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## THE RIGHT DIRECTION?

**An examination of where the New Evangelical policy of no separation from those associated with error and apostasy has led the theological college *WEST*.**

R. E. Palgrave

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This article can also be found on the *Bible League Quarterly* website: <http://www.bibleleaguetrust.org> for easier access to the links referenced in this document.

It was the policy of the *British Evangelical Council (BEC)* and Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones *not* to engage in church-level fellowship with evangelicals remaining in the ‘mixed denominations.’<sup>1</sup> Individual churches, evangelical or otherwise, in denominations belonging to the *World Council of Churches (WCC)* were excluded from membership of the *BEC*. The *BEC Official Statement: Attitude to Ecumenicity*<sup>2</sup> was clear on its policy that it would not accept into membership churches belonging to the Ecumenical Movement as to do so would compromise the Gospel and blur the distinction between truth and error.<sup>3</sup>

In 2004 the *BEC* became *Affinity* and its new ‘Director,’ Jonathan Stephen, made it clear that he intended to ‘develop the Anglican dimension’ within *Affinity*.<sup>4</sup> This has resulted in *Affinity* taking churches into membership which belong to the Church of England. Furthermore, churches belonging to other mixed denominations, such as the Baptist Union, have been permitted to join *Affinity*.<sup>5</sup> In addition to his position as ‘Director’ of *Affinity*, Jonathan Stephen became the Principal of *Wales Evangelical School of Theology (WEST)* in 2006.<sup>6</sup>

*WEST* is a theological college in South Wales for those entering the Christian ministry. As stated on the history pages of the *WEST* website,<sup>7</sup> it began in 1936 as the *Barry School of Evangelism* or *Barry Bible College* and was evangelical in its theology. In the 1960s Rev. John Waite became the Principal and the College became Reformed. In 1985 the College became known as the *Evangelical Theological College of Wales (ETCW)* and Dr. Eryl Davies became the Principal. Under Dr. Eryl Davies the College introduced degrees validated by secular universities. In 2005 Dr. Davies stepped down as Principal but he continues to take an active role in the College as *Research Supervisor*. In appointing Jonathan Stephen as Principal the College willingly opened the door to his non-separating policies. His views were known to the College because of his proposed *Essentially Evangelical*<sup>8</sup> organisation and the direction in which he had publically confirmed that he would take *Affinity*.<sup>9</sup>

In a leaflet produced by *Wales Evangelical School of Theology (WEST)* entitled *The Right Direction* Jonathan Stephen made the following statement:

‘I rejoice in the increasing partnership between Reformed Anglican and Free churches and, as Director of *Affinity*, will continue to promote it. But if biblical non-conformity should short-sightedly refuse to support and invest in its own training institutions, then it will soon discover that it has colluded in its own demise.’<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The term ‘mixed denominations’ refers to denominations that are largely teaching error but where a number of evangelicals choose to remain.

<sup>2</sup> British Evangelical Council *Official Statement: Attitude to Ecumenicity* (BEC Newsletter, June, 1968).

<sup>3</sup> See R. E. Palgrave *They Have Forgotten...* (Unity in Truth Literature, 2012). Tel: 07967 118852 or email [unityintruth@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:unityintruth@hotmail.co.uk)

<sup>4</sup> Jonathan Stephen speaking at the launch of *Affinity* as reported in the article entitled *To Affinity and Beyond* by John Benton (*Evangelicals Now*, May, 2004).

<sup>5</sup> *Affinity* (Issue 6, 2006, No.2).

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.west.org.uk/history/>

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *Essentially Evangelical* was Jonathan Stephen’s proposed network of Free Church and Anglican Christians together. See Rev. Geoff Thomas’ article: [http://www.banneroftruth.org/pages/articles/article\\_detail.php?646](http://www.banneroftruth.org/pages/articles/article_detail.php?646)

<sup>9</sup> John Benton *To Affinity and Beyond* (*Evangelicals Now*, May, 2004).

<sup>10</sup> This quotation from Jonathan Stephen used to appear on the *WEST* website <http://www.west.org.uk/Home/Why-WEST> However, it was removed from the site at the end of December, 2012.

As this article will show, however, it is the New Evangelical, unbiblical and non-separatist organisations that are prepared to associate with error and apostasy, which are colluding in their own spiritual demise and, sadly, the spiritual demise of all who blindly follow them.

## WEST'S ALLIANCE WITH THE SARANG COMMUNITY CHURCH

*SaRang Community Church* is a Presbyterian Church in Seoul, Korea, with about 80,000 members.<sup>11</sup> It was founded in 1978 by Pastor Han Hum Oak. In 2003 Pastor Oak announced his retirement and named Jung-Hyun Oh as the new pastor.<sup>12</sup> Pastor Oh<sup>13</sup> has been described as ‘a very distinguished missions strategist and administrator.’<sup>14</sup>

As Jonathan Stephen reported in *Evangelicals Now*,<sup>15</sup> links were established in 2007 between *WEST* and the *SaRang Community Church* through one of *WEST*'s Korean students. The *SaRang* megachurch was eager to extend its mission to Europe and had an interest in Wales due to the fact that the Welshman Robert Jermain Thomas (1839-1866) was one of the early Christian missionaries to Korea. Furthermore, the *WEST* Council saw that the Korean megachurch could provide the financial help they required:

‘They realised that they themselves were not in a position to project the School to the next level — to build the internationally recognised centre for theological learning and training for ministry they were praying for. They saw that SaRang were prepared to invest substantially in the School and could secure its development. They understood that good stewardship on SaRang’s part demanded that they should acquire a large stake in the formation of a new Board. They agreed that the baton needed to be passed on.’<sup>16</sup>

When a church or Christian organisation contemplates a possible future partnership with other churches or groups, it is vital that they thoroughly examine the theology and practice of potential partners to ensure that they are Biblically sound and are not involved in any sort of spiritual compromise. As we shall see, long before 2007 the *SaRang Community Church* had links with both the Charismatic/mystical occult teacher Paul (David) Yonggi Cho and Rick Warren, author of the famous bestselling book *The Purpose Driven Life*. Tragically, however, the partnership went ahead.

