

ABSTRACT

THE IMPACT OF THE 40 DAYS OF PURPOSE SPIRITUAL GROWTH CAMPAIGN IN TWELVE CHURCHES OF THE ALABAMA-WEST FLORIDA CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

by

James Nathan Elliott

Currently, little information is available about the long-term impact of the 40 Days of Purpose Spiritual Growth Campaign in churches. After completing the program at Samson First United Methodist Church, Samson, Alabama, and seeing the results of the program, many questions arose. The questions caused me to consider researching the results of this program as a subject for my project dissertation.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to evaluate twelve churches of the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church that have participated in the 40 Days of Purpose Spiritual Growth Campaign. The study includes lay pastoral visitation, small groups, outreach (evangelism and missions), and the size of the churches that participated in the campaign with its results.

The review of literature includes biblical, theological, and historical aspects of the nature of the church, the nature of a 40-Day period, being Christians with purpose, lay pastoral care visitation, small groups, outreach (evangelism and missions), and vision with strategic planning. The 40 Days of Purpose Spiritual Growth Campaign introduces the fact that each Christian is a minister in the local church and has ministry in his or her local church that only he or she can fulfill.

The study considered quantitative and qualitative components of the impact of the twelve studied churches. A researcher-designed questionnaire and telephone interview were the two instruments that gathered data for this study. The conclusions of these findings will be used to enhance growth strategies in the United Methodist churches.

The results of this study show that all churches noted positive changes in some way that participated in the 40 Days campaign. Small and large churches developed new lay pastoral care teams, new small groups, new outreach programs, and had professions of faith as a direct result of 40 Days. Three small churches (50.00 percent) reported that the purpose that had the greatest impact in their congregations was *fellowship*. Four of the large churches (66.67 percent) reported the purpose that had the greatest impact in their congregations was *discipleship*. Small and large church “yes” responses increased from before to after the 40 Days campaign in the characteristic areas of outreach (evangelism and missions) on the survey. The overall impact of the three variables, lay pastoral care visitation, small groups, and outreach (evangelism and missions), correspond to (are dependent on) the size of the church. In this study, the impact variables are slanted toward the large churches. Resistance/hindrances to having the 40 Days campaign was dependent on the size of the church. All churches recommended the 40 Days campaign.

The findings of this study showed both small and large churches benefited in some way from the campaign. Based on the evidence shown in the numbers, percentage changes, the results from the impact variables, and the telephone interviews, the larger churches received the greater impact from 40 Days. The smaller churches did receive significant impact in the three variables, because a greater need was in those churches; however, more resistance before and after the 40 Days was found in the smaller churches.

The area which received the greatest impact was small groups for both small and large churches.

DISSERTATION APPROVAL

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled
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THE IMPACT OF THE 40 DAYS OF PURPOSE SPIRITUAL GROWTH CAMPAIGN
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A Dissertation

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James Nathan Elliott

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CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM

Background

After the 40 Days of Purpose Spiritual Growth Campaign at Samson First United Methodist Church, Samson, Alabama, church members showed no long-term commitment in terms of becoming more involved in lay pastoral care visitation or carrying out their individual ministries and team ministries or new outreaches. Small groups only continued through Day 41. No new outreaches into the community of Samson began as a result of 40 Days. No new converts resulted from the campaign. Only a youth/adult confirmation class, March-May 2006, brought in seven professions of faith in Jesus Christ four months after 40 Days. Others who joined Samson First United Methodist Church (UMC) in 2006 did so by transfer of letter. The church council chairperson talked about door-to-door evangelism and visitation, but the outreach did not come to fulfillment. Based on the evidence of Samson First UMC's campaign, the impact of 40 Days of Purpose seemed to be "a flash-in-the pan" (short-lived) following the conclusion on Celebration Sunday. The 40 Days of Purpose campaign at Samson did not seem to have lasting impact nor deep theological roots.

No major change occurred in the Sunday morning worship attendance. Though Day 41 small groups were somewhat a success, the church reverted back to its old ways of Sunday night Bible study and worship and Wednesday night Bible study. The most participation that Samson had in my tenure in a Bible study or small group was during 40 Days and Day 41.

Small groups did not have a lasting effect after 40 Days and Day 41 because the older generation wanted ministry the way it had always been done. The comment was made by the senior citizen Sunday school class that they did not know why Samson was doing 40 Days. Even some among the middle-age Sunday school class did not like the idea of change and doing 40 Days of Purpose. Some did change their opinion after 40 Days. Getting people inside the congregation to change is one of the major obstacles to growth in ministry and evangelism. The maintenance ministry role in many churches makes the church stagnant, and then they ultimately decline. Change has been difficult in many areas at Samson First UMC.

Though some positive ideas came to pass in the aftermath of 40 Days, I noticed that by the summer of 2006 most of the momentum from 40 Days came to a halt. Most people did not follow through on their ministry and missions commitments from the fair and follow-up training.

Nothing has been done in the Sunday night home small group to move the group into the door-to-door evangelism to reach and invite the unchurched to church. We, as a church, began to see a decline in attendance in worship and other activities the second half of 2006. I wondered if other United Methodist churches experienced the same results.

Having served six small churches now in the United Methodist Church, I am interested in what United Methodist churches can do to get more (or everyone) involved in ministry and outreach in the church. The mentality exists that “since the Pastor is getting paid to do the job, he/she should do everything in the church.” This model for ministry is pastor as chaplain: one person doing everything from preaching to teaching to

doing all the shut-in and hospital visits and also doing youth ministry. I wanted to discover how leadership can be developed to help people discover their gifts and ministry in the local church body. My deepest concern in ministry is to get every baptized believer engaged in ministry and outreach.

The 40 Days of Purpose campaign stresses the fact that each Christian is a minister and that God has a ministry for each Christian. The reason for doing 40 Days of Purpose in the Samson congregation was to bring change and bring people to a deeper level of commitment in not being just hearers of the Word but doers of the Word (Jas. 2:20). The focus of 40 Days of Purpose was to get people connected to ministry, with an emphasis on evangelism and outreach.

Also, other people are interested in the impact of the 40 Days campaign in the churches of the Alabama-West Florida Conference. After a telephone conversation with our resident Bishop Larry Goodpaster on 8 August 2007, he expressed interest in knowing the impact of the campaign in the churches. He wanted to know if 40 Days of Purpose was just something else that the churches were doing or if it was changing the churches. Next, after communicating with my district superintendent via e-mail in July 2007, he said that he thought the 40 Days project would be an interesting study for those who were considering the 40 Days of Purpose campaign (Sadler).

Purpose

The purpose of this dissertation was to investigate the long-term impact of Warren's 40 Days of Purpose campaign within small and large churches of the Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church in the areas of lay pastoral care visitation, small groups, and outreach (evangelism and missions).

Rationale for Using the Three Impact Variables

The rationale for using lay pastoral care visitation, small groups, and outreach as impact variables is connected to Rick Warren in his writings and through the 40 Days of Purpose campaign.

First, the goal in lay pastoral care visitation (or any ministry), is to turn church members into ministers. Pastors must give their church members a sense of ownership. Ministry must be given away through delegating others to do ministry as a team. The pastor's responsibility is to equip Christians for their ministry. The pastor must essentially wean the church from pastoral dependence for ministry (or all ministries) (Warren, *Purpose Driven Church* 387-89).

Lay pastoral visitation is about serving God. Every ministry in the church matters, especially this one. One of the main reasons why Christians need to be connected to a local body of believers is to fulfill their calling to serve other believers in practical ways. Out of the times of Christians' greatest hurts will come their greatest ministry or ministries (Warren, *Purpose Driven Life* 225, 230, 246). An example of lay pastoral care visitation comes from *40 Days of Purpose: The Purpose Driven Life Simulcast*. People in a certain small group at Saddleback Church rushed to the hospital to give lay pastoral care in praying and ministered to a woman in their small group who suffered a miscarriage. Also, lay pastoral care visitation is one topic that was brought up as an important area of ministry from the 40 Days Ministry and Missions Fair at Samson First United Methodist.

