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**Distinctively Vineyard:
An Identity in the Making**

Christine K. Eubanks

Despite its youthful twenty-five years, the Vineyard Christian Fellowship has seen some remarkable days. It has been the object of fiery allegations and zealous praise, eliciting attackers and followers alike. Its birth, shrouded in conflict with Calvary Chapel, preceded criticism that increased as dramatically as its flourishing healing ministry. It became known for its belief in and practice of signs and wonders, and especially for its magnetic leader, John Wimber. Two major events, its splitting from the 'Kansas City Prophets' and its withdrawing support from the 'Toronto Blessing', further defined Vineyard's identity. Recently, all within one year, John Wimber resigned, Carl Tuttle left abruptly, and Wimber passed away, leaving the Vineyard in a tailspin. What distinctives will the Vineyard embrace as it establishes itself in a post-Wimber era? Which distinctives were specifically a part of John Wimber's leadership? These are the questions I will seek to answer by examining key characteristics and philosophies on which the movement was founded, describing events which further defined its identity, and determining the similarities and differences of vision its current leaders have compared to that of Wimber.

The Beginning of the Vineyard

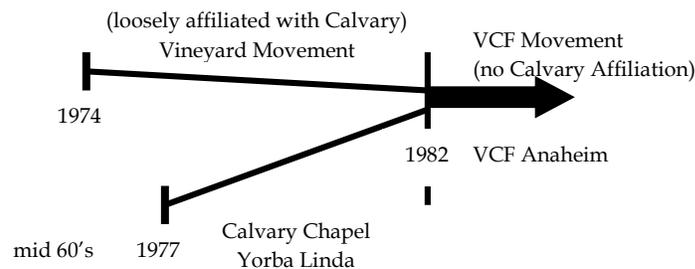
While John Wimber is often credited with the founding of the Vineyard movement (Maxwell 1998), Kenn Gulliksen is in fact its originator. At the movement's inception, the Vineyard churches were affiliated with Calvary Chapel, yet they retained

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the name 'Vineyard.' At the same time, John Wimber was pastoring a thriving congregation, also affiliated with Calvary Chapel, named Calvary Chapel Yorba Linda (Wimber & Springer 1987). It was previously a Bible study group of a Quaker church, and when it became more "charismatic" than what the elders felt was appropriate, the group was asked to leave in 1977.

In 1982, however, Wimber and Gulliksen joined together, distinguished the several churches as the Vineyard, unaffiliated with Calvary, and renamed Wimber's church Vineyard Christian Fellowship of Anaheim. Gulliksen relinquished the movement's leadership to Wimber, and the Anaheim Vineyard became its 'flagship' church (Coggins & Hiebert 1989; Jackson 1999).

Literature on the Vineyard cite conflicting dates on the 'beginning' of the Vineyard. Some reported that the Vineyard began in the mid-60's (Carroll 1998), referring to the beginning of the Calvary Chapel Movement. Others have claimed it began in 1978 (Maxwell 1998), referring to the start of Calvary Chapel Yorba Linda church which later became Anaheim Vineyard. Still others cite its inception in 1982 (Perrin & Mauss 1993), referring to the separation of Vineyard (as a church and a movement) from Calvary Chapel. The following diagram, I believe, clearly illustrates the evolution of the Vineyard movement and the changes in its affiliation:



An Identity Created

The explosive popularity of movements like Calvary Chapel and Vineyard arose from the baby boomer generation. This generation was disenchanted with the Vietnam War, sobered by the assassinations of John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Bobby Kennedy, and terrified with the Cuban missile crisis and China's nuclear bomb test. When their parents' generation of-

ferred unsatisfactory “because I said so” answers to many life issues, they looked elsewhere for meaning (Jackson 1999). John Wimber’s unpretentious approach to Christianity gave many in the hippie-generation precisely the genuine no-frills spirituality for which they hungered.