According to the *Evangelicals Now* article referred to above, in October 2008 Jonathan Stephen and Peter Milsom, the *WEST* Council Chairman (and current Director of *Affinity*),<sup>17</sup> attended the 30th anniversary celebrations of *SaRang*. Further negotiations then took place in spite of difficulties which were arising in Seoul relating to a controversial building project that the megachurch was undertaking.<sup>18</sup> Jonathan Stephen reported that at the end of February 2011:

‘Peter [Milsom], Sungho<sup>19</sup> and I returned to Seoul — together this time with Graham John, a longstanding Council member who is continuing on the new Board — for the formal signing of the papers that would seal our gospel partnership.’<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> <http://english.sarang.org/> (‘History’ page). According to the SaRang Church website the 80,000 members consist of 9,000 children, 31,000 young adults and 40,000 adults.

<sup>12</sup> See Wikipedia and the *SaRang* Church website: <http://english.sarang.org/>

<sup>13</sup> Pastor Jung-Hyun Oh is referred to as ‘Pastor John Oh’ by Jonathan Stephen.

<sup>14</sup> *Joining the Holy Spirit Movement with Discipleship Training* <http://www.davidcho.com/Neweng/news-event/2001-06-16-2.asp>

<sup>15</sup> Jonathan Stephen *East Meets WEST* (*Evangelicals Now*, May 2011). <http://e-n.org.uk/p-5454-East-meets-WEST.htm>

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Rev. Peter Milsom has continued *Affinity* along the same lines as Jonathan Stephen. ‘...we do not require a church to have actually seceded from their denomination in order to join Affinity. We recognize that some churches believe that they should continue to witness actively to the truth within their denominations...’

<http://exiledpreacher.blogspot.co.uk/2011/08/interview-with-affinity-director-peter.html>

<sup>18</sup> *Church Proceeds With Construction Despite Controversy* (Korea Times, 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2010).

[http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/art/2011/04/135\\_59372.html](http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/art/2011/04/135_59372.html)

<sup>19</sup> Sungho Choi was a Korean PhD student studying at *WEST* in 2007.

<sup>20</sup> Jonathan Stephen, *op. cit.* (See picture at:

[http://news.sarang.org/unron/unron\\_view.asp?db\\_idx=1482&section=W007](http://news.sarang.org/unron/unron_view.asp?db_idx=1482&section=W007)).

Following the alliance with *SaRang*, Pastor Oh took over as the new Chancellor of *WEST*, replacing Peter Milsom.<sup>21</sup> According to a letter from the *WEST* Chairman<sup>22</sup> and published company information,<sup>23</sup> the new *WEST* board consists of the following members: Rev. Sam Ko<sup>24</sup> (Chairman of the Board), Mr. Chul Ki Ju,<sup>25</sup> Mr. Hee Keun Kang,<sup>26</sup> Rev. Myung-Ho Kim,<sup>27</sup> Mrs. Sung-Joo Kim,<sup>28</sup> Rev. Graham John,<sup>29</sup> Mr. John Stevens,<sup>30</sup> Dr. John Temple,<sup>31</sup> Mr. Wyn Thomas,<sup>32</sup> and Mr Lindsay Brown, International Director of the *Lausanne Movement*. It is surprising that the College should wish to associate with the *Lausanne Movement* as it is ecumenically compromised. At the *Third Lausanne Congress* in 2010, for example, the head of the *World Council of Churches*<sup>33</sup> was invited to address the Congress.<sup>34</sup>

## SARANG'S RELATIONS WITH DAVID YONGGI CHO

David (formerly Paul) Yonggi Cho<sup>35</sup> is one of the most influential Charismatic preachers alive today, and Emeritus Pastor (formerly Senior Pastor) of the *Yoido Full Gospel Church* in Seoul, the world's largest church with about a million members. He claims that he received the call to preach directly from Jesus Christ, who he says appeared to him dressed like a fireman.<sup>36</sup> David Yonggi Cho emphasises the gift of tongues, divine healing and the importance of the 'cell-group ministry,' for which he has appointed 50,000 leaders, 47,000 of them being female,<sup>37</sup> contrary to the teaching in 1 Timothy 2. He is a proponent of the influential Charismatic *Word-Faith*<sup>38</sup> New Age teaching which says that the believer *is* God and Christ<sup>39</sup> and that faith is a creative force that can be used to shape one's own world, a common occult and New Age belief.<sup>40</sup> He teaches that the 'third dimension' is the material world, while the 'fourth dimension' is the spiritual world, and that one can influence the third dimension. He states that 'through

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<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> [http://www.bibleleaguetrust.org/articles/Chairman%27s\\_Address\\_final.pdf](http://www.bibleleaguetrust.org/articles/Chairman%27s_Address_final.pdf) The *WEST* Chairman's letter names Rev. David Seung Kwan Yoo, a Mission Pastor of *SaRang Community Church* and Member of the Strategic Working Group of the *Lausanne Movement*, as a Board member, but his appointment was terminated in June 2012. Mr Lindsay Brown was appointed a few days later. This information was obtained from Companies House: <http://www.companieshouse.gov.uk/>

<sup>23</sup> *Dellam Corporate Information Ltd.* <http://www.dellam.com/01987227-WALES%20EVANGELICAL%20SCHOOL%20OF%20THEOLOGY%20LTD.html>

<sup>24</sup> Director of Global Ministries at *SaRang Community Church* and Board member of the *Korea-China Cultural Foundation*.

<sup>25</sup> Former South Korean Ambassador to France and Vice President and Secretary General of *Global Compact Korea Network*.

<sup>26</sup> Senior Vice President of *Samsung Electronics* and Board of Trustees at *Sungkyunkwan University Foundation*.

<sup>27</sup> CEO of *Disciple Making Ministries International* and President of *Christianity Today*, Korea.

<sup>28</sup> Chairperson of MCM and *Sungjoo Group International*, and Board member of *World Vision*.

