% certain that that church will grow automatically. The Poongsunghan Church received an amazing 93% as a result of NCD's first consultation, and improved to 99% in a re-examination which was carried out at the request of the NCD (Kim 2005:24-27).

The result of the NCD evaluation received great attention from the Korean churches which were looking for new church growth methods, and as a result the Poongsunghan Church, though it had only 300 attendees at that time, opened the first "Two Wings International Conference" in February 2002 with around 200 invited pastors from the whole country. The first conference had such an enthusiastic response from the pastors that the church started a "6 Step Intensive Training" which imparts all the methodologies of the church to the attended churches for 6 classes after the conference (Kim 2005:28-32). The conference of the Poongsughan Church became a huge scale conference with around 2,000 attendees at the third conference. Since then, the number of participants was rapidly growing and at the eighth conference in 2009, it astonished the Korean church with its 15,000 participants (Huh 2009). From 2006, the same conference is being held in the U.S.A, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand, and so on.

Before the first conference, pastor Kim re-organised his processing-style ministry by adding the 8 principles of the NCD. He proudly called the Two Wings Nurturing System "The most perfect system throughout history God has ever designed" and

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"The system that can surely make a healthy church" (Cho 2010b). At the conferences, he insisted that like a car which is manufactured, if it just follows a manufacturing line, following his system thoroughly, a born again Christian will be produced as a disciple and a soldier of the Lord, and the church will surely be growing through them. He also argues that the system has already passed several years of clinical trials, so that it has to be carried out as it is without changes depending on each individual church condition (Kim 2005:61). According to an article, the total number of churches who participated in the conference up to 2009 is about 14,000, which is almost 1/4 of the whole Korean church. The total number of participants up to 2009 is around 50,000 and about a half of them are ministers (Lee 2009). Given that the other half also have important positions in the churches, it is easy to recognise how the megachurch spirit of the Poongsunghan Church is having a great influence on the Korean church.

Schwarz (1996:61-80) criticises the methodologists who are pursuing unlimited church growth, exaggerating the importance of systems, programmes, methods, and so on, and states that all types of organic growth have a natural limit. He insists on natural church growth, by suggesting "6 Biotic principles" which are interdependence (working as a team), reproduction through multiplication, energy transformation (e.g., using new converts in evangelistic ministries), multi-usage, symbiosis and functionality as an alternative to unlimited growth. When the Poongsunghan church got such a high grade of 93%, which the church has been so proud of this became a momentum for fame among the Korean churches, and has consequently contributed to church growth. The number of attendance of the church was just 300 initially. At present the church has become a megachurch and is constantly growing bigger leaping over the natural growth limit. It has already broken the regional limit by building a branch church in Ilsan in which there is no senior pastor, but a pastor in charge because they have the same senior pastor (Oh 2011).

It is doubtful that the church, which has grown to a megachurch at present and continues to pursue growing bigger, leaping over the natural growth limit and even the regional limit, which can be seen through its branch church can still achieve such a high grade from the NCD.

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1.6.1.5 An interview with a pastor of the Poongsunghan Church

The interview was conducted by telephonice conversation at around 15 hours on 24th of April 2014. The interviewee was Mr. Kim who is working with the senior pastor of the Poongsunghan church as an assistant pastor. Kim is also one of the directors of the cell structure. Thus, he knows almost everything regarding the system of the church and vision better than anyone else.

a) Question and answer:

1) What is the first priority and goal of your ministries?

In terms of the church, it is to achieve church growth which can be approved objectively in accordance with the 8 essential qualities of healthy churches. In terms of individuals, it is to set reproducing workers according to the two wings nurturing system.

2) What do you see as the merits and demerits of the megachurch?

Merits: As the number of attendance and budget of the church is increasing, the church can deal with the missions which could not be conducted when the church was small.

Demerits: It is very difficult to keep the spirit of the church which it had in the beginning. For instance, although making people to be perfectly united in mind and thought can be possible only by strong discipline (We are not pursuing a special ministry, which is chasing out the people who cannot follow the spirit of the church), the discipleship training cannot be carried out with many people at once, so that causes the dilution of the spirit of the church as a result. On account of this situation, “how to set the leadership properly” is one of the biggest issues in the church these days.

3) What is your reaction to the statement “The bigger a church grows, the more

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it can carry out missionary work?"

I think it is true. Now, we are sending missionaries to "the 12 front battle lines of the world" that we divided strategically as well as spreading the two wings nurturing system to the whole world. We are already having good results from the Philippines and also starting in India. From now on, we will send our missionaries to all those 12 front battle lines by adding one more country every two years, and will make those 12 countries send other missionaries to other countries around them as mission bases in the end. We are dispatching 20-30 short-term missionaries at a time, mostly 1 year and all disciplined under the two wings nurturing system, to the same place every year and let them evangelise and teach the locals. After finishing 1 year of missionary work, short-term missionaries hand over what they have done to their successor in a proper manner in order to minimise time wasting and allow the ministries to continue.

We believe this is more effective and efficient than the old style of mission strategy, which focused on sending one person or family to the mission field. Among the churches we have planted, there is a church which is being envied by other churches around because it already has more than 200 congregations and has reproduced 2 more churches by itself. We could not think about this kind of world mission vision when the church was small, but it is getting more concrete and clear with the abundance of human and material resources and know how as the size of the church is growing.

4) What do you think is a missional church?

What the senior pastor is most emphasising these days is that "the conclusion of the two wings nurturing system is mission." Because the Poongsunghan Church invested everything on the two wings nurturing system, what the senior pastor is saying is that the church is investing everything on mission. Although all believers are missionaries where ever they are standing whether it is the end of the earth or the mission field, those people who received a special calling have to go out.

5) Do you think that the megachurch can be missional?

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Yes, I think so. It is true that there are things we are losing as the size of the church is growing, but there are obviously some more important things we can earn from the scale for mission like material and spiritual resources.

b) Analysis of the interview

Given the premise that the Poongsunghan Church emphasises being perfectly united in mind and thought and pastor Kim is an assistant pastor as well as a director of the church, it can be supposed that his answers represent the vision of the church. To analyse the interview, Kim is obviously a fully dedicated person to saving souls. However, he does not confront the background of the megachurch phenomenon such as market economy system, church individualism, equalisation of church growth and expanding God's kingdom. The missional church that he is thinking of means an individual church carrying out more missionary works and propagating the gospel further and wider. In his understanding, the Poongsunghan Church can obviously be a missional church which is conducting many missionary works locally and globally with its human and material resources and its influence as a megachurch.

In closing, the purpose of this chapter, where a question "Can a megachurch be missional?" is premised, there has been an endeavour to demonstrate how a megachurch is a social and religious phenomenon, and to point out how that definition works in practice with a Korean megachurch. It studied the characteristics of the megachurch against its socio-cultural, historical and theological backgrounds.

First of all, the rapid numerical growth and influence was observed. It was noted that the speed of the megachurches' radical growth cannot be compared to any other churches in the history of the church. It continues growing despite the decline of the overall population of Christianity, and has no territorial limitation to its quantitative growth. Through this fast growth, it has a great influence on other churches to pursue the same type of church growth.

As for the backdrop of these characteristics, the following factors were dealt with:

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The socio-cultural background of this growth was rapid urbanisation and industrialisation. The emergence of economical consumerism influenced the mass religious clients in the church and led to competition between congregations. Historically the understanding of the church after Constantine, the emphasis on the Great Commission by the Great Awakening, and world mission movement were carried over to church growth theorists. The concept the “the growth of individual churches is the expansion of the kingdom of God” was firmly established. Theologically the megachurch is supported by evangelical pragmatism based on the regional understanding of the kingdom of God and the theology that speaks of prosperity rather than of sin, purity, suffering and sacrifice for church growth.

Through research on these characteristics and background, the megachurch is defined not as a very large church with more than 2,000 attendees, but as a conspicuous social and religious tendency and an ethos that makes all megachurches and not-yet-megachurches (potential) concentrate on increasing number, size and influence (power), more than anything else, and on expanding the territorial concept of the kingdom of God with these resources. This definition of the megachurch is connected to an ecclesio-centric understanding of mission (missiology) and to a functional and organisational (institutional) approach to the church (ecclesiology) to carry out its missionary works more efficiently and effectively. The definition of a megachurch and its missiological and ecclesiological perspectives are obvious among the Korean megachurches represented by the Poongsunghan Church.

Whether a megachurch can be missional or not, depends on its understanding of a missional church. Following this line of research, a missional church will be described in the next chapter.

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Chapter 3

1. Missional church

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to answer the research questions: 1) What is the definition of a missional church? 2) What are characteristics and trends of the missional church as a movement? 3) What is the background of the missional church? 4) How is the definition and characteristics of the missional church applied to a Korean missional church? To do that, first the definition of a missional church as a movement and its most significant characteristics and trends will be researched. Then the social and cultural, historical and theological backgrounds of the missional church movement will be studied in order to understand the movement more clearly. Finally how the definition and characteristics of the missional church movement, which was obtained by theoretical research, will be applied in a case study of a Korean missional church.

1.2 Definition of a missional church

To define the missional church is a problem. Shin (2014) says that it is because the missional church is an ongoing movement which has not yet been long and firmly set up theologically. According to Wells (2006:28), a movement must exhibit three characteristics: 1) There must be a commonly owned direction, 2) There must be a common basis on which that direction is owned, and 3) There must be an *esprit* that informs and motivates those who are thus joined in their common cause.

Bosch (1991:3-4) stated that the crises, such as secularization and de-Christianization of the West as well as the entire modern missionary enterprise, pluralism, polarisation, and the falling of Western theology and the rise of Third-World theologies that the church and its mission have been experiencing since World War II called for a paradigm shift of mission. There has been an increasing interest in exploring “what is the church, and what is the church for” in response to the changes of the world and the crises of the church (The Archbishop’s council 2004:27). In the light of the recalibration of the relationship between the church and mission, at the Willingen IMC in 1952, the concept of the *missio Dei* that mission comes from the nature of the Triune God - God is the acting subject of mission - was set forth, and

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thereby mission has been centred around the conversion of a church that participates in the mission of God (Bosch 1991:390).

According to Van Gelder (2007:18), "this participation is based on the redemption that God accomplished through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, a redemption that was announced by Jesus as the kingdom of God". The role of the church for the mission of God has been rediscovered in terms of participating in God's reconciling work that brings back all creation into a right relationship with God through the redemptive reign of God in Christ by bearing witness and inviting people in the world to become reconciled to the living and true God (Van Gelder 2007:18). Mission began to be understood as an inherent aspect of the nature of the church (Van Gelder 2000:33), which belongs to the very purpose, life and structure of the church, rather than a task of the church that is one among several in which the church should be engaged (Bevans & Schroeder 2004:290).

In the late 1990's, churches attempted to work out the implications of the concept of the *missio Dei* in a rapidly changing society (Specifically churches in the USA) (Hirch 2006:81). Since then, the conversation regarding the relationship between ecclesiology and missiology exploded under the common awareness of the crisis that "the sense that the church is increasingly out of tune with contemporary culture, and that unless it comes to terms with change, it faces extinction" (Stott 2007:12). Missional ecclesiology emerged as one of the significant trends in mission studies in the past couple of years (Niemandt 2012:1). Therefore, missional ecclesiology is rooted in the efforts to restore the missionary nature of the church to be part of the mission of God to the world in this rapidly changing context.

In this sense, the missional church is clearly a movement which exhibits three characteristics as Wells proposed: 1) it is commonly directed to the restoration of the essence of the church, 2) it is based on common thoughts that the church is in crisis, 3) it has missional ecclesiology as an *esprit* that informs and motivates those who are thus joined in their common cause. Niemandt (2010b:407) says that "movements give expression to the organic change and dynamics through which the missionary nature of the church emerges. It is a clear indication of a change in direction, a new way of being church and a different culture".

According to Hirch (2006:82), the concept of the missional church can be summed up as "the emphasis of the radical Jesus movement that we need to rediscover

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today". In his words, the Jesus movement is the restoration of the apostolic genius of the early church and of the underground Chinese church's rapid growth in the crisis of severe persecution (Hirch 2006:17-22). His metaphor is that as DNA is the essence of a living organism, the church inherently has a missional DNA (mDNA) that has as its genetic coding, as recounted by the apostles: Jesus is Lord, disciple making, a missional-incarnational impulse in an apostolic environment with an organic system, and *communitas*, not community (Hirch 2006:76-79). He argues that the church's missional nature has been lost in religious institutionalism, so that, in order to restore it, the present church has to start missional movements called Jesus movements (Hirch 2006:21-23).

To define the missional church as a movement, missional ecclesiology as the spirit of the movement must precede it. To understand missional ecclesiology, definitions of mission and ecclesiology are necessary. The World Council of Churches (2013:8) says:

> The Christian understanding of the church and its mission is rooted in the vision of God's great design for all creation: The kingdom which was both promised by and manifested in Jesus Christ… God's purpose in creation was thwarted by human sin and disobedience, which damaged the relationship between God, human beings and the created order. But God persisted in faithfulness despite human sin and error. The dynamic history of God's restoration of *koinonia* found its irreversible achievement in the incarnation and paschal mystery of Jesus Christ. The Church, as the body of Christ, acts by the power of the Holy Spirit to continue His life-giving mission in prophetic and compassionate ministry and so participates in God's work of healing a broken world.

Stott (ed. Douglas 1975:66-68) defines mission as an evangelising life constituted with words and deeds of the people of God to the whole world, emphasising the sovereignty of God as the subject of mission. Niemandt (2012:1) says: "Ecclesiology is a theological discipline that seeks to understand and define the church." Thus, the missional ecclesiology can be defined as a theological discipline that seeks to understand and define the church from a missional point of view where the church is understood as a community of witnessing life through words and deeds, called into

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being and equipped by God in His sovereignty, and sent into the world to testify to and participate in Christ's work. Through this understanding of missional ecclesiology, the church and mission are in an inseparable relationship. WCC (2013:63) states:

> The church in history has not always existed but, both theologically and empirically, came into being for the sake of mission. It is not possible to separate church and mission in terms of their origin or purpose. To fulfil God's missionary purpose is the church's aim. The relationship between church and mission is very intimate because the same Spirit of Christ who empowers the church in mission is also the life of the church.

Bevans and Schroeder (2004:10) state that the church can only be a church "as it understands and accepts mission anywhere and everywhere in the world". Given that the church is not buildings, but people (The Archbishop's Council 2004:32), mission neither only belongs to the church nor to ordained pastors and missionaries. It, as well, does not only mean missionary activities of the church within which it is developing systems and organisations and mobilising resources, but means the Eucharistic life of all the people of God by eating, becoming, and living out Jesus Christ anywhere and everywhere they are located following the guidance of the Holy Spirit (Shin 2009:289-292), who gives Christians courage to live their convictions, even in the face of persecution and martyrdom (WCC 2013:58).

A missional church can be defined as all kinds of efforts by all the people of God in terms of missional ecclesiology to restore the church's missionary essence also in the crises it is facing in a rapidly changing local context. Despite the difficulty of codifying the missional church due to its diversity and dynamics as a movement, the following outlines from the research of the five-year long missional journey of the twelve South African congregations collaborating in the South African Partnership for Missional Churches (SAPMC) make the definition more concrete:

- A missional church is a community of God's people that defines itself, and organises its life around its real purpose of being an agent of God's mission to the world. In other words, the church's true and authentic organising principle is mission (Hirch 2006:82).
- The church is understood as being a community of people discerning what

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God is actively doing in the world around them and then participating in God's work. It is about engaging God in the community through His Word (Niemandt 2010b:411).

- The church is a community gathered around Jesus Christ in order to participate in His life and incarnate it into the context in which He has placed them (Keel 2007:155). This also means that missional churches are deeply connected to the community. Wherever community members live their daily lives, they are learning the way in which to easily, naturally, and routinely embody, demonstrate, and announce God's life and reign for the sake of the world around them (Niemandt 2010b:411).
- The church is a community of people who look to discover what God is actively doing in the world, and then participate in God's work (Niemandt 2010b:411).

Other definitions of the missional church from scholars are as follows:

- The missional church is a reproducing community of authentic disciples, being equipped as missionaries sent by God, to live and proclaim His Kingdom in their world (Minatrea 2004:xvi).
- The missional church is a sent and a going church, a movement of God through His people, sent to bring healing to a broken world (Frost & Hirch 2013:34).
- The missional church is a church that is shaped by participating in God's mission, which is to set things right in a broken, sinful world, to redeem it, and to restore it to what God has always intended for the world (Barrett *et al*. 2004:x).
- The missional church is an alternative community, engaging with, but not conforming to, the surrounding cultures. It is conformed instead to Jesus Christ. It points to the reign of God, depending on God's action in the past, present, and future (Barrett 2006:183).

To understand the missional church movement more clearly, this research

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investigates the characteristics and trends of that movement and the background from where the movement was initiated.

1.3 Characteristics and trends of the missional church

In the radically changing context of the USA in the late 1980's, through a project research on the issue of "the possible shape and themes of a missiological ecclesiology for North America" (ed. Guder 1998:7-8) with the Gospel and Our Culture Network (GOCN), Guder (1998:11-12), emphasising the essential nature and vocation of the church as God's called and sent people, proposed the following five characteristics of a faithful missional ecclesiology:

- A missional ecclesiology is biblical. The biblical witness is appropriately received as the testimony to God's mission and the formation of God's missionary people to be the instruments and witnesses of that mission.
- A missional ecclesiology is historical. When it is being shaped for a particular culture, the historical development of other ecclesiologies must be taken into consideration. The missional ecclesiology is guided by the Christian church in all its cultural expressions as part of the catholicity of the church.
- A missional ecclesiology is contextual. All ecclesiologies function relative to their context. Their truth and faithfulness are related both to the gospel they proclaim and to the witness they foster in every culture.
- A missional ecclesiology is eschatological. The doctrine of the church must be developmental and dynamic in nature based on belief that the church is the work of the creating and inspiring Spirit of God and is moving toward God's promised consummation of all things.
- A missional ecclesiology can be practiced. It serves the church's witness as it carries out the Great Commission of Jesus Christ.

Since their first research project, the GOCN has fostered much research into cultural trends and the revisioning of a new missional approach to church, and as a result, they have produced the following twelve hallmarks of a missional church (Frost &

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Hirch 2013:25-26):

- The missional church proclaims the gospel.
- The missional church is a community where all members are involved in learning to become disciples of Jesus.
- The Bible is normative in this church's life.
- The church understands itself as different from the world because of its participation in the life, death, and resurrection of its Lord.
- The church seeks to discern God's specific missional vocation for the entire community and for all of its members.
- A missional community is indicated by how Christians behave toward one another.
- It is a community that practices reconciliation.
- People within the community hold themselves accountable to one another in love.
- The church practices hospitality.
- Worship is the central act by which the community celebrates with joy and thanksgiving both God's presence and God's promised future.
- This community has a vital public witness.
- There is recognition that the church itself is an incomplete expression of the reign of God.

Frost and Hirch (2013:25-26), in terms of ecclesiology, spirituality, and leadership, proposed three more overarching principles that give energy and direction to the above-mentioned marks. The three features they offered are as follows:

- The missional church is incarnational, not attractional, in its ecclesiology. Being incarnational, is the opposite of being attractional. It implies something of a Go-To-Them approach to mission and evangelism. Instead of asking non-Christians to Come-To-Us, to our services, our gatherings, and our programmes on our terms. The incarnational church seeks to

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infiltrate society to represent Christ in the world (Frost & Hirch 2013:62).

- The missional church is messianic, not dualistic, in its spirituality. It adopts the worldview and practices of Jesus the Messiah, rather than that of the Greco-Roman empire. Instead of seeing the world as divided between the sacred (religious) and profane (nonreligious), like Christ it sees the world and God's place in it as more holistic and integrated.