While the sociopolitical context framed the style which Vineyard embodied, its name would frame its identity. Kenn Gulliksen struggled with finding a name for his fledgling movement; he was dissatisfied with suggestions such as “Church of the Creator,” and “Holy Ghost Fellowship.” The word vineyard, on the other hand, made a significant impression on him as he was reading the book of Isaiah. The Holy Spirit, he realized, was saying “You’re the Vineyard. Everything the Father wants to do in the life of the church can be seen in a vineyard – ground preparation, sowing, husbandry, pruning, the production of fruit, grafting, beauty, the joy of the wine...” (Jackson 1999:81) Indeed, Isaiah 27:3 says, “A Vineyard of wine, sing of it! I, the Lord, am its keeper; I water it every moment, lest anyone damage it, I guard it night and day” (Jackson 1999:81).

Lance Pittluck would later say that Wimber and Gulliksen did not expect for the Vineyard to develop as rapidly as it did. Pittluck recounts that Wimber was simply obeying God and following His lead (personal communication 1999), and in doing so, the following distinctives were developed.

Distinctive #1: Simplicity

The facilities which have housed Vineyard churches have been sites like a Masonic lodge, high school gyms, an industrial warehouse (Wimber, C., John...1999), YMCA facilities, a tent, and even outdoors. Currently, the Anaheim Vineyard meets in a former aerospace office building. The walls are white and the carpet is gray; the theater style seating replaces a bygone tradition of long wooden pews. A few colorful banners proclaiming truths such as “Mercy Triumphs Over Judgment” and “We Welcome You Lord” are the only purposeful decor.

Almost invariably, the agenda for Sunday services is : worship, teaching, ministry time. A bulletin announces not the order of service, but upcoming events, classes, and ministry opportunities. It is often joked that anyone wearing a tie must be a visitor. While a casual style is not uncommon in contemporary churches, in the 1970’s it was not easy for traditionalists to adjust. At first,

members of Kenn Gulliksen's Vineyards put up unwelcoming signs reading "No bare feet," directed towards hippies, which Kenn hurriedly tore down (Jackson 1999). The value of simplicity infiltrates church life at the Vineyard, from the kind of sermon given to the sort of lifestyle the leadership encourages its congregation to have. The simple format of service and modest appearance are styles that many new churches today are adopting.

Distinctive #2: Music and Worship

Worship has been a distinctive since Anaheim Vineyard's first days and throughout the movement, heavily influenced by John Wimber's background as a professional musician. As a result, the movement attracted other musicians as well, including popular contemporary Christian performers Keith Green and Randy Stonehill. [In fact, Keith Green's death in a tragic plane crash was during a trip to explore the site of a potential Vineyard church in Connecticut (Jackson 1999)].

Vineyard Music Group has produced dozens of compact discs, and its worship songs are sung in thousands of churches worldwide (Pittluck, personal communication 1999; Hunter, personal communication 2000). Christians across the U.S.A. may reject Vineyard doctrine, but enjoy Vineyard music. Many do not even realize the source of the worship songs they sing (Pittluck 1999). However, musicians from the Vineyard are not the only ones writing contemporary songs. Calvary Chapel's 'Maranatha! Music' is also extremely popular, and praise choruses from both movements are 'flavored' with a style that is a distinct trend in current worship music. Its easy melodies and first-person lyrics facilitate intimate personal experience in the presence of God by allowing the worshiper to express herself or himself directly to Him.

Distinctive #3: "Doin' the Stuff": Signs and Wonders

When John and Carol Wimber became Christians, they were attending a Friends church. Carol describes the community as one that was not "Spirit friendly," especially in regard to speaking in tongues. For years the Wimbbers brushed aside what they later believed was the Spirit working within and among them (Wimber, C., Taking...1999). They had seen a few instances of healings, words of knowledge, and prophecy, but speaking in tongues gave them particular angst, knowing the church elders

did not approve. However, when John joined the staff at Fuller Evangelistic Association, he met missionaries like Chuck Kraft and Paul Hiebert (Wimber, C., *Taking...1999*; Wimber, C., *John...1999*) who had seen countless cases of supernatural phenomena overseas. Also, John Amstutz' (professor at Life Bible College) teaching challenged Wimber to keep an open mind on the validity of healing (Wimber & Springer 1987). Subsequently, the Wimbbers shifted their worldview to one that considered the gifts of the Spirit.