<sup>29</sup> Pastor of *Ebenezer Baptist Church*, Swansea, and Former Secretary of the *Associating Evangelical Churches of Wales (AECW)*.

<sup>30</sup> Director of the *Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches (FIEC)* and law lecturer for 20 years.

<sup>31</sup> Former Chief Executive of the *Plessey Corporation* and author of three books, including *Family Money Matters*.

<sup>32</sup> Pro Vice-Chancellor of *Bangor University* and Elder and Church Secretary of *Ebenezer Evangelical Church*, Bangor.

<sup>33</sup> *The World Council of Churches (WCC)* is an inter-church organization founded in 1948 arising from the *Ecumenical Movement*.

<sup>34</sup> Dr. E. S. Williams *Lausanne Not What It Should Be* (English Churchman, 11<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> February, 2011). <http://www.cofec.org/sermons/7812>

<sup>35</sup> Paul Yonggi Cho claims that God told him to change his name to David.

(Paul Yonggi Cho interviewed by C. Peter Wagner, *Yonggi Cho Changes His Name*, (Charisma and Christian Life, Nov 1992, 80).

<sup>36</sup> Dwight J. Wilson *Cho, Paul Yonggi* (Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements, p.161).

<sup>37</sup> *Calvary Contender* (Nov. 1, 1991).

<sup>38</sup> Also referred to as *Positive Confession* or the *Faith Movement*. Other *Word-Faith* teachers include Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland, Benny Hinn, Paul Crouch, Joel Osteen and Rodney Howard-Browne, leader of the so-called 'spirit' drunken laughing revivals.

<sup>39</sup> Kenneth Copeland, for example, stated: 'You don't have a god in you, you *are* one.' *The Force of Love* (audiotape). See also Ray Yungen *For Many Shall Come In My Name* (Lighthouse Trails, 2007, pp.21-23).

<sup>40</sup> David Cloud *The New Age Tower of Babel* (Way of Life Literature, 2008, p.384 & p.426) and Dave Hunt and T. A. McMahon *The Seduction of Christianity: Spiritual Discernment in the Last Days* (Harvest House Publishers, 1985, pp.12-14).

visualization and dreaming you can incubate your future and hatch the results.<sup>41</sup> The *Word-Faith Movement* is underpinned by enormous amounts of money raised through promises of healing and prosperity.<sup>42</sup>

Dr. Peter Masters, pastor of the *Metropolitan Tabernacle*, London, has issued this warning:

‘The religious disposition of the Koreans is both harnessed and exploited by the “Christianity” of Paul Yonggi Cho in his blatant mix of sorcery, mind-over-matter, self-interest, Sinkyo, Japanese Buddhism and Christianity. But to mix pagan ideas and practices with the pure religion of Christ is condemned in Scripture as the heinous sin of idolatry. It is a marriage of Christianity and the occult and is forbidden by Paul’s words – *What communion hath light with darkness?* And – *What agreement hath the temple of God with idols?*

What has built the largest church in the world? The answer is, an idolatrous mixture of biblical teaching and pagan mind-techniques. God is deprived of His sovereignty in the believer’s affairs, and the authority of Scripture is replaced by the authority of supposedly direct messages from God and the produce of the imagination. This is the kind of church which has moved hordes of impressionable Christian teachers the world over to jump on to the healing-propheying bandwagon. We need to take very great care in these days.<sup>43</sup>

In May 2001 Pastor Oh was senior pastor of the *Sarang Community Church* which he pioneered in Los Angeles, California.<sup>44</sup> He organised a *Spiritual Renewal Conference* which began with a meeting with Pastor Oh, Dr. Yonggi Cho and Rev. Rick Warren of *Saddleback Church*, California, followed by several preaching rallies with Dr. Cho as the main speaker. Dr. Cho believes that threefold blessings are available for every believer: salvation of the soul, physical healing and prosperity.<sup>45</sup> In this conference Cho’s preaching centred on his teaching that physical healing is available to every believer if they have enough faith. He told numerous healing stories<sup>46</sup> and stated that:

‘To solve the problems of your life, you must repent of your sin... We have already been healed by Jesus Christ’s crucifixion on the cross 2000 years ago. Satan occupies our bodies unlawfully. If we are afraid of the impossible, we cannot accomplish anything.’<sup>47</sup>

Dr. Yonggi Cho reported that Pastor Oh had decided that the main theme of this conference should be ‘Let us become a peace offering.’<sup>48</sup> Flyers of the event show a picture of Dr. Yonggi Cho preaching under the heading ‘Let us be a peace offering! Revival 2001.’<sup>49</sup> Was this a Biblical desire for unity in truth, or a desire for unity at the expense of the truth? Pastor Oh emphasised:

‘Korean churches are strong in Systematic Theology. This means that I am right; others are wrong. We are not of the same mind. Through the help of the Holy Spirit, I want the Korean ethnic churches to eliminate denominational barriers.’<sup>50</sup>

When we desire unity above truth it is inevitable that we will be influenced by associations with those teaching error. A report on this 2001 conference revealed that Dr. Cho’s teachings had caused Pastor Oh’s Presbyterian church to re-assess their views on the Holy Spirit.<sup>51</sup> Certainly the influences of the

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<sup>41</sup> Dr. Paul Yonggi Cho *The Fourth Dimension* (Bridge Publishing, 1979, p.44).

<sup>42</sup> David Cloud, *op. cit.*, p.384.

<sup>43</sup> Peter Masters *Occult Healing Builds World’s Largest Church* in *The Healing Epidemic* (The Wakeman Trust, 1988, pp.34-35).

