WHEN MAPS NO LONGER WORK

MAPS SHAPING OUR IMAGINATIONS IN MODERNITY

Several years ago, my wife, Jane, bought the Launch Edition Mini Cooper. It had a number inscribed on the tachometer indicating its special status as one of the few launched. It was one sweet vehicle. In the early days, Jane made it clear that I would have limited driving privileges. So I was delighted when one Saturday morning she said, "Why don't you drive?" Jane was in the passenger seat. She pointed into the distance and said, "Just look at that mess. I've got to fix that right away. Those birds are so messy!" I followed her finger into the distance, looking for birds or evidence of their mischief. "What are you talking about?" I asked. "I can't see any mess!" Jane laughed and pointed again. "Look!" she exclaimed. "Can't you see that? The birds must have done it while we were in the store." This time the finger seemed to be pointing a little lower on the road. I leaned forward to take a closer look. "I can't see a thing!" I reiterated. Then Jane realized what the problem was. "No!" she laughed, "not the road; the windshield! Look at the mess on the windshield. I've got to get it cleaned before it bakes on!" Finally, I "saw"; the mess wasn't "out there" but on the windshield.

When driving, we see *through the windshield* but *not the windshield itself*. Most of the time, we are unaware it is there. Maps work the

same way. When navigating the streets of Vancouver where we live, we envision the maps in our heads and just take our directional certitude for granted. We use them to move about easily and freely but hardly ever stop to think about the maps themselves.

We use these inner maps to control and manage our world. In modern, Western societies, we have assumed ways of driving on the road, for example. In the world of church and ministry, despite denominational and other differences, we have a basic inner map of how a pastor should function in a church (notice even the image we use here, where the place of a pastor is *in* a physical location called a church). We have been given internal maps about how to go about raising children; these are often quite different from the ways, for example, children are raised in non-Western cultures. These inner maps of how things are supposed to work have been very effective in enabling us to manage and control our environments. Obviously, many of these inner maps are still just as effective and important for our everyday life in the modern West. Other maps that we have taken for granted, however, are being challenged. The nature of marriage is one current example. Another is the map of our economic life: the way our pensions and retirement were supposed to work no longer matches the financial realities many of us are facing. Within the church, other real and important overarching inner maps are also being challenged, such as the role of church leadership and who should lead. Many of us have shared the strong inner conviction that as church leaders in times of change, we must find ways of regaining control over our increasingly unclear church environments. When we sense that our inner maps of church leadership are becoming less and less effective and the images of leadership in which we were trained are not robust enough to encompass our current reality, another inner map tells us that we have to find a way of taking control in order make things work again. A simple story illustrates the persistence of these inner maps.

I'd had a long week crisscrossing North America in airplanes and was heading home—the interrupted schedules and mechanical breakdowns were far from my mind. When I called home, Jane picked up the phone to tell me she had our granddaughter Madeline in her arms. Maddy was communicating that she wanted down; she didn't want to be held too long in anyone's arms. My joy is holding Maddy, but she isn't someone who wants to be held much, or at least is willing to be held only on her terms. She isn't going to be managed; she has her own sense of what she wants.

I thought of Maddy as I boarded my flight and absorbed my first inklings that this would be a night when plans for getting home at a decent hour would evaporate. The flight was already ninety minutes late. When we were finally on board, the captain's voice crackled in the speakers. A computer wasn't working; a mechanic would need to replace it. I calculated: it would be midnight before we landed. Anticipation of ending the late summer day on our deck had just been thrown out. Life messes with our plans. A woman then called an attendant. She was connecting in Vancouver with a fight to Thailand; she wasn't going to make it and didn't want to overnight in Vancouver. She wanted off the flight. As she walked off, the captain came back on to tell us the ground crew had to reopen the compartments below and remove this passenger's luggage. It would be 1 A.M., four hours later than scheduled, when we would land in Vancouver. So much for best-laid plans.

I thought of Maddy, of the ways I want to hold her and how she is always saying "up" or "down" to tell me she doesn't belong to me. I won't be managing this relationship according to my preferred imagination. Like all important relationships, ours will follow the mysterious and unpredictable unfolding of interconnected lives, not some tidy picture I dream up. The mystery of our differing person-hoods will weave a tapestry neither of us, nor anyone else, will be able to map or control.