These issues are ultimately what separated the Wimbbers twice from their churches: first from the Friends church and then from Calvary Chapel. Nevertheless, the Wimbbers felt confident God was leading them to include signs and wonders in their ministry, and they felt called to obey (Wimber, C., *Taking...1999*). "Doin' the stuff," a phrase that John coined, refers to what Jesus commanded in John 14:12, "Anyone who has faith in me, will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, for I am going to the Father." This verse made a tremendous impact on John. The Wimbbers thought 'we haven't even been doing the lesser things that Jesus did, let alone greater things!' (Wimber, C., *Taking...1999*). The Wimbbers were convinced that they would soon see great miracles, heal the sick, cast out demons, and feed the poor.

Though they began very gradually, signs and wonders became increasingly frequent as hundreds of healings occurred. One example of the earliest cases involves a young man who had a congenital spinal deformity. Near the end of a service which he attended, the congregation separated into smaller groups to pray for one another. As they did, he felt heat in his lower back, and the x-rays he took the following day showed a completely normal spine (Wimber, C., *John...1999*). Those with uneven legs witnessed their short ones grow, epileptic seizures ceased, blind eyes could see, asthmatic conditions were cured, and so on. Carol Wimber called the period of 1977-1981 'The Glory Years' (John...1999). The Vineyard, as a result, became known as a proponent for miraculous healings and it would continue to operate in such a vein. Its philosophy behind praying for healing is that Christians have a God-given authority to heal and should pray for healing, but it was God's decision whether or not He would (Wimber & Springer 1987). During this time, signs and wonders would most markedly distinguish the Vineyard from other

Boomer/Generation X churches like Calvary Chapel and Hope Chapel.

Distinctive #4: "Doin' the Stuff": Ministry to the Needy

That the church should 'do what Jesus did' in John 14:2 impressed upon Wimber an urgency to focus also on social services. At this point, John decided that his church would devote themselves to the needy (Wimber, C., John...1999).

The Vineyard in Anaheim began an extensive benevolence ministry under the leadership of Monte and Brandi Whitaker. Literally tons of donated food from supermarkets and the county are distributed daily from a warehouse on the Anaheim Vineyard church campus. Coupled with grocery distribution, hot meals are served weekly by volunteers. In addition to the financially poor and the hungry, the 'poor in spirit' are also served. There are support groups, outreaches and classes for chemical, food, and sexual dependents, those grieving from deaths, single parents, the incarcerated, the ill, and many others. As a large church, the Anaheim Vineyard has resources to offer an array of ministries, while other Vineyard churches have benevolence ministries as they are able.

Distinctive #5: Kinship Groups

Also called 'home fellowship' groups, these are organized by geographic location and designed for church members to meet in more intimate settings and manageable sizes. Leaders are usually a married couple who are lay people, and serve as 'pastors' of their group. The Wimbers took this model from the Friends church, where there is little distinction between lay people and clergy (Wimber, C., Taking...1999). Another 'Wimberism' was coined, "Everybody gets to play." That is, all the participants have the opportunity to minister to one another in prayer.

Within each kinship are only three formal roles: leaders, hosts, and worship leader(s), and individuals may serve in more than one role simultaneously. Responsibilities may also be shared, between two worship leaders, for example. These groups are considered the 'backbone' of the church; it is the primary context for accountability, support, and the cultivation of spiritual gifts. While many Christian congregations have small group Bible studies and fellowships, Vineyard's groups are characterized by its leaders being a couple, and the participation of any

(or all) in ministry. In addition, there is a substantial measure of freedom for each group to develop its identity and emphasis. For example, the home fellowship group which I attend identifies itself as one that focuses on intercessory prayer.