<sup>44</sup> Pastor Oh emigrated from Korea to America in 1988. <http://www.davidcho.com/Neweng/news-event/2001-06-16-2.asp>

<sup>45</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David\\_Yonggi\\_Cho](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Yonggi_Cho)

<sup>46</sup> *Vivid Experiences of Life and Death*

<http://www.davidcho.com/Neweng/news-event/2001-07-24-1.asp>

<sup>47</sup> *Presbyterians Experience Full Gospel Reality* <http://www.davidcho.com/Neweng/news-event/2001-06-16-1.asp>

<sup>48</sup> *Joining the Holy Spirit Movement with Discipleship Training* <http://www.davidcho.com/Neweng/news-event/2001-06-16-2.asp>

<sup>49</sup> Conference flyer: <http://davidcho.com/neweng/news-event/2001-05laproE.asp>

<sup>50</sup> *Joining the Holy Spirit Movement with Discipleship Training* <http://www.davidcho.com/Neweng/news-event/2001-06-16-2.asp>

<sup>51</sup> *Spiritual Renewal Conference*, 2001, in Los Angeles <http://www.davidcho.com/Neweng/cc-1-6.asp>

Charismatic Movement can be seen today in both the Los Angeles *Sarang Community Church* and the Seoul *SaRang Community Church* where Pastor Oh is currently the minister.

When Rev. Sam Ko (a member of the Seoul *SaRang Community Church* and the current Chairman of the *WEST* Board) came to preach at *Mount Pleasant Church* in Swansea he attended with a group of the *SaRang* Church members who were studying at *WEST* and invited them to sing some songs. They chose to sing the Charismatic songs *Let it Rain* and *Our God is an Awesome God*.

The song *Let it Rain* refers to the Charismatic longing for the heavens to open and for God to pour out His Holy Spirit in revival. The wording of the song is: 'Let it rain, let it rain. Open the floodgates of Heaven.' (The Korean *WEST* students sang this one line fifteen times). However, the Charismatic Movement teaches that revival means 'signs and wonders' such as 'tongues,' dreams, visions, prophesying, and even 'spirit slaying,' uncontrollable jerking and spasms of the body, shaking and 'holy laughter.'<sup>52</sup> Although a spirit may well be involved,<sup>53</sup> the Bible does not teach that the Holy Spirit causes these phenomena.<sup>54</sup>

The *Let it Rain* song is part of the album *Come Away* by the contemporary 'Christian' band *Jesus Culture*. This band has said that its aim is to create an atmosphere by its music whereby people can encounter the presence of God and experience the signs mentioned above. As is common in the genre of Contemporary Christian Music,<sup>55</sup> the band members say that this is what their music encourages and explain that they want their worship events to have the following effect on the worshippers:

'We want you to be equipped in the realm of the supernatural - in prayer, in power, in the prophetic, in dreams, in signs and wonders, healing, uh you know, all this stuff.'<sup>56</sup>

The video footage<sup>57</sup> of *Jesus Culture* events shows scenes reminiscent of the so-called *Toronto blessing*.<sup>58</sup> Young people at the band's 'worship' services can be seen staggering around with uncontrollable body jerking, spasms and laughing. The band leaders believe that these disturbing phenomena constitute revival.<sup>59</sup> It is therefore horrifying that churches are singing songs which were written with the intention of promoting an atmosphere that encourages these phenomena, and whose words are actually requesting it, whether or not the singers themselves are aware of the meaning and intention of the songs.

Rev. Sam Ko showed his approval of these Charismatic worship songs after the *WEST* students' performance by commenting that their singing was 'more powerful' than the Korean pop singer PSY's song *Gangnam Style*. The congregation laughed. The video that accompanies the song *Gangnam Style* is overtly sexual. Rev. Sam Ko continued to joke that their singing was more powerful '...because they have Jesus, because they know Jesus isn't it.'<sup>60</sup>

*WEST* has partnered with *Sound of Wales* (SOW), a group of musicians promoting Contemporary Christian Music within Wales. The *SOW* musicians have announced on their website that they are in the process of discussions with *WEST* regarding a degree in contemporary worship:

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<sup>52</sup> David Cloud *The Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements: The History and Error* (Way of Life Literature, 2006).

<sup>53</sup> Andrew Strom *Kundalini Warning: Are False Spirits Invading the Church?* (RevivalSchool, 2010). This book is written by an 'insider' in the Charismatic Movement.

<sup>54</sup> See John MacArthur *Charismatic Chaos* (Zondervan, 1993) and Peter Masters *The Charismatic Phenomena* (The Wakeman Trust, 1988).

<sup>55</sup> See the DVD set *Music for Good or Evil* (David Cloud, Way of Life Literature) which examines the musical characteristics of CCM:

[http://www.wayoflife.org/publications/video/music\\_for\\_good\\_or\\_evil.php](http://www.wayoflife.org/publications/video/music_for_good_or_evil.php)

and the DVD/free eVideo: *The Foreign Spirit of Contemporary Worship Music*

[http://www.wayoflife.org/free\\_evideo/foreign\\_spirit.php](http://www.wayoflife.org/free_evideo/foreign_spirit.php)

<sup>56</sup> [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ob\\_yiiXw8pM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ob_yiiXw8pM)

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> The *Toronto blessing* describes the phenomena that began in January 1994 at the *Toronto Airport Vineyard* church including falling or 'slaying' in the Spirit, uncontrollable laughter, shaking, and crying, and even people crawling like animals and roaring like lions. Leaders and participants wrongly believe that these are physical manifestations of the Holy Spirit's presence and power.

<sup>59</sup> [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ob\\_yiiXw8pM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ob_yiiXw8pM)

<sup>60</sup> Sermon entitled *Three great I am's* by Rev. Sam Ko (morning service, October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2012).