Second, the rationale for using small groups as an area of impact for this study is that small groups are one of the 40 Days of Purpose campaign's main components. The

40 Days emphasis is developing new small groups and keeping them going beyond the 40 Days. The small groups met every week during the campaign to discuss the theme of the week. Every person who was involved in the 40 Days campaign was involved in a small group.

In a small group, Christians experience life together. The size of the group matters for true discipleship and life sharing to take place: Smaller groups are better. All Christians should be involved in a small group in their local church in order to experience real fellowship. All Christians need a small group of friends to have in God for them and to pull them through the difficult times (Warren, *Purpose Driven Life* 138-39, 142).

Third, the rationale for using outreach (evangelism and missions) is very clear in this study because Purpose #5 in *The Purpose Driven Life* is, “You Were Made For a Mission” (Warren 279). In looking for the model of outreach, we must look at Christ’s ministry as the example. Also, Christians must invite unchurched people to attend church. Unchurched people visiting church begins with a simple invitation (*Purpose Driven Church* 97, 321). Outreach (evangelism and missions) is also a major component involving church people in the 40 Days Ministry and Missions Fair and subsequent outreaches.

In order to fulfill God’s mandate in the Church, every believer should have a ministry in the church and a mission in the world. Christians are sent into the world as ambassadors for Christ. God cares most about lost people in the world. Outreach is a top priority in the body of Christ because God wants to redeem the people he created to spend an eternity in heaven. Jesus calls sinners to become Christians not only to receive

salvation but also to go into the world for him to proclaim the gospel (Warren, *Purpose Driven Life* 281-82, 288).

The Guiding Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study.

Research Question 1

What was the level of congregational participation in the three impact areas of lay pastoral care visitation, small groups, and outreach (evangelism and missions) in small and large churches before and after their participation in 40 Days of Purpose?

Research Question 2

What were the differences in impact within small and large churches following 40 Days of Purpose?

Definition of Terms

The following definitions of terms were used for this study.

40 Days of Purpose

The nearly six-week campaign designed by Warren to study the following question and themes from his book *The Purpose Driven Life* and held in numerous churches: “What On Earth Am I Here For?” (15); “Worship: You Were Planned For God’s Pleasure” (61); “Fellowship: You Were Formed For God’s Family” (115); “Discipleship: You Were Created to Become Like Christ” (169); “Ministry: You Were Shaped for Serving God” (225); and, “Evangelism: You Were Made for A Mission” (279).

Long-Term

For this study, *long-term* refers to those twelve churches and their pastors that have concluded the 40 Days of Purpose campaign at least one year before completing the questionnaire and participating in the follow-up telephone interview. The date for churches concluding the 40 Days campaign for this study is 1 November 2006.

Impact

For this study, *impact* is the increase, decrease, or lack of change in participation or involvement made by church members in the areas of lay pastoral care visitation, small groups, and outreach (evangelism and missions) following the participation in 40 Days of Purpose.

Lay Pastoral Care Visitation

For this study, *lay pastoral care visitation* consists of the teams of people who participate in doing the pastoral visitation of the church, including visits to the hospital, the sick in their homes, and shut-ins or homebound folks. *Lay pastoral care visitation* in this study does not include door-to-door evangelism.

Small Groups

For this study, *small groups* are life groups consisting of about ten to twelve individuals who covenant together to meet weekly for sharing, Bible study, prayer, and fellowship. The people gather as home-based groups or groups that meet at the church building. They have leaders who function as lay pastors. Small groups serve in reaching unchurched persons for Christ. They operate as a component of the outreach of the church (i.e., an empty chair represents the one new person the group wants to reach).

Outreach, Evangelism, and Missions

Outreach includes local, national, and foreign missions and evangelism to the lost to bring them to Christ. Both spiritual and physical needs are met in outreach. Outreach is service and being a light in one's own community. Outreach includes reaching the lost, visitation, and being the hands and feet of Jesus to the community. Outreach is the spreading of the good news that Jesus is Lord and devising a plan with a time schedule to accomplish goals for the church. It is reaching "one more for Jesus" (Warren, *Purpose Driven Life* 288). For this study, outreach also refers to other components a local church is using to reach the unchurched for Christ Jesus other than pastoral visitation and small groups. Outreach will include any program that brings unchurched (new) people into the church who would not normally come to Sunday school or Sunday morning worship. Outreach examples include afterschool programs, tutoring programs, youth programs, Hispanic worship service (at a different time other than regular worship times), vacation Bible school, missions work projects and giving (work teams), and door-to-door evangelism (knocking on people's doors to invite them to church and introduce them to Christ). Outreach is any project or program that reaches beyond the regular attenders of the church.

Project

The project part of this dissertation included studying twelve churches that completed the 40 Days of Purpose Spiritual Growth Campaign by 1 November 2006. The date is one year to the day before this study was conducted. Specifically, the study included local churches in the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church. The study consisted of two categories. I investigated the impact on six

smaller churches and their long-term response to 40 Days of Purpose and six larger churches and their response. In the Alabama-West Florida Conference, churches are arranged into four Sunday morning average worship attendance categories: one to thirty-four, thirty-five to seventy-four, seventy-five to two hundred, and two hundred plus. For this study, I am arranging the churches into two categories: small (one to two hundred people in average worship attendance) and large (two hundred plus people in average worship attendance). A large church in the Alabama-West Florida Conference averages more than two hundred people in attendance for Sunday morning worship service attendance (*Journal of the Alabama-West Florida Conference* 495). The project investigated how these churches were impacted by 40 Days of Purpose in the following areas: lay pastoral care visitation, small groups, and outreach (evangelism and missions).

Methodology

This project was an evaluative study of the long-term impact of the 40 Days campaign in twelve different churches of the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church. The impact was determined using a research survey instrument and telephone interview. The questionnaire instrument included a pre- and post-40 Days campaign evaluation. The methodology section is a detailed explanation of the study's participants, instrumentation, data collection, variables, and delimitations and generalizability.

Participants

The participants included twelve United Methodist churches of the Alabama-West Florida Conference, six smaller churches and six larger churches, that have participated in the 40 Days of Purpose Spiritual Growth Campaign by 1 November 2006. The district

superintendent of the Dothan district and the resident bishop and the entire cabinet (all eight district superintendents) of the Alabama-West Florida Conference gave their approval of the study and encouraged twelve churches to participate. A total of 737 churches exist in the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church. Seventy-two of these are larger churches (two hundred plus in average worship attendance). Six hundred and sixty-five are smaller churches (two hundred or less in average worship attendance; *Journal of the Alabama-West Florida Conference* S-1-75).

Instrumentation

The first instrumentation used to test the impact of 40 Days in the twelve churches was a questionnaire with selected response (quantitative) and open-ended (qualitative) questions. The researcher-designed questionnaire measured the impact of 40 Days of Purpose in the areas of lay pastoral care visitation, small groups, and outreach (evangelism and missions; see Appendix A). Also, other questions required numerical answers, short written answers, or marking answer blanks.

The second part of instrumentation entails a follow-up telephone interview, with the twelve pastors of the United Methodist churches who participated in the questionnaire (see Appendix B). The follow-up telephone interview consisted of four open-ended free response questions that the pastors received beforehand. The telephone interviews lasted forty-five minutes and were taped.

Data Collection

Data collection consisted of both questionnaires and telephone interviews. The questionnaire was first sent to the pastors of the twelve churches designated for this study. They, in turn, were to designate a ten-to-twelve person leadership committee

(team) to help complete the questionnaire. The pastors and the team members had two weeks to collaborate and complete a final questionnaire.

I held a forty-minute telephone interview with the twelve pastors whose churches participated in the 40 Days of Purpose Spiritual Growth Campaign. The phone interview was conducted to obtain the responses of the pastors on the four additional questions presented to them ahead of time. I collected data from the twelve telephone interviews by handwritten notes from the phone interviews in conjunction with audio taping of each phone conversation. I made initial phone calls or e-mails to the pastors to explain the project, questionnaires, and phone interviews.