Distinctive #6: Flexibility

John Wimber's disposition of teachability was a characteristic that had more to do with his nature than with any value formally outlined. Yet, his flexibility, coupled with sensitivity, was modeled for the movement and the church in direct ways. He was known to take risks (Jackson 1999), and "to admit error and repent when he was wrong" recalls Bob Fulton, his brother-in-law (Maxwell 1998). He was also willing to follow the Holy Spirit's leading during meetings, occasionally interrupting his own sermons with words of knowledge for people God wanted to heal (Wimber, C., John...1999).

Many of the leaders who were trained under Wimber's leadership have maintained the philosophy of openness. This kind of flexibility will likely continue as a chief principle throughout the movement, for the leadership is generally young and open to change (Hunter, personal communication 2000).

Distinctive #7: John Wimber

John Wimber's family was 'unchurched' for four generations, even though his ancestors were from the 'Bible belt' in Kentucky and Missouri. They had become a "gospel hardened" people; they knew the gospel, but had no intention of making it personal (Wimber, J. 1992). As a rock musician before he became a Christian, Wimber was strung out on drugs, alcohol, and five packs of cigarettes daily; he "didn't know the first thing about Christianity." Learning about the Bible was even a surprise. "God's got a book out, and it's called the Bible," his wife Carol told him (Wimber, J. 1992), when they reunited after a five month separation (Jackson 1999). What ensued was their earnest research and subsequent acceptance of Christianity.

Undoubtedly, Wimber's background heavily influenced Vineyard's style. As a young Christian, he had few church models to follow. As mentioned, the distinctiveness of the Vineyard was influenced by the tense sociopolitical era in which it began, enhanced by the uniqueness of Wimber's unaffected character and experience. His Sunday messages were conversational, low-

key teachings, "relevant to the everyday lives of people who have learned to value their families more than their careers" (Warner 1997). His vision was to train and teach the church how to grow closer to God (Wimber, C., John...1999). Bill Jackson relates how "Wimber would often be asked if he fasted or prayed long hours before a meeting in order to move in spiritual power. He used to jokingly respond that he drank a Diet Coke. What he meant was that he was no more spiritual than anyone else" (1999:115). "He never got sophisticated. He was never self-conscious. He was never ashamed to let his simple love for Jesus show" (Wimber, C., John...1999:105). Simplicity and lack of pretense were hallmarks of John Wimber's personality, ones which infiltrated the life of the church.

Another aspect in which John Wimber heavily influenced the Vineyard is the attitude he had toward God the Father. Wimber's father left the family the day he was born (Wimber & Springer 1984) and he grew up as an only child (Jackson 1999). When he began pastoring Calvary Chapel Yorba Linda he spoke of a "reputation of illegitimacy that followed Jesus throughout his early life and argued that the breakaway church (from its original Quaker congregation), born of the Spirit, would carry that stigma also" (Coggins & Hiebert 1989:18, parenthesis mine). Not surprisingly, in 1982 the church experienced yet another separation, in this case from Calvary Chapel, and would subsequently be distinguished as one of the few denominations that would remain steadfast in practicing the gifts of the Spirit.

Indeed, a significant emphasis in the Vineyard churches is the perspective of God being 'a Father.' Wimber sought to teach his congregation how to relate to God as a nurturing, involved, and kind Father. Much of the focus of worship has been toward God as Father. In fact, Vineyard Music Group produces a line of albums called "Touching the Father's Heart," and includes emotive, intimate songs like the following:

I need you to hold me
Like my daddy never could
And I need you to show me
How resting in your arms can be so good

Oh, hold me, hold me Father
Never let me go

Hold me tight, hold me closer still
 'Cause you've been only kind to me
 And in your arms is where I need to be

I need you to walk with me
 Hand in hand we'll run and play
 And I need you to talk to me
 Tell me again you'll stay
 (LaFave 1991)

Defining Events for the Vineyard

The years between 1989 and 1991 marked the 'prophetic period,' when Paul Cain, Bob Jones, and Rick Joyner began prophesying apocalyptic events. At the time, John Wimber affirmed their actions. After significant prophecies failed to come to pass, Wimber was disillusioned, and later told the movement that he regretted leading the Vineyard into the prophetic era. "I loved the gifts the prophets exercised; I didn't like the package," Wimber explained (Stafford and Beverley 1997). The Vineyard leaders had not yet learned to process the prophetic in a reasonable way. Eventually, Mike Bickle, pastor of the Kansas City Vineyard, left the Vineyard in 1996 after realizing that his desire to see the movement align itself with the prophets would not come to pass (Jackson 1999).