<http://www.mountpleasantchurch.org.uk/sermons.htm>

‘Another exciting partnership is with West theological seminary. This will be the place where the brand spanking new degree in contemporary worship starts in September 2013... We are currently in the throngs of meetings with the head bods at West, putting together a plan for the degree’s start...’<sup>61</sup>

It is also reported that, at the end of 2011, the SOW musicians had entered into partnership with *Elevation*, the managers of the band *Jesus Culture*:

‘... we were approached by Elevation music with a publishing and recording contract... More well known of their artists include Jesus Culture... We are now working in partnership with Elevation.’<sup>62</sup>

## SARANG’S RELATIONS WITH RICK WARREN

The relationship between Pastor Oh of the *SaRang Community Church* and Rick Warren has lasted over 20 years. Rick Warren’s *Purpose Driven* teaching embraces a gospel whereby one need only ‘receive and believe’ in the Lord Jesus Christ without any need for true repentance or holiness of life.<sup>63</sup> The book mixes ‘Christian’ teachings with those of the New Agers, mystics and Roman Catholics,<sup>64</sup> and is therefore similar to the Emerging Church teachings. Indeed in Rick Warren’s foreword to Dan Kimball’s book *The Emerging Church*, he proclaimed:

‘This book is a wonderful, detailed example of what a purpose-driven church can look like in a postmodern world... While my book *The Purpose Driven Church* explained what the church is called to do, Dan’s book explains how to do it.’<sup>65</sup>

His *Purpose Driven Church* growth model shares many similarities with the liberal Emerging Church leader Brian McLaren’s notions that Christianity should focus on social justice and humanitarian efforts here and now rather than on a relationship with Jesus Christ and preparing for Heaven. Rick Warren has close associations with Mark Driscoll,<sup>66</sup> the controversial pastor of *Mars Hill Church*, Seattle, who describes himself as ‘theologically conservative and culturally liberal,’<sup>67</sup> and they share a concern with being culturally relevant, for example in embracing rock music in the church.

The strong influence of Rick Warren on the *SaRang Community Church* in Seoul is evident from their website. The church has current links to many pages on Rick Warren and his *Purpose Driven* teachings and messages from Rick Warren to the church.<sup>68</sup> Furthermore, Rick Warren is featured on the church *Introductory Video*.<sup>69</sup> In this video, the speaker claims that ‘*SaRang Community Church* has been a pioneer in bringing revival through various ministries.’ But what do they mean by ‘revival’? One of the six ministries mentioned which is supposed to have brought revival is the *Purpose Driven Life Conference* led by Rick Warren in 2006. Pictures of Rick Warren playing the drums in a huge auditorium are shown whilst the video audio information is given.

A news report<sup>70</sup> of the 2006 event explained that Dr. Warren’s visit had been organised by Pastor Oh of the *SaRang Community Church*, Dr. Billy Kim<sup>71</sup> and Dr. David Yonggi Cho, and stated that:

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<sup>61</sup> [http://www.sowmusic.org.uk/blog/Sound\\_of\\_Wales\\_Blog\\_-\\_SOW/post/Partnerships\\_with\\_SOW/](http://www.sowmusic.org.uk/blog/Sound_of_Wales_Blog_-_SOW/post/Partnerships_with_SOW/)

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> Rick Warren *The Purpose Driven Life* (Zondervan, 2002, pp.58-59).

<sup>64</sup> Rick Warren frequently quotes from Roman Catholics and mystics to promote centering prayer and other Catholic-pagan forms of spirituality. For example, in *The Purpose Driven Church* and *The Purpose Driven Life* Warren advises his readers to ‘practice breath prayers’ as per the Benedictines.

<sup>65</sup> Dan Kimball *The Emerging Church: Vintage Christianity for New Generations* (Zondervan, 2003).

<sup>66</sup> E. S. Williams *Driscoll and Warren* [http://www.driscollcontroversy.com/?page\\_id=792](http://www.driscollcontroversy.com/?page_id=792)

<sup>67</sup> Jason Bailey interview with Mark Driscoll: *Men Are From Mars Hill*

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2006/julyweb-only/127-52.0.html>

<sup>68</sup> <http://english.sarang.org/> Click on ‘Organization’, then ‘Discipleship Ministries, International Media Ministry,’ then the ‘Purpose Driven’ logo takes you to: <http://www.purposedriven.co.kr/default.asp>

<sup>69</sup> *Church Introductory Video*: <http://english.sarang.org/>

<sup>70</sup> PRNewswire *Rick Warren Challenges South Korean Churches for a Third Wave of Revival* (July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2006).

‘Dr. Warren and his team conducted a two-day Purpose Driven Church conference for 20,000 pastors - the biggest they have held in any of the 162 countries where they have provided such training - at Yoido Full Gospel Church, the world's largest congregation.’

The report made a number of statements that would be of great concern to any Christian aware of the teaching and ecumenical/humanitarian agenda of Rick Warren:

‘Dr. Warren said he wanted to encourage Korean churches of all denominations to work together. "One church can't do much, but together, we can change the world," he said...’

‘Dr. Warren indicated he wanted to encourage business and government leaders to value and cooperate with the church in solving humanitarian issues...’

‘At the close of the service, virtually the entire audience stood with him to confess and commit they will do whatever it takes to bring about revival in their lives, their churches, their communities and their country.’<sup>72</sup>

But what did the 20,000 pastors promise Rick Warren that they would be prepared to do? Teach and obey God’s Word as revealed in the Holy Bible? The statement given by Pastor Oh at the event is very revealing:

‘Earlier revivals have emphasized the Holy Spirit and evangelism, and the current focus of our church is on discipleship,’ he said. ‘But Rick Warren puts the emphasis on life - the Purpose Driven Life - which is the real, timely need of the Korean church today. That is why something is happening.’<sup>73</sup>

Tragically, many Christians today are following Rick Warren and his *Purpose Driven* church growth philosophies rather than the message of the Bible. Roger Oakland has estimated that ‘over 400,000 churches have now participated in Rick Warren’s *Purpose Driven* program.’<sup>74</sup> The influence of Rick Warren in Korea is apparent in the statement by David Yonggi Cho:

‘God has used Dr. Warren to renew the Korean Church and Christian faith in Korea. I have never seen so many preachers gathered together in one place, and I am very happy about it.’<sup>75</sup>

### **Rev. Sam Ko (Chairman of the WEST Board) and Rick Warren**

Rev. Sam Ko has translated Rick Warren’s *Purpose Driven Life* into Korean.<sup>76</sup> Sadly, over a million Koreans have now been fed Rick Warren’s teachings. At an event celebrating the sale of the first million copies of the Korean version of his book, Rick Warren invited Rev. Sam Ko to the stage in order to receive applause from the *Saddleback Church* members. A video of these events<sup>77</sup> was published on the internet by *Saddleback Church* on July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

Inevitably, Rev. Sam Ko appears to have been influenced by Rick Warren’s gospel message with its easy believism. In his sermon at *Mount Pleasant Baptist Church*, Swansea, this was his explanation of the Gospel:

‘...it is so simple. It is so simple. It is the power of God to everyone who believes. So simple isn’t it! The Gospel is so simple! Ladies and Gentlemen, in order to have the Gospel in your

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<http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/rick-warren-challenges-south-korean-churches-for-a-third-wave-of-revival-56070002.html>

<sup>71</sup> Dr. Billy Kim was the president of the ecumenical *Baptist World Alliance* from 2000 until 2005.

