

## Messengers and Messages—then, now, and yet to come

There was a telling cameo in a recent replay of ‘Midsommer Murders’.

As a distraction from police business, Detective Chief Inspector Barnaby rolled up a pair of socks, pitched them down his back lawn, pointed to them, and commanded his lively terrier, Sykes, to ‘go fetch’ them. Sykes wagged his tail, stayed put, and fixed his gaze solidly on his master. The mission was ignored!

It reminded me of a recent discussion led by the Rev. John Maddern on the topic, ‘Has the Messenger become the Message?’. John applied this man-dog-ball image to Jesus, the messenger who repeatedly pointed to the Kingdom of God. The people pricked up their ears and focussed on the messenger whenever he spoke. They wagged their tails at each miracle. They marvelled at his wisdom, his magnetism, and his potency.

The people pondered. Here was a bloke who just might be able to knock off the Romans. The Messiah position had been vacant for years. The miracle-making messenger was notching up a gutsy CV— and the job needed filling!

The collective psyche cringed at the Roman declaration that ‘Caesar is King’! Ponder the likely process. At first, random, defiant thoughts—then, shared private murmurings—then, secret group mutterings—then, tacit public acceptance—then, Pilate’s ultimate divisive insistence that he saw Jesus as ‘King of the Jews’. Post-crucifixion perceptions promoted the ‘King’ to ‘Saviour’, and heralded him as the ‘Son of God’.

For many, the messenger had become the Message—but not for all!

During the first two centuries AD, groups of followers of the charismatic Jesus sprang up throughout the Roman Empire. Historians report division and diversity amongst, and between the sects and schools. One major difference related to the ‘nature’ of Jesus. In the red corner were those who worshipped him as the divine ‘Son of God’. In the blue corner were devotees who recognised the ‘fullness’ of the humanity that he modelled. They wanted it! As messenger, he pointed to God’s template for humankind.

In spite of the divisions, there was apparently enough common ground for an embryonic orthodoxy to emerge. It was dubbed ‘Christianity’. It unsettled the Roman Empire sufficiently to trigger spates of persecution.

That changed after Emperor Constantine had a ‘Christian’ vision (the Chi Rho Symbol) before winning the battle at ‘Milvian Bridge’ in AD 312. Some vision! In AD 313, Constantine signed the ‘Edict of Milan’ that ensured religious tolerance for all, and gave Christians special legal rights. Constantine didn’t muck about. He funded the institutionalisation of Christianity. He built edifices and pilgrimage sites, and fostered pilgrimages. However, ongoing confusion, controversy and contention about the nature of Jesus persisted. In particular, a priest, named Arius, preached that Jesus was fully human—special, but not an ‘eternal being’. This triggered ripples at his hometown, Alexandria, Egypt, that exploded into waves that rocked the boats across Christendom. One sect, the ‘Goths’ took his view on board, and popularised it in all the areas they conquered, including Spain, Italy and Africa.<sup>1</sup> Others colluded to scuttle Arius. The divisions were such that, in Constantine’s view, both Christianity and the social order were threatened. He felt ‘called’ to use his authority to help bring about unity, peace, and love within the church, and so, in AD 325, he chartered the Council of Nicaea. He

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<sup>1</sup> Boeree, C.G. *Early Christian Heresies*, web search on 5/12/14 at <http://webspace.ship.edu/cgboer/heresies.html>

encouraged the three hundred attending bishops to settle their internal disagreements and become Christ-like agents who could bring new life to a troubled empire. They were to decide, by majority vote, the 'nature of God for all of Christianity', the process for setting the proper date for celebrating Easter, and the means to promulgate canon law—set up ecclesiastical rules for Government of Christian organisations.

Well, Arius got blown out of the water as a Heretic. The majority voted to make the full deity of Christ the accepted position of the church. Constantine agreed and insisted that people and institutions alike universally adopt the Creed. He cemented certain rituals and behaviours, and tolerated few major deviations in belief.

No doubt Constantine believed that the Council had put the 'Trinitarianism'<sup>2v</sup> 'Dynamic Monarchianism'<sup>3</sup> debate to bed forever. Not so! Restless sleepers toss and turn. They wrestle with the possibility that perceptions rejected by majorities may yet hold truths for fresher eyes to see.

Perceptions are slippery things. Each is shaped by the individual observer. Each is moulded by family, social, cultural, religious, and generational norms. Each is garnished by personal tastes, preferences, and other sundry unique experiences. Here's a nice example that might be useful at some quiz night or other. The Ebionites<sup>4</sup> figured that there was only one God, therefore Jesus was not divine—nevertheless, he was special enough to be 'the' sacrifice for the sins of the world. That meant that sacrificing animals became a redundant activity, so they became staunch vegetarians—perhaps the first such gastronomes to emerge since snails first raided rhubarb.

Through time, the perceptions of particularly powerful personages introduce new 'slants' on the various mainstream beliefs. The pups of each emergent kennel-master look to them and wag their tails. Some may want to scrap with particular mongrels. Some may seek the security of firmer leash. Some may want their heads patted and their bellies scratched. Others, with heightened senses, will seek to sniff out new horizons, hear new wisdom, and explore new territories.

Diverse perspectives morph into diverse beliefs that consolidate into a range of worldviews. Different worldviews spawn different reactions to the same event. The behaviours that follow are likely to lead to different outcomes. Consider how two different worldviews might behave when the Master points, and declares the mission—'go fetch the Kingdom of God'. Both get the message that it involves harvesting the fruits of the spirit—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control—but their maps are different. The worldview that is underpinned by the certainty of original sin, highlights the inevitable, damnable pitfalls, and assures that the Divine Jesus, as Saviour, has paid the price, assuages guilt, and eventually ushers believers into their heavenly reward. The worldview that adopts the notion of 'original blessing' (as Matthew Fox<sup>5</sup> calls it) sees Jesus, as fully human, as teacher, as healer, and as the perfect model and spirit companion in the process of co-creating a domain of increasing beauty and complexity.