In the discussion of whether or not the Vineyard board had the authority to pastor the prophets (Wimber felt it did), the board divided. Four 'Vineyard pioneers' resigned in 1991-1992, including Kenn Gulliksen. The issue was "whether the Vineyard would choose to become an organized, cohesive movement which would...take responsibility over hundreds, even thousands of churches, or whether it would become a completely loose fellowship of churches with no organizational ties or structures for church planting, missions, and pastoring" (Jackson 1999:231). Using Paul Hiebert's "Social Set Theory" (1994), Wimber described three sets after which the Vineyard could be modeled: 1) a "fuzzy set" whereby groups have no organizational center and are operated as its leaders please, 2) a "centered set" in which groups have joined together around core values, with negotiable periphery, and 3) "bounded sets" describing groups which have both a common center and clearly define rules. John Wimber wanted the Vineyard to be centered set, but

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had trouble operating so (Jackson 1999). Wimber admits he was “preoccupied and too directive,” and didn’t “listen to his lieutenants” (Stafford and Beverley 1997). Hunter, too, called his leadership style “autocratic” (Maxwell 1998). At the same time, Wimber was able to admit mistakes, and risk by “letting the bush grow and then trim it back” (Wimber’s Wonders 1998).

At this time, John Wimber had an exorbitant amount of responsibility. He was senior pastor of VCF Anaheim, head of a growing denomination (Association of Vineyard Churches [AVC]), leader of a worldwide movement (Vineyard Ministries International) and still yet, the president of a prolific music company (Vineyard Music Group) (Jackson 1999; Pittluck, personal communication 1999; Wimber, C., John...1999). By the time the laughing, roaring, and barking of the ‘Toronto Blessing’ began in 1994, Wimber was much more cautious, and the board was much more active.

The AVC critically defined the movement when it withdrew support from the Toronto Airport Vineyard in 1995. It brought more emphasis on fruit and gifts of the Spirit, evangelism, scriptural emphasis, and church planting. The board encouraged long-term fruit, not experiences. While the board was careful not to judge the events of the Toronto Blessing, it also stated that it could not endorse their activity (Jackson 1999). The impact was a shock to the Airport Vineyard, and bitter remarks were made but later revised with an apology (Vineyard severs... 1996). This event solidified Vineyard’s identity as a movement that would embrace the gifts of the Spirit but remain steadfastly within scriptural parameters.

The Vineyard in Transition

The split from the prophetic and the Toronto Blessing helped Vineyard identify what it was not, but it would begin a struggle to define what it is. John Wimber’s death further marked the transition. Before his death, however, Wimber installed a board of six regional overseers (Maxwell 1998), including Todd Hunter as the AVC’s National Director and Bob Fulton as its International Director (Jackson 1999), who would accept the task of leading the movement into its post-Wimber era. Reacting to these events, Todd Hunter believes, the Vineyard movement recoiled from working supernaturally and had become stagnant at the time he became its director (Hunter, personal communication

2000). As a result, Hunter's vision involves getting the Vineyard 'back on its feet' by giving churches permission and freedom to redefine themselves.

Vision For the Association of Vineyard Churches

While AVC has learned a great deal from John Wimber's leadership, and his influence still runs deep within the movement, Todd Hunter will infuse his own leadership personality. He appears to have the ability to operate with a much more center-set approach. Though Wimber liked the idea of center-set groups, he did not relinquish enough control to allow the movement to truly be center-set (Jackson 1999). Bill Jackson describes Wimber's 'apostolic leadership' as one prone to an erratic path, less accountability, and concentrated power. "Another downside is the failure to recognize when those who are being trained are ready to share in making decisions. During the teenage years when children want to begin to spread their wings, the wise parent has to know when to hold on and when to let go. John, at his own admission, held on too long" (Jackson 1999:368-369).