<sup>72</sup> PRNewswire, *op. cit.*

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> Roger Oakland *Faith Undone: the emerging church, a new reformation or an end-time deception* (Lighthouse Trails, 2007, p.223).

<sup>75</sup> PRNewswire, *op. cit.*

<sup>76</sup> <http://www.hanbooks.com/pudrli.html>

<sup>77</sup> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gYLNzHnHk>

heart, you don't have to *beg* to God: "Please please please please please please please." You don't have to beg to God. You don't have to bargain with God: "Oh God, if you give me *something* then I'm not going to eat chocolate for the rest of my life." You don't have to say that! You don't have to *bargain* with God. Or, you don't have to *bribe* to God: "Oh God if you give me this - okay - um, I'm going to make sure to uh to attend Sunday service *every* Sunday!" You don't have to bribe to God - "I'm going to give you ten pounds." You don't have to bribe to God! You don't have to beg to God. You don't have to bargain with God. You don't have to uh bribe to God. Only thing you've gotta do is, you only BELIEVE! You only BELIEVE! You see God made it so simple that nobody could say it was too hard to understand.<sup>78</sup>

### Pastor Oh signs Rick Warren's P.E.A.C.E. Plan

Pastor Rick Warren and Pastor Jung-Hyun Oh have signed a covenant to celebrate their unity and commitment to upholding the values of the Rick Warren *P.E.A.C.E. Plan*. A report and photograph, dated July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2010, can be viewed on the internet<sup>79</sup> and there is also a *Facebook* page<sup>80</sup> to mark this event with further pictures. It was reported that at the signing Rick Warren said:

'After a long-term relationship, mutual respect and a vision that aligned with ours, we know our partnership is blessed because it is ordained by God.'<sup>81</sup>

This *P.E.A.C.E. Plan* was created with the aim of enlisting 'one billion foot soldiers' to overcome the five 'global giants' of 'spiritual emptiness, self-serving leadership, poverty, disease and illiteracy.'<sup>82</sup> 'P.E.A.C.E.' stands for 'Plant churches that promote reconciliation, Equip servant leaders, Assist the poor, Care for the sick, and Educate the next generation.'<sup>83</sup> Rick Warren has said that the fulfilment of the *P.E.A.C.E. Plan* requires a 'three-legged stool' consisting of government, business and religion.<sup>84</sup> Warren believes that this all-inclusive church<sup>85</sup> with its ecumenical and interfaith practice will be the key to the success of his Plan. He claims that the Lord Jesus Christ told him that he should embrace any man of peace to work with in his *P.E.A.C.E. Plan*, and that the man of peace could as easily be Muslim, Jewish or Roman Catholic as Christian.<sup>86</sup> Warren's Plan, therefore, is not about what the Church believes, but rather what it is doing; not about the Lord Jesus Christ but rather an ecumenical group of religious people brought together to eliminate social problems.

The ecumenical agenda of both Rick Warren and David Yonggi Cho is also evidenced by the fact that both have signed<sup>87</sup> the document *A Common Word Between Us and You*,<sup>88</sup> a letter dated 13 October, 2007, from leaders of the Islamic religion to leaders of the Christian religion. The document says that Muslims and Christians worship the same God and claims that 'the future of the world depends on peace between Muslims and Christians.' It states that:

'...The Unity of God, the necessity of love for Him, and the necessity of love of the neighbour is thus the common ground between Islam and Christianity.

...as Muslims, and in obedience to the Holy Qur'an, we ask Christians to come together with us on the two essentials of our religions... that we shall worship none but God... (Aal 'Imran, 3:64).

Let this common ground be the basis of all future interfaith dialogue between us...'<sup>89</sup>

<sup>78</sup> Sermon by Rev. Sam Ko (morning service, October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2012).

<http://www.mountpleasantchurch.org.uk/sermons.htm>

<sup>79</sup> *Peace Plan Covenant with SaRang Community Church in Korea* (July, 2010)

<http://saddleback.com/blogs/communityblog/peace-plan-covenant-with-sarang-community-church-in-seoul-korea/>

<sup>80</sup> <http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.447143465902.237212.34845120902&type=3>

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>82</sup> The *P.E.A.C.E. Plan* <http://www.thepeaceplan.com/>

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>84</sup> Roger Oakland, *op. cit.*, p.146.

<sup>85</sup> Interview by Charlie Rose with Rick Warren (August 17, 2006) See

<http://www.wayoflife.org/database/peaceplan.html>

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>87</sup> <http://www.yale.edu/faith/acw/acw.htm>

<sup>88</sup> <http://www.acommonword.com/the-acw-document/>

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

It was also signed by Roman Catholics, prominent theological modernists, Emerging Church leaders such as Brian McClaren and Bill Hybels,<sup>90</sup> New Age and ‘self-esteem’ guru Robert Schuller (whose philosophies have greatly influenced both Rick Warren and Yonggi Cho),<sup>91</sup> John Stott,<sup>92</sup> Leith Anderson,<sup>93</sup> Michael Treneer<sup>94</sup> and other evangelicals.<sup>95</sup>

At the signing of the covenant to uphold Rick Warren’s *P.E.A.C.E. Plan* Pastor Oh said:

‘We are living in this postmodern period that calls for different steps to produce action. SaRang Church is a disciple-making church intent on doing whatever it takes to reach people for Jesus.<sup>96</sup> Partnering with Saddleback and working together, our hope is that we can win a lot of young people in the 21st century and build them up to be future church leaders.’<sup>97</sup>

‘I’m thankful that God has given us this wonderful relationship with Pastor Rick for the past 20 years—trusting one another, walking together and being able to climb this high mountain set before us as one team.’<sup>98</sup>

The photo of Pastor Oh and Rick Warren holding their covenant together and the report of the event can be seen on the internet.<sup>99</sup> Furthermore, a video clip can be viewed of the occasion where Pastor Oh (and Rev. Sam Ko) gave Rick Warren a model ship in order to celebrate their covenant to work together.<sup>100</sup>

The influence of Rick Warren throughout the world is enormous and he is undoubtedly contributing to the bringing in of the One World Church through his false Christianity and ecumenical agenda.