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<sup>2</sup> Trinitarianism is the teaching that God is triune, that He has revealed Himself in three co-equal and co-eternal Persons. ('Search' in <http://www.gotquestions.org/Sabellianism-Modalism-Monarchianism.html> on 3/12/14

<sup>3</sup> Dynamic Monarchianism is the view that Jesus was not in His nature God. It is the view that God existed in Jesus, just as God exists in all of us, but that God existed in Jesus in a particularly powerful way. (ibid)

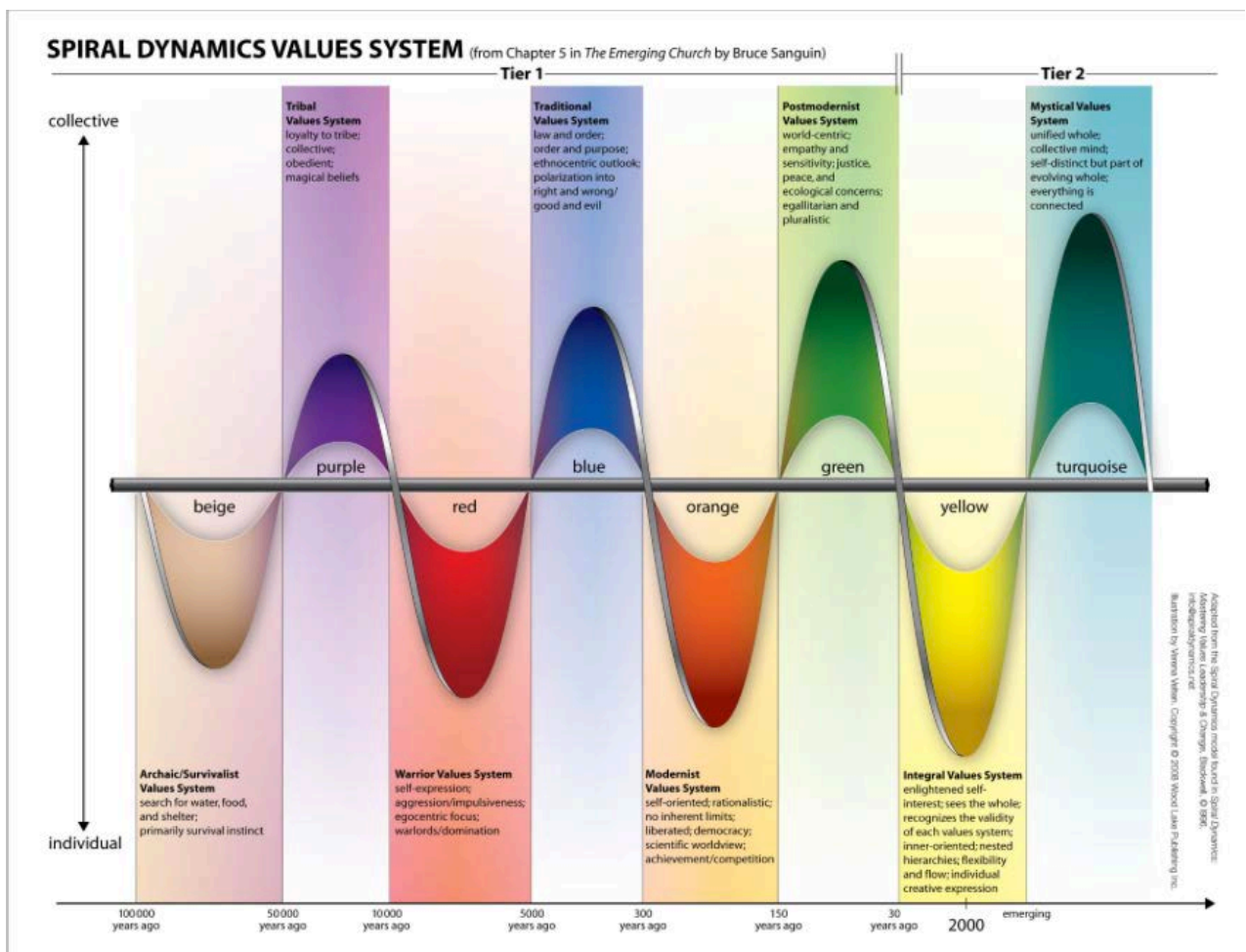
<sup>4</sup> Ehrman, B. D., 2003, *Lost Scriptures*, p.12, Oxford University Press, New York.

<sup>5</sup> Fox, M, 1983, *Original Blessing*, Bear & Company, Santa Fe.

Neither of those efforts at summarising a ‘worldview’ is complete or adequate, but they are both legitimate. They ‘work’ for the ‘holder’ when the behaviour is congruent with the associated belief system. They are certainly related in an evolutionary sense.

Let’s have a broader look at how worldviews evolve and how differences between them might account for an individual’s rigidity or openness to new ideas that call for change.

The image, below, ‘Spiral Dynamics value system’ is the work of Dr Clare W. Graves,<sup>6</sup> developmental psychologist. The small print is virtually illegible. (Print a copy from page 15 of this paper or the footnoted site.<sup>7</sup>) A simple overview of the findings should be sufficient to appreciate its relevance to what then follows—the question that Jesus posed, ‘*But who do you say that I am?*’<sup>8</sup> or, in terms of this exercise, *What colour is your Christ?*



The model represents how human values evolved over the last 100,000 until now—and will continue to do so. The screw-like ‘spiral’ reflects the fact that evolutionary events do not emerge as discrete bundles in a straight line that write off previous bundles. They emerge as better ways to deal with new challenges. Emergent ideas and behaviours tend to transcend older habits—but they do not discard them—they incorporate them. It works a bit like this. A bloke holding ‘Postmodernist’ values (green) is typically caring of

<sup>6</sup> In: Sanguin, B. 2008, *The Emerging church*, (pp. 79-90), Woodlake Publishing, Kelowna, BC, Canada. For more detail see <http://spiraldynamics.org> and associated links

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.woodlakebooks.com/files/spiral-dynamics-8.5%20x11-web-update.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Matthew 16:15

others, the ecology and the like. Then, Bang! He's out of work for yonks! He slides way back into 'survival' mode (beige). The hunt is for food, shelter, and cash for unpaid bills! Note that **stages** evolve cumulatively, whereas individuals can experience different '**states**' of being if their circumstances change radically.