Todd Hunter will also have a more balanced approach in leadership as the National Director of Vineyard USA simply because he will not be the sole leader of four different organizations as John was. The AVC will be a distinct entity from the Anaheim Vineyard, and will be able to focus on the organization nationally.

The Columbus Accord is a deliberate move on the part of the AVC to allow for a center-set pattern, with an emphasis on freedom. The delicate task of the AVC is to guide the movement while avoiding restriction. Therefore, the issue of freedom, despite its elusiveness, becomes significant as churches explore and risk, distinguishing their entities and defining their personalities, yet all with a fair amount of caution. Thus, Todd Hunter's leadership of the Vineyard churches will be managed on a relational basis rather than a defined, structural one (Hunter, personal communication 2000). Drafted on April 27, 1998, the Columbus Accord outlines priorities by which the AVC will govern its churches. The following lists a portion of it:

We must reframe the Corporate Culture of AVC USA.

1. Our focus should not simply be, what is a Vineyard?
It should be:

2. What is biblical and consistent with Kingdom theology?
3. What is righteous and ethical?
4. What facilitates the Vineyard mission of church planting, evangelism and renewal?
5. What is in harmony with our values, priorities and practices?

We Must Recognize the Freedom Within AVC USA

10. Freedom in the Vineyard is not a total absence of restraints, but being released from that which unduly hampers and frustrates our ability to follow God and fulfill His purposes.
11. Freedom is not an end in itself; it is given for the purpose of fulfilling your God-given potential and for facilitating the spontaneous expansion of the Church.
12. We affirm the freedom to risk failure for the sake of following God

We Must Sharpen the Focus of Mission Within AVC USA

We Must Redesign the Structure of AVC USA

- Our goal for AVC structure is that it will be relational and that it will provide proper systematic teamwork, healthy accountability, free-flowing communication and loving encouragement. Form will follow function.

(AVC USA Board and Council 1998)

Internationally, the Vineyard continues to grow as it does within the U.S.A. (Pittluck 1999). Hunter (personal communication, 2000) believes that Vineyard's growing attention to church planting overseas will soon make missions one of its chief distinctives. Currently, the AVC has 449 U.S.A. churches and 370 international churches in 52 countries (Jackson 1999; Hunter, personal communication 2000). In fact, the movement's growth internationally may surpass that of its growth nationally. One reason is that the worldwide church embraces the Vineyard more readily than its American neighbors, whose western, cognitive worldview has little room for signs and wonders (Kraft 1989; Jackson 1999). It will be interesting to see how the movement changes as it becomes an international presence, and whether its leadership will find a need to develop more structure within the

association.

The Vineyard Christian Fellowship of Anaheim in Transition

Lance Pittluck left his post as East Coast Regional Director to become senior pastor of the Anaheim Vineyard in the same year it suffered three considerable losses: John Wimber's resignation, Carl Tuttle's personal hardship and abrupt departure, and Wimber's death. To the church, these events were "like a blow to the stomach which knocks the wind out of you," and from which it is only beginning to complete its recovery (Pittluck, personal communication 1999). How these events impacted the Anaheim Vineyard remains to be seen.

Vision for Vineyard Christian Fellowship of Anaheim

Unlike John Wimber, Lance Pittluck will not divide his attention on four leadership roles, and can focus on the local church. Initially, when the movement was exploding in its growth, the Anaheim Vineyard instantly became a mega-church. In 1985, 120 congregations had been founded and the Anaheim church had mushroomed to 5000 members (Coggins & Hiebert 1989). At the same time, Wimber's teaching ministry had become so popular that he was often traveling (Pittluck 1999). While Wimber tried to simultaneously maintain his positions as senior pastor and AVC Director, the Anaheim Vineyard became more of a 'conference center' than a local church. It had become a training place for other church leaders. Consequently, Pittluck hopes to rebuild the Anaheim Vineyard as a cohesive body, emphasizing outreach in the community (personal communication 1999).