Variables

Impact variables for the study included the effectiveness of the 40 Days campaign on congregational participation in the areas of lay pastoral care visitation, small groups, and outreach (evangelism and missions); the size of the churches; and, the commitment level of Christians.

Delimitations and Generalizability

The study is delimited to include United Methodist churches in the Alabama-West Florida Conference. Limitations to this study (collecting data) include people's memory (recalling the events of the campaign as well as what they read in *The Purpose Driven Life* book). The study disregards the size of the city or population of the community in which the church is located and the makeup of people in the church (gender or race).

Theological Foundation

The parable of the sower is a key biblical text in understanding the theological roots of lasting impact. "The parable of the sower illustrates the contrast between the

impossible odds faced by Jesus' kingdom preaching and its ultimate success" (Meeks 1972). Opposition from the devil, fear of change, and being comfortable with church traditions are all factors determining the impact of 40 Days of Purpose. Jesus emphasizes why or why not the gospel (the Word of God) takes root in people's lives. Christians are called to keep planting those seeds and watering them, too. Jesus tells why the gospel takes root or does not take root with people in the parable of the sower and the seed:

"A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering seed, some fell along the path; it was trampled on, and the birds of the air ate it up. Some fell on rock, and when it came up, the plants withered because they had no moisture. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up with it and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was sown."

When he said this, he called out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

His disciples asked him what this parable meant. He said, "The knowledge of the secrets of the Kingdom of God has been given to you, but to others I speak in parables, so that, 'though seeing, they may not see; though hearing, they may not understand.'

This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the Word of God. Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. Those on the rock are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away. The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature. But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word and retain it, and by persevering produce a crop." (Luke 8:5-15, NIV)

In this parable, the seed is the Word of God (v. 11). This parable is the truth about the gospel's reception. Henry Hampton Halley says, "Some will accept it but soon fall away. Some will hold on longer but gradually lose interest. And some will hold on in varying degrees until their lives show in practice what the Gospel is all about" (598).

Many people cannot receive the gospel because they are incapable of digesting God's truth. Mental laziness and prejudice are important factors of why people's reception to the gospel is blunted (Barclay 99).

In the parable, the kinds of soil or ground into which the seed of the Word of God is sown are shown: along the path (v. 12), rock (v. 13), thorns (v. 14), and good soil (v. 15). The seed sown along the (hard) path has a hard time getting in the ground (soil). The common ground (hard path) found in Palestine was split into long narrow strips. Between the long narrow strips were rights-of-way paths. When seeds fell on these rights of way, they had no chance of getting in the ground because the seeds were beaten as hard as the paths (Barclay 98). These hard rights of way represent the mind that is shut to the gospel and refuses to take in the gospel (100). The rocky soil "represents those who accept the word but who never think it out and never realize its consequences and who therefore collapse when the strain comes" (100). Seed that falls on rocky soil takes no roots. The thorny ground stands for people whose lives crowd out the things of God because their lives are so busy with worldly cares (100). The good soil is evident of a good heart. The good hearer of the gospel listens attentively, thinks over what he or she hears until the meaning is discovered, and is a doer of what is heard (100).

The gospel message can be a challenge for people. Great difficulty in appropriating the message to the listener's lives is often encountered (Halley 1585). Each person is at a different place in his or her life. Also, Christians are at different places in their walk with the Lord. Life's circumstances contribute to whether or not people are apt to receive the gospel and mature in their walks with God. Testings and trials often produce hurts that impact people who then turn away from the gospel. Life's cares and

concerns also leave their impact on whether people choose to follow Jesus. Often, time is needed for people to make and follow through with their commitment to Christ. The job for believers is to continue to sow the seed of the gospel. People usually respond to the work of God in their lives after the good news has been presented to them a number of times. Again, people's backgrounds, including families of origin, friends, and churches, contribute to the reception of the Gospel. Complacency and traditions are obstacles to response. Some people are ready and some people are not ready to receive the Word. God has a perfect timing for each person.

Those who hear the Word and retain it are of quality soil and produce fruit in their spiritual growth. On the other hand, "the devil's purpose is that people will not hear with understanding and therefore will not appropriate the message and be saved" (Halley 1586).

The reason some may not accept and respond to 40 Days in the way it was designed is due to the church or denomination in which they were raised. Religious traditions in churches and denominations often hinder the numerical growth of people coming to Christ and church as well as their spiritual growth. Also, response of impact may be due to something inherent in 40 Days.

Ultimately, Christians and churches should not be discouraged when the fruit of sowing the seed does not come quickly. When the harvest does not come, Christians and churches must realize ultimately that God brings about the fruit in His timing. All believers have to do is be faithful in planting (and watering) the seeds. Resistance to the gospel will occur, but God brings the increase. The parable warns believers as to how

they hear and receive the word of God and gives hope that “not all setbacks can defeat the ultimate harvest of God” (Barclay 100).

Overview of the Study

Chapter 2 reviews the literature with biblical, theological, and historical views on the function of the church. The 40 Days of Purpose, lay pastoral care visitation, small groups, and outreach (evangelism and missions) are discussed. Chapter 3 discusses methodology and how the project was carried out among the twelve churches in the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church. Chapter 4 reviews the findings of the project. Chapter 5 states the impact of 40 Days of Purpose in the twelve surveyed churches.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE

Biblical and Theological Foundations

The review of literature includes biblical, theological, and some historical review of sources. The first section deals with general information on Warren's leadership ability, books, and 40 Days of Purpose; the popularity of *The Purpose Driven Life*; positive reviews of 40 Days of Purpose and *The Purpose Driven Life*; negative critiques of 40 Days of Purpose and *The Purpose Driven Life*; interaction with the pros and cons of the book and campaign; the significance of the forty-days time period including the meaning of 40 Days within the context of *The Purpose Driven Life* book; the meaning of God's purposes for the church and each individual Christian; biblical and theological thought about the nature of the church; and, a review of the meaning of the priesthood of all believers and lay ministry. Another dissertation study of 40 Days of Purpose is reviewed. The second section deals with lay pastoral care visitation. The third section concerns small groups. The final section is a comprehensive review and reflection on outreach. Outreach includes evangelism and missions as defined in Chapter 1 and with vision and strategic planning as the normal outgrowth function of a church's outreach program.

Introduction

Pertinent information and reviews about Warren, 40 Days of Purpose, and biblical themes of the study are necessary in helping discover what lies behind the scenes and underpins the 40 Days of Purpose.

Rick Warren: An Extraordinary Leader

Warren is founding pastor of Saddleback Valley Community Church in Lake Forest, California. He planted the church in 1980 (*Purpose Driven Church* 44). Warren is one of “America’s Top 25 Leaders” in *US News and World Report*, 31 October 2005 (“Rick Warren,” *Wikipedia*). Warren was named one of the “15 World Leaders Who Mattered Most in 2004” in *Time* magazine (Eisenberg and Fonda) and named as one of “The 25 Most Influential Evangelicals in America” in *Time* magazine (Van Biema et al.). Warren was honored as one of the “100 Most Influential People in the World in 2005” in *Time* magazine (Steptoe) and named in “Who Should Be Among This Year’s Picks for the TIME 100?” on 3 April 2006. Next, he was named as “15 People Who Make America Great” in *Newsweek* magazine. Finally, *Christianity Today* has named Warren “America’s most influential pastor” (Grossman).

Warren’s accomplishments are warranted as he donates 90 percent of his income to the church and charities. He has ministered to some 400,000 pastors and church leaders through Purpose Driven conferences and seminars (“Rick Warren,” *Wikipedia*). In his article, Jeffrey L. Scheler reports that Warren has a low-key leadership style, and he learned from both positive and negative leadership influences. The real key to his leadership is his ability to mobilize regular churchgoers in becoming active lay ministers (1-2).