A student of Graves, Dr Don Beck<sup>9</sup>, refined his work and devised the colour coding to classify grouped values for easy reference. Bruce Sanguin<sup>10</sup> adopted this coding to reflect on a relationship between value systems and images of Jesus—how different 'breeds' see their Master. My summary will attempt to spell out the illegible bits in the above chart, and integrate Graves' work and Sanguin's reflections 'as we go'.

### **BEIGE: Archaic/Survivalist Values System**

Humans evolved about 100,000 years ago. For the next 50,000 years, personal survival was the name of the game. It was a full time job finding water, food and shelter. In time, they tended to hunt in bands, but when the crunch came, personal survival came first.

No mention of God stuff here, but Sanguin notes that congregations have been known to regress to 'survivalist' values when under 'financial duress'. Backsliding at its best?

### **PURPLE: Tribal Values System**

During the next 40,000 years, bands merged to form more complex tribal systems. Collective loyalty to the tribe emerged. There was a collective enchantment with 'spirits'. Magical beliefs emerged about their power. After the 'domestics', life's goal was to keep the gods happy. Sacred rituals were devised and obediently enacted. The belief that such rituals had a direct impact on the universe characterised this value system.

#### ***The 'Tribal Christ'***

Sanguin describes the purple 'Tribal Christ' as the 'soul of the world'. He is present in the spirit of animals, plants, and the earth itself. 'He is the soul of the great ancestors, whose campfires light the starry night sky.' Obedience to him keeps the clan fed and safe from harm. He answers the prayers of the obedient ones.

#### ***Downside –upside***

The tribal value system becomes operative in those contemporary prayers that seek advantage for one's football team in the Grand Final. In spite of such unsporting seasonal backsliding, the evolutionary benefit of the purple stage is that humanity became sensitive to the sacred and enchanting nature of all creation.

### **RED: Warrior Value Systems**

The next 5,000 years saw the progressive re-emergence of the need for individual self-expression. Personal impulsiveness and eccentricities evoked aggressive responses that snowballed into 'power-plays', which, in turn, spawned dominating warlords. Most two-year-olds manifest the warrior 'state' in battles of will with parents. They mostly grow out of it. Some don't! Tribal warlords in some third-world countries, urban street gangs, and some 'Bikie' fraternities all still show plenty of red.

#### ***The 'Warrior Christ'***

The rams-horns that bleated loudly as Joshua entered the Promised Land, and the sentiment of the hymn 'Onward Christian Soldiers' both capture the 'warlord essence' of the red 'Warrior Christ'.

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<sup>9</sup> See <http://www.spiraldynamics.net>

<sup>10</sup> Sanguin, B. 2008, *The Emerging church*, (pp. 94-102), Woodlake Publishing, Kelowna, BC, Canada.

### ***Downside–upside***

Sanguin observes that, ‘In its most negative expression, following the Warrior Christ led to the crusades, the Inquisition, cultural and physical genocide of indigenous people and current day neo-imperialism ... and the US Army into Iraq.’ He also suggests that, ‘In its most positive expression, following this (red) Christ gives us the energy to ‘fight’ for what we believe in—to take a stand’.

### **BLUE: Traditional Values System**

About 5000 years ago, the collective need was to move from the aggressive, impulsive warrior stage towards a life of order and purpose. Law and order emerged where individualistic thrusts gave way to collective needs. Evolving perspectives came to see things either as ‘right’ or ‘wrong’—‘good’ or ‘evil’. Life was meant to have purpose—to have ‘meaning’.

The story is familiar. During this stage Rome emerged as a ‘world’ power. Jesus was born. Tensions persisted. Earlier states manifested periodically. Individual survival re-emerged when the collective was threatened (beige). Ritual sacrifices still occurred (purple). Warriors still sought power over others (red). As already mentioned, more than petty bickering kindled the Council of Nicaea. Constantine put his foot down, and the Council’s values were ‘it’. The core ‘Tradition’ was established, and, apart from ‘denominational’ splits, was not generally questioned until about 300 years ago.

### ***The ‘Traditional Christ’—Divine Scapegoat***

The traditional ‘blue’ Christ is familiar to most. He was ordained, as Son of God, to suffer and die on humanity’s behalf. He modelled sacrifice of self for future reward. His dignity ushered in new ways of living, loving, and serving, and new motives for sacrificing.

### ***Downside –upside***

Sanguin sees it as a ‘disaster’ to hold the unswerving view that the traditional Christ is the **only** truth, the **only** way, and the **only** life, and, at the same time, to declare that non-believers of this creed are certain candidates for hell! However, he certainly would not disagree that the traditional Christ is **a** truth, **a** way and **a** life—one that **has** led, **does** lead, and **will** lead to radical, positive transformations of hosts of lives.

### ***Reflection***

Sanguin notes that ‘seventy-six per cent of the world’s [Western?] religions function out of this blue traditional value system today.<sup>11</sup> That means that twenty-four per cent does not. This infers that the minority have either left the fold to join another sect, rebel within the tradition, withdraw commitment or declare an affiliation in each census.

A glance at Grave’s model shows that evolution has rocketed along. Four new stages have emerged in the last 300 years—the same number that accumulated over the previous 999,700 years—give or take a week or two. Let’s see what has driven the minority, and what the majority tend to discount or reject, and why.

### **ORANGE: Modernist Values**

The absolute authority of the institutional church stifled the innate curiosity, creativity and desire to improve one’s lot in life. It didn’t help when the church gave Galileo a hard time for announcing his agreement with Copernicus’s suggestion that the earth whizzed ‘round daily and orbited the sun—and not the other way around. The gauntlet was down.

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<sup>11</sup> Sanguin, B. 2008, *The Emerging church*, (p. 80), Woodlake Publishing, Kelowna, BC, Canada.