- The missional church adopts an apostolic, rather than a one-dimensional top-down, mode of leadership. Apostolic leadership means the fivefold model detailed by Paul in Ephesians. It abandons the triangular hierarchies of the traditional church and embraces a biblical, flatter leadership community that unleashes the gifts of evangelism, apostleship, and prophecy, as well as the currently popular pastoral and teaching gifts.

Since the ground-breaking publication of the GOCN in 1989, *Missional church: A vision for the sending of the church in North America*, from the beginning of year 2000, various discussions and research have been in progress as a number of books in relation to missional ecclesiology are being published (Frost & Hirch 2013:9-14). A report, *Mission-Shaped Church,* published by the Church of England in 2004 was one of them (Moynagh 2012:xii). In the report, many new church planting strategies called "fresh expressions" were addressed under the common recognition that the parish principle of the Anglican church is no longer adequate for the British context (The Archbishop's council 2004:xi). The report provided the following five values for a missionary church (The Archbishop's council 2004:81-82):

- A missionary church is focused on God the Trinity. Its chief inspiration and primary purpose is to love and know God as Father, Son and Spirit. It worships and serves a missionary God, and understands itself to share in the divine mission.

- The church is incarnational. It seeks to shape itself in relation to the culture in which it is located or to which it is called. The church evaluates itself in relation to the culture of the community it serves, and strips away whatever is not required by the gospel. It seeks to be responsive to the activity of the Spirit in its community.

- The church is transformational. It exists for the transformation of the

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community that it serves, through the power of the gospel and the Holy Spirit. It is not self-serving, self-seeking or self-focused. The kingdom of God is its goal, and the church is understood as a servant and sign of God's kingdom in its community.

- The church makes disciples. It is active in calling people to faith in Jesus Christ, and it is equally committed to the development of a consistent Christian lifestyle appropriate to, but not withdrawn from, the culture or cultures in which it operates. It engages with culture, but also presents a counter-cultural challenge by its corporate life based on the world view and values of the gospel. When reaching out to the people it identifies itself with them in all ways possible without compromising the truth of the gospel (Frost & Hirch 2013:57). The church encourages the gifting and vocation of all the people of God, and invests in the development of leaders.

- The church is relational. In a missionary church, a community of faith is being formed. It is characterised by welcome and hospitality. Its ethos and style are open to change when new members join. Believers are encouraged to establish interdependent relationships with fellow Christians as they grow into Christ.

In contrast to the preceding description of the characteristics of the missional church, Roxburgh and Boren (2009:31-34) try to explain it through 8 negatives, which provide the standard and the scope of the missional church to help discernment at a time when the characteristics of the missional church as a movement are increasingly varied and in flux. In their words, the missional church is not:

- a label to describe churches that emphasise cross-cultural missions. All Christians are missionaries. The senders and goers cannot be separated.

- focused on outreach programs. It does not divide between inside and outside. It avoids being programme-driven that objectifies people.

- another label for church growth and church effectiveness. Even if it has its own building, growing the size of the building is not its concern.

- a label for churches that is effective at evangelism. It focuses not on a private and individualistic conversion, but on inviting people to enter the kingdom of God.

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- a missional church because it has a mission statement or a clear definition of its purpose. Being missional is more than a mission statement.
- a way of reforming the ineffective denominational system.
- a movement to return to a primitive or ancient way of being the church as an ideal model of the church. The current context which is, not like the past, run by modern scientific civilisation must be considered.
- a new type of an attractional churches such as emergent and creative churches. Being missional is about forming missional life, which is more than being post-modernly attractional.

Among the wide range of discussions on the characteristics of the missional church, Niemandt (2012:2-8) listed 10 trends of the emerging missional ecclesiology through his research on three important ecumenical events of 2010: Edinburgh World Mission Conference 2010, World Communion of Reformed Churches and Lausanne Ⅲ:

- Participation in the life of the Trinity: Mission is an attribute of God the Trinity and the church participates in the mission of God called *missio Dei* to renew the whole of creation.
- Joining in with the Spirit: The church is the result of God's action through the power of the Spirit and the Spirit equips the church for the mission of transforming God's creation.
- Ecclesiology follows mission: The church has come into being as a result of mission. Thus, it is not the subject of mission but a privileged instrument.
- Incarnational or universal and contextual: The church needs to be contextualised and incarnational by listening to people and entering their culture, suffering alongside them to proclaim the gospel, which is a demonstration to the world of how the Almighty God took on the very nature of a servant.
- Relational: The church has to transmit its *koinonia* and love to the whole world by a communion of love because the relational nature of mission originated in the heart of the Triune God.

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- The kingdom of God: The church is the community through which the kingdom, which includes its present and eschatological meaning, is concretely manifested in history, the community of those who await the salvation of the *basileia*, to whom the gifts and powers of the *basileia* are granted and received to be the instruments of the *basileia* to proclaim Jesus as the Christ, to obey his commandments and perform the missionary task of preaching the gospel throughout the world.
- Discernment as the first act in mission: The church has to practice seeking the presence or movement of the Triune God in relationship with all of creation.
- Creativity: On account of the multifaceted characteristic of mission, the church needs help from creative thinking and ways, like of arts, apart from theories.
- Local community: The church is a missional community based on the level of a local community whereby the congregations witness to and participate in God's mission not only in their words, but also through their very lives.
- Ethics and mission: The church as a missionary institution must play their role as the light and salt for the community's ethics, especially as its counter cultural witness.

A wide variety of the characteristics of the missional church emerged from the fact that the missional church is an ongoing movement of the church in order to be living witnesses to the present and coming reign of God and, by being guided and empowered by the Holy Spirit, to re-envision God's mission which begins in the heart of the Triune God in a changing and diverse world today (WCC 2013:52). How the missional church movement developed these characteristics and trends from socio-cultural, historical, and theological points of view will be indicated.

1.4 The background of the missional church

1.4.1 Social and cultural background

As for the socio-cultural background of the missional church, many scholars have combined their opinions to the multiple facets of the problems confronting the present church. Guder (1998:2) states the reason for the research of the GOCN,

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which is the starting point of the missional church movement:

> The Christian church finds itself in a very different place in relation to its context. Rather than occupying a central and influential place, North American Christian churches are increasingly marginalized, so much so that in our urban areas they represent a minority movement. It is by now a truism to speak of North America as a mission field. Our concern is the way that the Christian churches are responding to this challenge.

According to Gibbs and Bolger (2005:17), the fundamental causes of the crises confronting the churches today can broadly be grouped under two headings: the transition from Christendom to post-Christendom and from modernity to postmodernity. Christendom provided institutional confidence and modernity provided an epistemological certainty based on foundationalism, but no more.

1.4.1.1 The transition from Christendom to Post-Christendom

Scholars disagree on the duration of this era, for example Frost and Hirch (2013:21) set the duration from around the eleventh century until the end of the twentieth century, Gibbs and Bolger (2005:17) describe Christendom as:

> Since the conversion of the Roman emperor Constantine in AD 313 until approximately the midpoint of the twentieth century, the church occupied a central position within Western societies. This extensive period is referred to as Christendom, during which the church provided both stability and security as a key social institution.

By the rise of the new era, Christianity turned from a persecuted minority faith to the official religion of the Roman Empire (Skead 2009:19). The church and the state became interdependent, to be called The Holy Roman Empire, during the Middle Ages (Frost & Hirch 2013:21). Guder (1998:6) described the partnership between the church and the state as a cultural hegemony in which Christianity was protected and

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privileged, and legally established with an institutional form. Due to the its connection with the state, Christendom often conceptualised the Christian church in territorial ways, which means its citizens grew up as Christians with the concept of Christianity as the normative expression of its religious faith, ethical action, and even world views (Tennent 2010:18-20). Frost and Hirch (2013:21) remark on this interdependence between church and state that it profoundly changed the social behaviour and religious patterning of Europe.

Bosch (1991:215-222) describes the characteristics of mission in the era of Christendom: 1) The individualisation of salvation, 2) The ecclesiasticalisation of salvation (*extra ecclesiam nulla salus*- "there is no salvation outside the Catholic Church"), 3) Mission between church and state with the *civitas terrena* (the earthly city) to be subservient to the *civitas Dei* (the city of God). All those characteristics collapsed during the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment attached supreme importance to reason and strictly distinguished between subject and object (Bosch 1991:269-270), which resulted in "the separation between fact and value" and the division between the private world and the public" according to Newbigin (1986:18). On account of these characteristics, the system of Christendom, which put faith before reason and intertwined church and state, was challenged, and the church's role was revised in this new world of science and reason (Bosch 1991:414-416).

Though the *corpus Christianum* collapsed through the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, and the legal structures of Christendom have been removed, the church is still greatly influenced by the legacy of it, by patterns of traditions, attitudes, and social structures, which are described as "functional Christendom" (ed. Guder 1998:6). Christendom still sees, mission as one of the many programmes of the church. Frost and Hirch (2013:22) state that "While in reality we are in a post-Christendom context, we still think of the church and its mission in terms of Christendom." The maladjustment of the church as mission caused its malfunction in modern societies. Gibbs and Bolger (2005:17) say that as the modern project continued to develop, the church increasingly occupies a place on the margins of society alongside other recreational and non-profit organisations. Roxburgh (1997:7-8) says that the 20th century witnessed the turning of the tables and saw Christians challenged to understand the meaning of their new social location in a decentred and pluralistic world.

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Frost and Hirch (2013:28) proclaim “The bankruptcy of Christendom”, saying “The church is in decline in almost every context in the First World.” Countries carrying out traditional missionary work under the Christendom concept of mission, which is “moving outward from its sending centre in the Western world to the unreached world” (Tennent 2010:16), have become the fields which need missionaries. Europe, the continent that served as the first base of the modern missionary movement, has become a new mission field (Padila 2013:149). What Tennent (2010:17) says exemplifies this. “The historic William Carey memorial church in Lester, England is now a Hindu temple, while the church in India, the traditional home of Hinduism, now sends out over 41,000 cross-cultural missionaries.” The WCC (2013:52) states:

> The history of Christian mission has been characterized by conceptions of geographical expansion from a Christian centre to the “un-reached territories”, to the ends of the earth. But today we are facing a radically changing ecclesial landscape described as “world Christianity” where the majority of Christians are either living, or have their origins in the global South and East.

Since classic distinction between domestic evangelism and foreign missions has collapsed, the mission field is now everywhere (Tennent 2010:24). In this falling of Christendom, re-conceptualisation of mission is required.

As for the Korean church, there has been no Christendom. It means that members of Korean society, as a multiple religious society, were never assumed to be Christian by birth rather than by choice. However, the call for the missional church in the Korean church has come from the same crisis awareness as the west.

In accordance with the Korean church future report in 2005, the number of Christians in Korea accounts for 21.6% of the whole population, and 43% of executives of listed enterprises are Christians. However, a report conducted by the Korea Gallup among 1,000 non-believers aged over 18 in the 6 largest cities in Korea (KFHI 2009:21), the answer to the question, “Does the Korean church do good relief and volunteer work for the society?”, 65% of interviewees reacted negatively. The church also lost the trust of society caused by the excessive competition among churches for growth,

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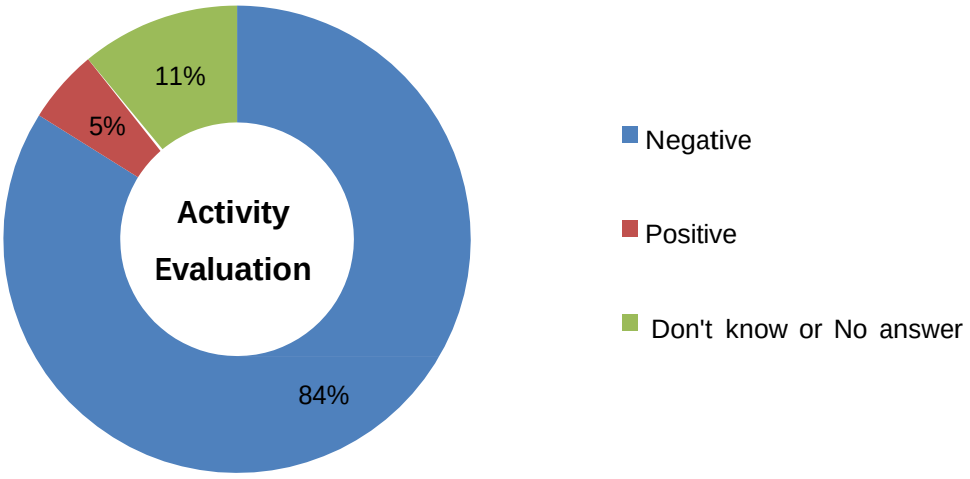
megachurch pastors' bad financial and sexual behaviour, and the discrepancy between Biblical knowledge and life. It effected a decline in the growth rate of the Christian population. The Korean church has been falling from one of the most influential religions in the society. Based on a survey conducted by the Korea Central Intelligence Agency in 2000 McGrath (2002:30) described the decline of the church in Korea from being "a Christian nation" to a marginalised religion that receives blame. A report of the Korea Gallup on the question, "How do you feel when Christians try to evangelize you?", clearly shows the current situation of the Korean church.

<Chart 3>



In this situation, interest in new concepts of the church and its mission is increasing. It is a breakthrough to improve the negative reputation of the Korean church and to overcome the slowdown of church growth.

1.4.1.2 The change from modernity to postmodernity

According to Stott (2007:13), "the prefix 'post' in the word does not simply mean 'after'. It rather hints at a protest against the Enlightenment years and the collapse of the intellectual and social edifices of modernism." A table which is made according to what Stott (2007:13) listed regarding modernism and postmodernism to recognise its diversity is helpful to see its characteristics and to compare and contrast each other.

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<Table 2>

	Modernism	Postmodernism
What does it proclaim?	The autonomy of the human reason in the cold objectivity of science	The warmth of subjective experience
What is the attitude to the truth?	Certainty is attainable	Pluralism; Tolerance is the supreme virtue
How does it say about Social progress?	Inevitable	Utopian dream
What does it pursue?	Self-centred individualism	The togetherness of community
How confident is it?	Supremely self-confident	Lacks confidence in anything

Grenz (1996:4) says that modernism elevated human freedom by removing all beliefs which curtailed man's autonomy based on external authority rather than on reason and experience; with epistemological assumptions, it assumed that knowledge is not only certain but also objective and inherently good, and is accessible to human understanding. Bosch (1991:349-351) says that though the modern era put not only science and technology but also the humanities including theology under the edifice of rationalism on the basis of the premise of the pre-eminence of reason, today it is extensively challenged and shaken at the foundation of science caused by the theory of relativity of Albert Einstein, and it became sceptical about human rationality caused by the first and second World War.

Scepticism about modernism called for postmodernism and caused its characteristics. As Bosch (1991:354) said, the merits of modernism should be defended and the demerits rejected. There is a paradigm shift, from modernism that trusts human reason and science, to postmodernism that admits the limitation of those. It can have both positive and negative effects on Christian mission. On the one hand, it opened the way for reconciliation between religion and science as objective rationality is expanded and subjective experience that is impossible to define, is included. The subject-object scheme, which caused natural destruction, is changing through materialism and the evolution theory to emphasis on togetherness and symbiosis. Optimism and progressivism based on confidence in human reason

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and the progress of technique was seriously challenged; Individualism which bore alienation of individuals moved to interdependence (Bosch 1991:351-362). On the other hand, pluralism and emphasis on subjective experience and tolerance are negative aspects to Christianity which places emphasis on exclusiveness and inalterability of the truth. For example, as Sproul (2000:131) stated, "Without an absolute ethical norm, morality is reduced to mere preference and the world is a jungle where might makes right." Focusing on relativism can cause malfunction of Christian ethics for the society. Wells (2006:409) refers to the negative aspects of postmodernism as:

> The bottom line for our modernised world is that there is no truth; the bottom line for Christian consciousness is precisely the opposite. The Christian predisposition is to believe in the kind of truth that is objective and public and that reflects ultimate reality cuts across the grain of what modernity considers plausible.

This relativistic characteristic of postmodernism regarding the truth is relevant to consumerism as well. As modern progressivism collapsed, the core value of society has moved from progress to choice. "Choice lies at the centre of consumerism, both as its emblem and as its core value" (Gabriel & Lang 2006:26). In this society everyone becomes a consumer and everything becomes a consumer choice, and religion is thus likely to be a matter of one's choice (The Archbishop's Council 2004:9-10). In this regard, consumerism affects the way people evaluate truth because "the way people think about shopping also becomes the way people think about truth" (The Archbishop's Council 2004:10).

1.4.1.3 Implications of socio-cultural change for the missional church and its characteristics

"The combined impact of the challenges to Christendom and modernity has profound implications for the church, the nature of its ministry, mission in the postmodern world." (Gibbs & Bolger 2005:18). In the process the church lost its position of privilege and that the position of Western mission agencies and missionaries was fundamentally revised in the traditional mission fields, a moratorium on missions was called for at a meeting of the World Council of

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Churches (WCC) in Bangkok in 1972 (Tennent 2010:26). In this situation, the questions, “How can the church try to rediscover the essence of its missionary nature and calling?” and “Can it respond creatively to the challenges it is encountering?” (Bosch 1991:365) challenged the church to an answer.

In order to answer these questions, there has been a growing understanding for the need of theological and strategic fresh approaches in mission and church planting (The Archbishop’s Council 2004:16). As for the theological fresh approaches, Carson (2005:48-49) says that the church should reconsider and re-engage with the fundamental missiological questions of how the church could successfully embody and communicate the gospel within a postmodern culture, in the context where the West re-emerged as a legitimate missionary field. As the position of the church has been re-located from the centre to the periphery, and from the privileged to the marginalised of society, an incarnational ministry of the church from the margins has been claimed on a biblical basis that “God chose the poor, the foolish and the powerless (1Cor 1:18-31) to further God’s mission of justice and peace so that life may flourish” (WCC 2013:52). McLaren (2004:282-283) quotes 1Corinthians 9:20-23 as the basis of an incarnational ministry, saying that “The gospel, the story of God’s becoming ‘one of us’ through incarnation, propels Paul on an incarnational ministry to become ‘one of them’, whoever ‘they’ are”.

Frost and Hirch (2013:36) insist that the church has to convert its “Come-To-Us” attractional mentality, which they identified as one of the Christendom church’s fundamental errors, to “Go-To-Them” mentality that Jesus, Paul, the disciples, the early church leaders all had. As for this, Kok and Niemandt (2009:6) also state:

> Ecclesiologically, we have to be incarnational instead of attractional: Jesus’ incarnational ethos results in the bringing of the presence of God into marginalised places or spaces where such presence is usually believed not to be found.

In trying to find expressions of the church that communicate with post-Christian people, and which enable them to become committed communities of followers of Jesus Christ, the Church of England has decided to aim at following the pattern of incarnation (The Archbishop’s Council 2004:12). To do this, the Anglican Church has drawn on contextualisation as a major resource because according to Frost and

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Hirch (2013:109), contextualisation:

> attempts to communicate the gospel in word and deed and to establish churches in ways that make sense to people within their local cultural context. It is primarily concerned with presenting Christianity in such a way that it meets people's deepest needs and penetrates their worldviews, thus allowing them to follow Christ and remain in their own cultures.

In the postmodern era that denies objective truth, and emphasises subjective individual experiences, Christians and the church, as a community striving to manifest the presence and characteristics of the divine reign as its sign and foretaste (ed. Guder 1998:101), should be the vehicle through which Christ preaches the good news of the kingdom because it is their daily lives that point to the reality of the kingdom (Skead 2009:79). Niemandt (2012:5) says that "although the church must not be equated with the kingdom, it cannot be separated from it either. The church lives and proclaims the gospel here and now and is both a sign and promise of the kingdom".

The church takes on a significant role as the salt and light of the world to reveal the hidden kingdom of God by living out the words and deeds of Jesus Christ. Hunsberger (ed. Guder 1998:102-109) characterises the church as a community, a servant, and a messenger of God's reign that is born to represent the divine ruling of God through its genuine discipleship and morality. To reveal God's reign, the church has to be inherently counter-cultural aiming at faithful Christian discipleship within the new context, rather than at cultural conformity (The Archbishop's Council 2004:xii-xiii).