Rick Warren’s Books and 40 Days of Purpose

In a survey documented on 30 May 2005, the two most helpful books for pastors in the previous three-year period of 2002-05 were written by Warren. *The Purpose Driven Life* was number one at 21 percent among senior pastors. Second on the list was

The Purpose Driven Church at 15 percent (Barna Group). In addition to this data, as of May 2006, *The Purpose Driven Life* has been on the *New York Times* best seller list of advice books for 174 consecutive weeks (“The Purpose Driven Life,” *Wikipedia*). *The Purpose Driven Life* has sold more than 24 million English-language copies since 2002 (Nussbaum). As far as the 40 Days of Purpose Spiritual Growth Campaign is concerned, over thirty thousand churches, corporations, and sports teams across the United States have participated in the 40 Days emphasis since September 2002 (“The Purpose Driven Life,” *Wikipedia*).

Positive Reviews of Rick Warren’s 40 Days of Purpose and *The Purpose Driven Life*

In the November/December 2003 issue of *Today’s Christian* magazine, Ted Parks and Tim Stafford report the positive results of other churches participating in 40 Days of Purpose. Parks and Stafford note, “Churches that have participated in the program have reported an average growth rate of 80 percent in Sunday School attendance and 22 percent growth in worship and financial giving. Both large and small churches report benefiting from the program” (16). The 40 Days campaign shows immediate results when implemented in churches.

One church showcased in the article was a church plant called Crossroads Community Church in Lombard, Illinois. The results of the church’s participation were phenomenal. The church had two hundred members when it participated in the campaign in 2003. The church grew more than 50 percent as a result of its participation. The church’s financial giving grew more than thirty percent following the 40 Days Campaign. The founding pastor, Scott Nichols, said, “We didn’t do it to grow, but as we focused on

purpose, the growth was a direct by product of our involvement. The program expanded our vision” (Parks and Stafford 16).

Another article printed in multiple newspapers in 2006 and 2007 discussed the success of the 40 Days campaign in First Presbyterian Church (FPC) of Elk Rapids, Florida. Gretchen Murray reports the findings. The goal of FPC’s 40 Days was for the 300 participants to come away with the understanding that everyone was put on earth to make a difference because “some people are treading water.” The elders of the church wanted to put everyone in the congregation on the same page doing one thing (40 Days) together. The 40 Days campaign brought people out of their comfort zone. The campaign built fellowship and community as well as produced a tsunami of faith. People internalized the ideas they learned and started using them.

Ed Brenegar reports on the topic of whether or not 40 Days works. One Presbyterian pastor stated that even though 40 Days ended the substance of spiritual growth will never end because 40 Days was only a starter to the abiding growth. The church went from having four small groups to having forty small groups during 40 Days.

“Champion Your Small Group’s Purpose” comments on the success of 40 Days as well as what is necessary to keep the momentum going and to have long-term growth from the six-week period. Scott Mawdesley from Christ Fellowship Church in Florida says, “40 Days of Purpose is and was one of the most successful campaigns we have ever had in our church.” The key to long-term growth as reported in this article is providing resources for small group ministry as well as providing leadership training and development. These two foundations will enable churches’ efforts to continue well beyond 40 Days.

The Purpose Driven Life book received many good reviews. Warren gives Christians several areas upon which to agree: (1) dependence on God every moment, (2) careful attention to the authority of Scripture, and (3) God (Christ)-centeredness (Alexander). Vicar Steven R. J. Parks says that Warren was essentially correct in regards to his explanation of Jesus Christ. The areas of worship, community, doing church together (unity), and spiritual gifts were other strengths of Warren's writing (Alexander; Gilley, "Purpose Driven Life: An Evaluation—Part 1").

Finally, Thomas P. Johnston gives a positive comparison of Warren to Erasmus. Johnston states that both Warren and Erasmus write their "rules" to provide simple guidelines for proper Christian living. Both indicate that sin will be dealt with under the atonement of Christ. As far as the Great Commission is concerned, Erasmus leans strongly to lifestyle emphasis while Warren leans toward a spiritual discipline orientation. Erasmus does not come close to New Testament evangelism while Warren does share the gospel but not as on the "Roman road."

Negative Critiques of Rick Warren's 40 Days of Purpose and *The Purpose Driven Life*

Negative critiques of Warren's 40 Days of Purpose and *The Purpose Driven Life* are evidenced through church splits, New Age movement tendencies, and leaning toward postmodern culture. Warren's writings and campaigns have been criticized as "self-help" for improper use of Scripture, improper concept of God, and being market driven.

The 40 Days of Purpose campaign has caused church congregations to split in addition to numerous church problems. Suzanne Sataline comments on how 40 Days of Purpose backfired in traditional mind-set congregations. The campaign split one

traditional Baptist Church in Iuka, Mississippi, where forty-plus members left the church complaining that Warren's program was market driven. They thought that researching the market and writing missions statements were inappropriate because doing these things instilled modern management tools. The older church members did not like it in Iuka.

In addition to church splits, the annoying problem of "PURPS" has come to the attention of the media. "PURPS" are groupies or followers of 40 Days of Purpose campaigns across the country. The 40 Days of Purpose phenomenon has been taken to an extreme by many people as it swept across the nation. Joel Kilpatrick reports a roving group of ten thousand people made up of Baby Boomers (PURPS) moving from one church to another church (city to city) whenever they discover another church doing 40 Days. These ten thousand Baby Boomers are seeking new life direction. The PURPS temporarily swell the sizes of local churches and overwhelm surrounding parks and neighborhoods. One forty-four year old PURP said, "I'm on my 400th day of purpose and I am still invigorated." These PURPS become street vendors to the churches and cities they visit. They even set up tents trying to make revenue from 40 Days. A church in Winslow, Arizona, stopped its entire small group ministry during 40 Days when they were overrun by thousands of PURPS.

Another criticism of *The Purpose Driven Life* is its market-driven methodology. Purpose Driven is a corporate slogan where success is measured in numbers rather than spiritual terms (Busenitz, "*Purpose Driven Life*"). Gary E. Gilley echoes this thought by saying, "Purpose driven sounds better than 'market driven'" ("Gospel"). Both terms say basically the same thing. Tim Todd also notes that it has a great marketing plan.

A fourth criticism of Warren is the adaptation of his famous five purposes to a postmodern culture. Berit Kjos says that Warren is deceptive and that his writing is “twisted to accommodate human preferences.” Kjos’ criticisms encompass all five purposes. Kjos states that worship in Warren’s book stirs good feeling. It points to a God who will excuse unholy ways and who cheers self-centeredness. Kjos criticizes Warren’s ideas on small group ministry in that members are trained in unbiblical tolerance and submit themselves in loyalty to the group. Kjos says these ideas do not represent God and his Word. Finally, Kjos points out that the evangelism’s purpose is so soft and offers a non-offensive gospel. Nathan Busenitz (“Gospel”) and Lynn D. Leslie, Sarah H. Leslie, and Susan J. Conway offer that Warren deemphasizes certain theological elements or doctrines and focuses on parts enticing to potential seekers. Therefore, the book is seeker sensitive, gives a watered down message, and falls short of biblical paradigms.

A fifth criticism is that the book has an Arminian approach to theology. The book is permeated with an emphasis on human works making God happy and that all people have the same purpose from God, which is theirs to decide freely by an act of will (Busenitz, “Gospel”; Espinosa; St. John).

A sixth criticism of *The Purpose Driven Life* is that Warren has written a book that has New Age tendencies. The book has a mixing of New Age techniques with Bible-based prayer and meditation. Jungian occult-based psychology is used to identify personality and spiritual gifts for people. New Age thinking and feelings permeate the book (“Rick Warren,” *Theopedia*; Carmichael; Sheldon).

The seventh criticism is the underlying theme of self-centeredness displayed throughout *The Purpose Driven Life*. The focus of the book is not on Christ but on self.

Warren says that making the right choices makes one Christlike. The book is more about self-esteem than dying to oneself (no denial). Self-promotion and self-help are characteristics to living the Christian life instead of Christ living in and through the believer. The book is all about “you” instead of God-centeredness. An individual can earn eternal rewards (Diekmann 1; Fesko; Bennett; Wilken; “The Purpose Driven Life,” Broadcast Transcript”; Dewaay 1; Challies, “Rick Warren”; Costella; Cloud; “John MacArthur”).