Strapped into my seat, I reflected on this powerful inner map that we think lets us plan, predict, measure, and control the directions and outcomes of other people's lives. Where did this delusion come from? Why, after years of experience to the contrary, do we still think we can have a wonderful plan for other people and, moreover, expect their lives to unfold according to that plan? For years, this internal map told me that it was possible, with the right vision and the right plan, for a church to build a roadway along which people would move toward the goals and mission I and other leaders had articulated with such passion and conviction. On the plane home, I wondered why I had been so blind as to actually try to control, manage, and align people in the churches I served. This conviction that leaders need to come up with a plan around which all the church's life is aligned is a deeply embedded map still shaping the actions of many church leaders. We need to understand why we as leaders have so strongly embraced this map because we are now in a space where this kind of map is less and less helpful.

HOW MAPS WORK

We're born into a world with cultures that already have maps. The argument of this chapter is that for us in the West, our primary map has been modernity, and modernity has in many ways profoundly reshaped, and even deformed, the Christian imagination in our culture. From birth, we're formed and shaped by the common understandings of the culture into which we're born to the point where we assume that our culture's map describes the world the way it is. Our cultural map of modernity shapes how we see the world, ourselves, and our relationships. This map "makes sense" to us because we live in the world it depicts.

These cultural maps use metaphors, images, symbols, and stories that enable us to navigate our worlds: even to this day, for example, church steeples dotting the landscape remind us how thoroughly church attendance once ordered our lives as a culture. The maps lie so deep in our imagination and reach so far back to our earliest memories and education that we find it difficult to recognize them as our cultural maps. Instead, we perceive them as the taken-for-granted descriptions of the way the world works, and our culture rewards us for adhering to them (similarly to how some societies drive on the left side of the road and wonder how others could be crazy enough to drive on the other side, the "wrong" side). Another example of culturally ingrained maps would be the ways church leaders, especially in the United States, aspire to *modernist* maps of leadership highly dependent on techniques of church growth and markers of success such as numbers of people in attendance or numbers of decisions made at a meeting or the percentage of the congregation involved in certain midweek programs, but as we move more into a globalized *postmodern* world, these inner maps of success bear little correspondence to the desire of people who seek not to fit into an institution but rather to discover empowerment and liberation. In some parts of the world, married women have few rights and cannot leave the home without permission of the husband, whereas in other cultures, married women are considered equal partners with their spouses. The power of these inner maps is made painfully manifest when people from such cultures move to the West and engage with Western ideas of gender equality. Married women from parts of India, for example, have been beaten or murdered by their husbands when they begin to adopt Western practices of equality. Another instance of

these cultural differences are the attitudes toward alcohol. In Muslim countries, the consumption of alcohol is completely frowned on. In America, it is seen as part of a dependency culture, whereas in Europe, it is more a part of a merriment culture. The differences in our inner cultural maps were starkly apparent with the 2003 invasion of Iraq and the Bush administration's accompanying belief that any country would naturally welcome a liberator and adopt some universal sense of democracy even if that meant the end of many of its own traditional institutions. Maps like these are in operation all the time, shaping how we make decisions, see the world, and take action; they are so much a part of our lives that we don't actually notice them. That's why we speak of them existing in our imagination. In this sense, imagination doesn't mean make-believe but suggests an image or picture that represents some object that isn't directly accessible to us. For example, when we encounter the phrase "North America" in this book, the actual landmass or histories of the nations that comprise North America aren't directly before us, but we each have in mind a picture or image of what "North America" embodies. Our imagination *makes accessible what would otherwise be unavailable to us.*[1]

Let's consider an illustration from a different culture to help us see how our own maps shape our imaginations. The Passover Seder is a ceremonial meal that Jewish families have practiced every year for millennia. *Seder* means order; it describes the specific order in which the supper is to be celebrated in terms of prayers, eating, storytelling, and song. It begins with the youngest son asking the father, "Why is this night different from all other nights?" The father's response begins, "On this night we remember we were slaves in Egypt . . . and the Lord . . . delivered us." Whenever the members of a Jewish family participate in this liturgy, they are following a map that forms their identity as few other things ever will. The food they eat that night is filled with symbols that remind them of that other night, thousands of years before, when their ancestors were slaves and God delivered them. This mapping of identity is profound. The table ritual begins with the pronoun *we*—this is more than a memorial. It is memory made present. Those at the table are also the *we,* distinguishing Jews as God's chosen people. The story roots them in memories of slavery and deliverance, the work of death on them as a people, and God's liberation of them as a people. These powerful maps of identity determine present actions. Here is an example of how someone following this map expresses this imagination. The poem, written by a rabbi,

is about the killings in Darfur. It goes all the way back to the Passover and its lived imagination.

