

## **CHURCH AND PARA-CHURCH TRADITIONS - A BREAKDOWN**

### **Para-local Church Movement**

"Any spiritual ministry whose organization is not under control or authority of a local congregation." Characteristics: Leadership centred on a strong personality, lack of accountability, competition with the local church for the dollar, and duplicate ministries.

### **Focus on the Family**

Ministry of Dr. James Dobson. Advocates home schooling/prayer for public school/last resort Christian school.

### **Why Encounter**

Organizes prayer rallies for the salvation of Canada.

### **Bible College/Bible Institute**

Train pastors, missionaries, church workers and lay leaders. View of the church: Generally baptistic. Most are premillennial/ dispensational.

### **Evangelicals**

Basic concern is the salvation of individual souls. Salvation is primarily spiritual and eschatological. Sin condemned is personal rather than participation in social evils. Central mission is evangelism and church planting. Many, while believing that evangelism is primary, insist that evangelism and social responsibility are both important.

### **Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC)**

Membership: individuals, organizations, denominations. Majority committed to the "public school socialization function, i.e. decent morals and neutral practical skill knowledge."

### **Mainline Denominations**

Salvation-personal and social. Social salvation includes socio-economic liberation in a secular and non-Christian society. The dominant ecumenical says that we must also convert social structures and de-emphasize the vertical side of sin and salvation. Salvation may take a liberationist character, e.g. WCC's continuing tendency to major on socio-political engagement, emphasis on economic liberation in the here and now.

### **Extreme Ecumenical Model**

Salvation in the here and now through restructuring society. Knowing God is nothing more than seeking justice for the oppressed. Goal of missions is the humanization of society.

### **Anglican Church (Church of England)**

A diverse body. *High-Church* (Anglo-Catholic): highly sacramental and ritualistic. *Broad-church*: social activists, liberal theology. *Low-church*: evangelicals, who retain an unyielding loyalty to Scripture and the Anglican Thirty-Nine Articles (Confession of faith).

### **The United Church**

"In the church it is acceptable not to know what to believe." Main task of education: "Training boys and girls for good citizenship."

### **Presbyterian Church of Canada**

Combination of liberal, fundamentalistic and reformed theology. Education: With few exceptions the same stand as the United Church.

### **The Reformed Church of America**

No support for Christian Day Schools.

### **Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec**

A mixture of evangelicals, neo-orthodox, and liberals

### **Radical Reformation**

#### **The Anabaptists**

Greater emphasis on community than evangelicals. Salvation is both personal and social. Salvation is directed towards the experienced, inwardly perceivable transformation of a person. Church: Church is a visible model of the redeemed. By living as converted individuals and offering fallen society salvation, this new model of the church is the only way to change the world. Infants are often dedicated. Some radical Anabaptists find no place for political engagement. Others find a small place for direct social engagement.

#### **Mennonites**

The will of God is revealed in a preparatory and non-final way in the Old Testament, but fully and definitely in Christ and in the New Testament. Some retain the communal ethos; others are distinctive in lifestyle without living in communities. Many are shaped by the modern evangelical movement. Education: Some organize/support their own Christian Day Schools.

#### **Baptists**

The New Testament church is composed of baptized believers. Emphasis on the local church and the priesthood of all believers. Ordinances: Baptism by immersion and Lord's Supper. Leaders: Pastors and deacons. Baptists are woefully divided.

### **Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec**

Trans-Canada Fellowship of Evangelical Baptists (The Fellowship of Evangelical Baptists) Many are premillennial or dispensational in theology. Some are Reformed. Education: The concern is more for the evangelization of the child rather than the development of a consistent world and life view. Children should be witnesses within the public school system.

### **Holiness Movement (Arminian)**

The endeavour to preserve and propagate John Wesley's teaching on entire sanctification and Christian perfection (Methodism). Education: Sunday school developed as the chief means of keeping the youth within the church.

### **Christian Missionary Alliance**

A broadly evangelical denomination. Strong home and foreign mission programs. Education: Do not support Christian Day schools.

### **Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada**

Radical wing of the holiness movement. Education: The Christian school is seen as a protest school that has chosen to break with the secular public school. Some support for Christian Day school. There is also support for Alpha Omega programs and Accelerated Christian education.

### **The Church of the Nazarene**

Strong emphasis on Christian education through Sunday Day Schools. Church: It combines congregational autonomy with superintendency in a representational system.

### **Free Methodists**

A 19th century product of the protest to the decline of strict holiness standards in early American Methodism. Infant baptism is practised.

### **The Salvation Army**

The Evangelical Missionary Church in Canada It has Mennonite and holiness roots.

### **Dispensationalism**

The belief that Christ will return secretly for His saints prior to the tribulation. Anti-covenantalism. (Many covenants and dispensations.) For many the pretribulational rapture of Christ seems to be a litmus test of orthodoxy. Education: No support for Christian Day Schools. Considers social concern insignificant because society will get worse and worse. The Brethren have always exercised an influence among evangelical Christians out of all proportion to their numbers.

### **Restorationism (Primitivism)**

Turn back the clock to the first century, live the simple apostolic life.  
a. *Plymouth Brethren*

Reject the term "Plymouth." Lay ministers. Weekly "breaking of bread," strong leanings towards prophetic studies.

b. Open Brethren

Mainstream. Willingness to cooperate with evangelicals.

c. Exclusive Brethren

Darbyists/dispensational. Separatists in relation to other Christians. No order of clergymen acknowledged.

## **The Sunday School Movement**

Tensions respecting Sunday Schools have developed between evangelicals and liberal Protestants. In response to liberal curricula, evangelicals have developed their own. Support dwindling. Despite the known weaknesses and criticisms, many still believe that the one hour of "religious instruction" on Sunday will offset the damage done by the public schools.

## **Lutheranism**

Lutherans do not insist on a uniform church polity. Some Lutherans and Lutheran church bodies have been influenced greatly by modern biblical criticism in recent decades. Waterloo County has the greatest concentration of Lutherans in Canada.

## **Missouri Synod**

Rigidly confessional in its theology. Congregational in church polity. Education: Supports a strong system of parish or parochial schools.

## **Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (E.L.C.)**

Inclusive in theology.

## **Lutheran Church in Canada**

Ethnic based. More rigorous in theology than the E.L.C.