Lance Pittluck describes the need for interaction among existing relationships as a means for evangelism and lists five core priorities, which he calls "non-negotiables." That is, they are biblical functions by which the church keeps its focus; the forms, or programming, based on these priorities may vary in appearance (personal communication 1999). These priorities are listed on the back of each Sunday bulletin:

We are simply trying to be followers of Jesus. He is our hero. We worship Him and want to be dedicated followers of Him. We organize our life together around 5 core priorities. A priority is basically how we spend our time, energy, and money.

1. Our first priority is worship. We want to love Him with our songs and our lives. We love Him because He first loved us.
 2. Our second priority is the Word. Our desire is to know the Bible, experience what it talks about and do what it commands us to do. The Bible is our standard for the Christian life.
 3. Our third priority is fellowship. Christians are not meant to be alone. We are meant to share life together, learning to know and love each other. This is why our church is divided into small groups in order to make our large family feel smaller.
 4. Our fourth priority is ministry. We believe and practice that every member of the church is a minister. We all get to participate in the work of the church. God gives the church leaders, not to do all the ministry, but to equip the people to do their part.
 5. Outreach is our fifth priority. As God blesses us, we are to become a blessing to others. All around us are lost, broken, poor people, who need resources that God has freely given the church. We are not to hoard, but be generous.
- All this is done in an atmosphere of love, acceptance, and forgiveness: Our God is a gracious God! May He meet you in His mercy and power. (Pittluck, *What Is...*1999)

Pittluck acknowledges the church's state of transition, and believes the church will need to remain flexible. He concentrates on keeping the local Vineyard's values simple, creating a clear set of core priorities and indicating a center-set approach, like Todd Hunter with the AVC.

In fact, Pittluck cites that 50% of the current population at Anaheim Vineyard have been attending the church for less than five years (personal communication 1999). As a result, classes such as Alpha and Basics have been offered. Alpha, a nationally adopted program, is designed for new Christians or non-Christians who wish to learn more about the faith in a non-threatening classroom setting. Basics is a course to explore values, doctrines, and practices of the Vineyard. It is designed to facilitate Community by becoming a kinship group, or directing

its students to one, following the completion of the course. By this means, new attendees to the Vineyard can be smoothly enfolded into the life and body of the church. Thus, if an emphasis on community outreach is maintained, and if Vineyard attracts more new Christians, this program will certainly expand. Pittluck described 'early Vineyard' as churched folks who needed the working of the Holy Spirit, while individuals in the current congregation may have visited and been affected by the Spirit, who now need more of the Bible (personal communication 1999).

At this point, however, there seems to be less vision for the experience of signs and wonders. Carol Wimber spoke in a recent Spiritual Gifts Conference about the need to take risks and expect God to work. On one hand, she encouraged her listeners to remember the Vineyard's roots, reminded them how rich the time was and continues to be, and asked them to come to church with expectation (Taking...1999). In recent church services, on the other hand, words of wisdom were spoken with similar themes, warning the congregation not to look at the past but to look towards the future: "God is doing a new thing." When Lance Pittluck was asked about his perception of these seemingly conflicting exhortations, he responded that remembering the church's roots can be healthy when it reminds people of their values and priorities, but what he does not want is a congregation that is nostalgic. It does not help incoming members to be told all that 'they missed,' rather, newcomers need to know what can be offered to them now (Pittluck, personal communication 1999).

The decrease in the incidence of signs and wonders at the Anaheim Vineyard in recent years can be explained by one or more of the following reasons: 1) The congregation no longer expects it, as Carol Wimber noted. 2) People have become shy about risking, as Todd Hunter noted. 3) This is simply a season in which the Holy Spirit is moving less visibly. 4) Lance Pittluck takes a more conservative approach to ministry, focusing more on the cognitive than the emotive. In any case, John Wimber was indeed a risk taker, not concerned with looking foolish. Pittluck, on the other hand, seems more conservative. His focus is on evangelism and teaching, whereas Wimber's focus was on worship and healing. Perhaps Vineyard's appearance will more closely resemble most mainline evangelical churches in the years

to come.