One of the major concerns about Warren is that he misused the Holy Scriptures and used wrong translations and paraphrases of Scripture. Strange Bible versions were used in his book. Warren distorted Scripture by taking verses out of context and cutting verses in two. He was sloppy with Scripture interpretation. He made the Scripture fit his beliefs and thesis rather than the other way around (Diekmann 1-2; Fesko; Bennett 6; Challies, “Book Review” “Rick Warren”; Costella; “John MacArthur”; Gilley, “Purpose Driven Life: An Evaluation—Part 2”).

A ninth criticism of Warren and the book focuses on the gospel not being presented clearly and having doctrinal weaknesses. Many say that Warren presents a wrong or truncated view of the gospel. Personal guilt or sin is not mentioned. In the presentation of the gospel, no repentance of sin is mentioned. Warren often confuses law and grace as well as the doctrines of justification and sanctification. He also has the wrong views of forgiveness and slights hell and judgment. The cross of Jesus Christ is not mentioned. Many key truths are missing. In addition, the purposes Warren emphasizes are not dealt with adequately from the Bible (Bennett 2; Wilken; “Purpose

Driven Life,” Broadcast Transcript; DeWaay 2-4; Challies, “Book Review”; Diekmann 2-6; Costella; “John MacArthur”; Cloud; Wiseman).

Finally, a tenth criticism is that Warren gives an inaccurate biblical view of the concept of God. In his article, Michael Stohlmeyer says that Warren challenges the biblical concept of God in that he says people that should be in heaven will not be and are not because people fail to evangelize. Stohlmeyer points out that Warren is claiming that God is not in control of everything. Another criticism about the nature of God comes from Stuart L. Brogden. Brogden fleshes out what God’s plan truly is for his people. In Brogden’s investigation of the book, he begins with the title and criticizes it from a scriptural basis, saying that God drives his enemies but he leads his people. “I submit that Christians should be purposeful and Spirit led, not purpose driven.”

Interaction with Pros and Cons of 40 Days of Purpose and *The Purpose Driven Life*

From the positive reviews, I also agree that spiritual and numeric growth occurs from implementing the 40 Days campaign and an expansion of the church’s vision. The reason why churches implement 40 Days of Purpose is to help their congregations get out of the stagnant or inactive status they are in currently. Long-term growth is evidenced when a plan is in place for future growth before 40 Days is completed. Providing resources for small group ministry as well as training small group leadership is the key in building on the momentum from 40 Days.

From the negative critiques, I agree that 40 Days of Purpose had difficulty in traditional mind-set settings, especially small graying churches. In regards to the fifth criticism, I did not see the Arminian tendencies in the book (being that I am United

Methodist); however, I did notice the heavy Calvinism in the book. *The Purpose Driven Life* is very doctrinally heavy with predestination.

I disagree with the blatant sixth criticism that Warren has used New Age techniques in his book. I do agree generally with the eighth and ninth criticisms of the book. Warren does take verses out of context, splices Scripture verses into two parts taking one part to fit his writing, and he uses paraphrases and translations of the Bible to fit his particular point or thesis. The presentation of the gospel is weak and could be strengthened by mentioning the cross of Jesus Christ and the necessity of repentance in salvation. Finally, I detected from my reading that other Christian pastors may have some jealousy in regards to how successful Warren has become and how well churches responded to 40 Days. In spite of the weaknesses of the book and the campaign, God has still used the book and campaign to accomplish transformation in many congregations.

Significance of the Forty Days Time Period

The 40 Days of Purpose campaign centers around the reading of the forty-chapter book *The Purpose Driven Life*. Warren, author of the book, urges people to set aside this forty-day time period to discern and discover what God wants them to do for the rest of their lives. Forty days is an important time length and number in the Bible. When God did something important to prepare his people for something greater, he used forty days:

The Bible is clear that God considers 40 Days a spiritually significant time period. Whenever God wanted to prepare someone for his purposes, he took 40 Days:

- Noah's life was transformed by 40 Days of rain.
- Moses was transformed by 40 Days on Mount Sinai.
- The spies were transformed by 40 Days in the Promised Land.
- David was transformed by Goliath's 40-day challenge.
- Elijah was transformed when God gave him 40 Days of strength from a single meal.

- The entire city of Nineveh was transformed when God gave the people 40 Days to change.
- Jesus was empowered by 40 Days in the wilderness.
- The disciples were transformed by 40 Days with Jesus after his resurrection. (9-10)

God definitely uses the forty-day time period for transformation in his people.

The Reading of *The Purpose Driven Life*

As people center their 40 Days around the reading of *The Purpose Driven Life*, Warren declares, “40 Days will transform your life” (10). The book itself was never to be read only; instead, people are meant to interact with it. The book was not intended to be read in one sitting but over a forty-day period because Warren urges readers “*to read only one chapter a day* [original emphasis], so you will have time to think about the implications for your life” (10).

This interaction with the book will give the readers an incredible experience of “hope, energy, and joy that comes from discovering what God put you on this planet to do” (Warren, *Purpose Driven Life* 11-12). Warren encourages each participant not to miss one single day of reading and to stick to the process of the forty-day spiritual journey to get the full effect of discovering God’s purposes for the lives (12). Again, *The Purpose Driven Life* is more than a book to be read; it is to be applied to one’s life. The book is merely the template to the forty-day spiritual journey, which encompasses the 40 Days of Purpose Spiritual Growth Campaign.

40 Days—Built around God’s Purposes

In discovering life’s most important question “What On Earth Am I Here For?” (Warren, *Purpose Driven Life* 15), Warren utilizes God’s five eternal purposes from Scripture to answer. These purposes are scriptural and flow out of Warren’s central

theme. The 40 Days of Purpose Spiritual Growth Campaign and *The Purpose Driven Life* emphasize the following five purposes:

Worship: You were planned for God's pleasure (61);

Fellowship: You were formed for God's family (115);

Discipleship: You were created to become like Christ (169);

Ministry: You were shaped for serving God (225); and,

Evangelism: You were made for a Mission (279).

Church Renewal and Growth Centered around God's Purposes

The 40 Days program is a spiritual renewal campaign for churches and individual Christians to do something great for God built around the purposes of God. Enthusiasm is contagious when people are doing the will and work of God to bring renewal to the church. Stanley Hauerwas and William H. Willimon say, "We [Christians] witness the courage of ordinary people who find their lives caught up in the purposes of God" (103). Unique, ordinary people make a difference in the kingdom of God.

God's purposes are not just for individual Christians but for those individuals to do Christ's work in the church. For renewal in the church to last, action must be taken, not just the writing of a statement. Talk or conversation about purpose does not get the goal accomplished. The church must change the way it does business for there to be lasting fruit developed:

For any renewal to last in a church, there must be a structure to nurture and support it. It is not enough to merely define a purpose statement and communicate it, you must also organize around your church, around your purposes. (Warren, *Purpose Driven Church* 122)

Churches must have organization around their purpose statement for them to be successful in attaining those goals.

Christian A. Schwarz affirms Warren's hypothesis. In his book he states that "functional structures" are one key to a church's health and growth. Those functional structures are the key to the "ongoing multiplication of the ministry" (28). Leadership is redefined in that leaders develop other leaders. The biggest obstacle to functional structures is "traditionalism." A negative relationship exists between traditionalism and church growth. Declining churches are plagued by the problem of traditionalism. For functional structures to work and grow a regular evaluation of such structures is needed and the reason for their existence considered. Those structures must help improve the overall structure of the church. Anything that does not bring growth must be changed or eliminated. Examples include worship service times, ineffective leadership structures, and ineffective financial campaigns (28-29).