As for the strategic fresh approaches in mission and church planting, there has been a wide diversity of fresh expressions of the church in relation to society. Bob Hopkins's working definition of church planting that is "creating new communities of Christian faith as part of the mission of God, to express His kingdom in every geographic and cultural context" (The Archbishop's Council 2004:29). There are some snapshot features of each type of expression of the church in the English context proposed by the Archbishop's Council (2004:43-80):

- Alternative worship communities: They are loose networks of groups which are trying to connect with churches. They have a passion to close the divide between the experience of the church and the rest of life by seeking to be

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responsive to post-modern culture using multi-media in their worship service.

- Base Ecclesial Communities (BECs): BECs originated in Latin America, and are now spread worldwide. BECs work for the people at the bottom or at the edges of society with a gospel of liberation.
- Café church: Though this expression of church is not common yet, it is an attempt to organise groups that seek to engage with a café culture. They prefer gathering around small tables rather than in pews; having interaction with refreshments rather than defending personal space.
- Cell church: It is based on the conviction that the small group is truly church. A typical cell meeting could express worship, word study, community and mission. It responds well to a culture and the missionary need of the non-churched.
- Churches arising out of community initiatives: These churches have developed through or out of local initiatives though those initiatives have not attempted to create a church. This expression of church is mostly found in areas where those called to mission engage with people experiencing significant needs in areas of social deprivation.
- Multiple and midweek congregations: It is offered to people from different cultures or sociological groups to be nourished and sustained within the same building.
- Network-focused churches: They are developed for mission to specific social and cultural groups in the belief that people connect most closely with people where they work or with whom they are at leisure, rather than with the people who happen to live nearby.
- School-based and school-linked congregations and churches: They began after-school groups that become church. They meet late afternoons during midweek in order to draw primary school children, parents of both sexes and grandparents.
- Seeker church: It attempts to design their worship and teaching for seekers, who have a little or no background in Christian worship, to feel comfortable.
- Traditional church planting: It is mostly conducted by the sending congregation for different reasons, such as that the ministry of the sending

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congregation did not reach them on account of its geography. It retains close links with the sending congregation, so that the financial operating costs would be covered by the sending church for a certain period of time.

- Traditional forms of church inspiring new interest: Some churches keep their heritage in liturgy and spirituality, and a sense of sacred stability for the people who are looking for mystery, beauty, stability and a sense of God's presence in a fast changing world.
- Youth congregations: They are congregations for youth, by youth.

In the Korean church, church planting is still centred on "church building", and geographical advantages and disadvantages are excessively considered though Korean society has already converted to a network society similar to English society (Pyo 2014). On account of the costly building-focused church planting tendency, the relationship between a planted church (a sent church) and a supporting church (a sending church) is more like the one of claimer-obligator rather than partners in mission to participate in God's mission. It focuses only on financial support rather than on ministerial support. The sending church usually do not have enough time to research the characteristics of the local people where it plans to plant the church, so that a fresh expression of church adapted to the local people cannot emerge. Large churches tend to plant cloned-churches that have the DNA of their mother churches, at a place where there are none of their church members, without considering local specialties (Kim 2014).

Suck-Hwan Sung (Lee 2014), the head of the Urban Community Research Institute, points out that "As for church planting, the Korean church does not carry out a fundamental project based on a theological insight of how the church of God should exist in this rapidly changing context, but not only to emphasize the technical and functional aspects of it." However, even in this situation fresh missional types of church planting have been experimented. Some churches have been formed in cafés, restaurants, company lounges, movie theatres, and libraries on Daehangno, a road located among many universities that are centres of culture and arts. A number of university students are involved (Pyo 2014).

Among churches in Daehagno, the Dongsoong Church with its more than 2,000 attendants, has an experimental project in partnership with two fresh expression types of churches located on Daehangno Road to carry out a local mission together

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(Sung 2014). One of the fresh expression type of church is the Beauty & the Cross Church that gathers in a café and pursues urban mission through culture and art based on the characteristics of where it is situated (Ryu 2012). The other church is the Jesus Dream Church which has a church service on Sundays and operates as a library named the Homo Bookers during the week for university students looking for good books and space to build relationships with others (The gospel and context 2011). During the first three months, the Dongsoong Church introduced the ministries of the two above mentioned churches to its congregation through lectures conducted by the senior pastors of the two churches. After that the Dongsoong Church let its members join the special ministries of the Beauty & the Cross Church and the Jesus Dream Church.

During the process of the project, about 10-20 members of Dongsoong per week were interested in each of the two missional churches' ministries and enthusiastically participated in those churches' programmes or ministries even after the project finished. Because of the experimental project of the Dongsoong Church, the news that there are special churches carrying out mission in unique ways spread in that region. The church members and local society reacted positively to the project and gave the Dongsoong Church a positive evaluation because it opened up to cooperate with the other churches (Sung 2014).

Sweet (2001:18-22), outlining three possible responses of the church to the tsunami-like tidal waves of change: 1) Deny the reality and significance of changes; 2) Accept its existence but choose to be nostalgic for the past and be timid for the future; 3) Not escape from it or mix with it but rather "learn its language, master its media, and engage it on a higher level." He urges the church not to sink but to swim by hoisting the sails to catch God's wave. Frost and Hirch (2013:20) say that the church has to question itself "What has God called us to be and do in our current context?" The answer of the church to this question is the missional church movement, indwelling in its context and its characteristics.

1.4.2 Historical background

To figure out the historical backdrop of the emergence of the missional church movement and its characteristics, the research on how the relationship between ecclesiology and missiology has been progressed throughout the history of the church is indispensable. This research will investigate the change of the church's understanding regarding mission in each period of the history of the church following

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Frost and Hirch's (2013:23) division: 1) Apostolic and Post-Apostolic mode (A.D.32 to 313); 2) Advance and Triumph of Christendom mode (A.D.313 to current); 3) The missional mode (past 20+ years), and the characteristics of its result.

1.4.2.1 Apostolic and post-apostolic mode (A.D.32 to 313)

After the resurrection and the ascension of Jesus Christ, the Jerusalem church had scattered under severe persecution. "Often their witness to Jesus resulted in martyrdom, but it also led to the spread of the faith and to the establishment of the church in every corner of the earth" (WCC 2013:10). The emergence of local churches which received the gospel and spread it where they were was a characteristic of the early church (Shin 2014).

Under the reign of the Roman Empire, the church had to pass through a long trial period experiencing the ten great persecutions for about 300 years. However the church kept growing as an active community living out the gospel, which is "being, doing, and saying as witness to the gospel" (Guder 2000:vii). In the end it became a state religion of the Empire. *Diognetos* Ⅴ (Goold & Lake 1975:358-361) offers a gripping depiction of the gospel being delivered through the life of the early church:

> For the distinction between Christians and other men, is neither in its country or language nor in its customs … They dwell in their own fatherlands, but as if sojourners in them; they share all things as citizens, and suffer all things as strangers. Every foreign country is their fatherland, and every fatherland is a foreign country. They marry as all men, they bear children, but they do not expose their offspring. They offer free hospitality, but guard their purity …

Schor (2009:478) says that it was not clerics but ordinary Christians who delivered the gospel by living out their teaching through charitable giving, mutual support and self-control. Shin (2009:290) says that it was the essence of the ecclesiology of the early church in the 2nd century that the teaching of Jesus could be delivered in the most wholly way when it became re-incarnated through bodies and lives of His disciples. The early church insisted on "The apostolic succession" standing against

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Gnosticism which separated spirit from body; that the example of Jesus was properly passed on to the church through the examples of faith and practice of the apostles and the church that preserved in faith and life (Shin 2009:290). As Lohfink (1984:176) pointed out, the early Christians believed that praxis is the strongest way to confirm and convince people about the excellence and superiority of the truth of Christ. Although "the ancient church had no structures and strategies for systematic missionary activity" (Lohfink 1984:177), it practiced the truth instead.

Niemandt (2010a:3-7), based on the research of Bevans & Schroeder in 2004, describes the characteristics of the early church when it was challenged to discern how best to live the gospel in its day and in its way through the following seven stages of mission in Acts:

- Stage 1: Before Pentecost (Acts1)

The disciples did not immediately start witnessing to Jesus in "Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth". After the ascension of Jesus, they returned to Jerusalem (Bevans & Schroeder 2004:15). In Jerusalem, the church waited on God first to discern "What is God doing?" and "Where is the Spirit moving?" rather than questioning "What should we do?" under apostolic leadership (that was Jesus' command, Ac 1:4-5). .

- Stage 2: Pentecost (Acts 2-5)

The church reframed the old order, Judaism, in the light of the new community's experience of the resurrection of Jesus. God's covenants had been fulfilled in Jesus, and Christ continued to be present in the world through his word and the Holy Spirit dwelling in the church and in each member of it.

- Stage 3: Stephen (Acts 6-7)

When the church was expanding, it caused conflicts in its growing linguistic, cultural and social diversity (Bevans & Schroeder 2004:18). As to the conflicts, the church practiced reconciliation, but also used conflicts to enrich discussion, whereby it could prove its identity to the world.

- Stage 4: Samaria and the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8)

In this stage, the church started covering the wider circle step by step from Jerusalem Jews to Samaritans and to a marginalised Gentile (Bevans & Schroeder 2004:22). The church crossed boundaries and welcomed the "Other",

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the “Stranger”, the “Marginalised” in the community by means of hospitality because it speaks louder than words.

- Stage 5: Cornelius and his household (Acts 10:1-11:18)

“With the baptism of Cornelius and his household, a redefinition of the religion itself is in process” (Bevans &Scroeder 2004:25). The church went beyond the re-forming of Judaism and its world view and moved on to conversion, thereby posing a challenge and a viable alternative to a multicultural world and society.

- Stage 6: Antioch (Acts 11:19-26)

As the climax of Luke, in this stage, the church prepared the way for the first real encounter of the Christian faith with the pagan world (Bevans & Scroeder 2004:25). When encountered, the church willingly gave up its old identity to overcome all kinds of barriers limiting its proclamation of the gospel for the sake of God. “The early Christians did not remain culturally static, but quickly translated the gospel out of the original language and culture of Jesus, as the Church was planted into non-Jewish cultures” (The Archbishop’s Council 2004:87), and as a result of it, they got a new self-understanding in dialogue called a prophetic dialogue.

- Stage 7: The mission to the Gentiles (Acts 12-28)

To carry out mission to the Gentiles, the church focused on its missional essence rather than a non-essential issue like circumcision though it was central to Israel’s identity as God’s covenant people. The church listened to the sound of the old, understood the present, and discerned how to live that old way in a new day to keep being missional.

As observed from afar, though, it was a marginalised community and not a well-organised institution, the early church and all its members were a missional community that asked for God’s guidance and discerned the leading and the working of God’s redemptive purposes within a particular context through the empowerment and teaching of the Spirit and was never scared to confront conflicts, even denying its cultural identity to participate fully in God’s mission, which Jesus identified as beginning with an announcement to the world of the forgiveness of sins by Jesus, through living out the words and deeds of Jesus. The early Christians saw their identity in relation to mission. There was no room for them to doubt that they were sent for Jesus’ mission. They were not the subject of mission, but the followers of the

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life of Christ Jesus. They were sincere missional instruments for the kingdom of God (Chung 2007:208). In this sense, the Archbishop's Council (2004:85) states:

> The church is both the fruit of God's mission – those whom he has redeemed, and the agent of his mission – the community through whom He acts for the world's redemption. The mission of the church is the gift of participating through the Holy Spirit in the Son's mission from the Father to the world. It is therefore of the essence of the church to be a missionary community.

Bosch (1991:390) says "there is church because there is mission, not *vice versa*", in the early church, mission and the church could not be separated and mission preceded the church.

1.4.2.2 Advance and triumph of Christendom mode (A.D.313 to current)

The energetic movement of the early church bore fruit as "the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved." (Ac 2:47). According to Dreyer (2012:4), by the year 350 AD there could have been as many as 15.8 million Christians within the Roman Empire and 33.9 million in the whole world. However, after the Milan edict in A.D 313, the church was not able to keep the purity of the gospel and its activeness, so that it spent a long time relying on institutions and systems in the form of Christendom.

Since the Nicene Creed and the Apostle's Creed confirmed five attributes of the church: Unity, Holiness, Universality, Apostleship, and the Communion of Saints, those attributes became the functional reality of the church from the fifth to the sixteenth centuries and came increasingly to be viewed as exclusive properties which the Roman Catholic Church alone possessed by being God's authority on earth (Van Gelder 2000:51-52). Mission, which was carried out in the early church through the incarnational life that all the believers lived out in the world as salt and light was perceived. But as the church became institutionalised and the sacred and profane spaces were strictly separated, people were attracted to the church by its power and influence (Frost & Hirch 2013:20-22). Bosch (1991:193) says that the church had had some success among the upper classes in the early years when it

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was not a bearer of culture and was mocked by the vast majority of the cultured citizens of the Empire. But it began to be a bearer of culture and a civilising presence in society. Mission became identical to the spread of culture from the superior to the inferior (Bosch 1991:201). The perception that mission can only be done by the powerful to the powerless, by the rich to the poor, or by the privileged to the marginalised took a deep and strong root (WCC 2013:59).

Although the reformation was able to reform the church's Oneness, Holiness, and Catholicity out of four attributes of the Nicene Creed by *sola gratia*, *sola fide*, *sola scriptura*, and by the marks of the church which are the pure gospel, the holy sacraments, and the exercise of discipline, it could not reform the Apostolate (Bosch 1991:248-249). Van Gelder (2000:55) explains that it was because "the Roman Church used the apostolic attribute primarily to legitimize the office of the bishop and the role of the pope based on the authority given to Peter and the other apostles." The apostolic attribute of the church, which is "being sent by God to the world to participate in God's mission", was ignored as the reformers operated the state churches following the way of Constantine (Van Gelder 2000:55). Even though the concept of the priesthood of all believers fought against the hierarchical structure of the Roman Catholic church, which separates priest and laity, it was focused on individual holiness (Van Gelder 2000:56) rather than on the function the priests should play between God and His people (Frost & Hirch 2013:38). In the Reformation era, in which the attributes of the church, one, holy, and catholic were stressed, more than being apostolic, the focus was on who is "ministering the means of grace through preaching and sacraments.", and in the end confined mission to evangelising activities carried out by the institutional church (missions of the church) (Van Gelder 2000:55-58).

Mission in the era of the Protestant Reformation which was still strongly affected by Medieval Christendom in terms of relations between church and state was led to be conceived as a concomitant of the Western imperial outreach (Bosch 1991:274). The church and mission in the era of the Enlightenment following the Reformation were characterised by individualism (individual salvation), separation between the sacred and the secular caused by a strict division between the state and religion, progressivism through the influence of the enlightenment.

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Mission in the period of the Enlightenment expanded to the world mission movement conducted by a number of para-churches as well as churches. It was due to the influence of the first and second Awakening, the emphasis on the impending apocalypse and urgency of world evangelisation caused by pre-millennialism of revivalists like Dwight L. Moody (Bosch 1991:315-317). The Student Volunteer Movement was launched in 1886 with the famous slogan, "The evangelization of the world in this generation." Within 5 years 6,200 students from 352 schools in the USA and Canada volunteered as missionaries and devoted their lives to world evangelisation (Chung 2007:186).

The world mission movement was connected to the first world missionary conference held in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1910. Through the fact that only 17 representatives from non-Western nations participated in that conference and the foundation of mission was set on Christology on the basis of "the Great Commission" according to the assertion of William Carey in the 18th century and Gustav Warneck in the 19th century (Kim 1999:420), it can be said that mission was still centred around the West until the beginning of the 20th century, and it was of "the church as conqueror of the world" (Bosch 1991:377) in its progress.

During medieval times, mission had degenerated into one of the programmes of the established church. The church should be the subject of mission but it preceded mission. The mission of the church has lost its natural characteristic as an agent participating in the ministries of the missionary God and remained only with its functional characteristic as a missionary entrepreneur. With regard to this, the Archbishop's Council (2004:33) says:

> Radically speaking, the word *ekklesia* has been wrongly interpreted to mean simply 'congregation', so that church attendance has replaced discipleship, membership has replaced community, and internal functions have been prioritised over both evangelism and social involvement… The church should be the embodiment of the patterns and priorities of the New Testament, lived out in our mission context.

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1.4.2.3 The missional mode (past 20+ years)

The outbreak of the First and the Second World Wars thoroughly shook Western civilisation. Scientific technology and industrialisation lost its attraction; the belief that the golden age of the millennial kingdom should be built through the reason of mankind collapsed. Crisis awareness in those years had had a profound and lasting influence on theological thinking (Bosch 1991:363), so that it called for the emerging of new concepts of the church and mission. The understanding about the relationship between mission and the church as conqueror of the world was challenged because of the guilty conscience of Western Christianity on what they had done to the non-Christian world such as colonisation and the World Wars (Bae 2011).

After the First World War, in the beginning of 1930s, Karl Barth and Karl Hartenstein became initiators to articulate mission, not in the context of ecclesiology or soteriology, but in the context of the doctrine of the Trinity (Bosch 1991:389-390). In the IMC held at Willingen in 1952, which was opened under post Second World War conditions, and having lost the biggest mission field by mission failure in China which became communist, the term "*missio Dei*" was first used by Karl Hartenstein (Chung 2007:192-194). Hartenstein (1952:62) clearly described the source of mission as the Trinitarian God Himself, and the goal of it as sending the Son for reconciliation of all things by the power of the Spirit.

Rosin (1972:5) says that the biggest fruit of the Willingen IMC was to clarify the fact that mission is based on the Trinitarian God. The church is no longer the subject of mission, but the instrument of a missionary God. The new understanding about the relationship between mission and the Trinitarian God made the church and missionary organisations reconsider the various missions they had been carrying out. Because mission originated from the Triune God meant the missions that the churches and mission bodies had focused on could differ from the mission of God (Chung 2007:192). In this regard, Neill (1964:571) said that "The age of missions is at an end. The age of mission has begun."

Meanwhile, as the era of modernism which was characterised by trust in science and reason ended with the World Wars, the postmodern era had begun, characterised by

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the denial of existing authorities including truth. Leslie Newbigin thoroughly experienced the situation when church and mission were thrown into the postmodern era. Born in Scotland in 1909, and worked as a missionary in Madurai of South India from 1947 to 1959 (Kim 1999:48), he was shocked when he came back from India and realised that England had turned from a sending country to a mission field, so that he started research on the Western church from a new perspective (Shin 2014).

Newbigin, who worked for the IMC as the last secretary in 1959 and as the first director after the IMC was incorporated in the WCC in 1961, developed the concept of the mission of God after the Willingen IMC (Kim 1999:48) in the sense that mission and unity belong together, and thus mission and church can come together because the church is called to be an inclusive community, baptised by the one Spirit (WCC 2013:64). He insisted on spreading a holistic gospel to the world through the unity and agreement of the church emphasising the sovereignty of God (Newbigin 1963:31-51). It is because, in his understanding, in a postmodern context, the church should live out its faith in community through word and deed and in its very being in order to witness to and give the pluralistic and broken world a foretaste of the coming reign of God (WCC 2013:64).

Therefore, it can be said that the *missio Dei* and the Triune God centric mission emerged in the pluralised post-Christendom where Christianity is no longer the mainstream in the West. The Occident no longer the centre of mission, and absolute truth lost its power in the postmodern era. With the influence of Newbigin, North America began to recognise that they are a mission field in the post-Christendom of the postmodern era (Guder 2000:xi). Scholars like Hunsberger, Guder, Roxburgh, and Van Gelder initiated a ministry called the Gospel and Our Culture Network (GOCN) in the late 1980's (Lee 2012:52). They started analysing the reasons and processes why and how the church had lost its missionary nature, which they found to be permeated with individualism and commercialism (Roxburgh & Borren 2009:9).