## WEST AND THE ACTS 29 NETWORK

*WEST* now has links with the church-planting network *Acts 29* through the *Porterbrook Network*<sup>101</sup> which provides teaching courses for Christians. The *Acts 29 Network* was founded by the Emerging Church leader Mark Driscoll and is currently led by Matt Chandler.<sup>102</sup>

Dr. E. S. Williams, a member of the *Metropolitan Tabernacle* in London, has created two excellent websites<sup>103</sup> which provide information and warn about Mark Driscoll’s ministry. Dr. Williams shows that Mark Driscoll is a very influential New Calvinist who is promoting the mixing of Calvinistic theology with worldliness. Driscoll has established R-rated movie nights, beer-making sessions, parties serving alcohol, rock music in the services and rock concerts at the church. There is inappropriate sexual content and language in his preaching, he promotes tattoos, uses profane language,<sup>104</sup> and even practices divination.<sup>105</sup> Dr. Williams also warns about other New Calvinists such as Tim Keller,<sup>106</sup> John Piper<sup>107</sup> (friend of Rick Warren and Mark Driscoll) and Al Mohler.<sup>108</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Bill Hybels is the pastor of *Willow Creek Community Church* in the USA. He is an Emerging Church leader and he works closely with Rick Warren on humanitarian problems such as the AIDS issue.

<sup>91</sup> David Cloud *The God of End Time Mysticism* (Way of Life Literature, 2011, p.59).

<sup>92</sup> John Robert Walmsley Stott CBE (1921 -2011) was an Anglican cleric and one of the principal authors of the *Lausanne Covenant* in 1974. He was the Rector Emeritus of *All Souls Church* London at the time of signing.

<sup>93</sup> Leith Anderson is the President of the *National Association of Evangelicals*.

<sup>94</sup> Michael Treneer is the International President of *The Navigators*.

<sup>95</sup> <http://www.yale.edu/faith/acw/acw.htm>

<sup>96</sup> The *SaRang Community Church* has its own similar ministry to Rick Warren’s *P.E.A.C.E. Plan* entitled:

H.E.A.R.T. See <http://english.sarang.org/>

<sup>97</sup> <http://saddleback.com/blogs/communityblog/peace-plan-covenant-with-sarang-community-church-in-seoul-korea/>

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>100</sup> *Rick Warren Receives Ship from Dr. John Jung Hyun Oh*

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NwhaBNjCZbk&feature=youtube\\_gdata\\_player](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NwhaBNjCZbk&feature=youtube_gdata_player)

<sup>101</sup> <http://www.porterbrooknetwork.org/>

<sup>102</sup> Matt Chandler is Lead Pastor of *The Village Church* in Dallas, Texas.

<sup>103</sup> <http://www.newcalvinist.com/> and <http://www.driscollcontroversy.com/>

<sup>104</sup> Mark Driscoll was nicknamed ‘Mark the cussing pastor’ by Donald Miller in his book *Blue Like Jazz* (Thomas Nelson, 2003).

<sup>105</sup> Divination is communicating with demons in order to discover information. It is forbidden by God (Deuteronomy 18:10).

The *Porterbrook Network* is an *Affinity Associate* and its website states that it subscribes to ‘the doctrinal basis of *Affinity*. Students need to accept that this is who we are.’ The *Porterbrook Network* is in partnership with the *Acts 29 Network*, an organisation it describes as ‘like minded,’<sup>109</sup> and it has announced that its course has been ‘commended and endorsed’ by the *Acts 29 Network*, Timothy Keller, the Anglican Vaughan Roberts,<sup>110</sup> and Alan Hirsch.<sup>111</sup> Furthermore, in order for students to be accepted on the Columbia *Porterbrook* course, it is necessary for them to agree to the following statement:

‘I have read the Acts 29 doctrinal statement<sup>112</sup> and find myself in agreement with it enough to keep from being divisive or contrary.’<sup>113</sup>

The *Porterbrook Network*’s teaching reflects Tim Keller’s New Calvinism, the ‘missional’ emphasis of the Emerging Church, and the *Acts 29* ‘contextualising’ of Scripture. This can be clearly seen in the titles of the course modules such as: *Culture, Missional Community Life, Keeping it Missional, Church History in Missional Perspective, Missional Church and Church Planting, Engaging with Context, Engaging with the Urban Poor and Engaging with the City*.<sup>114</sup>

Scott Thomas, a former director of *Acts 29*, has made the following statement about *Acts 29*:

‘God is significantly using our network to influence and shape the church planting culture through both rock-solid theology and contextualizing the gospel. We will not waver on either of these commitments. We won’t water down our theology to reach more people and *we won’t attack the culture* in the name of Christianity.’<sup>115</sup>

Contextualisation is about how the Church relates to culture. What does contextualising the Gospel actually mean in practice to the New Calvinists? Dr. E. S. Williams has argued that:

‘Scripture is contextualised to make the gospel world view sensitive and acceptable to the latest cultural trends in society. Jesus must be presented as the answer to the questions the culture is asking.’<sup>116</sup>

If one’s theology allows worldliness then there is something very wrong with the theology! The behaviour of Mark Driscoll and other so-called ‘conservative’ Emergents is a complete contradiction of historical Calvinism. The Bible does not tell us to embrace culture; we are exhorted to ‘have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them’ (Eph. 5:11). According to *Acts 29*, culture should be embraced rather than attacked or reprovved. Mark Driscoll, his *Acts 29* network and other New Calvinists are promoting a worldly and unbiblical form of Christianity which faithful Christians should not associate with, but rather reprove.