> We Jews see with ancient eyes and attend with ancient ears. We were not born yesterday.
> Not long ago we swore over the cremated bodies of our fathers, mothers and children a solemn oath. From the depths of our souls we cried, "Never Again." That oath carries the past into the present and pledges to do today whatever is in our power to prevent the perverse plots to extinguish the promise of life.
> "Never Again" will we allow the world to dissemble, to pretend that we are voiceless, soundless, without legs or hands.
> Ours is a solemn oath in memory of those who were slaughtered in deathly silence.
> We are pledged to wake the world from the paralysis of will. We are partners with God in protecting His Children.
> We dare not shut our eyes or our mouths or our ears.
> Who is Darfur to us? And who are they to us?
> They are us.[2]

The maps in our imaginations tell us who we are; they provide for us the geography of our identity as a culture and inform the ways we act. They're part of who we are, but they are also so pervasive in our imaginations that we don't notice them. Anyone who walks into a medieval cathedral will be struck and overwhelmed by the power and beauty of its height drawing us upward, its huge stone pillars and curved arches. On the ground, the overall design of the nave, aisle, and transept (note how the language itself now sounds unfamiliar to us—we sense we know but can't quite attach an image to what each word designates) described a world, mapped an imagination, about the relationship between earth and heaven, humans and God, that we can hardly imagine for ourselves. The stained-glass windows are of immense beauty, but beauty was never the point; rather, these windows mapped the journey of life on earth and described the future after death. The cathedral was a living, physical map of the Christian imagination. It is a way of understanding our place in the world that no longer carries meaning for us. We cannot decipher the meanings written into the brick, mortar, carvings, and glass. These are no longer

part of the ways we see or construct the meaning of our lives as modern people. Indeed, this other map we call modernity has come to shape our imagination of how the world is supposed to work. It's crucial for the church and its leadership to grasp the pervasiveness and power of modernity's maps when it comes to the ways we lead and form our churches.

MODERNITY'S MAPS

Modernity is the cultural map that has profoundly shaped the West, dominating the cultural imagination of people in Europe, North America, Australia, and New Zealand. Its roots reach back to the Enlightenment, when the French philosopher René Descartes rejected the traditions of the medieval intellectual map, questioning the scholasticism of his day with its notions that physical actions could be explained in terms of God acting on things and developing a method of approaching the world we now know as rationalism. This was a massive shift in imagination, a revolutionary new way of seeing the world.

Central to the map of modernity are convictions about the sources of truth and knowledge and the method for attaining truth and knowledge. Compared to all previous maps across cultures, in which a divine being was the source of truth and knowledge, modernity places the autonomous individual at the center as the source of truth and knowledge.[3] This autonomous self is radically separate and above everything else, a subject relating to myriad objects. With this shift in imagination came a method by which this rational subject could compel truth and knowledge from the objective world. This form of rationalism came to be known as the scientific method. These two elements combine to create the basic terrain of modernity's map: a fundamental division of all reality between the subjective human self and an objective, external world.

According to this map, we habitually assume that the world is composed of a set of objects divided into separate and distinct parts. With the right techniques, sufficient knowledge, and enough metrics, it is possible to break things down into their simplest, most discrete pieces in order to understand them and then put them back together in ways that give us control and predictability over our environment.

Alasdair MacIntyre, in *After Virtue*, helps us see more nuanced detail in the map of modernity by describing two perceptions—one

social and the other philosophical—that control the modern imagination.[4] Sociologically, modernity partitions each human life into a variety of segments, each with its own norms of behavior. Thus the public is divided from the private, the corporate from the personal, fact from value, truth from faith, childhood from old age. These divisions reflect a part of the modern map that assumes that all of reality is made up of separate, distinct parts. This is why, for example, it was possible to see the world as a collection of separate objects (the *atomistic* view of the world) that we could use and manipulate as we chose. What we have in modernity, on one side, is this tendency to "think atomistically about human action and to analyze complex actions and transactions in terms of simple components. In this way the view that particular actions derive their character as parts of larger wholes is a point of view alien to our dominant ways of thinking."[5] A classic illustration of this atomistic thinking is the way individuals claim they can do what they like as individuals because it is their action alone and nobody else is involved. This is why some people can justify getting behind the wheel of a car after drinking: it's their choice, one that doesn't affect anyone else. In modernity, we have built a world that we believe is made up of individual, personal actions that don't have any effect on others. If we stopped to think about this for a moment, we might be appalled at such a notion, but because this is one of the default maps, we keep acting as if it were the case, in spite of evidence to the contrary. The individual is sharply separated and distinguished from the particular roles he or she may play in society, exemplified in the notion that what someone does behind closed doors is nobody else's business. Recent scandals in which well-known North American religious leaders have been "outed" in some form of moral compromise illustrate this aspect of the modern imagination at work.