In the process of the analysis, they realised that it was time for the church to recover its identity as shaped by the Triune God. They tried to set a direction to go by, likening the situation of the Western church of today to that of the early church (Skead 2009:36) and began to introduce the concept of the *missio Dei* to the

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churches in the USA as the mission field, in order to regain the dynamic missional life of the early church and its characteristics. Theologically, the missional ecclesiology which focused on the indispensable role of the church for the mission of God has been flourished by missional conversation among scholars (Choi 2011:246). Scholars who belonged to the GOCN coined a new term, "missional church", for the churches in the North America (ed. Guder 1998:3). All scholars who belonged to the missional church movement insisted on a new perspective on the church from "a sending church" of the traditional view to "a sent church". Frost and Hirch (2013:34) say:

> The missional church, then, is a sent church. It is a going church, a movement of God through His people, sent to bring healing to a broken world. North America is as much a mission field as any other nation or people group on the face of the earth.

In the Korean church, the missional church movement is still in the primary stage both in its theoretical and practical aspects (Lee 2012:54). The theoretical aspect of the missional church can be found first in the writing of Hyung Geun Choi Ph.D. of the Seoul Theological University in the late 2003. Choi (2003:27), on the basis of the critical view of Newbigin and Hiebert on the Western church, insists on a biblical missional church as an alternative for the Korean church which has emphasised individual salvation and regarded mission as one of the programmes of the church. Since Choi's introductory work, several books of scholars that belong to the GOCN have been translated into Korean, for example Guder's *The Continuing Conversion of the Church* translated in 2005 and Frost and Hirch's *The Shaping of Things to Come* translated in 2009, and thus theoretical research on the missional church has been facilitated.

Kuk Il Han's Ph.D. presented practical examples of missional churches in the Korean context as well as introducing a missional ecclesiology at Hope Theology Forum held in the Presbyterian University and Theological Seminary in 2011. On the basis of his personal visit and research on the small local churches, Han (2011:12-17) introduced three Korean missional churches: Yong-Hak Church in Asan, Sung-Kwang Church in Wando, and Hannam Jae-Il Church in Seoul. According to Han's

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presentation, all the missional churches he found tried to discern first what God is doing in their local communities and did their best to serve and satisfy the necessities of the communities. Among the large churches, Onnuri Church proclaimed that it would convert from a mission-oriented church to a missional church when celebrating the 25th anniversary of its foundation in 2010. The senior pastor, Yong-Jo Ha, implied that the church would build the missional church in the same vein as the GOCN by intentionally mentioning “missional church” (The Kukmin Daily 24 September 2010:38).

The Onnuri Church dedicated itself to world evangelisation according to the great commission in Mt 28:19-20. To do that, it concentrated on foreign mission by sending 2,000 missionaries abroad following its vision called “Acts 29”. However, as its social influence increased because of its size, the Onnuri Church had a calling as a church sent by God to be a model of a healthy and well-balanced gospel to the world. Since the senior pastor declared it to be a missional church, the church has emphasised the “missionary spirit” that all members should live out the words and deeds of Jesus as disciples sent to the world. The church has many compassion ministries like running welfare facilities to satisfy the necessities of the local community. The Onnuri Church describes its ultimate aim of mission as “holistic salvation” that the will of God will be done by the whole area and its entire people (Cho 2014). Although it is true that the characteristic of the Korean church as an individual pastor-centric church is revealed by the declaration of such an important decision by the senior pastor, it was a proclamation from “the church gathered” to “the church scattered” in the context of the competition among the Korean churches that has been soaked in the ideology of church growth (Lee 2012:64).

Lee (2012:65-68) proposes four guidelines to ensure that missional ecclesiology will not disappear as a short time trend, but will restore the essence of the church and fulfil the mission of God: 1) Missional church theorists in America are attempting public approaches by running websites, but more diverse ways need to be explored in the Korean context for their churches to be missional. 2) A network for solidarity and sharing information is necessary among the participants of the missional church movement. 3) For the acceptance and proper development of missional ecclesiology, a clear concept of it and its content must first be introduced, and all kinds of practices and applications of it in the Korean church need to be shared together. 4)

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The historical, political, economic, cultural, and religious situation of Korea must be thoroughly considered in the early stages of the forming of a missional ecclesiology.

The missional church movement is not a church enhancing programme but a church reforming movement to restore its missional nature. It has been attempted continuously by a number of scholars and practitioners since it was recognised that the church deviated from the way God is going. Although the missional church movement is not a movement to go back to the early church which lived in a different context in the Roman Empire. But, although they did not embrace its culture, they exercised influence on it. The missional church movement emerged as an ongoing pilgrimage for the restoration of the essence of the church (Guder 2000:x), which is an active missional community that is not mixed with the spirit of the age but stands against it to convert it with an understanding of the culture of the age.

1.4.3 Theological background

Shenk (1995:47) says "the church's normal relationship to every culture is that of missionary encounter." Many missiologists agree that the missional church movement is the encounter of the *missio Dei* with postmodernism. Guder (1998:8) clarifies it that missional ecclesiology emerged when the mission theologians, who "accepted the definition of the church as God's instrument for God's mission", gathered and researched on "what is the possible shape of missiology?" in the awareness of the crisis of the churches in the North American culture. Barrett (2006:180) says "Missional church theology sees the church as participating in the *missio Dei*." To understand the missional church movement more clearly requires study of the mission of God, its definition, scriptural references and scope, as theological background.

1.4.3.1 Definition of the *missio Dei* and the place of the church in it

According to Moreau (2000:631), "the *missio Dei*", is a Latin expression, literally meaning "the sending of God". Nevertheless, Rosin (1972:1-2) insisted that *missio Dei* should be translated as "God's mission" or "the mission of God" rather than "the sending of God". This is because God's sending is itself His mission to save all the creatures He Himself created but became evil. According to Engelsviken (2009:483), God is both the sender and the one being sent. As for God the sender, he quotes

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Vicedom (1965:9) that God's saving works for man and the world are throughout the Bible described as "sending".

If God did not send His Son, the Holy Spirit, His words, the prophets, and everything needed for man's salvation, man could never be saved to obey and worship God. The Triune God is a sending God and the God who reveals Himself in the sending of his church. Vicedom (1965:10) says "God is always present in this sending. Sending is therefore an expression of His presence at work in judgment and grace. Thus the *missio* becomes a testimony to His deity."

In the meantime, the Trinitarian God is not only sending, but also being sent. God's one and only Son, Jesus Christ, was willing to be sent to this lowly world and started his redemptive history. The Holy Spirit was also sent to this world like the blowing of a violent wind (Ac 2:2) according to Christ's promise and has been carrying out the ministry of salvation relentlessly since then. Vicedom (1965:8) says "God sends His Son, Father and Son send the Holy Spirit. Here God makes Himself not only the One sent, but at the same time the content of the sending." The Triune God started His mission by sending and being sent, and is fulfilling it, and will complete it in the end (Chung 2012:190).

Goodall (1953:189) clearly reveals the source and purpose of mission through the mission of God against the existing church-centric missions as follows:

> The missionary movement of which we are part has its source in the Triune God Himself. Out of the depths of His love for us, the Father has sent forth His beloved Son to reconcile all things to Himself, that we and all men might, through the Spirit, be made one in Him with the Father, in that perfect love which is the very nature of God.

Van Gelder (2007:18) describes the identity of the church in the sense of the *missio Dei* that "God as creating God also creates the church through the Spirit, who calls, gathers, and sends the church into the world to participate in God's mission". With regard to this, the WCC (2013:9) states:

> The Holy Spirit came upon the disciples on the morning of Pentecost for the purpose of equipping them to begin the mission entrusted to them… God's plan to save the world (sometimes referred to with the Latin expression *missio*

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> *Dei* or "the mission of God"), is carried out through the sending of the Son and the Holy Spirit. This saving activity of the Holy Trinity is essential to an adequate understanding of the Church.

If mission is an attribute of God coming out from within God Himself, the church must be missional because it derives from the missionary Triune God. Thus, all the people of God who were called to the church must be missional. As for the scope of the church which participates in the mission of God, Clapp (1996:109) has written:

> God the Father and God the Son are not fundamentally known privately and ethereally. They are instead encountered through a holy people, a community set apart, a light to the world, a city on a hill, a tribe bearing promise to all other tribes. Christians are inescapably called to the corporate witnessing of the coming of God's kingdom in Jesus Christ.

When the church is the subject of mission, mission is just one of many other programmes of the church (mostly being pushed back in its priority), but when the missionary God is the subject of mission, mission is the essence of the church and all its members have to be missionaries. The new perspective on God as the acting subject in mission has had great influence on the understanding of the mutual relations between ecclesiology and mission. Through the concept of the mission of God, many scholars began to consider mission as the most important element when defining the church, and going further, they concluded that mission precedes the church and the church is the result of mission. Barrett (2006:183) states that "God's mission creates the church and gives the church its reason for being."

The mission of God can be defined as the ministry of the Triune God who sends the church to the world and works through it by the Spirit as He sent His Son to the world in order to save all the creatures He created. Mission is the very nature of the Trinitarian God and He is the subject of mission. Because mission derives from the Triune God, and because the church naturally comes into the world through the mission of the Trinitarian God, all local churches must be missional and participate in His mission as "a tool of God, the instrument through which God carries out His mission" (Vicedom 1965:6). The missional church places its participation in the mission of God as its top priority. The missional church begins in "the heart of the Triune God and the love which binds together the Holy Trinity overflows to all humanity and creation" (WCC 2013:52). Therefore all members of the church should

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realise that they are being sent to the world by a missionary God (Chung 2012:207).

1.4.3.2 Scriptural references of the *missio Dei*

A full diachronic survey of the whole of Scripture will not be feasible, but a limited synchronic look at several relevant passages will be dealt with.

"As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." (Jn 20:21) is a crucial scriptural reference of what the *missio Dei* is and how God does His mission (Goheen 2000:43). "As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world." (Jn 17:18) in the high priestly prayer represents, in relation to John 20:21, both God's missionary nature (sending and being sent) and the church sent by the Trinitarian God (Mitchell 2008:35). The missionary Father sends his missionary Son and the Father and the Son send the missionary Spirit as written "When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, He will testify about Me." (Jn14:26). In this Trinitarian origin, the church is sent for His mission. Thus, mission is God's divine nature and He is the subject of mission while the church is the direct object of God's mission and inherently missional for the world that is the indirect object of God's mission (Mitchell 2008:18). That the missionary nature of the church is not to be the sender, but the one sent, can be found in 1 Peter 2:9 (Bosch 1991:372).

The reason the Father sent His Son is: "For God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten Son…" (Jn 3:16a) (WCC 2013:38). Bosch (1991:392) states that "Mission has its origin in the heart of God. God is a fountain of sending love. This is the deepest source of mission. It is impossible to penetrate deeper still; there is mission because God loves people." Therefore, "To participate in mission is to participate in the movement of God's love toward people." (Bosch 1991:390). Newbigin (1995:65) argues that the Trinitarian sending is often explicitly linked with the Kingdom of God, saying that "By obediently following where the Spirit leads, often in ways neither planned, known, nor understood, the church acts out the hope that it is given by the presence of the Spirit who is the living foretaste of the kingdom."

Wright (2006:425-428) argues that the church has to recover the *imago Dei* according to Genesis 1:26-28, fallen in sin, in order to restore the kingdom of God. The restoration of the kingdom of God, Wright suggests, is: to recover the social relationship (Created in relationship) and to rule the world as kings (Created for a task) following God the King, reflecting the character and values of God's own

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kingship, which is “not tyranny or arbitrary manipulation and exploitation of subjects, but a rule governed by justice, mercy and true concern for the welfare of all” (Murray 1992:98). Shin (2009:148-153) states that, the ruling order of the kingdom of God is naming and serving. Naming means not dictatorial reigning, but ruling in love, watching over and looking after. Serving means man serves the earth and all creatures as God is the King but humbled Himself (withdrawal or self-limitation) and entrusted man with the ruling authority. God serves man, and man serves the world.

The missionary God has been fulfilling His mission through the mission of His people, and will continue fulfilling it. When God called Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3, He wanted Abraham, as the blessed one in terms of the Goodness of creation, hope and salvation, to be a blessing for the world (Wright 2010:66-70). Therefore, the church, as descendants of Abraham, who believe in Jesus as Messiah and saviour, does “not only share in the blessing of Abraham, but are commissioned to spread the blessing of Abraham.” (Wright 2010:72). This becomes clearer in Exodus 19:4-6. God wants His people to remember the grace of salvation freely given to them (Verse 4) and to be priests (verse 6) whose job is “to bring God to the people and bring the people to God” for all nations (Wright 2010:116-126).

The restoration of the kingdom of God is fully achieved by Jesus Christ, the second Adam, Romans 5:12-21 (The Archbishop’s Council 2004:93) due to the failure of the first Adam and of Israel. Jesus said "I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God" (Lk 4:43). “Jesus proclaims that the kingdom is present and is also coming” (Guder 2000:36). On the one hand, Jesus proved that his coming should be interpreted as fulfillment through his words and deeds. After having cast out demons He said “the kingdom of God has come to you” (Lk 11:20). On the other hand, when his disciples asked him to teach them how to pray, He taught them to pray: “Your kingdom come” (Mt 6:10; Lk 11:2) (Guder 2000:36).

Guder (1998:4) says that the mission of God “reached its revelatory climax in the incarnation of God’s work of salvation in Jesus ministering, crucified, and resurrected." The public life of Jesus Christ represented God’s ruling by naming (love) and serving (delegation in humbleness) that achieved restoration through Him. Therefore, the church has to witness to God’s present and coming kingdom with its words and deeds until the second coming of Jesus Christ.

The church has to participate in the mission of God by following Jesus Christ who

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restored the rule of God, as Bosch (1991:391) explains:

> Our missionary activities are only authentic insofar as they reflect participation in the mission of God… The primary purpose of the *missiones ecclesiae* can therefore not simply be the planting of churches or the saving of souls; rather, it has to be service to the *missio Dei*, representing God in and over against the world, pointing to God, holding up the God-child before the eyes of the world in a ceaseless celebration of the Feast of the Epiphany.

The mission of God, as the emanation of His nature, is an on-going process to recover the reign of God through the church - the people of God. Therefore, mission cannot be imperialistic church-centred with its institutional structure and financial power; rather, the mission of all God's people should follow the way of Jesus Christ which is the best model for missionary activity (Gibbs & Bolger 2005:62).

Glasser (2003:12) emphasises that all Christians on earth have to follow the mission of Jesus in their mission activity as follows:

> Our mission is none other, no more nor less, than participation in Jesus' mission. To taste it negatively, when it is not Christ's mission, it may be colonial expansion, church extension, proselytism, or social services - but it is not mission. Our mission is biblical mission only when it is centred in Jesus Christ.

1.4.3.3 The Scope of the *missio Dei*

Bosch (1991:389) insists that the *missio Dei* is the concept that brought the most decisive shift toward understanding mission during the past half a century. However, he also points out that the *missio Dei* has been unfolded in a different way from the intentions of the ones who first used the term (Bosch 1991:392).

When Hartenstein coined the term, the *missio Dei*, in his report to the Willingen IMC, he explained it as follows:

> Mission is not just the conversion of the individual, nor just obedience to the word of the Lord, nor just the obligation to gather the church. It is the taking part in the sending of the Son, the *missio Dei*, with the holistic aim of establishing Christ's rule over all redeemed creation (Engelsviken 2009:482).

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When advocating the *missio Dei*, Hartenstein had both an eschatological perspective, which understands mission as activities presenting the reign of God in a corrupt world, and a redemptive historical perspective which interprets mission as the work out of God's historical redemptive plan (Kim 2001:136).

On the contrary, Hoekendijk (1967:19-20) regarded the purpose of mission as establishing "Shalom". He understood "Shalom" as social events among and along with people such as peace, integrity, community, harmony, and justice. He thought that the church could participate in the kingdom of God by building the Shalom, and for this reason, the church existed. Through his understanding about Shalom, it can be clear that he emphasised the mission of God in terms of an eschatological perspective especially the present eschatological perspective (Ahn 2004:340).

Engelsviken (2009:483) points out that "the differences in the understanding of *missio Dei* correspond with differences in the understanding of the kingdom of God." According to Engelsviken (2009:483-484), the two major concepts of the kingdom of God can briefly be sorted into 1) The reign of God over the whole of creation (sometimes including redemption) and 2) The present and final salvation that God offers in Christ (sometimes including ethical and social transformation).

In the former understanding, the kingdom may be seen as

- Universal, relatively independent of the church, primarily ethical
- An object of faith and hope in the present
- Something to be fully empirically realised in this world only in the future

Thus its growth includes all of history and its realisation is often seen as taking place primarily in the social and political realm.

In the latter understanding, the kingdom

- Is restricted to salvation history
- Is the realm where salvation is found, through faith in Christ and participation in his church
- Is primarily a future eschatological reality, to be equated with eternal life, in a new perfect creation
- Does not deny that God is the ruler of all the world, but sees this in terms of creation and preservation rather than in terms of the kingdom of God
- Does not exclude the ethical or present aspects of the kingdom, but it emphasises that it is through the church and its mission that the peace

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and justice of the kingdom are worked out

Depending on the different understandings about the kingdom of God, the role of the church in the mission of God can be differentiated as “a witness to or a participant in the realization of the kingdom, not as the primary or sole actor” (the former understanding) and “God’s main instrument to serve the world in both through personal service and through social and political action” (the latter understanding) (Engelsviken 2009:483).

In the present eschatological understanding of the *missio Dei*, Hoekendijk (1952:324-336) insisted that the church can never be the subject of the mission of God because it is too deep and wide to measure, and going further, he argued that the church has no need of the mission of God. In relation to this, Shivute (1980:194) evaluates Hoekendijk’s theology as “Non-church theology”. Hoekendijk pointed out that the church has to come out from its churchism and be opened to mobile groups, secularised, and fully identified with the people in the world. In accordance with Hoekendijk, the mission of God is not a mission which starts from the church as a community called by God, but starts from the world to which the church was sent, and at this point, the traditional premise, the order of “God-the church-the world”, changed into “God-the world-the church” (WCC 1968:16-17).

The understanding of the mission of God as mentioned above has significance in terms of reforming the attitude of the church toward mission, awakening responsibility of the church toward the world, and broadening the concept of mission (Ahn 2004:344-345). However, as it can be seen from the Uppsala WCC in 1968 in which Hoekendijk’s understanding of Shalom was interpreted as “humanisation” (Goodall 1968:27-29), the *missio Dei* as Shalom has brought some side effects such as an overemphasis on social and political meanings of Shalom without reconciliation with God first, weakening of the church, the possibility of confusion about God’s activity caused by fully identifying secular history with redemptive history (Ahn 2004:345-346). Scherer criticised “Hoekendijk’s reflections that went far beyond the challenge to church parochialism and self-sufficiency; they implied a quite new, unhistorical, and methodologically unclear model for Christian mission” (ed. Scherer 1987:55).

There have been many groups of people who agree with Hoekendijk’s understanding

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of the *missio Dei*, which later on became the view of the WCC on the relationship between the church and mission (Ahn 2004:342). However, according to the 10th WCC held in Busan in 2013, the WCC found a balance in its interpretation of the *missio Dei*. In accordance with the WCC (2013:8-13), the relationship between mission and the church based on the *missio Dei* is as follows:

> The Christian understanding of the Church and its mission is rooted in the vision of God's great design for all creation: The "kingdom" which was both promised by and manifested in Jesus Christ. According to the Bible, man and woman were created in God's image… At the heart of the Church's vocation in the world is the proclamation of the kingdom of God inaugurated in Jesus the Lord, crucified and risen… As a divinely established communion, the Church belongs to God and does not exist for itself. It is by its very nature missionary, called and sent to witness in its own life to that communion which God intends for all humanity and for all creation in the kingdom.

The scope of the *missio Dei* in this research supports the *missio Dei* interpreted in balance between the soteriological and the eschatological understanding of the kingdom of God, which was initiated by Hartenstein and proclaimed by the WCC.