For church growth to be lasting, people must want to do God's purposes and be willing to roll up their sleeves. These Christians must be committed to the health of the church, which means doing the work to see growth happen. God uses gifted, imperfect people to accomplish his purposes:

Churches grow by the power of God through the skilled effort of people. Both elements, God's power and man's skilled effort, must be present. We cannot do it *without God* [original emphasis] but he has decided not to do it *without us* [original emphasis]! God uses people to accomplish his purposes. (Warren, *Purpose Driven Church* 60)

God's power and his use of willing people will cause churches to grow.

When Christians cooperate with God's plan of church health, then church growth is the natural result. A healthy church is one that is balanced on God's purposes; therefore, the growth of the church comes from the equilibrium of God's purposes. An unhealthy, unbalanced church would be one that emphasizes only one of God's five

eternal purposes. Attention must be given to all five purposes in order to have health and growth:

Church growth is the natural result of church health. Church health can only occur when our message is *biblical* [original emphasis] and our mission is *balanced* [original emphasis]. Each of the five New Testament purposes of the church must be in equilibrium with the others for health to occur. Balance in a church does not occur naturally; in fact, we must continually correct imbalance. It is human nature to overemphasize the aspect of the church we feel most passionate about. Intentionally setting up a strategy and structure to force ourselves to give equal attention to each purpose is what being a purpose-driven church is all about. (Warren, *Purpose Driven Church* 49-50)

Church health and growth occur when each purpose is kept in balance.

When equal attention is given to each purpose, growth occurs in a spiritual dimension as well as in the visible dimension. Growth that lasts is in all five purpose areas. The responsibility of church leadership and every believer is to minimize the obstacles to growth both outside and inside the church for natural church development. The removal of obstacles within the church should be the concentration for believers. Outside factors cannot be controlled. God will bring growth when believers do their part (Schwarz 10). Thus, when people are dedicated to the balance, growth is seen on all levels:

Healthy, lasting church growth is multidimensional. My definition of genuine church growth has five facets. Every church needs to grow *warmer* [original emphasis] through fellowship, *deeper* [original emphasis] through discipleship, *stronger* [original emphasis] through worship, *broader* [original emphasis] through ministry, and *larger* [original emphasis] through evangelism. (Warren, *Purpose Driven Church* 48)

Church growth is multifaceted and includes fellowship, discipleship, worship, ministry, and evangelism.

Biblical Basis for the Purposes

In order to get his message across to every church and believer, Warren uses two New Testament passages to summarize the five purposes of the church. These two passages are Matthew 22:37-40 and Matthew 28:19-20 and are known as the Great Commandment and the Great Commission, respectively. In order to help churches remember the commitment to the purposes, Warren came up with a catchy slogan. The slogan is, “A Great Commitment to the Great Commandment and the Great Commission will grow a Great Church” (Warren, *Purpose Driven Church* 103). It became Saddleback’s motto.

Warren takes the two segments of the Great Commandment and three segments from the Great Commission to help remember the five eternal purposes found in the Bible. Then, Warren gives the purpose in conjunction with the Scriptures from Matthew’s Gospel and defines the purposes in his book *The Purpose Driven Church*:

Purpose #1: Love the Lord with all your heart

The word that describes this purpose is *worship* [original emphasis]....

Purpose #2: Love your neighbor as yourself

The word we use to describe this purpose is *ministry* [original emphasis].... The church exists to minister to people. Ministry is demonstrating God’s love to others by meeting their needs and healing their hurts in the name of Jesus. Each time you reach out in love to others you are ministering to them. The church is to minister to all kinds of need: spiritual, emotional, relational, and physical needs....

Purpose #3: Go and make disciples

This purpose we call *evangelism* [original emphasis]. The church exists to communicate God’s Word. We are ambassadors for Christ, and our mission is to evangelize the world. The word *go* [original emphasis] in the Great Commission is a present participle in the Greek Text. It should read “as you are going.” It is every Christian’s responsibility to share the Good News wherever we go. We are invited to be a part of bringing people into God’s eternal family. As Christians we’re called to *belong* [original

emphasis], not just to *believe* [original emphasis]. As long as there is one person in the world who does not know Christ, the church has a mandate to keep growing. Growth is not optional; it is commanded by Jesus. We should not seek church growth for our own benefit, but because God wants people saved....

Purpose #4: Baptizing them

I believe it is because it symbolizes one of the purposes of the church: fellowship—identification with the body of Christ. As Christians we're called to *belong* [original emphasis], not just to *believe* [original emphasis]. We are not meant to live lone-ranger lives; instead, we are to belong to Christ's family and be members of the body....

Purpose #5: Teaching them to obey

The Word we commonly use to refer to this purpose is *discipleship* [original emphasis]. The church exists to edify, or educate, God's people. Discipleship is the process of helping people become more like Christ in their thoughts, feelings, and actions. As the church we are called not only to reach people, but also teach them. After someone has made a decision for Christ, he or she must be discipled. It is the church's responsibility to develop people to spiritual maturity. (103-06)

The Great Commandment and the Great Commission summarize the purposes for the church.

Biblical Review of the Nature of the Church and Its Purposes

As recorded in Acts 2:42-47, after the day of Pentecost, the birthday of the Church, a unity developed among the believers so that no one went without anything. The Lord made the Church grow:

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

When the early believers acted upon the purposes of God, God did the miraculous work, and the Lord did his part.

Warren describes that when the five purposes were fulfilled by the early believers, God grew the church in number:

In Acts 2:42-47, these five facets of growth are described in the first church at Jerusalem. The first Christians fellowshiped, edified each other, worshiped, ministered, and evangelized. As a result, verse 47 says, “and the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.” Note a couple of things about this verse. First, God added growth (his part) when the church did its part (fulfill the five purposes). Second, the growth was daily, which means, at a minimum, this healthy church had 365 conversions a year! What if this was the evangelistic standard every church had to meet in order to call itself a healthy “New Testament” church? How many churches do you think would qualify? (*Purpose Driven Church* 49).

When the people did their part, God did his part, even growing the church every day.

Acts 4:32-35 reconfirms Acts 2:42-47 in that believers in the early Church were unified, and everyone shared their possessions. God did powerful things in their midst. A genuine concern to care for each other was prevalent. God honors this love in action:

All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had. With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all. There were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales. And put it at the apostles’ feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need.

The believers’ affection toward each other showed the effectiveness of their fellowship and ministry.

In Acts 5:12-14, the apostles performed miracles in the midst of people. As the miracles occurred, more and more people came to the Lord Jesus and believed in him and were added to the number of believers in the early Church. When the apostles were

obedient to God's will and work, God honored the obedience with the many miracles, including the increase in the number of Christians. Church growth comes again from God working in both the leadership and other believers to do the purposes, and then God brings the fruit.

James 1:22-25 tells the early Church to be doers of God's Word and not merely hearers. James calls Christians to actions not just belief in Christ. Those who are blessed are those who do what the Word says. God calls Christians to do his will, not to be apathetic or passive. The 40 Days of Purpose campaign brings revival and renewal and a boost in the laity of the church to do God's purposes. The 40 Days of Purpose campaign is the catalyst event to give a boost in doing God's Word:

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it he will be blessed in what he does. (Jas. 1:22-25)

Christians must hear and act upon the Word of God.

The 40 Days campaign calls people out of complacency to do the work of ministry and missions. The mentality has been "Jesus and me." Discipleship is used as a springboard to work on relationships with others in the church. The campaign brings individuals out of just a personal relationship with Jesus Christ to a relationship with others.

Finally, Jesus demonstrates why the Word of God takes root in some people and not in others, yet Christians are to continue planting and watering those seeds and God will give the growth. The growth is another affirmation of Christians doing their part and then God doing his part. Many times the reason the seed does not come to be full grown

is that it lies dormant or lies on hard ground. God brings the seed to fruit in due season. The harvest comes in his timing. The main concern is that Christians have the tendency to glorify themselves and others rather than God. Paul addressed this concern to the Corinthian church in 1 Corinthians 3:1-9. Paul referred to them as worldly with jealousy and quarreling because they were saying they were following a particular man instead of saying they were followers of Christ. He warned them that saying they were following a particular man was causing division. Then Paul attributes everything to the glory of God. The 40 Days of Purpose campaign is about planting and watering seeds in people's lives. God wants each believer to do his or her part in the process:

What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor. For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field; God's building. (1 Cor. 3:5-9)

The particular person that plants and waters is not important. God considers the workers as having one and the same purpose.