*WEST* has announced the following on its website under the title ‘New Initiatives:’

‘The partnership with SaRang Church is bearing fruit, founded on mutual trust. This remarkable Korean church has a vision for re-equipping the churches of Wales, particularly in the

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See Phil Johnson’s warning about Mark Driscoll and divination:

<http://teampyro.blogspot.co.uk/2011/08/pornographic-divination.html>

<sup>106</sup> Timothy Keller is pastor of *Redeemer Presbyterian Church*, New York. <http://www.newcalvinist.com/tim-kellers-false-gospel/> and <http://www.newcalvinist.com/who-are-the-new-calvinists-part-1/>

<sup>107</sup> John Piper is the Pastor for Preaching and Vision at *Bethlehem Baptist Church* (Minneapolis, MN) and the founder of *Desiring God*.

<sup>108</sup> Al Mohler is the president of the *Southern Baptist Theological Seminary* in Louisville, Kentucky.

<sup>109</sup> <http://www.porterbrooknetwork.org/about/who-we-are-connected-with/>

<sup>110</sup> Vaughan Roberts is the Rector of *St. Ebbes Church*, Oxford, and the President of the *Proclamation Trust*.

<sup>111</sup> Alan Hirsch is the founding director of *Forge Mission Training Network International*, a missional training centre that exists to help ‘birth and nurture the missional church’ and to train leaders in the USA, Canada and Australia.

<sup>112</sup> <http://www.acts29network.org/about/doctrine/>

<sup>113</sup> <http://www.porterbrooknetwork.org/columbia/>

<sup>114</sup> <http://www.porterbrooknetwork.org/syllabus/>

<sup>115</sup> David Cloud *What is the Emerging Church?* (Way of Life Literature, 2009, p.396).

<sup>116</sup> <http://www.newcalvinist.com/who-are-the-new-calvinists-part-2/>

Valleys. The Porterbrook Network in Wales – focused on church planting – is now based at *WEST...*<sup>117</sup>

Furthermore, the new Chairman of the *WEST* board, Sam Ko, has announced that *WEST* is intending to work directly with *Acts 29*. On October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2012, Sam Ko declared that *WEST* is working on a project known as the *Valley Commandos Project*. He said the following:

‘We are going to do this ministry together called the *Valley Commandos Project...* and *SaRang* Church is going to work together with *WEST*, with *Mount Pleasant Baptist Church*,<sup>118</sup> many Welsh churches and the mission agencies such as *Acts 29*, and the denomination that this church belongs to: *FIEC*.<sup>119</sup> What we have agreed is that *yes*, we are moving! It is about time for us to move into the Valleys and we are going to plant 12 churches in those 14 valleys.’<sup>120</sup>

Given the ongoing associations of Pastor Oh and Rev. Sam Ko with Rick Warren and his *Purpose Driven* teachings, the Charismatic leanings of the *SaRang* church, and the New Calvinist theology of *Acts 29* with the worldliness of its leaders, one wonders at the type of teaching to which the Welsh Valleys are about to be introduced.

## CONCLUSION

We are witnessing a global collapse of the Biblical doctrine of separation and a great mixing of truth with error resulting in spiritual confusion and apostasy. Reformed and evangelical truths are being mixed with New Age ideas, mysticism, Roman Catholic practices, culturally-relevant worldliness, the promotion of ecumenical ideas in Charismatic worship and the Emerging Church, the promotion of the social justice gospel and emphases on Charismatic so-called ‘experiences’ of God.

Tragically for Biblical Evangelicalism, *WEST* is most definitely *not* heading in the right direction. It can no longer be considered a Reformed college as it is now closely associated with dangerous false teachers, the Emergent *Acts 29* network, the ecumenically compromised *Lausanne Movement*, and has been influenced by New Calvinistic, Charismatic and Emergent philosophies. The non-separatist stand adopted by *Affinity* and *WEST* can only lead evangelicals into association with error, apostasy and ecumenicity, as we have sadly seen.

There is a dearth of discernment in Evangelicalism today and spiritual compromise and alliances with error are on every side. The need for faithful Biblical teaching and a holy, separated stand by evangelicals is greater than ever before. As Rev. Malcolm Watts<sup>121</sup> has said of the calling of ministers:

‘When false teaching arises, they must meet it head-on, wielding the sword of the Word of God. Of course, this might erode their popularity and support. Often we hear criticisms made of a faithful man: “He is becoming so negative. He always seems to be knocking things!” Well, friends, there is a time to knock things. If a venomous snake suddenly and menacingly comes your way, you would do well to deliver a crushing blow on its head. Heresy is more dangerous than any snake. It is able to destroy men’s very souls for all eternity. Should ministers ignore heresy and hope it will not do too much damage? Shouldn’t they strike it with the Scriptures of truth, and all the power at their disposal?’<sup>122</sup>

May God help us all to stand firm in the Faith in the days ahead and until our Lord and Saviour returns.

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<sup>117</sup> *WEST* have updated their website and this information no longer appears on the website. However, this statement from the *WEST* website was published in the December 2012/January 2013 edition of the *Heath Evangelical Church* magazine (p.7).

<sup>118</sup> *Mount Pleasant Baptist Church*, Swansea. The pastor is Steve Levy.

<sup>119</sup> *Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches*

<sup>120</sup> Sermon by Rev. Sam Ko (morning service, October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2012).

<http://www.mountpleasantchurch.org.uk/sermons.htm>

<sup>121</sup> Rev. Malcolm Watts is the pastor of Emmanuel Church in Salisbury.

<sup>122</sup> Malcolm Watts *What is a Reformed Church?* (Reformation Heritage Books, 2012, p.150).