Science and religion were at loggerheads. Thinkers reckoned it was legit' to use their God-given brains. The church and her priesthood lost power. 'Enlightened' rationalists chanted, 'no more myths and ascent' (no more room for spirit). Democracy was born. The scientific worldview, that 'if you can't see it or feel it, it ain't so', was popularised. So too, the notions that humans can shape their own destinies. 'We are achievers'; 'competition is healthy'; 'the strongest survive' were popular chants! Corporate culture was born, and still flourishes. It heralds, 'what's good for individuals' serves the whole'.

### ***The 'Demythologised Christ' —the 'CEO'***

The Orange Christ was conscripted to be 'demythologised' by scientific surgery. Miracles were cut out. The rationalists were happy. The gifted **humanity** of Jesus was emphasised. His teaching and wisdom were valued. The achievers were especially fascinated by his ability to attract loyal followers. He was seen as a kind of model for aspiring CEO's. They preferred to nut out his leadership style rather than seek spiritual wisdom, or incorporate new teaching.

### ***Downside—upside***

The modernists seemingly threw the baby out with the bath water. They failed to pick the difference between 'religion' and 'spirit' (Religion requires conformity to the 'interpretations' of others; spirit helps choose the path that one's 'inner tutor' fosters.)<sup>12</sup>.

Sanguin suggests, however, that 'The positive contribution of this stage is its embrace of reason, its optimism about human potential, and its empowerment of the individual'. ... It helps us transcend the literalism of the previous levels, grounding our beliefs in something more than wishful thinking ... it gives us permission to think for ourselves and to realise that we are centres of creative self-expression.'

### ***Reflection***

It's not hard to see how slamming the door on spiritual dimensions by the modernists justifies the tendency of many people to not venture beyond the security and comfort of the cosy drawing room of the 'blue' traditional stage.

### **GREEN: Postmodernist Values System**

The Postmodern Values System emerged about 150 years ago and blossomed in the 1970's. The 'Orange' emphasis on individual achievement and the pursuit of wealth gave way to more inclusive, less greedy, perspectives. Postmodernism embraces a global, pluralistic, and multicultural worldview. The Orange bell that tolled 'it's all about **us**' was re-pealed. The Green bell signalled the resounding 'its about **all** of us!' Multiple cultures—not just ours—were recognised and validated. Sensitivity towards, and empathy for, others were expressed more overtly. Problem solving by consensus became preferred to majority rule. Strategies for shifting power from the elite to the marginalised were advocated. Justice, peace, and ecological values are prized in this stage.

### ***The 'Postmodern Christ'***

The egalitarian, Postmodern Christ embraces all cultures and 'downplays' the 'truth' of any particular religious system. The odd-bods, outcasts, crooks, and marginalised are cherished, not so much for **what** they are, but for **who** they actually are. Most 'isms' are frowned on: 'sexism', 'nationalism', 'racism', 'elitism', and 'ageism', to name a few. The non-hierarchical 'egalitarianism', and 'feminism' are still smiled upon.

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<sup>12</sup> Walsh, N. D. 1997, *Conversations with God*, Book 2, (p.80) Hampton Road Publishing Co, Charlottesville, VA, USA

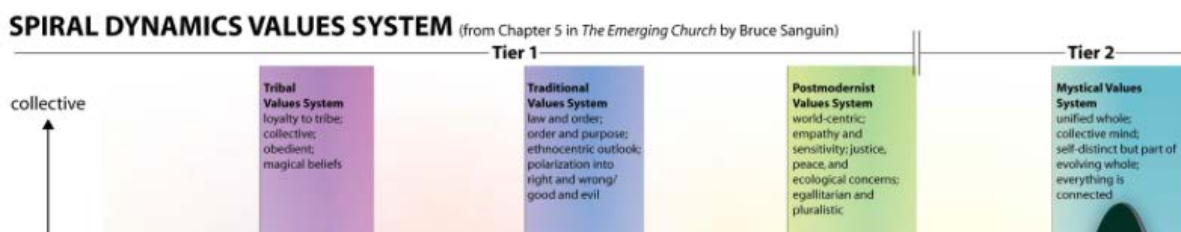
## Upside–Downside

It's time to 'flip' the heading. There are more ups than downs here. Sanguin observes that 'In its positive expression, followers of the Green Christ take up the cause of the poor, the left-behinds, and creation' itself. He also warns that 'In its negative expression, followers of the Green Christ are impatient and dismissive of all other value systems'.

## Reflection

It's a bit of a worry when those serving the 'left-behinds' get cranky with them for not catching up! One might well ask 'How come?' The answer seems to be that, collectively, we've still got a bit more evolving to do!

Take another look at Graves Model. Note that the 'Tier 1' line, at the top, covers the 'Beige' through to 'Green' stages. The 'Tier 2' stages will be discussed in due course.



Graves observed that, when the chips were down, each stage in Tier 1 focused on personal survival. If conflicts emerged between stages, each backed their own system—and fronted the other. Here's a simple biblical example of what Sanguin calls 'The Disqualification Game of Tier 1.'<sup>13</sup> 'The writer of Colossians (at 2:18) encourages his followers not to let themselves be "disqualified" by other Christians ... who have accused them of not eating the right food, observing the correct rituals, or believing the right philosophy (2:8, 16). Some scholars suggest that the prolific pen pusher, Paul, was not the author of Colossians, but whoever it was, played the 'disqualification game', pointed the finger at the accusers, and claimed that **they** were the mob with the wrong beliefs.

Anybody can play the game that no body wins. It's a pretty dodgy (if understandable) track record. Here's Sanguin's sports report—almost all of us get a mention!

'At the first three levels (survivalist warrior, or beige to red) this disdain for the other levels leads to **physical** wars and violence. From level four through six, (traditionalist to post-modern, or blue to green) the result is **culture** war.

People at Blue (the traditionalist stage) criticise those in the stages above them. According to those at blue, People at Orange (modernists) are 'godless' hedonists, and people at Green (postmodernists) lack absolute moral values to guide them.