The characteristics of the *missio Dei* such as the Trinitarian mission of sending and being sent and restoring the kingdom of God represent the missionary nature of the church (Guder 2000:ix) and all its members as the instrument of God who is the acting subject in mission, as well as that the church has to participate in the *missio Dei* by living out the life of witnessing to the kingdom of God following the model of Jesus Christ. This view of the *missio Dei* is the background of the missional church movement and its characteristics

1.5 Conclusion

The definition of a missional church as a movement, its characteristics, and the background where those characteristics come from have been observed thus far. The missional church is not another programme for the church's numerical growth, but an on-going movement for the reformation of the church and restoration of its missional essence, based on the concept of "*ecclesia semper reformanda debet*", that is, the church always needs reformation. (Tennent 2010:433).

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The missional church finds its ground for the reformation of the church and restoration of its missional nature from the *missio Dei*, "which uses a Trinitarian understanding of the divine reality" (Niemandt 2012:2). In the concept of the *missio Dei*, mission is God's attribute and He is the subject of mission. Therefore, the church and all its members being sent by the missionary God to the world must be missional and participate in the mission of God not as the subject but as an instrument. In this sense, being a missional church neither means producing some outstanding missionaries from each local church nor spending some portion of the church's budget on doing missionary work. In the missional church, all members of the church are missionaries. They should go out to the world every day and live out a missional life, proclaiming the kingdom of God through their words and deeds, following the model of Jesus Christ.

In the light of the *missio Dei*, the missional church movement can be summed up with the five W's and one H: 1) Who? Not only clergy, but also the laity, 2) Where? All the local places the church is confronting, 3) What? The restoration of the kingdom of God through Jesus Christ in terms of His reigning with naming, serving, and building relationships, 4) When? All the time until the second coming of Jesus Christ, 5) Why? It is the essence and purpose of the church, derived from the missionary God, 6) How? Through missional life by words and deeds as Jesus did.

This can be seen in the characteristics of the early church although it was in a different context. To them participating in the mission of God was the only reason for the church to exist, as Campbell (1999:118) pointed out "The disciples were expected to continue the ministry of Jesus, in the same pattern as Jesus. They were given no other option". As Guder (Barrett *et al*. 2004:61) says:

> The first Christian communities shared the conviction that they existed for Christ's mission … They understood that they were to live their life together "worthy of the calling to which they had been called"… Their calling was to "be my witnesses"… To use a contemporary expression, they understood themselves to be "missionary by their very nature."

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The life of the early Christian was a missional life to participate in the *missio Dei*, which was fully embodied in the mission of Jesus, and the early church itself was a missional movement. Participating in the mission of God by the early church, however, changed into an imperialistic church-oriented mission through the medieval period and the Enlightenment ever since the official recognition of Christianity by Constantine. The church and its mission have been content with Christendom, but confronted serious challenges passing through the two World Wars. Under the condition of a changing society (post-modernism) and a changing worldview (post-Christendom), which European and American churches are experiencing (also the Korean church in terms of characteristics of the crisis), the church has lost its former position and has been marginalised. The church in crisis has applied the concept of the *missio Dei* to the new context that it faced, and it worked as a momentum for the emergence of a missional ecclesiology.

Although a missional ecclesiology appeared in the crisis, it was not a programme, but played a role of *esprit* for restoring the missional nature of the church. All the churches that are participating in the mission of God based on the missional ecclesiology are putting themselves at risk in order to restore mission from institutional activities to an active movement (Frost & Hirch 2013:240). Frost and Hirch (2013:278) insist that “the missional church must always strive to maintain the style and ethos of a movement”. It is because if the missional church movement degenerated into a programme for quantitative growth of the institutionalised church, it would lose its dynamic and have to experience all kinds of draw backs that the early church had (Bosch 1991:50).

How the definition and characteristic of a missional church is actually applied to an individual church and how it works in a case study of the Bundang Woori Church, one of the Korean missional churches, will be examined.

1.6 Case study of a missional church in South Korea

Frost and Hirch are influenced by the Anabaptists and Mennonites who prefer informal, incarnational, and organic church forms such as house churches and new monastic communities to the existing institutional church. They try to reconstruct the

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current form of the church and its structures that keeps to a more orthodox view of the gospel and scripture (Belcher 2009:45-47).

Although there are few fresh expression types of churches in Korea that follow the claim of reconstructionists like Frost and Hirch in Korea, it is difficult to be applied to all the Korean churches because of the following two characteristics of the Korean church: 1) The tradition of the Korean church which has a high regard for the clergy and see the church building as important through the influence of the Presbyterian missionaries in the Korean church. On account of the persecution they suffered under a pluralistic religious society, a building-centred ecclesiology has developed naturally and they have a strong sense of identity as a chosen community called from the world (Han 2011:1); 2) Worship service without a pastor is dangerous and cannot keep its faith pure for a long time as it is threatened by heresy. According to a report from the Korean Heresy Consultation Centre, there are a number of heresies at work in Korea, to the extent that around 40 self-appointed “Returned Jesus” have several thousand followers each. The same report says that the small sized heretic groups are presumed to be several hundred because there are about 2 million cult members out of 8.5 million Christians.

Among the heresies, the Shincheonji Church of Jesus the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony established in 1984, which follows Man-Hee Lee as a religious leader, destroys normal social life of the followers with its Pseudo-eschatology. It has different characteristics from the other heresies in that it teaches that all the existing churches are founded on lies. They try to win over the members of the existing churches to them by spreading their false doctrine in Bible study groups gathering at houses. Therefore all denominations in Korea have decided not to allow meetings or Bible study gatherings at houses without appointed church leaders (Chung 2011). Not only the existing churches, but Korean society as well has a negative view on religious meetings gathering at houses or places other than existing religious buildings because of the Pseudo-eschatology of the Shincheonji Church which promotes social disturbance, harms and damages the economical and ethical values of its followers and their families (Song 2012). In this situation, the message of reconstruction may cause resistance to the intent of an incarnational mission that is to restore the church to be the light and salt to the world (Frost & Hirch 2013:63).

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The research on the theoretical and practical features of the Bundang Woori Church as a missional church is useful in looking at how the missional ecclesiology is applied in a Korean church, which participates in the missional church movement while keeping the existing church structure and being relevant to the postmodern context at the same time.

1.6.1 The Bundang Woori Church

Chan-Soo Lee, the senior pastor of the Bundang Woori Church, says that the missional church movement of the Bundang Woori Church focuses on restoration of the church of the book of Acts. It can be divided into the following three time stages: 1) From its beginning to 2009; 2) From 2009 to early 2012; 3) From early 2012 to the present.

1.6.1.1 From its beginning to 2009

When the Bundang Woori Church was founded in 2002, the term ”missional church” was still strange to the Korean church. However, the Bundang Woori Church exhibited characteristics of a missional church from its beginning dreaming of “the church” in the book of Acts. According to the homepage of the Church, the church in the book of Acts that the Bundang Woori Church dreamt of was a church which was a joy to God and was highly praised by the world through its sharing, love, and serving that differed from the world. In the Bundang Woori Church, Bundang is the name of where it is located and Woori means “We”. The Bundang Woori Church has been emphasising its community spirit of love by adding a modifier “laughing together and crying together” before its name. Emphasising the community spirit like this is first for the restoration of God’s image among the people in the community by recovering the order of creation in that God created man in the image of the Triune God (Gn 1:26). Second, to a world that is full of conflict and division they are to present a taste and glimpse of the present kingdom of God accomplished by Christ Jesus and a foretaste of the eschatological kingdom of God that will be fulfilled by Him (Lee 2003:73-74).

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Because community spirit is emphasised, the leadership of the church is established not according to a hierarchical structure, but with a horizontal relationship. The senior pastor discussed the calling and purpose of the church with about 30 lay leaders, who were the first members, in the prayer meeting preparing for church planting. This shows his intention to reflect on the dreams and desires of the laity in the establishment of the church. It deviated from the general church planting paradigm in Korea which is that an individual pastor, who has prepared church planting for a long time, unilaterally proposes his dream and desire and expecting the lay leaders to follow and support him. The laity, after finishing discipleship training and ministry training, leads “the Upper room” the small group meeting of the Bundang Woori Church, and serves the 9 departments of the church as team leaders and members. Because the team leaders of the 9 departments are given executive budget authority, it practically prevents the church from being controlled freely by the senior pastor (LEE 2003:145).

After deciding to plant the church in the region of Bundang, the senior pastor and the laity together pulled their efforts to listen to the local people and to enter their culture asking the following questions: “Why is planting another church needed among many other churches?” (concerning the essence of the church); “What place is Bundang where we are going to plant the church?”; “What are the characteristics of the local people?”; “What thirst and need do they have?”; “How are the existing churches satisfying the need and thirst of the local people?”; “If there are two different types of growing churches in Bundang, one is a traditional type and the other is a new expression type, how can we help them?” (LEE 2003:60-61). As a result of this process, the Bundang Woori Church set the following four goals concerning its identity before planting: 1) A church having inspirational worship; 2) A church healing the families; 3) A church awakening the youth; 4) A church changing the world.

These four goals of the church come from the effort to discern the presence or movement of the Triune God in the local place and its identity. The region of Bundang is crowded with well-educated upper-middle social class people staying in many high grade apartment complexes with many schools. Although Bundang was called “spiritual star wars” because there were already many large churches, the Bundang Woori Church could find “the neighbours who fell into the hands of robbers” and the works of God who was listening to their cry as follows: 1) Most of the large

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churches adhered to a traditional worship style targeting the forties and fifties, so that it was difficult to find churches which served the youth well; 2) There were a number of dysfunctional families suffering from divorce and marital discord caused by the characteristics of upper-middle social class where the head of the family (mostly the husbands) has to spend most of his time at the working place (LEE 2003:26).

In order to respond to these needs of the local place, the Bundang Woori Church from its beginning set its goal as a church to heal the families and to awaken the youth. To put these goals into practice, the church holds a family restoration which is a family blessing service once a month and a family worship on Sunday evenings instead of the traditional style of having the congregation spend the whole day in the church on Sundays. The Sunday afternoon service is a modern style service for the youth (Lee 2003:101-103). When carrying out the ministry for the un-churched youth, it did not focus on a programme-centred ministry, but on fellowship , by building natural relationships with the local youth outside the church building at the church's book café (Lee 2003:96-98).

Noticing that many people were hurt by senseless church culture in Bundang among highly-educated people, the church emphasised that common sense is as important as praying, and put more effort into evangelisation and the restoration of those people with broken hearts (Lee 2003:117-120). For example the Church rented an auditorium of a high school from an early stage of its planting, rather than trying to build its own building even after it grew big with a number of people with weak faith left the existing churches because they were forced through a building-centred ecclesiology to give offerings for the church building (Lee 2012:231).

Although the Bundang Woori Church from the beginning spent 40% of its budget on relief work in local society, it put its priority into emphasising a genuine Christian life for the congregation, to live out the life of Jesus wherever they are in order to change the world. As an example of this, the church opens at dawn for a prayer meeting followed by a breakfast for office workers. The participants pray for their working places and arrived there earlier than anyone else. They practiced good deeds at the working place such as cleaning the offices of others before they arrived at work and, as a result, they were praised by their non-Christian colleagues (LEE 2003:70-72).

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1.6.1.2 From 2009 to the early 2012

The Bundang Woori Church, in pursuing the example of the early church of the book of Acts which was praised by the world, experienced radical quantitative growth like the early church. As people who got hurt by the imperial leadership of pastors and senseless church culture rushed into the Bundang Woori Church, It grew to about 200 registered attendees in the 2 months after planting and became a very large church with around 2,000 attendants after one year (Lee 2003:126).

However, as the church grew rapidly, it became difficult to keep the essence of the church it had pursued since it started. The community spirit of “we are laughing and weeping together” turned into a mass of individuals feeling lonely, and the fellowship of the congregation that was supposed to be deep and essential became shallow and superficial. Though “the upper room”, the small groups of the church, were functioning, as the anonymity of individuals increased because of its size, there was a limitation on the entire membership of the church to be like a family. Radical quantitative growth of the church also had a bad effect on its reputation with the local society. Parking lot troubles and congestion of traffic happened around the church on Sundays and whenever there were events at the church. It seriously challenged the goals the church had pursued from its initial stage to encourage local society to taste God’s reign (Lee 2012:251-252).

The time that the Bundang Woori Church turned its direction from quantitative growth to the restoration of the missional nature of the church happened during the sabbatical year of the senior pastor in 2009, 7 years after planting the church. Though it is difficult for pastors to keep the sabbatical year in Korean church culture, pastor Chan-Soo Lee left the church and studied at Fuller Theological Seminary in the USA, saying that he had to leave the church for some time to make people rely not on him but on God to prove that the owner of the church is not the senior pastor but God (Kim 2010). During the sabbatical year, he met with the term “missional church” at Fuller Seminary.

As soon as he came back from the USA, pastor Chan-Soo Lee first started a project

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named “Open Joseph’s store house”. He started the project to share the abundant grace of God given to the Bundang Woori Church for the past several years with neighbours in the same way as Joseph shared God’s grace with the people who suffered from severe drought by opening the store houses. According to the Church’s homepage, as part of the project, various welfare ministries were established, such as a multicultural family support centre for foreigners who struggled to settle down in Korea and suffered from discrimination, “Edu-together” to reduce the inequality of education caused by the phenomenon the rich-get-richer and the poor-get-poorer (matching volunteer tutors from the church to the poor students in Bundang), and a day centre for the aged.

1.6.1.3 From early 2012 to the present

All efforts of the Bundang Woori Church to satisfy the needs of the local place were appreciated by local society, and even by Korean society as being different from other churches which were seen in a negative light as highly competitive in building bigger buildings only for themselves (Kim 2012). Though the Church continued to grow, it felt pressured because a large proportion of its quantitative growth was achieved by a horizontal shift from other churches.

At his sermon on 1 July 2012, senior pastor Chan-Soo Lee described this situation as a “spiritual inclination phenomenon” like that of the Titanic that was leaning to one side when it was about to sink. According to Choi (2013:39-40), a futurologist, the small churches taking up 80% of the Korean church will fall into serious defeatism and won’t survive in the rapidly changing context, except for a few of the larger churches. After 10 years the number of Korean Christians will reduce by 4 million, which is half the present, if this condition continues. Actually, the Korean Christian breakaway from the church has already started, and is accelerating. In his sermon on 26 January 2014, Pastor Chan-Soo Lee said:

> Being a missional church is seeing not a tree but the entire forest. The Korean church is in the condition that individual trees increased but the forest is ruined. To be a missional church is to restore the good influence of the Korean church to the Korean society, seeing not an individual church but the entire Korean

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church.

As the Bundang Woori Church is part of the leaning ship they asked what God wants them to do in this crisis. They answered with an unprecedented movement called the "Sending 10,000 member movement".

1.6.1.4 The Sending 10,000 member movement

At his sermon on 1 July 2012, Pastor Chan-Soo Lee explained the background of the sending 10,000 member movement:

> In the late spring, as praying for the Korean church in crisis, God gave me a strong calling. It was around the time that the attendance of the Bundang Woori Church past the 20,000 mark. The Spirit of God pressed me by asking "Until when are you going to collect people only to your church?", "Is it right that people shift horizontally?", "if people rush into the Bundang Woori Church, other churches will be shrinking. Is it right?" In agony with these questions, I decided to change the Bundang Woori Church to the church sending well-trained members, following the God who continues to send and being sent and gave God a promise that "I will send from 1/2 to 3/4 of the congregation to the weak church in neighbourhood for the next 10 years".

When the senior pastor, after obeying the leading of the Spirit that called him to participate in the *missio* Dei, shared with all church members what he promised to God and asked for their acceptance or rejection. Surprisingly 97% of the congregation consented. At his sermon on 26 January 2014, pastor Chan-Soo Lee said:

> The sending 10,000 member movement came from the thought that the Korean churches should grow together as partners, participating in God's mission together. Although there is fear for not knowing how to progress or what the result it is going to produce, as there is no previous example, God

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gives me confidence in prayer that He does not look for a 100% satisfying result, but that the struggle with the process will provoke the missional church movement among the Korean churches. The Bundang Woori Church will move forward step by step following the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

When the mass media wrongly interpreted the sending of the 10,000 member movement as a dissolution of a large church this caused misunderstandings and complaints from other large churches. The senior pastor argued that, although the sending of 10,000 member movement is a narrow way the Bundang Woori Church sees it as the way the Church has to follow because it is the right way of pleasing God (Kim 2012). Thus far, it can be said that the Bundang Woori Church started the sending 10,000 member movement to be a missional church, dreaming that all the churches God established will revive together in the Korean context where the church is being blamed by the world for its excessive growth competition.

In accordance with the Church's homepage, to practice the sending the 10,000 member movement, the Bundang Woori Church had to carry out the following three strategies:

1) The Bundang Woori Church does not allow the people registered with another church to re-register with it.

2) The Bundang Woori Church serves the small and weak churches through the 10•10•10 project. The first 10 means financial aid. The church pays 10 pastors of the poor and weak churches monthly to help them concentrate on ministries. The second 10 means aid of time. The church sends several groups of 30 members to each small and weak church in the area to join the Sunday services of those churches. The third 10 means physical aid. The church offers referral information to the congregation and urges them to shift to the weak churches voluntarily.

3) The Bundang Woori Church plants churches by dividing itself and by sending.

On its homepage, the Bundang Woori Church evaluates the significance of the

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sending 10,000 member movement as follows:

> The sending 10,000 member movement is the realization of a missional church. The missional church is to restore the essence of the church. If the essence of the church is restored, it does not work only for one individual church, but for bearing fruit, regaining “good influence”. The fruit of good influence means the state that all the churches on earth can be in a win-win position together. The head of the church is Jesus Christ, so that all the churches confessing Him as the Lord form His body. In this sense, all the churches on earth are partners to participate in the mission of God. The Korean churches have to be partners for each other to expand the kingdom of God together by overcoming the existing excessive competitive discord structure for growth.

The sending 10,000 member movement is not simply the dissolution of a large church, but a step to realise missional ecclesiology in the Korean context. Even if the Bundang Woori church would reduce its attendance by 5,000 after 10 years, it would be still a large church.

1.6.1.5 An interview with a pastor of the Bundang Woori Church

The interview was conducted by email on 3rd of June in 2014. The interviewee was Chang-Soo Jang who is an assistant pastor of the Bundang Woori Church. He works as a missional church coordinator. He also has experience in lecturing about the missional church to African seminary students as a member of an international mission NGO. In this regard, Pastor Jang knows the missional church movement of the Bundang Woori Church better than anyone else.

a) Question and answer:

1) What is the first priority and goal of your ministry?

It is to continuously challenge all members of the church including myself to have “the kingdom of God awareness” wherever they are. It is not about how many people gather in a church building or what kind of spiritual service is being offered to the

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congregation; rather it is about awakening Christians to realise their identity as the body of Christ and the people sent to the world. The church has to set its purpose of being as spreading the gospel by a missional life and recovering its social influence.

2) What do you see as the merits and demerits of the megachurch?

When pursuing to be a missional church as a large church, the important point is not a certain ministry but the missional conversion of more church members. As for a small church, the important point to be a missional church is to develop appropriate ministries with limited resources. In a large church, though its ministry can be various and influential, the daily lives of the majority of its members and the missionary spirit can be irrelevant. A small church has the advantage of disciplining and uniting the hearts and thoughts of all church members, but also has the disadvantage of developing and carrying out meaningful ministries which can have a positive influence on the local community.

3) What is your reaction to the statement "The bigger a church grows, the more it can carry out missionary work?

The ministry aiming at being a large church is wrong. On the contrary, pursuing only to be a small church is a similar error. Persisting in a certain type of church is far from the spirit of the missional church. How sensitive the church and its members are reacting with the gospel to the context they belong to is the core part. In terms of pursuing the missional church, both large churches and small churches have their own assignments to solve.

4) What do you think is a missional church?