Priesthood of All Believers

The priesthood of all believers encompasses the idea that every Christian has direct access to God only through Jesus Christ because Christ broke down the barriers between God and humans. Jesus himself fulfills the purpose of the Old Testament priesthood through his sacrifice on the cross. When Jesus died on the cross, God gave direct access to all people to the holy of holies in the temple when the veil in the temple was torn from top to bottom. The veil separated the holy of holies from the rest of the sanctuary (Butler 1137).

Christ calls all his followers (Christian believers) to share in his priestly ministry. Israel's role as a kingdom of priests as well as light to the world is, thus, fulfilled (Butler 1137). The priesthood of all believers has its roots in the Old Testament. The Bible says in Exodus 19:6, "[A]nd you [Israel] shall be to Me a Kingdom of priests and a Holy nation" (NKJV). The Wesley Bible footnotes say that the "kingdom of priests" is a phrase of responsibility: "A priest is a ministering servant, a bridge builder; Israel was to be the bridge builder between God and the nations of the earth. How could she do this?" By being a "**holy nation** [original emphasis]" (Harper 112). Israel would be God's special treasure if they would keep God's commandments and obey the voice of the Lord.

In the New Testament Christians are now the "holy priesthood." Every believer—not a professional priesthood—has the opportunity to be a channel of holy communication through which the Holy Spirit can work and offer God's grace in prayer and confession (Butler 1137). This idea is confirmed and derived from Scripture:

Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. (1 Pet. 2:4-5)

As living stones, Christians can minister to each other as well as to the lost world.

Lay Ministry

Pastors are often tempted to attempt to do the work of an entire congregation. This temptation may come from the pastor's pride and control issues. "The pastor's primary task is to equip the body, not try to do everything for the laity" (Oden 156). Equipping the laity for service is one of the pastor's primary goals. The pastor needs to make the laity feel the importance of their contribution to the body of Christ (157). When laypeople understand the importance of their ministry, they are inspired to continue

working in their ministries. When laypeople are accepted in their ministries, they are encouraged to continue forward. They are inspired.

God's work is so important that more than twenty percent of the congregation needs to be doing eighty percent of the work of the church. Neither can the church staff do all the work. Much of God's work is unaccomplished due to expectations of the congregations toward the pastoral staffs of churches. Hence, "*It takes all the people of God to do all the work of God* [original emphasis]" (Steinbron, *The Lay-Driven Church* 87).

What motivates people to go into a particular ministry will not necessarily enable them to continue (Steinbron, *Can The Pastor* 124). Dr. Frederick Herzberg identifies motivational factors in continuing a ministry. The motivational factors include a feeling of importance or being wanted, recognition for work being done, and a sense of achievement and responsibility (Steinbron, *Can The Pastor* 125).

Another Asbury Dissertation Written on 40 Days of Purpose

One Asbury dissertation worth noting is Silas D. Ripato's, "Using '40 Days of Purpose' Spiritual Growth Campaign as a Key Intervention in Small Church Turnaround." The purpose of Ripato's study was to see the effects (identify and evaluate the impact) of a major spiritual growth intervention in the life of a small membership church (26). The study focused on the personal life change that 40 Days of Purpose brought, which would then affect the entire church body. The study was conducted in the Resurrection United Methodist Church in the East Jefferson County of the Louisville Metro area (1). Resurrection United Methodist Church is the merger of two other churches: Advent United Methodist and Eastwood United Methodist. The merger took

place during the 1997-98 year (3-4). The redesigning of the two churches to become one effective church had its changes and challenges (8). Thus, a spiritual intervention to affect mind-set was instrumental for church health and for the church to move out into the community (14).

The findings of the study show and reinforce the premise “that positive corporate change occurs when positive personal change takes place” (Ripato 128). The study shows a positive impact from 40 Days of Purpose on personal life change occurred (+0.56 on a scale of 1.0 to 4.0). The positive effect results from a positive influence in the five purposes of the 40 Days campaign: worship, fellowship, discipleship, ministry, and mission (129). “Change in spiritual and relational vitality produces the catalyst of church growth” (131).

The major implication for Resurrection United Methodist Church is that irreversible strides have been made to move the church toward cultural relevance and purpose (Ripato 137). The results of the study show that the basis “to small church turnaround should take the form of a balanced approach that consists of a variety of reinforcements.... [T]he results of this study support the assumption that to change individuals in the church changes the church” (139).

Lay Pastoral Care Visitation

Of the three items of impact tested and analyzed from 40 Days, the first area from biblical and theological resources is lay pastoral care visitation.

Biblical Review

In searching through the New Testament, scriptural evidence supports pastoral care visitation. Jesus demonstrates the model of ministry to the sick and hurting, and James shows the emphasis of prayer for the sick.

One passage shows Jesus' ministry is personal as he visits people in synagogues in the area of Galilee. In addition to teaching and preaching, Jesus heals sicknesses and diseases among the people. The power of God's touch accompanied (followed) the proclaimed Word of God. A part of pastoral care visitation is to minister to the sick and hurting to bring whatever healing God wants:

Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed, and he healed them. Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and the region across the Jordan followed him. (Matt. 4:23-25)

Because of these miracles, people from the known world, both Jews and Gentiles, came to be healed and followed Jesus. Jesus' personal touch was for everyone because he loves everyone.

Another passage in Matthew's Gospel shows where Jesus went to Peter's house for a pastoral visitation to give care to Peter's mother-in-law. Jesus is the model for house-to-house pastoral visitation. Peter's mother-in-law was cured of her fever when Jesus touched her. The following passage shows again that when he healed one person, others came to visit Jesus for deliverance and healing:

When Jesus came into Peter's house, he saw Peter's mother-in-law lying in bed with a fever. He touched her hand and the fever left her, and she got up and began to wait on him. When evening came, many who were demon-possessed were brought to him, and he drove out the spirits with a word and healed all the sick. This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: "He took up our infirmities and carried our diseases." (Matt. 8:14-17)

Jesus was always available to people whether he went to them in their homes or people were brought to him. He was never too busy to care for people no matter what time of day.

In James' epistle, the model of pastoral care is shown and given by the church leaders to the sick. The following passage shows the church leadership working as a team. More than one person participated in the pastoral care visit to the sick:

Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven. Therefore, confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. (Jas. 5:14-16)

The passage shows that the elders of the church are to go as a pastoral visitation team to pray for the sick. This passage shows the dynamics of pastoral care ministry of prayer of the righteous, anointing of oil, and laying on of hands. Confession of sins is connected to unction. The passage shows that the elders of the church are to go as a pastoral visitation team to pray for the sick. This passage shows the dynamics of pastoral care ministry of prayer of the righteous, anointing of oil, and laying on of hands. Confession of sins is connected to unction.

Theological Review

Pastoral visitation is a vital ministry to the local church and to the entire body of Christ. Pastoral visitation is a shared responsibility of every Christian: "Indeed, all baptized persons do have the task of caring for others in need, feeding the hungry, visiting the imprisoned" (Oden 190). All Christians, both laity and clergy, are advised to visit the sick and follow the patterns of Christ and his disciples (249). Thus, the pastor should not be expected to do all pastoral visitations. All Christians should participate in pastoral visitation.

In order to have effective ministry and growth in a local church, pastoral care visitation must be addressed for both pastors and congregations. As Dale Galloway

reflected over his personal experience in ministry of four pastorates spanning three decades, he says that he should have lightened his own pastoral responsibility by delegating authority to others (Galloway and Bird 79). Galloway gives his years of wisdom and advice to pastors as they begin and grow in their ministries:

To be a maturing pastor of a changing church, you must continually work at helping lay people develop a greater sense of ownership. [P]astoral care is one essential area to share as quickly as possible. Many first-time pastors start out being the caregiver who responds, in sole fashion, to everyone who calls. (79-80)

Laypeople must become responsible to aid in the ministries of the church. Pastoral care should be shared among the laity.