People at Orange (the modern rationalist achievers) find those at Blue to be backward and superstitious, and they judge those at Green (the egalitarian multiculturalists) to be tree-hugging liberal flakes who are good at criticising but who don't have any real alternatives to economic progress.

Those at the Green level want to deconstruct Orange—after all, look at the harm that corporations and capitalists are doing in the world! They are similarly impatient with the allegiance shown by those, at Blue, to traditions that serve only to maintain the status quo. Greens believe that they have reached the highest level.

Those at Red (the warriors) just want to blow everybody else up, because the modern/Post-modern world has no room for them.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Sanguin, B. 2008, *The Emerging church*, (p. 83), Woodlake Publishing, Kelowna, BC, Canada.

<sup>14</sup> Sanguin, B. 2008, *The Emerging church*, (p. 84), Woodlake Publishing, Kelowna, BC, Canada.

Sanguin continues by noting that most 'liberal' denominations have a 'Green centre of gravity'. This creates dilemmas for such congregations. The Greens tend to trash all levels below them—including the top financial supporters whose wealth may well derive from an Orange orientation in their business lives. The same benefactors may well have a Blue orientation in their personal lives that both keeps them in the fold and motivates them to do the 'right' thing in the broader community. The Greens also tend, subtly or overtly, to point out the errors of the warriors, traditionalists, and modernists—a cauldron in which congregational conflicts simmer. On the other hand, Sanguin assures, Blue-Orange congregations chew up and spit out Green ministers on a regular basis!

### **Back to business**

The importance of Clare Graves' work is that it gives us a language and a set of concepts that allow us, perhaps for the first time, to consciously explore members' differences instead of unconsciously reacting to them. There's better ventilation with doors ajar.

Graves' research turned up a surprising finding—so different that he dubbed it 'Tier 2', the 'Being Codes'. Tier 2 has two stages—Yellow and Turquoise. Let's check them out.

### **YELLOW: Integral Value System**

In the late 70's – early 80's Graves noted a minority that 'thought differently' and made decisions in a radically different 'integral' way. They act out of 'enlightened self-interest' and see both the dignity and disaster of each stage.

They see that dysfunctional forms of Red (warrior) and Blue (traditional) lead to jihads and fundamentalist revivals, but also see dignity in Red's action orientation, and in Blue's sense of moral purpose.

They see that Orange (modernist) is messing up the planet with its unbridled ambition and galloping technology, but also see the undoubted benefits of harnessing them.

They see that the Green (postmodern) strategy of trashing the previous levels inhibits constructive interactions, but also see the merits of Green's world-centric vision.

They see the validity of each value system, and of spiral as a whole—but see that life's fullness and joys are muted by the dysfunction within the spiral.

Yellow (integral) values seek health for the whole spiral. Their aspirants are typically 'swinging voters'. They focus on issues—not party allegiance. They prefer 'flatter' hierarchies in organisations because they know that 'horizontal' dialogue harvests better yields than 'vertical' edicts that are responded to with either nonchalance or 'one eye on promotion'.

Sanguin summarises the stage like this: 'Those with a Yellow values system see the potential in an evolutionary philosophy that imbues the universe with a sacred bias toward increased complexity, beauty, and consciousness. They desire to integrate the insights of science and religion, seeing a "pattern that connects", and a deep intelligence that animates the whole universe'.

### ***The integral 'Cosmic Christ'***

The Yellow, Cosmic Christ permeates the universe—all the 'its', the 'me's, the 'us's', the 'them's', and the fluid spaces in between—into an integrated ecology of systems that dance with fluxing rhythms in celebration of the radical togetherness of all that is. This is the Christ that Paul declared in a sermon to the Greeks on Mars Hill: 'in him we live, and



move, and have our being' (Acts 17:28)—the Divine energy that pulls it all together, the divine wisdom that encourages rather than coerces, the divine love whose freedom nurtures growth.

### **Upside—downside**

The Yellow values encourage people to express their creative gifts in the spirit of the evolutionary impulse that 'transcends' and 'includes, past learning.

Yellow flashes the warning: Beware the 'pathological temptation towards elitist thinking, and a lacking of patience towards those who are 'less involved'.

### **Reflection**

The Yellow integral stage does more than just transcend and incorporate the earlier stages—it **embraces** them. It's not yet a two-way hug. Those who see their particular colour as the only valid one in the rainbow don't even want to paddle in 'Lake Spectrum'.

It might seem 'plain wrong' for a Blue traditionalist to even put in a toe to test the water. Remember the scorn towards the Orange Modernists when they denounced 'spirituality'. How natural for traditionalists to be suspicious of stuff extolled **beyond** the modernists?

I'm not proud of the inherent judgement in my opening paragraph under this heading. I, too, am unlikely to try out stuff that conflicts with my core values. This tendency denies my core quest—to relate authentically and empathically to all phenomena. Accurate empathy must surely be the primary 'marker' of Tier 2 expression. It's intuitive in a precious few, and trainable for those with a mind to learn.<sup>15</sup>

### **TURQUOISE: Mystical Value Systems—emerging—evolving**

In this stage, the individual is, mystically, both distinct and boundary-less. The historical focus has evolved from *me* to *us* to *all of us* to pinnacle in **all that is**. Individual heads, hearts, and guts know themselves to be seamlessly, and intimately interconnected with an evolving whole—'a collective mind seeking expression'. Life is not free of challenges, of course, but contingencies are approached without concerns of 'being converted, blown up, or poisoned by pollution ... Allegiance is not to external authority figures, but to an inner, hidden wholeness. As Jesus affirmed, the kingdom of God is *within*'.<sup>16</sup>

### **The Mystical Christ**

Followers of the mystical Christ know themselves to 'be a form of the integrated whole in whom the whole manifests'. This is the Christ that 'wants his disciples to realize their own Christ-like natures' ... to replace fear based worry 'by joy at the inner awareness we are the manifestation of the Holy *One* in the realm of time and space'.<sup>17</sup> Followers of this Christ are no longer surprised by life's many synchronicities and convergences that simply reflect the co-incidences that highlight the interconnectedness that is God.