The self is the center of modernity's imagination. Modernity automatically thinks individualistically, or atomistically, as if human beings are independent, separate entities functioning out of their own self-determined worlds. According to this map, an individual can and should generate his or her own independent meanings.[6] Frank Sinatra's boast that "I did it my way" in the Paul Anka song "My Way" is one expression of this. I was in a store recently returning a printer. While waiting for service, I heard the voice-over on a video advertisement for sales personnel. It went something like this: "The salesperson we're looking for is an independent self-starter looking

to develop his or her full potential and express his or her own special self in a forward-looking context of . . ." This script is straight out of modernity's map, but few people in the store would have reflected on that fact.

Reflecting on our maps helps us see the stories and assumptions that shape us. Modernity is only one particular story of how to read and order life. It is not particularly old (three to four hundred years, compared to more than two millennia for the Passover story), but it became our culture's normative way of reading the world. Modern notions of the self and the individual, for example, are still powerfully present in our imagination; any quick reference to advertising or television programs still shows that the self remains at the center of our story. We don't quickly or easily leave behind something that has shaped us so indelibly for such a long period of time.

It is important to remember that maps continue to shape us long after we think they're in the past. I remember when Jane and I were first married. We had come from such different kinds of families that there were a lot of negotiations along the way, some of them quite humorous. I was raised in postwar England when there were huge shortages of basic staples. The refrigerator was an invention for the rich who lived in what seemed another world. In the late fifties, we moved into a rental home with a refrigerator. My mother made it very clear that no child was ever to go near the fridge. By the time I left home, I had developed a high level of skill at sneaking into the kitchen to get food from the fridge. One evening, several months after Jane and I moved into our first apartment, I was studying at my desk and got hungry for a snack. Without thinking about what I was doing, I quietly moved to the kitchen and sneaked into the refrigerator. Just then Jane asked me, "Alan, why are you sneaking around like that?" After an initial response of denial and hurt, I realized that the practices I had learned as a boy were still determining the way I moved about in a home where Jane and I owned the refrigerator. Maps don't disappear just because our reality changes. They stay with us, continuing to shape our habits. The challenge we face as leaders is that we find ourselves in a new space where we keep trying to navigate with maps that represent a reality that no longer exists. I grew up in Liverpool for the first fifteen years of my life, but I can't go back to Liverpool and try to get around with the internal maps I had then—the geography and the space have changed.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MODERNITY

We live in a time when people find interesting ways of encountering the past. A magazine I was reading recently showed a picture of Manhattan Island, a strange picture. The left side of Manhattan was all green and lush, covered with grass and trees. The right side of the picture showed the cityscape as we experience it today. The point of that picture was to show how much Manhattan has changed since a group of Dutch explorers entered the mouth of the Hudson River several hundred years ago. We human beings construct our spaces and make maps to manage those spaces. Over time, tremendous change occurs. The human story can be imagined as a long, flowing river moving through time with unpredictable and unexpected twists and turns. Sometimes that river flowed in a long, straight line like the Nile in Egypt or the Seine in France. At such times, generations developed predictable habits and practices for managing life along the river and controlling their destinies. These habits and practices become predictable and help us control our worlds. At other times, the waters have turned unexpected corners and churned into great, swirling rivers, such as the Iguaçu in Brazil, a river that can't be managed or controlled. Like the Iguaçu's twists and turns, modernity is one part of the river that has shaped our imagination and maps.

In the distant past, human community shifted from *hunting-and-gathering clans* toward *agrarian civilizations.* Population centers emerged, forming the basis for these agriculture-based civilizations. Such changes took thousands of years. Then, for further thousands of years, the basic character of civilizations settled around an agrarian culture. This was a long, continuous, stable period of human history. Changes occurred as tools and implements developed and crop management and husbandry improved; however, the basic forms of culture remained relatively stable. Even with great disruptions, like the barbarian invasions of Europe in the fourth through sixth centuries, the culture gradually returned to its base as a farming civilization. Over time, people developed myths and stories that formed the narrative explanations into which generation after generation was born. Such stories and myths were essential for continuity and stability. We still carry the memory of these stories in the agrarian practices of the equinoxes, harvest festivals, and the ancient dances around the rites of spring.