The common misunderstanding in researching the missional church is to understand the church as a structure. The missional church is a phenomenon emerging in the situation when the church loses its missional nature. The missional church is a movement to restore the missional essence of the church.

5) Do you think that a megachurch can be missional?

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I believe that if a megachurch keeps sending its well-trained human resources and the small church works together with them in the dream about the kingdom of God, regardless of their size, there will be a movement that both the megachurch and the small church are united to participate in the mission of God which is the expansion of the kingdom of God.

b) Analysis of the interview:

Pastor Chang-Soo Jang clearly understands that a missional church is not a new structure of the church aiming at numerical growth, but a movement to restore its missionary nature. He emphasises that the missional church is not about a certain size of the church, but whether or not the church and all its members let the local community taste the kingdom of God through their witness to the gospel with words and deeds which are relevant to the context they belong to. Therefore, the Bundang Woori Church is a missional church which is sending and being sent to participate in the works of the missionary God as His instrument and is showing the various characteristics of the missional church as applied to the Korean context.

In conclusion, the purpose of this chapter, where a question “Can a megachurch be missional?” is premised, was to define a missional church as a movement and to figure out how that definition works in the practice of a Korean missional church. It studied the characteristics and trends of the missional church and its socio-cultural, historical, and theological backgrounds where the characteristics and trends stem from, so as to understand the movement more clearly.

The social and cultural background of the present day missional church is a post-Christendom and postmodernism. In the present pluralistic and anti-authoritarian world the old way of Christian mission (Christendom mode), to attract people to come to the church, no longer works but marginalised the church. But an incarnational mission is called for, through which the church makes people taste the kingdom of God by building relationships by going to the people in their context. The missional church finds this in their historical background, from the witnessing life of the disciples of the early church. To let people have a taste in advance of the eschatological kingdom of God by joining the present kingdom of God, the

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discipleship of the early church has to be restored in the missional church. Theologically all the characteristics of the missional church are related to the *missio* Dei (the mission of God). Since the *missio* Dei was rediscovered at the Willingen IMC in 1952 mission has been understood to be the essence of the church. The church is no longer the subject of mission, but an instrument of the missionary God. Thus, all the churches and its members must participate in the mission of God.

From this backdrop, although the missional church has a variety of characteristics as an ongoing movement, the following three characteristics were observed: Incarnational (contextual and relational), discipleship, and participating in the mission of God. Through the research on these characteristics and background, the missional church is defined as a movement to restore the missionary nature of the church in the crises it is confronting. This definition of the missional church is connected to the Theo-centric understanding of mission (missiology) and to a theological discipline in order to understand and define the church (Niemandt 2012:1) as a Christian movement and to restore the apostolic nature of the church (ecclesiology).

This definition of a missional church and its missiological and ecclesiological perspectives are plainly found among the Korean missional churches represented by the Bundang Woori Church.

To find the answer to a question “Can a megachurch be missional?”, in the next chapter, a comparison and the contrast between the characteristics of the megachurch and the missional church will be described in both theoretical and practical ways, and the megachurch will be criticised from a missional church perspective, as well as from a missiological and ecclesiological view on the basis of the insights obtained in this chapter.

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Chapter 4

1. Comparison and megachurches as missional churches

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to answer the research question: “Can the research find the answer to the question of whether a megachurch can be missional through a comparison of the definitions and characteristics of a Korean megachurch with a missional church?” To answer to this question, on the basis of insights gained from the previous chapters, the definition and characteristics of the megachurch will be compared theoretically and practically with that of the missional church from the previous case studies, and the megachurch will be criticised from the missional church’s missiological and ecclesiological perspectives.

1.2 Critiques of megachurch from missional church’s perspectives

1.2.1 From a missiological view

Mission from a missional church is embedded in the concept of the *missio* Dei (the mission of God). God is the subject of mission and the church is an instrument (Hirch 2006:129-130). Because the Trinitarian God who is sending and being sent is the subject of mission, the church with all its members as God’s instrument must be missional. Mission is the essence of the church and the mission of the church must focus on making the mission of God known to the world through its words and deeds according to God’s ruling to fulfil His redemptive purpose for the whole of creation (Padilla 2010:199). God’s mission is directly related to the world and the church is an instrument privileged to participate in God’s mission of redemption and the recreation of humanity and the cosmos (Niemandt 2012:3). In order to demonstrate God’s rule (the kingdom of God) by Jesus’ incarnation which is different from the rule of the world, all his followers, the disciples of Jesus Christ are to be contextualised to that culture to which they believe they are sent (Frost & Hirch 2013:276) and are to play the role of the light and salt of the world as witnesses witnessing to the kingdom of God.

The mission of the megachurch is rooted in the understanding that the quantitative growth of an individual church is the expansion of the kingdom of God. It developed

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from the following factors: 1) the Christendom-based mission of the medieval times since Constantine, 2) the Great Commission, the ideology of classical evangelicals, 3) the pragmatism of the new evangelicals who are affected by the church growth theory of McGavran. This approach, which will be scrutinised in this chapter, sees each individual church as the subject of mission, and mission is one of many programmes for the growth of the individual church. Megachurches see the expansion of the kingdom of God through the evangelisation of the world with their material, influence and power, gained from their numerical growth. Megachurches put their efforts into raising church leaders who can effectively carry out various church growth programmes by training the laity through disciple training programmes.

In the light of the *missio* Dei the different understanding about the mission of the megachurch and the missional church can be summed up as ecclesio-centric mission and Theo-centric mission respectively. In this research, the mission of the megachurch will be criticised in both theoretical and practical ways in terms of the following three characteristics of the Theo-centric mission obtained from the previous study, which include other characteristics of the missional church (Frost & Hirch 2013:277) (although all characteristics of the missional church are inseparable and related to each other). The case studies showed obvious differences between the Poongsunghan Church (a Korean megachurch) and the Bundang Woori Church (a Korean missional church): 1) The Theo-centric mission does no longer see the kingdom as a regional and territorial concept, but God's rule. It changed from the focus on a place, to that of the person, and a new mission command is given to God's new people along with this change (Wells 2006:402-403); 2) it is an incarnational mission; 3) concentrating Discipleship.

1.2.1.1 Understanding of the kingdom of God

According to Hendriks (2004:32), the understanding of mission as *missio Dei* led to an appreciation of the present and eschatological kingdom of God reflecting God's missional praxis. As Wright (2012:187) puts it, because "God is the creator and redeemer of the world, and Jesus' launch of the kingdom – God's worldwide sovereignty on earth as in heaven – is the central aim of his mission, the thing for which he lived and died and rose again", those who are put right with God through the cross are to be putting-right people of the world, addressing the evils of the world

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in the light of the victory of Calvary (Wright 2012:244). The coming kingdom is a present reality with the expectation of the future completion of God's redemptive work, which can be visible in history through the mission of the church (Niemandt 2012:5). Bosch (1991:420) summarises evangelism as

> that dimension and activity of the church's mission which the mission of the church by word and deed and in the light of particular conditions and a particular context, offers every person and community, everywhere, a valid opportunity to be directly challenged to a radical reorientation of their lives, a reorientation which involves such things as deliverance from slavery to the world and its powers; embracing Christ as Saviour and Lord; becoming a living member of his community, the church; being enlisted into his service of reconciliation, peace, and justice on earth; and being committed to God's purpose of placing all things under the rule of Christ.

As Padilla (2010:205) puts it, through proclamation as well as through social service and action of the church as the community tasting the ruling of Christ, the kingdom of God is manifested to the world. Newbigin (1980:19) says:

> It is the community which has begun to taste (even only in foretaste) the reality of the kingdom which alone can provide the hermeneutic of the message. … Without the hermeneutic of such a living community, the message of the kingdom can only become an ideology and a programme; it will not be a gospel.

The Bundang Woori Church as a kingdom community tries to satisfy the needs of a local society by running a project since 2009, namely "Open Joseph's store house", in which the church manages multicultural family support centres, senior welfare centres and rehabilitation centres for the disabled, apart from propagating the gospel by words. All the members of the church also participate in the mission of God serving the local society by working for the centres above, and especially, working for the "Edu Together", which is a project matching volunteer tutors from the church to the poor students in Bundang, to present the present and eschatological rule of God that is different from the world's, to the mission field where they are sent.

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In comparison with the Bundang Woori Church, the Poongsunghan Church has a different understanding about mission. This difference in view had a great influence on the mission of the Poongsunghan Church. The mission of the Poongsunghan Church, according to Bosch's understanding (1991:322), is close to spreading and planting the same system in the country (Poongsunghan Church in Ilsan) and out of the country (China and India) on the strength of the numerical growth of the mother church through the "Two wings Nurturing System". Spreading the influence of the church to surrounding countries through the "Two Wings International Conference" resulted in a typical Christendom-mode mission which understood the kingdom of God as territorial expansion. The emphasis on "winning souls" already suggests something about the understanding of Kingdom for this church, which is different from the missional church's idea of the Kingdom.

To criticise the megachurch' missiological perspective, the "mission" of the evangelicals should first be criticised. Evangelicals have their priority in evangelism. However this enthusiasm for the propagation of the gospel can produce an unexpected distorted result when it is pursued ignorantly without adequate thinking. Evangelicals interpret the Great Commission of Matthew 28:18-20 as a command for foreign missions (Shin 2012b:5). Bosch (1991:57) points out that evangelicals degraded the final verses of Matthew to a mere slogan for foreign missions by lifting these words out of Matthew's gospel and allowing them a life of their own, and understanding them without any reference to the context in which they first appeared.

According to Bosch (1991:56-83) the final verses of Matthew's gospel are the core text in which the whole content is condensed. It cannot be separated from the entire context of the gospel. When the text is read in context, there are several significant interpretative modifications. First, the text should not be interpreted putting dots over the word "go (abroad)" to be emphasised because Matthew focused on "teaching" the lessons of Jesus that is represented by the Sermon on the Mount. Second, although evangelicals understand the text as a command for evangelism to preach the gospel to non-believers, Matthew understood the command as teaching and disciplining believers within disciple community circles. Third, although evangelicals regard the "Great Commission" as being concerned primarily with "evangelism" and

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the “Great Commandment” (Mt 22:37-40) as referring to “social involvement”, it is impossible to make disciples (evangelism) without practicing God’s call of justice for the poor (social involvement). They are the ones in Matthew’s understanding (Bosch 1991:81-82).

Bosch (1991:262) insists that the evangelism of evangelicals is affected by the Enlightenment rather than directed by the New Testament. The evangelism style of evangelicals, such as evangelism to individuals, winning souls, and hope for the afterlife, differs greatly from that of the New Testament (Shin 2012b:6). To them salvation is a matter for individuals. They let individual non-believers listen to the gospel and persuade them to conversion by asking “Are you saved?” Even in a large scale crusade held by evangelicals, the goal is set for individuals to have salvation by letting them listen to the gospel individually. Evangelism to individuals reflects Enlightenment’s vision of human beings as autonomous decision makers of their own fate and faith (Bosch 1991:267).

According to Bosch (1991:144), for the early Christians, salvation was not something that happens to isolated individuals. Although the early Christians also went to individuals and asked their existential resolution, they ultimately invited the individuals to move into the eschatological community of believers, which means the completion of the kingdom of God is given to the community of believers as a foretaste, or the church is a sign of the kingdom of God and the proleptic manifestation of God’s reign both in what it is and what it does (Van Gelder 2000:99). Salvation meant moving into the kingdom community here and now, leaving world order.

For evangelicals the winning of souls refers to the place where salvation occurs (salvation in the soul). The object of salvation is not the body but the soul. This idea of salvation in the soul is the result of a too narrow understanding of “justification by faith” (Bosch 1991:166). It sees faith as a psychological happening in an individual’s inner side (Shin 2012b:6). In the early church faith included not only internal factors, but also external factors like social and political aspects. On account of their reductive soteriology evangelicals have confined Christian faith to be an individual matter and something psychological. Evangelicalism has not been able to grow out

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of an irrelevant religious group by their concentration on winning of souls only, without social participation (Shin 2012b:7). The WCC (2013:43) opposed this focus on winning souls only:

> Strengthened and nourished by the liturgy, the Church must continue the life-giving mission of Christ in prophetic and compassionate ministry to the world and in struggle against every form of injustice and oppression, mistrust and conflict created by human beings.

Wells (2006:206) says that as evangelicals placed emphasis only on internal experience ignoring the outside world, for instance, all kinds of bad laws were passed in the USA even though about one-third of Americans claimed to be born again in the 1990s. Wells (2006:194) points out that the problem of evangelicalism is either practice without theory or lack of social participation.

The soteriology of evangelicals cannot get out of the concept of entering heaven after death, because the main contents of the gospel evangelicals have been propagating are promises about afterlife which almost lost its relevance to the present age, salvation will be given not to the body but to the soul after death (Snyder 2001:25-39). Padilla (2013:45) says:

> At the other extreme is the concept of salvation as the future salvation of the soul, in which present life has meaning only as a preparation for the “hereafter.” History is assimilated by futurist eschatology, and religion becomes a means of escape from present reality. The result is total withdrawal from the problems of society in the name of “separation from the world.” It is this misunderstanding of the gospel that has given rise to the Marxist criticism of Christian eschatology as the opiate of the people.

As observed thus far, through Intellectual idleness and evangelism affected by the Enlightenment, the kingdom of God that the megachurch pursues has implied an irrelevant religious ghetto, which looks to Christianity’s geographical expansion

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through church growth by baptising more people rather than to God's continuing sovereign authority and activity over all things for the restoration of creation (Snyder 2001:146-147). As Snyder (1983:11) puts it:

> Kingdom people seek first the Kingdom of God and its justice; church people often put church work above concerns of justice, mercy and truth. Church people think about how to get people into the church; Kingdom people think about how to get the church into the world. Church people worry that the world might change the church; Kingdom people work to see the church change the world.

1.2.1.2 Incarnational mission

According to Bosch (1991:390), "Willingen recognized a close relationship between the *missio* Dei and mission as solidarity with the incarnate and crucified Christ." According to the concept of the *missio* Dei, all the churches and their members, according to a variety of conditions of the communities where they live, have to let the communities taste God's rule by discerning what God wants from them and build relationships with local residents in incarnational ways. Stott (2010:39) says all authentic mission is incarnational mission, so that all Christians are to be like Christ in his mission. Thus, as Niemandt (2012:4) puts it, the missional church is an incarnational movement sent to engage with its context.

Snyder (2001:154) says that understanding God's kingdom is to abolish the line between the "sacred" and the "secular", admitting that all things are within the sphere of God's sovereignty. In this sense, the missional church sublimates the division between the sacred and the profane and participates in the mission of God not by attracting people to the church, but by discerning where God works and be an example of God's reign of love among them through the Holy Spirit. As Hirch (2006:135) says "Incarnational ministry essentially means taking the church to the people, rather than bringing people to the church." Jesus embodies the good news and through his incarnation, God's good news became wonderfully present in a specific setting (Tennent 2010:325). Thus, incarnational ministry entails listening to people and entering their culture (Sweet 2009:35), because relationship is the key

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means in the transfer of the gospel (Hirch 2006:133).

This relational nature of mission originated from the relational attribute of the Triune God, who wants a relationship with us (Niemandt 2012:4). God's love is transmitted to the whole world through the participation and practice of the church and its members in the love relationship of the Triune communion (Niemandt 2012:5). In accordance with Niemandt (2012:5), "the church and all its functions, such as proclamation, service and celebration, are the result of its relational nature." Hirch (2006:143) says "Worship style, social dynamics, liturgical expressions must result from the process of contextualizing the gospel in any given culture."

The Bundang Woori Church tried to discern the movement of the Trinitarian God where they were (Bundang region) for incarnational mission from its inception. As a result of discerning the process in the Holy Spirit, they decided to serve the youth and the dysfunctional families in local society to help them to be restored holistically. To do this, the Church concentrated on building natural relationships through their ministries rather than running growth-oriented programmes (Lee 2003:101-103). Managing a book café at the Church and giving a banquet in the Church's front yard (The Church's front yard is a playground of a high school because the Church is renting the auditorium of the high school) for the community exemplifies their efforts to be a fellowship-oriented church (Lee 2003:75-76). This relationship-centred ministry of the church developed their indigenous, contextualised worship in partnership with the new believers (Frost & Hirch 2013:35). The Bundang Woori Church has a family blessing service once a month and the Sunday afternoon service is a modern style service for the youth.

According to Frost and Hirch (2013:35-37), in contrast with the missional church's incarnational mission, the megachurch's mission is "attractional and dualistic". It attracts people to come to the church building, which is called the "Come-To-Us" stance, to make them listen to the gospel, on the basis of dualism of Christendom that sees the world as divided between the sacred and profane. A church with an attracting mode focuses on a variety of programmes rather than on relationships (Frost & Hirch 2013:65).

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The Two Wings Nurturing System of the Pungsunghan Church is a combination of many church growth programmes for better consumption. Through the Open Cell, the first step of the system, the Church goes out and gathers where people are. They treat people to a meal and give them gifts to build relationships for 12 planned weeks. This seems to be incarnational. However, as Frost and Hirch (2013:65) point out, "even though the program might be sound and biblical and is obviously very effective in its original context, it nevertheless smacks of something artificial" because building relationships is to them nothing but a means of bringing people to the church and is carried out, not for everyday life, but for a certain period of time.

Meanwhile, excessive confidence of the Church in their Two Wings Nurturing System caused them to ignore contextualisation. Their argument, that the system must be transplanted in each church, without being contextualised in each church's conditions (Kim 2005:61) and that the result cannot be guaranteed (Cho 2010b), is, to borrow Frost and Hirch's (2013:109) expression, a typical "one-size-fits-all approach". The Poongsunghan Church as a "Seeker" style megachurch pursues the tailoring of worship services to attract seekers and people without church affiliation (the unchurched) to the church building.

The attractional and dualistic mission of the megachurch is criticised as follows from the missional church's incarnational perspective: 1) Inducing excessive competition; 2) Being excarnational (non-incarnational); 3) Practical atheism.

Padilla (2013:120) criticises the attractional and dualistic mission of the church in that it sometimes creates a regrettable spirit of competition that is more related to the capitalistic system than to the Word of God, to draw more people and to grow the church for numerical growth. Under the condition of keen competition, churches are easily lured to compromise the message, manipulating the hearers through pressure techniques, and using statistics dishonestly (Padilla 2013:67).

As for excarnational, Frost and Hirch (2013:35) say "By anticipating that if they get

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their internal features right, people will flock to the services, the church betrays its belief in attractionalism." Although the early church was attractive through practicing their faith in society, the present church is getting more irrelevant to the needs of society by becoming self-centred, thinking that it could be attractive if its product (internal congregational life) is better (Chester & Timmis 2011: loc 345).

With regard to practical atheism, the dualism of the megachurch's mission has over 1,700 years created Christians that cannot relate their interior faith to their exterior practice, and this affects their ethics, their lifestyles, and their capacity to share their faith meaningfully with others (Frost & Hirch 2013:26). Consequently, according to the survey of credibility of the Korean church conducted by the Christian Ethics Movement Korea in 2011, only 17.6% of Koreans answered that they trusted Christianity, which continues dropping compared to 19.1% in 2009 and 18.4% in 2010. This credibility gap between the church world and the real world is the practical atheism of Christians (Frost & Hirch 2013:37).

All these imperfections of the megachurch's mission let the church fail its high calling to be the light and the salt of the world as God's kingdom community that lives different from the world in the world. As Niemandt (2012:4) said, only being incarnational decentres the church from a self-centred life and makes the church sensitive towards outsiders and strangers.