### **Upside – downside**

The upside is that, in Mystery, there is always more!

The downside is that we can kid ourselves that partial truth is ultimate truth. It comes about like this. We all interpret our experience according to the values that we hold. Let's say that we are one of the 76% who hold traditional Blue Values. Let's say that we have a wondrous mystical experience—too life-changing to forget, too rich to not share.

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<sup>15</sup> Kranz, D. H. & Sanders, V. 2006, *Roadworthy Skills*, Quest Partners, Oakden, Sth Aust.

<sup>16</sup> Sanguin, B. 2008, *The Emerging church*, (p. 88), Woodlake Publishing, Kelowna, BC, Canada.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, (p. 97)

These experiences happen. They are mystical ‘States’ that can occur in any ‘Stage’. It’s not hard to see how such experiences may be seen as ‘it’, —top drawer’—‘omega’.

### **Reflection**

Reading, reviewing, reflecting, reasoning, and writing this paper took much longer than it would take a bright kid in Grade 2 to read it. The project dragged up yet another ‘R’—remembering. Remembering the umpteen experiences in each of the stages—states of struggles for beige survival; times when I was on the red warpath about this, that and the other; a long period when I cherished the certainty of my blue traditional faith; a turbulent orange period when I rubbished miracles and applauded the latest research into ‘whatever’; a productive green period when I contributed some new bits to the ‘Human Relations’ literature and practices; and frequent forays into stuff that I now, in retirement, recognise as the Yellow stage, (where, incidentally, a smattering of quantum physics makes miracles possible again). I now have dream traces of the Turquoise allure. In 1976, I made resolution to ‘die growing’. I suspect I’ll do more than dream after death.

I have learnt much more than an outline of a way of seeing life with greater clarity. I have learned that, hitherto, I was both ardent and skilful at rubbishing stages other than the one I was in (but could not delineate) as well as pushing barrows that may have either bored others, bruised others, but seldom beckoned others. I intend to curb those tenancies by more than just ‘mellowing’ in my old age. I guess I’ll never make it to full time ‘Tier 2, but that’s a big bit of my future Mission. I have also come to find that Bishop Spong’s arguments for a revised Christology energise my intention to die growing. I suspect that not all will agree with him. See what you think, and ponder why.



‘The way we have told the Jesus Story for most of the years of our life is based on the perfection of creation, including human beings: their fall from perfection; they can’t rescue themselves; their need for a divine rescuer. The rescuer comes, pays the price, and restores them to their status before they were fallen. Well, you know, that’s where our hymns talk, and that’s where we develop what I call our fetish with the blood of

Jesus and its cleansing power. Protestants like to bathe in it. Catholics like to drink it. Its sort of interesting the way we’ve made that fetish work.

But when you look at Darwinian principles, there never was a perfect creation—so there could not have been a fall. So original sin is irrelevant to the life of our world, and any body that keeps talking about sin, and rescue, and redemption doesn’t understand what’s going on. There wasn’t a fall. You don’t need to be rescued from a fall that never happened—not even metaphorically— and you can’t be restored to a status that you’ve never possessed. So the reality is that we’ve got to get out of what I call the rescue, saviour, redeemer mentality, and begin to see life—not as fallen—but as **incomplete**. And you develop a Christology that helps people to become more whole, more complete, more human, and more authentic, and that’s where I think we can make a difference in the world today.’<sup>18</sup>

Ponder away—take a break. After a long ponder, a recap might help. If not skip the recap.

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<sup>18</sup> Excerpt from Session 5, in *Painting the Stars*, 2013, livingthequestions.com, LLC

### **Recap after a lengthy ponder**

The earlier text introduced the analogy of ‘dog-ball-master’ to discuss the different behaviours, and perceptions that people have had, through time, in relation to the ‘Master’, Jesus. Views of the nature of Jesus were polarised between his being, fully (and ‘only’) human and ‘Son of God. The tensions between these groups were sufficiently disruptive, for over 300 years, that the Emperor, Constantine called the stakeholders together to sort it out. A tight, ‘Home-brand’ Christianity was institutionalised’—values were set, rituals established, conformity demanded and breaches punished. God was supreme over human kind—body and soul!

Clare Graves, developmental psychologist, studied the evolution of ‘Values’ over the last 100,000 years. The evolutionary pattern was that ‘new’ values ‘transcended’ older values and ‘incorporated’ them in classifiable, colour-coded stages. Part one outlined eight such stages from ‘Survival’ through to ‘Mystical’. The core nature of a colour-coded ‘Christ’, whose ‘image’ might align with each values ‘stage’ was discussed, and the ‘upside’ and ‘downside’ of each colour were presented (after Sanguin). Part one concluded with a contemporary analysis of the Church, by Bishop Spong, that differs significantly from traditionalists’ values that are still held dear by many.

### **Read on to skip the recap**

The accelerated evolutionary stages from the Blue stage to Turquoise covers 300 years. This period warrants more detail than was given earlier. The focus will be on what triggered the shift to the orange stage, its implication, and subsequent significance.

### **The split**

The significant impetus for rapid change came when the all-powerful, closed-minded leadership of the Church stomped heavily on the ‘thinkers’ who spawned the sciences. There were death threats, imprisonment, and excommunication. The philosopher, Rene Descartes, was troubled, and dreamed up a way of sorting out the punch-up between the church heavies and the scientific rationalists. His ‘truce’ was adopted. It simply declared that:

The **mind** is God’s domain.

The **body** [and the physical world] is the territory of deterministic science.

In time, Descartes notion of separating mind and body became the ‘Cartesian dichotomy’. The dichotomy radically changed perceptions of ‘how things happen’.

### ***Pre-split: downwards causation***

Before the split, God was seen as the ‘cause’ of all things. God is ‘up there’ and we are ‘down here’. It’s a two-tiered universe. God **causes** stuff **downwards**—creates, cares, punishes, inspires, and the rest. He is regularly invited to, ‘bring peace’, ‘heal Grandma’ and so on—Come on Down! Such ‘downward causation’ still holds true for those holding traditional values. God still causes body and mind.