In Europe and North America, agrarian culture lasted into the late seventeenth century, when another transformation got under way.

Following the Thirty Years' War, as towns and cities developed into important centers of commerce, the Industrial Revolution began tearing apart a way of life that had lasted for thousands of years. The French Revolution (1789), with its destruction of the Ancien Régime, signaled the emergence of a Europe that would move rapidly away from the primary social formations of an agrarian world. For the first time in thousands of years, the nature of civilization underwent a dramatic transformation. This was the birth of the modern era; the stage on which Western culture played out its life and passed on its narrative stories had been forever changed, the scenery replaced, and the players given radically new scripts.

In the river metaphor, human culture had settled at a point along the bank establishing a particular kind of known world: agrarian civilizations. Suddenly, after thousands of years of living embedded in this location, the river turns a massive corner and careens over a roaring waterfall into a radically different location. These are the white waters of eruptive, discontinuous change that cause massive shifts in civilizations. Few people are prepared for such radical changes. The Industrial Revolution restructured social life in the West and then the whole world. In historical terms, industrial society lasted some three hundred years in the West. While the transition from agrarian to industrial civilization was profoundly destructive of social life and human meaning, it happened over a long enough span of time for new forms of social life to emerge; people gradually settled into a new kind of known world: the industrial world, with its growing cities, new kinds of technology, a new understanding of time and place, and new forms of social organization, such as unions, and classes of people. One of the most profound of these social changes that we take for granted today was the formation of what are called *societies.* These were a radically new kind of organization in which people chose to associate freely with one another in a club or organization. Prior to this point, in the feudal world, people were bound by an age-old system of social organization that marked their place and ranking in the social order. In the new industrial cities, these predetermined orderings of society broke down and practically disappeared. What emerged in these industrial countries were laws and guidelines for how these new kinds of societies were to act in terms of regular meetings and essential bylaws. What's important about this illustration is that these new laws in the industrial countries became the templates for determining how churches and denominations could operate in

this new world. Thus the yearly church business meeting according to a church's constitution and bylaws is directly taken from the formation of these societies in the industrial age. What can be easily missed is the profound transformation in our social maps this simple legal procedure brought about. Societies are associational organizations. In other words, they are organizations that individuals freely choose to join and leave. Thus what gets built into Protestant church life in the West, in spite of wonderful theologies about covenant, are church cultures that are fundamentally associational or based on voluntary membership. We take these features of church life for granted with very little awareness that they reflect a social map created at the beginning of the industrial age. We have therefore built all our church systems on the basis of individual rights to associate as and when they choose, and when they meet, they are directed by legal codes and bylaws. This is not an argument for or against this kind of process but an illustration of how changing maps shape the ways we go about being and leading the church.

It was in this period, between the seventeenth century and the early twentieth, that many of the leadership and organizational forms of the church were reshaped. It is instructive, for example, to observe how deeply some denominations, such as the Baptists, are invested in and shaped by *Robert's Rules of Order*, a set of processes designed to enable early industrial age organizations to function as the associational societies I've just described for decision making in the emerging industrial society.[7] Yet since then, the character and pace of civilizational change has picked up dramatically. The *electronic age* made an early appearance at the great Chicago and Paris world fairs at the beginning of the twentieth century. In the final decades of that century, thanks to the introduction of the computer, the electronic age resulted in another radical and rapid transformation, the emergence of the *information age,* which, though connected with the previous period, is also strikingly discontinuous. Each of these innovations—the industrial, electronic, and information ages—represents a developing stage of modernity, when rational technique and the search for control and predictability came to be part of our central ethos. Each age has required us to readjust and change our understanding of work, self-identity, social relationships, and the meaning of place.

The electronic age, for example, gave us electric light and electrified trams and trains, resulting in people staying up a lot later and engaging more in local community activity. New technologies made work less

physical for many people and began the emancipation of women in the home. These and other technologies created new kinds of experts and professionals that increased the diversification of work as well as brought people into more face-to-face interactions (as the automobile enabled people to travel to see each other, for example). The information age represented another huge shift in our mapping of social life. One of the best volumes addressing this latest and most conspicuous shift is *The Rise of the Network Society* by Manuel Castells.[8] The information revolution gave birth to the network society (including the Internet), which has revolutionized how we understand the nature of economic systems; it has changed the basic relationships people have with their work (less loyalty to a company or organization and more a feeling that people are empowered as "information workers" to control to the ways they work) and is fundamentally altering the ways people communicate with each other: younger people are more at home carrying on three or four texting conversations with various people at the same time, disembodied from physical space, than sitting across from one person in a conversation; conversation now moves in multiple directions at once, including a diversity of people with a variety of opinions, creating far more open, diffuse sense of authority or the sources of knowledge. These are massive, recent changes in the ways we relate and work in the world.