1.2.1.3 Discipleship

The phenomenal movements in history found a way to translate the grand themes of the gospel such as kingdom of God and redemption into concrete life through the embodiment of Jesus in ways that were profoundly relational and attractive (Hirch 2006:114). Likewise the missional church as a movement needs Jesus-like disciples to witness to the kingdom of God by their incarnational way of life. As Bosch (1991:421) puts it, the missionary message of the Christian church incarnated itself in the life and world of those who had embraced it. According to Bonhoeffer (1959:59), discipleship

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> means adherence to Christ and, because Christ is the object of that adherence, it must take the form of discipleship. An abstract theology, a doctrinal system, a general religious knowledge of the subject of grace or the forgiveness of sins, render discipleship superfluous, and in fact exclude any idea of discipleship whatsoever, and are essentially inimical to the whole conception of following Christ. … Christianity without the living Christ is inevitably Christianity without discipleship, and Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ.

If the heart of discipleship is to adhere to Jesus, Jesus' strategy is to get many versions of him infiltrating every nook and cranny of society by reproducing himself in and through his people in every place throughout the world (Hirch 2006:113). According to Hirch (2006:114), Christians must actually become the gospel to the people around them, which is an expression of the real Jesus through the quality of their ordinary everyday lives (Chester & Timmis 2011: loc 349). Therefore the Christians' lifestyle should be exemplary and winsome. It should attract outsiders and invite them to join the community. In other words, believers should practice a missionary lifestyle (Bosch 1991:137). The mission of the missional church is not attractional but attracts people through the holy lives of its members living according to the way of the Lord in righteousness, justice and love- thus an ethical life (Niemandt 2012:8). It is to be a community shaped by God's own ethical character and standards, so that God can bring about the blessings of the nations (Wright 2010:94). Frost and Hirch (2013:76) say:

> In his letter to Titus, Paul encouraged him to teach his congregation to be respectful, self-controlled, kind, loving, and faithful. He told him to discourage drunkenness, slander, gossip, and disrespect. To Titus himself, he commended integrity, seriousness, and soundness. Why? "So that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Saviour attractive." (Titus 2:1– 10)

Padilla (2013:27) says that the paradox of Christian discipleship in relation to the world is to be in the world but not to be of the world. In this regard, Stott (2010:19-27) proposed the following four contemporary trends which the disciples of Christ Jesus must resist to persevere in their dedication to God: 1) Pluralism, 2) Materialism, 3)

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Ethical relativism, 4) Narcissism. The disciples must become a community of truth standing against the challenge of pluralism to protect the uniqueness of Christ Jesus; a community of simplicity and pilgrimage standing against the challenge of materialism; a community of obedience standing against the challenge of relativism; a community of love standing against the challenge of narcissism (Stott 2010:26).

Both The Bundang Woori Church and the Pungsunghan Church put in a great deal of effort to raise disciples. Both of them are influenced by the discipleship training programme of the Sarang Church of which the motto is “Awaken the laity”. Although they focus on raising disciples under the influence of the same programme, due to their different understanding about mission, the aspect of their discipleship programme and its results are different. According to Hirch (2006:122-126), there are two types of approaches to disciple making, the Hellenistic approach and the Hebraic approach.

The Hellenistic approach is based on the Hellenistic ideas of knowledge that believes that if people get the right ideas, they will simply change their behaviour. Affected by this view, many churches try to change a person to a new way of thinking by providing information through books and classrooms, expecting that dealing with intellectual aspects a person will change their behaviour. This attempt can be very frustrating because it is hard to change one’s behaviour by merely getting new ideas. On the other hand, the Hebraic approach believes that education in the context of life and for life is needed to transform a person. This is the way of Jesus’ disciple making. He not only lived with their disciples in every possible circumstance, but also let them minister with him and he corrected them, all in the context of everyday life.

The Bundang Woori Church follows the Hebraic style of disciple making. At his sermon on 26 January 2014, pastor Chan-Soo Lee, the senior pastor of the Church, said that he did not know where to go. Many other large churches in Korea misunderstood his pure intension after he had proclaimed and carried out “the sending 10,000 member movement”, through which the Church would send 10,000 members to the Korean church within the next 10 years. It surely was the way to participate in the mission of God with other churches as one body of Christ and the way to recover the good influence as the salt and light of Korean society. But he, as

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disciple of Jesus, controlled his desire to be a bigger church and obey the Holy Spirit. He hoped that all the members would struggle, make mistakes, and correct the mistakes together with him. According to the homepage of the Church, a number of members of the Church joined his lead and went to neighbouring small churches giving up all kinds of conveniences they could enjoy in a large church. These participants of the movement learned serving and sacrificing as they actually attended and served the small churches.

The Poongsunghan Church manages “The World Vision Disciple School” which consists of 3 sessions: Disciple training, Soldiership training, and Reproduction training. To finish all courses takes about a year and after passing through all courses, a new comer to the Church becomes a reproductive leader of the Church. This is system-centred and is close to the Hellenistic approach which believes a person can be transformed by gaining knowledge within a short period of time. Although the Church has the trainees of the courses join and lead one Open Cell meeting to be trained in a practical way, on account of competitive characteristics of the meeting for growth, it becomes focused on raising disciples working within and for the Church rather than presenting the kingdom of God to the local community by the lives of disciples.

According to Kwon (2014), the problem of disciple making in the Korean church is that the church only focuses on raising church leaders working for church growth programmes in the light of a mechanical perspective of man, which believes a man can be a disciple as long as he passes through a well-organised short-term discipleship training course, ignoring the emphasis on sacrificial life and struggling of the disciples to be holy (being dedicated to God) at work place and home. Against disciple-making as a means of church growth, Bosch (1991:82) criticises it on the basis of Matthew’s gospel:

> Where he identifies mission as “making disciples”, Matthew does not have in mind the adding of new members to an existing “congregation” or “denomination”. To be a disciple is not just the same as being a member of a local “church” and “making disciples” does not simply mean the numerical expansion of the church. … Matthew’s interest, then, is in costly discipleship. If

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this attitude scares some would-be converts away from the church, so be it.

1.2.2 From an ecclesiological view

According to Van Gelder (2000:37), the ministry of the church flows from the church's nature and the organisation of the church is designed to support the ministry of the church. Therefore all the characteristics of the ministries and organisations of the megachurches and missional churches are determined by and differentiated according to the understanding of the nature of the church. In the light of the *missio* Dei, the different appreciation about the essence of the church of the megachurch and the missional church can be summarised: The missional church is not a church enhancing programmes for its numerical growth but a church reforming movement to restore its missionary essence as an agent of the missionary God; The megachurch is a functional institution to carry out the missions of the church in more effective and efficient ways.

These different perspectives of the nature of the church are derived from an historical background. The early church believed that apostolicity (One authoritatively sent on a mission) had been succeeded to them by the faith and practice of the apostles. In this belief, although they were not systematic and strategic, the early church lived out apostolicity. By living together with the Gentiles in their local societies, the early church embodied the truth in incarnational ways by their words and deeds as a united and consecrated community. From the apostolic aim, the early church found its origin, its core task, and its continuance (Lee 2008:76). Thus, mission preceded ecclesiology (Niemandt 2012:3) and the goal of the church's mission was not a project of expanding churches but of the church embodying God's redemptive purpose to renew the whole of creation (WCC 2013:63).

After Constantine, the institutional church began to precede mission because of different interpretation of apostolicity, in which the church believed that the authority for the apostles to teach and lead were inherited to the institutional church (Van Gelder 2000:124), especially to the office of the bishop and the pope. Mission was confined to evangelising activities carried out by the institutional church and the church started trying to attract people of the secular world from the sacred

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institutional church with power and influence under Christendom. This Christendom-mode ecclesiology could not be reformed by the Reformation and had great influence on the emergence of the megachurch and its entrepreneurial mission with power and influence mobilised from its membership. In this understanding, the church is the subject of mission. Mission is one of many other church programmes such as worship, teaching, service, and fellowship (Lee 2008:78) and the goal of its mission is the church itself (WCC 2013:63).

The missional church, in postmodern and post-Christendom context where the church is losing its central and influential place in society and is being marginalised as the early church was, sees that the restoration of the apostolic genius and dynamics of the early church is the restoration of the nature of the church in its ecclesiological perspective. In the Nicene Creed, originally articulated by the Council of Constantinople in 381, the four marks representing the nature of the true church, "One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church", were proclaimed (The Archbishop's Council 2004:96). These attributes are derived from the attribute of the Trinitarian God, and are thus not separate from one another but inform one another and are mutually interrelated (WCC 2013:16-17). Therefore restoring apostolicity of the early church should be discussed with the other three marks of the true church, the Oneness, Holiness and Catholicity.

As observed above, the understanding of the church's nature has become differentiated depending on how the apostolicity was interpreted and what extent it was emphasised. Küng (2007:493) insists that the church can only be one holy catholic when it is apostolic. Skoglund (1962:94) says:

> Mission can never be thought of as only one of the marks of the church. It is *the* mark of the church. All other so-called marks, if legitimate, are but an explication of mission. The only power which Christ through the Holy Spirit promises to the church is power to witness. All other church activities are derived from this essential task and must be indeed by it.

In this understanding, the nature of the church is centred on its apostolicity, which is

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"missionary sentness" in Van Gelder's (2000:125) words. Thus, the true church has to have the following attributes of the church: Apostolic Oneness, Apostolic Holiness, and Apostolic Catholicity. In this research, the understanding of the megachurch regarding the church's nature and ministerial and organisational characteristics flown out from nature will be criticised in both theoretical and practical ways in terms of apostolic oneness, holiness, and Catholicity. The case studies plainly showed differences between the Poongsunghan Church and the Bundang Woori Church.

1.2.2.1 Apostolic Oneness

According to Van Gelder (2000:122), the essential oneness of the church finds its source in the oneness of the Trinitarian God as Jesus prayed, "that they may be one, as we are one" (Jn 17:22). By reflecting the oneness of the Godhead to the world through its oneness (Jn 17:20-21) the missional church can be used by God to lead people to believe in Him (WCC 2013:17). This essential oneness begins with the recognition that the church is a gathered community forming the one body of Christ Jesus (Küng 2007:434), which is presented through baptism with water in the name of the Triune God. Through baptism as a basic bond of unity, Christians are united with Christ and with each other in the church of every time and place (WCC 2013:27-28). All the members of the missional church understand that the church is not an individual but a community called to display the Triune God united in love for the world (Tennent 2010:489-492). The missional churches, as well, understand the church not as individual churches but as one church forming the one body of Christ Jesus through its unity in diversity depending on their functions as instruments participating in the mission of God together (The Archbishop's Council 2004:96-98).

The Bundang Woori Church has tried to be a family-like community. Since it started they have added a modifier to its name, namely "laughing together and crying together". According to the church's homepage, this effort did not end up as an empty catchphrase, but has been being fulfilled through a couple of projects such as partaking more than once per year at funerals of people unknown to the church and the "Gleaning Offering" (a special offering to help church members who are in sudden unexpected financial crisis). Through it the Bundang Woori Church successfully demonstrates to Korean society that it is becoming more nuclearised and individualised, that the church is a loving community. Meanwhile, The Bundang Woori Church is carrying out the "sending 10,000 member movement", emphasising

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that all the churches confessing Jesus as the Lord are one body with its members forming the body of Christ Jesus together. Through this movement, the Bundang Woori Church will send from 1/2 to 3/4 of the congregation to the local churches in its vicinity for the next ten years, in order to avoid the horizontal migration that is prevalent among the Korean churches. They will serve the local community by participating in the mission of God together with the weak churches in the neighbourhood.

For the megachurch, the church is just an assembly of individuals and its oneness can only be attained in the invisible heavenly church. Therefore, as a visible church on earth, it is still in a position where both the weeds and the wheat are growing together (Mt 13:30). The church is a crowd of individuals rather than a gathered community (Tennent 2010:493) united in one baptism and forming the sacred body of Christ Jesus (The Archbishop's Council 2004:96). The concept of the invisible oneness which understands the visible church as a crowd of weeds and wheat has become the foundation of the possibility of unlimited growth of a local church (megachurch) according to the megachurch's interpretation of apostolicity in which the church is an authoritative institution to call people from the world to the institutional church.

The Poongsunghan Church understands the body of Christ as spiritual gifts in small groups, rather than interdependence among all the members (Van Gelder 2000:110). According to the Two Wings Nurturing System of the Church, all the members of the church have to take part in "Gifts Discovery Seminar", and thereafter have to be allocated to various programmes of the church to serve according to their spiritual talent (Kim 2005:247-248). Although this understanding of the body of Christ helps the talented people to work more efficiently and pleasingly in the programmes they were put to serve, it is based on practicability, rather than based on sacrificial love and fellowship related to the crucified Christ and dynamic gift-shaped interdependence related to the resurrected Christ (Van Gelder 2000:110). About their understanding of the body of Christ as small groups, the senior pastor says, "if a church grows through running well-organized small groups, there will be no problem even if the church grows very large" (Kim 2005:125). This understanding of the oneness of the church, however, is not to make God known to the world through a loving and sacrificing community, but more to make the church grow through

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organisational and functional unity.

According to Van Gelder (2000:105-106), “the author of the New Testament did not distinguish between the visible and invisible church.” The early church was obviously the concrete, historical, visible church created by God through the Spirit as a gathered community. Van Gelder (2000:106) criticises the people’s group represented by evangelicals suggesting that they have been negligent about the unity of the church. All churches have consistently to embrace contextual and theoretical differences of each other in love (WCC 2013:20-21) as seen from the following two examples in the New Testament. Jesus created a community that was able to overcome all the differences that could have separated them. Among his disciples, Simon who was called the Zealot, Levi the tax collector, and fishermen were together and united (Padilla 2010:162-163). For the unity of the church the Jerusalem council (Ac 15) discerned that circumcision was not necessary for Gentile converts although it was was indeed central to Israel’s identity as God’s covenant people (Niemandt 2010a:6-7).

On account of its negligence of the unity of the church, a number of conflicts have been caused among denominations in the USA since the Reformation, and as a result of it, the church continues repeating divisions and competitions without any difference from the world, losing something essential in understanding the church as the creation of the Spirit, which is demonstrating the love unity of the Triune God to the world.

The WCC (2013:17) declares “Current divisions within and between the churches stand in contrast to the oneness; these must be overcome through the Spirit’s gifts of faith, hope, and love so that separation and exclusion do not have the last word.” It is because the church is called to make present God’s holy and life-affirming plan for the world revealed in Jesus Christ by rejecting values and practices which lead to the destruction of community (WCC 2013:61). Oneness does not necessarily require some type of organisational or institutional oneness (Van Gelder 2000:122), however it must be implemented by the churches in visible and concrete ways. According to Küng (2007:411), this oneness of the church:

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> cannot be decreed from above, it must grow up from below, from within both communities and individuals. For this reason, the vital thing at all levels is that we should learn to accept and respect one another- something we are only now beginning to take for granted; we must come to know one another and listen to one another where what is really essential, faith, is concerned; we must feel that we are one, and work together, wherever possible, required of common witness to Christ before the world.

1.2.2.2 Apostolic Holiness

"Jesus loved the church and gave himself up for her in order to make her holy by cleansing her with the washing of water by the word, so that she may be holy and without blemish" (WCC 2013:17). Therefore the holiness of the church does not stem from itself, but is already given to it as God justifies individual believers through the death and the resurrection of Christ Jesus. According to Shin (2009:146), holiness in the Bible means "set apart", "stay away" and "be separated" from sin and the sin indicates following the worldly order (culture) rather than individual, internal and ethical errors. The worldly order is the rule of power in a pyramid structure, which is revealed by limitless competition and the law of the jungle (Shin 2009:169). God commands the church to be holy because He is holy, although the holiness had already been given to the church as a gift. Therefore the missional churches testify the holy God to the world in concrete ways through their resolution, direction and pilgrimage (sanctification), keeping themselves separate, by themselves and marginalised from the worldly order (culture). Thus, the missional church is inherently a counter cultural witnessing community (Niemandt 2012:8).

Although the church as the *ecclesia* in Greek, which means "a called-out assembly", describes a political gathering (Küng 2007:109), an official meeting of an assembly of citizens (Van Gelder 2000:105), it is more than just another social organisation or human institution because it is created by the Holy Spirit (Van Gelder 2000:116-117). In this sense, to relate the holiness of the church to its oneness and apostolicity, the missional church has to live a holy life because it is already holy, baptised to be united as the body of Christ Jesus, so as to display the holiness of God in a way that attracts the nations to find blessing in God as God promised to Abraham (Chester & Timmis 2011: loc 675-676). As the WCC puts it, "the essential holiness of the Church is witnessed to in every generation by holy men and women and by the holy words

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and actions the Church proclaims and performs in the name of God, the All Holy."

God's people (the church), is living under the present pagan rule, which is like the imperial tyranny of Caesar. Caesar ruled the state by winning military victories and by putting up money for public works so that people would hail him as lord and entrust themselves to him as their saviour (Wright 2005: loc 1501-1502). The church as a community that hails Jesus as Lord, who rules by love, stands against the unstoppable military might of Rome (politics) and the divinity of Caesar (theology), whose power stood behind that of his armies. Thus, the church is inherently separate from the worldly order both politically and theologically, and persecution is its natural result. The fight to be set apart seems to be impossible because the church can fight the world only with love. Therefore missional churches with the genius of the apostolic holiness should risk their lives by carrying their own crosses (Mt 16:24-25) by the power of the Spirit, who is the empowering presence of the living God (Tennent 2010:411).

The Bundang Woori Church has, since its inception, been renting an auditorium of a high school in Bundang region, and did not try to build its own building, even after it grew very large. This is not only because the Church tried to be considerate to the people coming to the Church with wounded hearts from their building-focused Korean church, but also because the Church tried to avoid following the worldly order of consumerism, which attempts to attract more people with a large and luxurious building, as can be seen from the title of the senior pastor's book, *A diary of church plating of the Bundang Woori Church running to be things not belonged to the world* (Lee 2013). The Bundang Woori Church is dispatching its well-trained members to the weak churches in the neighbourhood through the sending 10,000 Member Movement, in order to share the blessing it has been enjoying, in contrast to the world where the richer get richer and the poor get poorer.

The Church is also witnessing God's holiness to the world through concrete action an apostolic holiness that is different from the greediness of the world by donating the Seo-Hyun Education Centre building to local society after 10 years of usage. The Seo-Hyun Education Centre is the only building the Church purchased for the education of Sunday school students. Although the Bundang Woori Church is

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experiencing misunderstanding and resistance from both inside and outside because of its different order, Chan-Soo Lee the senior pastor is steadily leading them to be apostolic in their holiness. In his sermon on 26 January 2014 he said that “this is the shape of the church with which God is pleased and the way to restore the good influence of the Korean church that has waned through excessive competitions for growth.”

The megachurch emphasises that the church is on a journey to be holy rather than that it is already a holy community. He regards the holiness of the church as an essential characteristic only of the invisible church (Van Gelder 2000:116). Shin (2014:225-245) summarises the theology of the Korean megachurches with a newly coined compound word, “Arvinism”, made of Arminianism and Calvinism. Arvinism puts together the soteriology of Arminianism (I can be saved if I choose to believe) and the perseverance of the saints of Calvinism. Through this, the megachurches lessen the burden of being already-holy communities chosen by the holy God, and avoid consistent efforts of sanctification, not to lose their salvation by attending the church as the perseverance of the saints. This understanding of the holiness of the megachurch comes from its understanding of apostolicity, and it produces a “culture Christianity” (Padilla 2013:57).

According to Wells (2006:32), evangelicals tend to see that culture is neutral and harmless. Furthermore, they often see culture as a helper to propagate the truth of Christianity. The megachurches say that they baptize worldly movies, music, television programmes, commercials, and pop trends into the service of the kingdom (Thumma & Travis 2007:141). The megachurch does not lay a burden on its congregation to be separate from the culture of the world. Thumma and Travis (2007:14-16) say that the megachurches take for granted that increasing their size follows the world in keeping up its enlargement. They borrow models of organisation and presentation methods from other institutions around them in order to cope with large numbers of attendees, and design their worship and religious message to satisfy their attendees’ (consumers) physical and spiritual needs in a consumerist society.