In sum, most of the distinctives of the Vineyard will remain intact, especially as it relates to the core values of the movement and church. I anticipate much of Anaheim Vineyard's form to remain the same: a basic, down-to-earth approach to worship and teaching, with conservative openness for the Holy Spirit to move. Kinship groups will remain paramount, and ministering to the needy will continue to be of great importance. The distinctive that Vineyard will plainly no longer possess is John Wimber himself, and his humble, magnetic nature. It is questionable whether another personality, however dynamic, will be able to influence the Vineyard movement as Wimber had. Indeed, Pittluck states "The birthing of the Vineyard was a unique time. It will never happen again" (personal communication 1999).

The birth and growth of this movement in its twenty five years have been exciting, and this truly is a defining moment in its history. While it has lost a magnetic, anointed leader, it has trained successors who have made wise decisions to submit to leadership accountability. As long as it maintains a loosely structured center-set approach, there will be a necessity to define and redefine its identity. At the same time, the legacy of a simple man and the uniqueness of his character have already infiltrated the movement making it distinctively Vineyard.

History of the Vineyard: A Time Line

- 1964–1970 John Wimber becomes co-pastor of the Quaker church. Carol is an elder.
- 1974 Wimber offered a job by Peter Wagner to help establish the Charles E. Fuller Institute of Evangelism and Church Growth.
- Kenn and Joanie Gulliksen move to Los Angeles from Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa to pastor a church that they will eventually name the Vineyard.
- 1976 Carol and some of the leaders of the Quaker church start a home meeting. Bob Fulton (Carol's brother-in-law) facilitates and Carl Tuttle leads worship. The attendance grows from 12 to 50 in a few weeks.
- 1977 The group has grown to 100 and John has become the leader.
- Meanwhile, the Vineyard, started by the Gulliksens, had met at several different locations, produced two church plants, and was in Westwood.
- Mother's Day, May 8, Wimber's group becomes the Calvary Chapel of Yorba Linda with 150 in attendance. John is the designated pastor and continues his work with Fuller Evangelistic Association.
- 1978 Wimber and team see their first healing after ten months of preaching and praying without anyone healed.
- 1979 John Wimber and Kenn Gulliksen meet.
- Todd and Debbie Hunter are the first church planters sent out from Wimber's church. They plant a church in Wheeling, West Virginia.
- 1982 January, The first MC510 course is held at Fuller Theological Seminary called 'Signs,

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- Wonders and Church Growth' taught by John Wimber.
- April, Calvary Chapel of Yorba Linda becomes Vineyard Christian Fellowship of Anaheim.
- May, Kenn Gulliksen turns leadership of Vineyard movement (seven churches) to John Wimber. Thirty Calvary Chapels soon join Vineyard.
- 1983 Vineyard Ministries International (VMI) is born.
- 1984 MC510 at Fuller is opened to the public. It is soon taught worldwide.
- 1985 The Association of Vineyard Churches (AVC) is incorporated.
- 1986 Inner healing emphasis at Anaheim Vineyard
The Vineyard grows to 200 churches.
- 1988-1992 The prophetic period in the Vineyard
- 1994 The 'Toronto Blessing' period of the Vineyard begins.
- December, John Wimber installs Carl Tuttle as Senior Pastor of VCF Anaheim.
- 1995 Toronto Airport Vineyard agrees to formal separation from AVC.
- 1997 John Wimber Installs Todd Hunter as National Director of AVC.
- July, Carl Tuttle resigns as Senior Pastor, having severe personal difficulties.
- October, Lance Pittluck becomes Senior Pastor of VCF Anaheim.
- November 17, John Wimber dies from massive brain hemorrhage.

1998 The Columbus Accord calls for a reconstruction of the Association of Vineyard Churches, USA.

AVC has 449 USA churches, 370 international churches in 52 countries.

(VineyardUSA, Then...1998; Jackson 1999)

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