### ***Post-split: upwards causation***

Science, on the other hand, stayed steadfast to its charter to explore the territory of matter of all kinds. The broad conclusion is that material things, including bodies, materialise by ‘**upward** causation’. The picture is familiar. Science first discovered that all matter derives from tiny ‘elementary particles’ that interact in different ways to form all sorts of atoms. Atoms interact to form molecules of all kinds. It's a bottom up process from which all ‘things’, including living things are formed. Consider the human body. Specific molecules combine to form cells, then organs, then systems that elegantly

coordinate the body. The wondrous human brain is pinnacle of upward causation. Neurophysiologists generally consider that consciousness is ‘produced’ in the brain—‘an illusory ornamental epiphenomenon of the brain’—a secondary occurrence that’s hard to explain. In other words, says Quantum Physicist, Amit Goswami: ‘just as the liver secretes bile, so the brain secretes consciousness. ... The underlying assumption is that consciousness is an **object**’.<sup>19</sup> Matter can only manifest matter!

To keep it simple, let us recognise that our **minds** are free to ‘make up our minds’—we have free will. **Objects** do not—they are just mindless things. Mind and consciousness are clearly different—they exemplify the Cartesian dichotomy.

The Cartesian dichotomy has persisted through to now. It is reflected in all the separate ‘... ologies’ and their products that bless contemporary life—that help us make stuff, and do stuff, better and better. It is inherent in the work of Ken Wilbur whose integration of a number of independent scientific theories produced the elegant ‘Integral Theory’ that is foundational to the utility of the Yellow Integral Stage. His work simply carried forward the dichotomies embedded in his source materials. His work now incorporates ‘non-dual’ material. During the Green Stage, in 1900, the physicist, Max Plank, broke ranks, took a bold conceptual leap to give birth to Quantum Theory. Quantum research has progressed along side the ‘conventionally’ based sciences through the Green and Yellow stages, and not only adds substance to the current Turquoise Stage, but vertically ‘flips’ the notion of upward causation. Not everyone accepts the flip.

#### ***Post split: downward causation reframed***

The experience of highly trained neurosurgeon, Eben Alexander offers compelling evidence that the brain is not the source of consciousness. Until he had his own near death experience, he **knew** that even though they ‘feel’ real, they are actually only fantasies produced by brains under extreme stress. Now he knows different! He was in a coma for seven days before surviving bacterial meningitis. He and his neurologist colleagues all knew that he was ‘brain dead’ for that period, and that consciousness of anything was totally impossible—yet after his recovery he could chronicle vivid, detailed memories of diverse experiences in surrounds that were filled with colour, light and love. Aspects of his story in *Proof of Heaven*<sup>20</sup> clearly confirm the validity of his recall.

The research reports of Amit Goswami preceded Alexander’s experience and led to the conclusion that consciousness not only pervades the universe, but is the ‘ground of **all** being’ whose **downward** causation is ‘the central secret of how the world operates’.<sup>21</sup>

#### ***Consciousness***

In contemporary society, we live in a soup of energy that pervades our environment. We satisfy our needs with the push of a button: radio, TV, smart phones, ‘remotes’, and GPS’s. We take the benefits of air traffic controls, satellites and allied devices for granted. It’s all good stuff. ‘Consciousness’ is a bit like that—soup with herbs and spices. Scientific journalist, Lynn McTaggart<sup>22</sup> likens the ‘Field’ of consciousness to a massive ‘Library’ of encoded energy that details all that **is**. There are no archives—all that was, ‘is’. All that can be, ‘is’. Every new idea is like borrowing a book. Every thought and action is

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<sup>19</sup> Goswami, Amit, 2008, *God is not dead: what Quantum Physics tells us about our origins and how we should live*, Hampton Road Publishing Company, Inc. (p. 18)

<sup>20</sup> Alexander, Eben 2012, *Proof of Heaven*, Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, NY.

<sup>21</sup> Goswami, Amit, 2008, *God is not dead: what Quantum Physics tells us about our origins and how we should live*, Hampton Road Publishing Company, Inc. (p. 27)

<sup>22</sup> McTaggart, Lynn, 2007, *Living in the Field: Tapping into the secret force of the universe*, Sounds True Audio Course.

catalogued—a bit like a new acquisition for shelving in the Library—in Consciousness. There’s a ‘handbook’ for every critter, like ‘how to build a your first nest’, and automated ‘reminders’ that it’s time to migrate, and so on—what Zoologists call ‘Cosmognosis’—(knowing from the Cosmos). It’s all in consciousness.

Figure 1.5<sup>23</sup> is a simple representation of our connection with Consciousness—the ground of all being. Let’s look at its content in a little more detail. The cloud of ‘Consciousness’ actually ‘fills’ the universe. Its ‘contents’ (library sectors) are described as ‘possibilities’ in four domains. The same domains appear below the dotted line as ‘Bodies’ with ‘actualities’—human experiences.

They are the:

- Vital Energy Body that we may **feel**;
- Mental Body that we **think**;
- Supramental Intellect Body that we **intuit**;
- Physical Body that we **sense**.

Glibly put, such possibilities become actualities through ‘Discontinuous Nonlocal Collapse’. That’s certainly glib, but gobbledygook to most of us. I am not smart enough to unpack it fully, but I can take the wrappers off.

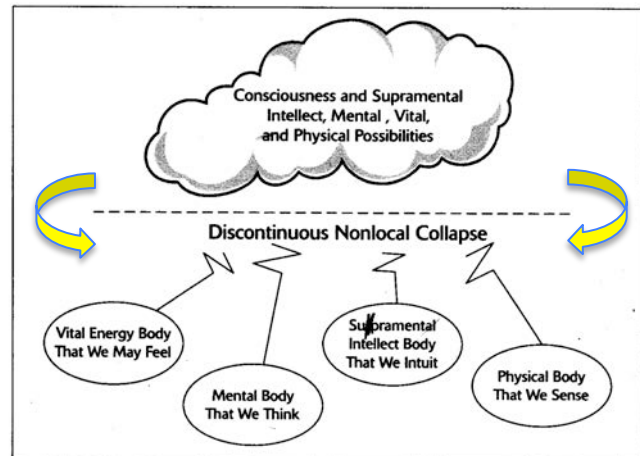


FIGURE 1-5. Quantum psychophysical parallelism. Consciousness mediates for physical, vital, mental, and supramental domains of quantum possibilities functioning in parallel.