The Poongsunghan Church, following the managerial methods of shopping malls, pursues optimisation of productivity and efficiency in a consumerist society. The

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Church has huge buildings which have various convenient facilities in the suburbs of a densely populated area. It has an effective pyramid-type organisational structure. There are 12 direct disciples (full-time ministers) called “director” working immediately under the charismatic leadership of the senior pastor. Each director manages 12 super cell leaders, while each super cell leader manages 4 other cell leaders under them. Through this structure, the management policy of the leader can be quickly spread throughout the whole structure. The Church is given to dispensing rewards and punishment, as can be seen from their promotions that when a cell leader reproduces four other cells, he is promoted to be a super cell leader and gets rewarded a special ring before the whole congregation. But a cell is dissolved and merged into other cells when it fails to reproduce within a year. The Poongsunghan Church, as a seeker-type megachurch designs its worship for seeker’s satisfaction, and preaches a message that is relevant to everyday life and contemporary reality rather than dealing with the themes of sin and repentance.

The megachurches are not prepared to occupy the margins of their cultural environment. Instead, they are committed to impact on the culture by portraying Christianity as useful, relevant, and user-friendly (Tennent 2010:29) although “Christianity is the profoundest wound that can be inflicted upon a man, calculated on the most dreadful scale to collide with everything” (Kierkegaard 1944:258) with its holiness. Shin (2009:210-211) criticises the megachurch’s failure in holiness because of its understanding of baptism. Being baptised means devoting oneself to Jesus Christ, entrusting oneself to the resurrected Lord and submitting oneself to His rule and protection, instead of to the worldly order where Caesar rules (Küng 2007:292). However, the megachurches, although insisting that they baptize worldly entertaining, managerial and psychological methods, to serve the congregation well, neglect to cut out the worldly ethos to grow big, make more profit, and have bigger power and influence. Padilla (2010:41) says this culture Christianity emerged through the megachurch’s failure of being baptised:

> The problem the culture Christianity lies in the fact that it reduces the gospel to a formula for success and equates the triumph of Christ with obtaining the highest number of “conversions”. This is a human-centred Christianity that clearly shows itself to be conditioned by the “technological mentality”… [that] regards efficiency as the absolute criterion and on this basis seeks, in all areas

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> of human life, the systematization of methods and resources to obtain pre-established results… This is another form of worldliness. The manipulation of the gospel to achieve successful results inevitably leads to slavery to the world and its powers.

The church must be holy because it is set apart for God and for God's missionary purposes in history (The Archbishop's council 2004:96). As Chester and Timmis (2011: loc 693-694) put it, the missional church's missional cutting edge are not events that are like culture but a life and message that are unlike culture.

1.2.2.3 Apostolic Catholicity

According to Choi (1998:125), the Catholicity of the church means that the church is a universal church that is arranged and prepared for all nations, all ages, all social statuses, classes, and for all place and time. In this understanding, the church transcends time and place and is not bound to any one social or political system (Van Gelder 2000:118). The Catholicity of the church, related to its oneness, indicates all the local churches in which the oneness of the church, believing in the same gospel and carrying out the same baptism, is manifested, represented and fulfilled (Küng 2007:429). This Catholic Church which keeps its oneness despite change of age and generation never exists for itself but for the world. Therefore the church cannot be catholic by territorial expansion, numerical quantity, socio-cultural diversity, and continuity in time (Küng 2007:430). The church can be catholic when it carries out God's redemptive ministry toward the world, transcending culture and race.

This apostolic Catholic church is fundamentally missionary in nature, universal in scope and translatable into a particular context (Guder 2000:81). Just as the Word became flesh, the church as the body of Christ is enfleshed in human culture with an organisational structure, to embody God's redemptive reign in the local place where it is sent. When the church expresses the reign of God to the local area, a power encounter occurs between the church and the fallen principalities and powers of the world (Tennent 2010:490). The missional church, in being led and taught by the Holy Spirit, confronts these principalities and powers with the following four Christ-like incarnational elements in their local context (Hirch 2006:133-134):

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- Presence is to become part of the fabric of a community and to engage in the humanity of it all, to make relationships with people whom Jesus wants to make relationships as representatives of Him.
- Proximity assumes not only presence, but also genuine availability, which will involve spontaneity as well as regularity in the communities the church inhabits.
- Powerlessness is servant hood and humility that the church is committed to relationship with the world. As Jesus Christ was in a plain body on the Cross, the church should live a kenotic life style, giving all kinds of privilege, position, title, and authority, to be with marginalised people (Shin 2009:280-281).
- Proclamation of the gospel is to be willingly shared by the church within their world and to be ensured by their faithful lives.

The missional church, through this incarnational power encounter, unmasks the powers of the world that have already been defeated and incapacitated, transcending time and space, which can be compared with no other human construction of social existence (Van Gelder 2000:120).

According to the annual report of Statistics Korea (2013:27), regarding the number of divorces that occurred in Korea during 2012: 114,316 divorces occurred from 327,073 marriages. The Bundang region had the third highest divorce rate among the Korean cities due to its regional characteristic which is that the majority of the region's population is from the upper-middle class (Statistics Korea 2013:21). The Bundang Woori Church has been devoted to the restoration of broken families under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to encounter and expose the destructive powers and principalities of the region. Through the Church's worship service and various ministries for the restoration of families, a number of broken and dysfunctional families have recovered. As the restored Christian families share their lives in local society, the local people, especially a generation of young people from dysfunctional homes who need to experience Christian families in action before they become husbands, wives and parents, are seeing Christian living and grace modelled (Chester & Timmis 2011: loc 945-947).

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The megachurch, through the influence of the medieval understanding of Catholicity in which one universal Roman Church existed in all the known regions of the time under the rule of the Roman Empire (Van Gelder 2000:115), regards territorial expansion and numerical quantity of an individual church as the Catholicity of the church. The megachurch's understanding of apostolicity is world evangelisation and world mission. That is the vision most megachurches pursue. The megachurch places emphasis on delivering well-prepared messages organised in advance (Sermon) at the appointed time and place (an institutional church) rather than proclamation of the gospel through a sermon sustained by a life of relationships. Through the use of technology, with television, internet and broadcasting equipment, the megachurch tries to transcend time and space to quickly fulfil world evangelisation by transmitting to all the world the virtual image and message of the senior pastors without a real presence (Shin 2009:317-321).

The Poongsunghan Church understands the power of encounter as a territorial expansion of the church. In order to have the command of the region by binding territorial evil spirits, the Church first performs "Prayer walking" going round where the "open cell meeting" gathers for the first four weeks of the meeting. This prayer walking comes from the influence of the concept of "territorial spirits" and "spiritual mapping" advocated by some scholars centred on Peter Wagner at the second Lausanne Conference held in the Philippines in 1989 (Lee 2013). On the Church's homepage, the senior pastor says that the more abundant fruits (winning souls) can be expected to harvest through the open cell meeting after prayer walking because the territorial evil spirits are chained, as it happened in Joshua 6. Kim (2010), a professor from Fuller Seminary, criticises prayer walking, saying that "the letters to the Ephesians and Revelation, sent to Ephesus with its temple of Artemis, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, do not teach us to pray walking around this temple. The letters teach us instead to encounter Satan's rule of sin and death by preaching the good news of the kingdom of God with the help of the Holy Spirit to stand firm in faith, keeping the truth, practicing love and righteousness (Eph 6), and with the spirit of self-sacrifice risking martyrdom like "a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain (Rv 5:6).

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In relation to the megachurch's impersonal characteristics in its understanding of Catholicity in which the church focuses on propagation of the gospel without bodily presence, Shin (2009:277-284) says: the New Testament way of revelation is that a messenger reveals the truth through his bodily presence, way of life as Jesus revealed God and the truth through His body (Jn 12:45). By being among and with them Jesus Christ convinced his disciples to confess: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Mt 16:16). As Padilla (2013:110) refers to it:

> The knowledge of God is personal and therefore it takes place in the context of our bodily existence in the world. The God whom the gospel proclaims is a God who has entered into human history in order to put himself within our reach and to participate in all the contingencies of everyday life. The incarnation is a negation of every attempt to reach God by means of mysticism, asceticism, or rationalistic speculation; we know God through the Word who takes on concrete form in our own culture.

1.3 Conclusion

This chapter compared both theoretically and practically the megachurch's understanding of the church and mission with that of the missional church on the basis of definitions and characteristics obtained from the previous chapters, and criticised the megachurch from the missional church's missiological and ecclesiological perspectives with the purpose of seeking the answer to the question "Can a megachurch be missional?"

In their missiological perspective the missional church and the megachurch differed in terms of understanding of the kingdom of God, incarnational mission and discipleship. This difference derived from the missional church's base on the mission of God, while the megachurch is rooted in the mission of the church. The mission of the missional church plays a role as an eschatological kingdom community to let the world taste God's rule in advance by incarnational life wherever it operates and by practicing radical discipleship of the incarnational life. On the contrary, the mission of the megachurch rooted in ecclesio-centric mission made Christianity an irrelevant religious group which focuses only on bringing more persons to the church by

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competitively running various programmes without social participation, and by training disciples as workers to carry out the programmes effectively, seeing the kingdom of God as the church's territorial expansion through quantitative growth of the local church.

In an ecclesiological perspective the understanding of the nature of the church is based on the four attributes of the church which are interrelated and effect each other. But especially the interpretation of its apostolicity throughout history has had great influence on the understanding of the megachurch and missional church about the church. While the missional church sees the apostolicity of the church as being sent by the Lord to the world to witness to the truth by words and deeds, following the example of the apostles, the megachurch sees it as attracting more people in the world to the institutional church because the authority of the apostles were bestowed to the institutional church. With this interpretation of the apostolicity, the megachurch believes that One, Holy, Catholic Church cannot be attained by a visible earthly church as an assembly of individuals aggravates divisions of the church by pursuing the individual church's unlimited growth and is compromised by the worldly order (culture) to accomplish that growth effectively and efficiently rather, than being united as the one and holy body of Christ Jesus separated from the world to confront and disarm the fallen destructive powers and principalities in the area where it was sent, through incarnational lifestyle, transcending time and space.

Through these comparative analyses and critiques, it is concluded that the megachurch cannot be missional in its perspectives on mission and the church. The missional church is an on-going movement to restore the apostolic genius of the church and to overcome the tendency to be a megachurch in the light of the *missio* Dei.

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Chapter 5

1. Conclusion

1.1 Introduction

This paper has been an attempt to honestly and accurately answer the question, “Can a megachurch be missional?” To find the answer to the question, both theoretical and practical research was undertaken. A theoretical study was done from the documented works of many scholars, especially scholars in ecclesiology and missiology in America and Europe, where the phenomena were initiated. As for the practical study, although the megachurch and the missional church are global phenomena, this research investigated these types of churches in Korea. Due to the constraints of this paper, more examples of practical expression could not be presented, but a Korean megachurch and a Korean missional church were chosen as examples. This final concluding chapter summarises the author’s findings and proposes the way forward for the Korean church and for further research.

1.2 Can a megachurch be missional?

Definitions and characteristics of the megachurch and the missional church were presented because the word megachurch does not simply refer to a very large church in membership or size of its building. A missional does also not simply refer to a mission-focused church sending many missionaries to other countries or carrying out various relief ministries for local societies. Otherwise the megachurch can be seen as more missional than any other churches.

In chapter 2, the definition and characteristics of the megachurch and its background was expounded. The megachurch does not have any competitors throughout the history of the church in its growth rate, building and numerical size. It has great influence on all the churches in the world, going beyond the local boundaries, to achieve the same church growth. This explosive growth and influence of the megachurch has been the result of the intertwining and interaction of socio-cultural, historical and a theological backdrop. As urbanisation and market economy emerged along with industrialisation, people got used to mega-sized buildings, masses of people and consumerism. The megachurch follows the consumerism of shopping malls with its mega-sized buildings and the scale of its economy.

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The following factors interacted and were mixed with the church growth theory and pragmatism of the new evangelicals: A theology that saw the expansion of Christendom as the same as the expansion of the kingdom of God under the partnership between the church and the state; Competition on their expansion was started among denominations in America by their discovery of the New World; New appreciation of a large scale conversion through the movements of the Great Awakening; the World mission (Evangelisation) movement with its emphasis on the Great Commission of Christ. These factors were woven into the thinking of the pastors of the megachurch that the growth of an individual church is the expansion of the kingdom of God and the church has to use anything if it can bring good results (numerical growth of an individual church).

The characteristics of the megachurch can be found not only in large scale churches, but from all churches with missiological and ecclesiological perspectives to achieve by all means the quantitative growth of the church and world evangelisation, through the power and material obtained from growth. Therefore, the megachurch is not simply a matter of size and number, but has this strong tendency. This tendency was also revealed at the Poongsunghan Church, a Korean megachurch.

In chapter 3, the definition and characteristics of the missional church and its background was observed. The missional church has emerged in a situation where Christianity is being marginalized by the Post-Christendom of the postmodern world. After the World Wars, the *missio* Dei (the mission of God), missionary works of the Trinitarian God to save the whole cosmos, was rediscovered by the church to supersede the missions of the church that are based on the institutionalism of Christendom. The missional church and all its members participate in the mission of God on the basis of a missional ecclesiology that sees the church as an instrument sent to the world to participate in the *missio* Dei. The missional churches, following the way of God's mission, testify to God's rule wherever they are, in incarnational ways through their holy lives (with words and deeds represented by ethical life) as disciples of Christ Jesus.

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The missional church is an on-going movement that believes that all churches are sent by God to deliver the good news of reconciliation through Christ to the whole created world (missiology) and try to restore their missional nature (ecclesiology) take part in God's *missio*. This on-going movement is also activating in the Bundang Woori Church, a Korean missional church.

Chapter 4 compared the understanding of mission and the church by the Poongsunghan Church and the Bundang Woori Church. The comparison was based on the definitions and characteristics of a megachurch and a missional church. It criticised the megachurch from a missional church perspective. The understanding about mission of the megachurch and of the missional church was classified under God-centred missions and church-oriented missions.

On its understanding of mission the missional church sees itself as an eschatological community that witnesses to God's redemptive reign. It participates in the mission of God by working for the restoration of the local society in incarnational ways with the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit. It continues living out the way of Jesus' disciples. The megachurch showed the characteristics differed from that of the missional church. It neglects social participation due to its emphasis on individual salvation and its view on world evangelisation is bringing more individuals to the institutional church through running various programmes and raising disciples as workers to carry out the programmes productively.

On its understanding of the church the missional church, as a movement trying to restore the apostolic oneness, holiness and universality of the church, they regard the nature of the church as its apostolicity and witness about the kingdom of God to the world through unity in love. They separate themselves from the world order and culture, and live out the truth that transcends time and place. The megachurch harbours a different view. The megachurch interpreted the apostolicity of the church as their authority to give the salvation that had been entrusted to the institutional church. On the basis of this interpretation, the megachurch pursues unlimited growth of the individual church, is being secularised and attempts to accomplish world evangelisation by transmitting the gospel all over the whole world without their incarnational presence.

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Through the series of observations mentioned above, it is concluded that the missional church is a reforming movement for the restoration of the apostolic essence of the church by overcoming the characteristics of the megachurch. It emerged from the combination of socio-cultural, historical and theological backgrounds. Therefore, any mega-trended and mega-minded churches that have or pursue the tendency of the megachurch cannot be missional. The critique on the megachurch is not that it has a big number of attendees and to be a missional church does not simply mean changing ministries and organisations of the megachurch. It can only be possible when the church and all its members participate in the mission of God keeping the nature of the church in view. In this sense, a big and large church can be missional although it is more difficult than with a small church. However, a church that is not resisting the megachurch phenomenon can never be a missional church regardless of its present size.

This research did not focus on the size of congregation that gathers on Sunday mornings, but on how the congregation lives its mission outside the church building (Chester & Timmis 2011: loc 2355-2359). As can be seen from both case studies, the Poongsunghan Church and the Bundang Woori Church are megachurches based on a general definition of a megachurch with more than 2,000 church members. The difference is whether the church uncritically follows the megachurch tendency or not, and whether the church practices introspection to restrain the endless desire to grow bigger or not. Mission cannot be achieved with the power and influence of the church. It can only be engaged in properly when the church lives a missional life to make the reign of God (the kingdom of God) be modelled and demonstrated wherever it is sent as a community sent to the world by the Triune God.

1.3 The way forward for the Korean church

Korean society rates the Korean church very low, as spiritually and morally bankrupt. A number of pastors see the slowdown or decline of the numerical growth of the church as a problem to be solved by employing various methodologies and are fiercely competing with each other to boost the numbers of church attendance. Pastors' plea for evangelism from many pulpits: "If we are not evangelizing, we will see our church emptied and sold as beautiful churches in Europe is being sold to

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pubs and shrines of other religions."

Shin (2010:260-261), quoting Jacques Ellul, says "Alternatives for change are not separate from dispassionate awareness of a reality." Paton (1953:34) makes bold to say, "When a disaster has occurred, nothing is really wise, or even kind, save ruthless examination of the causes." Bill Hybels, the senior pastor of Willow Creek Community Church, which is a representative of the seeker type megachurch, said in a leadership summit in 2007 that "We made a mistake." He admitted that the emphasis on programmes and meetings did not produce disciples. Loyalty to the church such as tithing and serving in church works did not guarantee spiritual maturity and genuine love for neighbours (Stetzer 2007). According to him, the church needs a new paper to write on, not just rewriting after erasing. The Korean church needs this confession and thorough investigation on what went wrong. An alternative can be found when there is a thorough awareness of the reality and confession on it.

Bosch (1991:3) says that crisis is not the end of opportunity but in reality only its beginning. It is the point where danger and opportunity meet, where the future is in the balance and where events can go either way. In this sense, the Korean church should recognise that they are in the same condition as the early church that was persecuted and marginalised. Shifted to the margin, the early church took hardships for granted and even grew under the persecutions by a living missional life. As Chester and Timmis (2011: loc 76-78) put it, "Our marginal status is also an opportunity to reconnect with our Bibles. The New Testament is a collection of missionary documents written to missionary situations. It was written by Christians living on the margins of their culture."

The missional church, with its missional ecclesiology, finds the way forward for the Korean church. It is not from the result, the slowdown of its numerical growth, but from the reason why the church lost its missional (apostolic) genius. In order to change a crisis into an opportunity, the Korean church has to participate in the missional church movement, shifting its focus from attracting events to creating attractive communities with marginal status. Belcher's (2009:204-207) seven suggestions are helpful to create that community:

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- Create an environment that is exciting, hospitable and warm to celebrate togetherness.
- Keep the gospel of forgiveness and the kingdom at the centre of community group and let the gospel sustain, renew and energises the community.
- Become missional by reaching out to people in need with mercy.
- Become a shalom maker by seeking the peace where the community is.
- Become a deep worshiper by studying the hymn and the Lord's supper (Eucharist) and share grace earned from them with others around.
- Let the love of the community make guests feel included.
- Let each member of the community try to be attractional first.

1.4 Proposal for a further research (Final thought)

Although the megachurch and the missional church are global phenomena and movement, this research only investigated American and European churches as part of the theoretical study, and Korean churches for its practical study. If an analysis of the megachurch and the missional church in the African church, especially Zambia where the author worked as a missionary, is added to this research, it will be even clearer that the megachurch and the missional church are worldwide movements. Because Europe, America, Korea and Africa are different continents, different characteristics and trends can be observed according to their different contexts. African churches have the following special characteristics compared to churches in other continents.

African churches:

- experienced Christendom as a colony of European countries (Especially Zambia is called a Christian nation since the declaration of former president Frederick Chiluba in 1991), but is in its history not like one of countries of its origin in Europe and the USA. The Korean church never experienced Christendom. Therefore, it can be said that the African church is in the midst of the European church and the Korean church.

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- are experiencing the prevalence of Christianity in society unlike the American, European and Korean churches.
- are mostly Pentecostal churches, which are managed by charismatic leadership.
- in crises of expansion of Islam, radical urbanisation and polarisation owing to foreign capital influx, and thoughtless introduction of theologies like prosperity theology.

More research on this issue is worthwhile.

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