We once had thousands of years to digest and adjust to seismic cultural shifts that required the drawing of new maps. Eventually, transformations of such magnitude were compressed into centuries and now decades. The various landscapes onto which we are thrust are changing with great rapidity, and known world maps are disrupted at an ever-increasing pace.

MAP-MAKING AND THE EMERGENCE OF MODERNITY

In his novel *A Mapmaker's Dream,* James Cowan tells the tale of a sixteenth-century Venetian monk who tirelessly works to create the most accurate maps of the world.[9] The monk, Fra Mauro, was born in the twilight of a medieval, premodern time. He had his ways of making sense of that world shaped by his time. But he could sense something shifting; the world was in flux, and the habits and imagination of his time were beginning to change. It was a period of anxiety and creativity. Great journeys of exploration were under way. An awakened

Europe faced dazzling stories of exploration, new worlds, and strange peoples. Fra Mauro came to dream of a new map that would describe the emerging world unfolding before him as he listened to the stories of travelers and saw the sketches they made of places no one in Venice had seen before. He did not so much extrapolate from known maps that for hundreds of years had defined the shape of the world as listen to the stories of travelers who had stepped off the paths of known maps to encounter places and peoples that could not be correlated with established maps. Like other men of that time, he struggled to "give form to something that was not of this world."[10]

This "stepping off the page" created dissonance about the known maps and led to a redrawing of the world. In so doing, the monk draws new maps by which travelers might navigate around the strange, emerging world of the sixteenth century. The stage on which European life had been shaped for hundreds of years underwent massive change.

THE CALL FOR MAP-MAKERS

Fra Mauro was one of those risk takers who dared become a map-maker rather than a copier of maps. He sensed that the maps he had received from his forbears were no longer sufficient to capture the stories he was hearing. Like Fra Mauro, we live in a time when the maps of modernity, with their promises of management, control, and predictability, are no longer sufficient to describe the places where we find ourselves. The rapidity and extent of these changes create disequilibrium, anxiety, confusion, and disorientation among people in North American culture, and this means that our maps need to be reimagined. We are required to become map-makers. The maps we have inherited no longer adequately describe the realities we face. Like Fra Mauro, we must relinquish the desire to copy our inherited maps and learn to listen to the stories of pioneers so that we can make new maps. In this way, we can reshape the imagination of God's people.

For some, this is an exhilarating adventure, for others, it is a disconcerting process taking them ever further from the familiar world of modernity they've known. Some try to live according to the familiar scripts modernity gave them but find that the stage keeps changing such that the scripts no longer work. Others quickly adopt scripts

for the new stage. Most struggle, however, trying to make the scripts they were given work again.

Not everyone has been shaped by all parts of our North American cultural maps. Within the church, for example, some groups have steadfastly resisted the frameworks of modernity, seeking to describe themselves as a contrast society (Mennonites, for example), while the great bulk of Protestant churches have drunk deeply of modernity with its emphases on techniques of control and predictability (programs that guarantee growth and "health," such as Natural Church Development or Forty Days of Purpose) and focus on the individual ("needs-centered" and "seeker-centered" churches). Others, especially from African American, Native Indian, Hispanic, and other recent immigrant cultures, have resisted aspects of modernity. Native American Christians, for example, are much more at home doing decision making in a circle together rather than having some strong leader provide a vision statement with a plan.

Some more recent groups cluster themselves under amorphous titles like "emergent" or "postmodern" and believe they are in a vanguard that is moving beyond things modern and writing their own maps. These are signs of people experimenting, stretching into new territories to discover on the journey other forms of leadership and church life. It is important to note that the overall cultural map of the last three hundred years was shaped by a shifting modernity, and it may be that this modernity still shapes these groups in one form or another. The power of modernity's maps continues to shape much of the church. It is not easily thrown off. The Spirit of God, however, is hovering among all these groups and types of churches, just as the Spirit hovered in the creation story. The voice of God is being spoken over the church in all its diverse and contradictory forms. The next chapter invites us to follow this voice.