### ***Discontinuous nonlocal collapse***

#### Nonlocality

In the so-called ‘real’ world, stuff stays put unless it’s given a nudge. Some sort of energy does the job. I don’t get your text message until your smart phone signals mine. That is **not** non-local—even though I might be interstate! Nonlocality is a technical quantum word meaning ‘information or influence transfer without local signals; such influences are action-at-a-distance and instantaneous’.<sup>24</sup> Things actually get sent when nothing ‘apparently’ sent it? Goswami sees our spirituality as nonlocal. We ‘get’ stuff!

#### Collapse

Simply put, consciousness is energy in tiny bundles. Each bundle is called a quantum. So the full name is Quantum Consciousness. These bundles are shifty little critters. They are ‘two-timers’. Depending on the circumstances they can be either a ‘wave’ or a ‘particle’—but not both at the same time. It’s what the experts call ‘wave-particle duality’. It is universally agreed that waves of quantum objects are waves of ‘possibility’.<sup>25</sup>

Quantum critters are not just shifty—they are shy! All you have to do is look at them and they ‘collapse’ into little particles—stuff. It’s called the ‘observer effect’. In a real sense we ‘create’ what we focus on—as he thinketh in his heart, so is he (Prov. 23.7), so to speak. If that doesn’t make a lot of sense just sense the creative opportunities, and the mystery. It’s sparkling Turquoise.

<sup>23</sup> Goswami, Amit, 2008, *God is not dead: what Quantum Physics tells us about our origins and how we should live*, Hampton Road Publishing Company, Inc. (p. 26)

<sup>24</sup> *ibid* (page 21)

<sup>25</sup> *ibid* (page 20)

## A 'conclusion'— for now

Perhaps by now, we've captured something of the wonder of the interrelatedness of self and this mysterious quantum consciousness. There is so much more. We not only 'download' from, we also 'upload' to, the source of all creation—the entity where all is known. Goswami calls it 'Quantum consciousness', and sees his research as deciphering the signatures of God. He quips, 'Call it God if you like, but quantum consciousness will do'. Prof. Norm Habel might well call it 'the wisdom that taught God'. Some Christian groups call it "Sophia". Prof. Brian Cox (on the 'telly') referred to the 'energy that was there before the Big Bang'. The same source of wonder—consciousness—is called 'Allah', 'Shiva', 'Ahura Mazda', 'Krishna', 'Biame', 'Queztalcoatl', 'HaShem', and many more. They don't need to be listed alphabetically. None is more important than another. Followers of each have historical links to its particular Messenger—but none of who were the Author! There's the rub!

We started by looking at Messengers, Messages, and dogs. We saw how messy things got through arguments about the nature and role of the Messenger. The mess persists!

Is Goswami on track? Will a name change to 'Quantum consciousness' help fix the mess? I might think so—in time. Others might think so. Most won't—it's too big a change!

So what about Mathew Fox's strategy for incremental change? What a man. He spent 242 pages extolling the significance of *The Coming of the Cosmic Christ*, and then on the very next page, writes. 'because of the sins of Christians towards other faiths over the centuries, the term 'Cosmic Christ' carries too much baggage with it that might hinder deep ecumenism. If that is the case, there is another phrase which carries a similar message; 'Cosmic Wisdom'.<sup>26</sup> What loving thoughtfulness. What an overt 'Tier 2' guy (in Graves terms). What a stepping-stone towards Quantum Consciousness. Cosmic Wisdom names the state, Quantum consciousness draws the map'.

I have no doubt that the Turquoise Stage and its tantalising quantum mysteries will, as it evolves further, transcend all that has been. It will incorporate the best of what has been. It will spawn the day when, eventually, the Author, the ground of all being, by whatever name, will 'party on' with us in joyful celebration of the loving abundance that permeates all that is.

All we need to do is **focus** on it—create it—with loving intent! Bingo!!

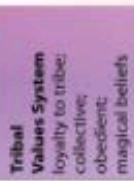
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<sup>26</sup> Fox, Matthew. 1988, *The coming of the Cosmic Christ*, Collins Dove, Melbourne.

# SPIRAL DYNAMICS VALUES SYSTEM (from Chapter 5 in *The Emerging Church* by Bruce Sanguin)

## Tier 1

**Tribal Values System**  
 loyalty to tribe;  
 collective;  
 obedient;  
 magical beliefs



purple

**Warrior Values System**  
 self-expression;  
 aggression/impulsiveness;  
 egocentric focus;  
 warlords/domination

**Traditional Values System**  
 law and order;  
 order and purpose;  
 ethnocentric outlook;  
 polarization into  
 right and wrong/  
 good and evil



blue

**Modernist Values System**  
 self-oriented; rationalistic;  
 no inherent limits;  
 liberalized; democracy;  
 scientific worldview;  
 achievement/competition

**Postmodernist Values System**  
 world-centric;  
 empathy and  
 sensitivity; justice,  
 peace, and  
 ecological concerns;  
 egalitarian and  
 pluralistic



green

**Integral Values System**  
 enlightened self-  
 interest; sees the whole;  
 recognizes the validity  
 of each values system;  
 inner-oriented; nested  
 hierarchies; flexibility  
 and flow; individual  
 creative expression

**Mystical Values System**  
 unified whole;  
 collective mind;  
 self-distinct but part of  
 evolving whole;  
 everything is  
 connected



turquoise

## Tier 2

collective

individual



Adapted from the Spiral Dynamics model found in *Spiral Dynamics: Mastering Values Leadership & Change*, Blackwell, © 1996, info@spiraldynamics.net  
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