Often pastors are all things to all people because they are considered as the hired hand in many churches. “Pastors are getting paid to do the visitation” is often a common response (Steinbron, *Can the Pastor* 30). Galloway says of his experience that certain people expect the entire visitation to come from the pastor because “[s]ome Christians ... will never be satisfied unless they receive personal attention from the pastor” (Galloway and Bird 74). Pastors learn to share their ministry out of desperation, becoming overwhelmed and feeling fatigued. When pastors allow other Christians to take on responsibilities of pastoral care and other ministries, pastors reach farther through multiplying their span of care through other people. If pastors have to do everything themselves, then their ministries will not grow beyond their reach (74-75). If the ministry model is “pastor as chaplain,” then the pastor must begin to develop leaders by training others and equipping Christians to do the work of ministry (80). “Every observant pastor will be able to identify members of the congregation who are already caring for people” (Steinborn, *Can the Pastor* 29).

Pastors must empower others to do the work of the Lord if their vision for ministry is bigger than being the personal pastoral caregiver for everyone (Galloway and Bird 74). Many people must be taught not to have the expectations that the pastor is the only pastoral caregiver in the church. Teaching the flock that they can receive a high quality laypastor through small groups is key to transitioning people from the chaplaincy model to the leadership development model (74). Whether or not lay pastors would be accepted in certain congregations is of concern. The ability and readiness of laypeople to pastor must be met by the readiness of other laypeople to accept them as pastors if indeed, pastoring is to take place (Steinbron, *Can the Pastor* 35).

Finally, pastoral care visitation is about meeting people where they are and caring for their needs. Four areas exist in which a lay pastor ministers to those he or she oversees. These are remembered by the acrostic “PACE”:

P—*Pray* [original emphasis] for each one regularly.
 A—*Be available* [original emphasis].
 C—*Contact* [original emphasis] each one on a regular basis.
 E—Provide a Christian *example* [original emphasis]. (Steinbron, *Can The Pastor* 63)

Treating people as Jesus treated people is the key to lay pastoral care. Believers need a pastoral shepherd who takes time to care for them as Jesus touched people:

No method or approach to caring is more vivifying, enlightening, and reliable than Jesus’ own approach to people. It is clear that he saw each person as incomparably valuable in God’s eyes. He took time for each one. He listened deeply for the particular needs of each person in each situation, and awakened latent possibilities in that person, not through massive programs, but for that very person (Gregory, ACW, vol. 11, p. 263). (Oden 193)

Shepherding by a lay pastor demonstrates compassion for people by seeing the sheep as God sees them.

Biblical Review of Small Groups

The second area of 40 Days impact that was tested and analyzed in this study was the area of small groups.

Old Testament

Small groups and community are detected early on in the Old Testament. First, small groups are shown in the fabric of the life in the nation of Israel. The large group and small group emphasis was displayed every day in the existence and social structure of Israel from the entire nation all the way down to the individual family unit. In Genesis 49, Israel entered into Egypt while Joseph son of Jacob was second in command of Egypt. The children of Israel were divided into twelve tribes or family groups based on being a descendant from one of Jacob's twelve sons (Atkinson 58).

Second, in Exodus chapter 18, the Jethro principle of delegated authority and mobilization of small groups as a strategy comes to the forefront. In Exodus 18:13-17, Moses sits as judge for the entire people of Israel from morning to evening. Moses is wisely advised that he would suffer burnout if he did not share the judging of disputes with other leadership in Israel. The multitudes of Israelites became dependent on Moses as the one and only judge; thus, Jethro suggested a strategy for Moses to implement. This strategy was for Moses to delegate and share ministry leadership with other able men. He chose and employed men to be leaders over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens (Atkinson 62). "In this system of large and small groups, needs were better met, burdens were shared, capable men were equipped for leadership, and a team ministry was implemented" (63). The sharing of ministry meets needs more effectively.

New Testament

The evidence of small groups in the New Testament begins with the ministry of Jesus. Four instances worth mentioning are in the Gospels where Jesus emphasized small groups. First, at the top of the list, is where Jesus called out his twelve disciples. Jesus knew the value of small groups in producing community. Jesus created fellowship with his disciples. Second, he instigated daily small group table fellowship and during times of the feasts. The Bible says, “When evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the Twelve” (Matt. 26:20). He fellowshiped with the disciples during the Last Supper. Third, Jesus even had a smaller group within the rank of the twelve disciples. Jesus had an inner circle of disciples, perhaps an inner circle of leadership. These three disciples, Peter, James, and John, went with Jesus up on the Mount of Transfiguration. Mark 9:2 says, “After six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John with him and led them up on a high mountain, where they were alone. There he was transfigured before them.” Some things can only happen or be accomplished in a small group of people. Many encounters with the majesty and glory of God happen in small groups. Fourth, in Mark 6:30-44, when Jesus fed the five thousand men plus women and children, he placed them into groups of people in order to distribute the blessed loaves of bread and fish for them to eat. “Then Jesus directed them [disciples] to have all the people sit down in groups on the green grass. So they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties” (Mark 6:39-40). Jesus knew he had to organize people from a large group to smaller groups to get the maximum potential and value out of people in any given situation. Jesus ministered to large groups of people as well as to small groups of three and twelve disciples.

Moreover, getting a large group to become small(er) groups is mentioned elsewhere in New Testament Scripture. In doing ministry, two components must be realized for the effectiveness of small groups. The example of teaching publicly (large group of people) and teaching from house to house (small groups of people) are certainly modeled, too, in the life of Paul and is an example for Christians and churches to follow. When Paul gives his farewell to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20:20, he says, “You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house!” Paul’s ministry, just like Jesus’ ministry, was public and private with personal touches. Gareth Weldon Icenogle describes how early Christian small groups formed from the larger group of Christian disciples beginning on the day of Pentecost—the birthday of the Church. He notes that the small groups of the early Church gave Christians confidence in doing the work of God in ministry and mission. The small group environment produced Christian discipleship and fruit:

The practice of small group disciplines provided a strong identity and base from which the ecclesia church could do ministry and venture into mission. In fact, the extended practice of the disciplines *became* [original emphasis] the ministry. Luke’s description of the ministry of these early Christian small groups included selling their possessions and goods and giving to anyone who had need, meeting daily, breaking bread together, and praising God (Acts 2:45-47). They met together as a base for ministry, as well as to provide a supportive environment for the apostles to do “many wonders and miraculous signs” (Acts 2:43). (324)

These groups were a support structure for church leaders and other followers of Christ.

Small groups helped establish the groundwork for fellowship and served as a base for the early Church to help those in need. Halley comments on the early Church of Acts 2:

The communal life allowed for individual family and vocational activities as well as significant time spent together in fellowship. The members of

the early church shared voluntarily with their new brothers and sisters in Christ to provide for those who did not have enough for the basic necessities of life. (727)

Sharing with others was, thus, the outgrowth of trust in the established relationship of friendships with one another because of Christ's work in people's lives.

Small groups, therefore, gave the early Church an unshakeable platform for individuals to be partners in sharing the gospel. The gospel was not only spoken but lived in authentic community.

Historical Review of Small Groups

The importance of small group ministry is evidenced by the Christian participation the early Church and John Wesley's Methodism.

The Early Church and Small Groups

The early Church met in both large and small settings. These settings gave hope for those who were oppressed, needed strength, and were discouraged. These gatherings were used as teaching moments in the meaning of being a Christian. Building relationships was the key to early Christian community. As a matter of fact, building relationships is the key for today's church. Relationships in the church are twofold: (1) a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ and (2) a relationship with other people (Young 130). The early Church's most significant ministry took place in the gatherings of small groups. The small-group ministry foundation, which was begun in the early Church and has continued today, focused on the edification and spiritual growth of Christians (Comiskey 23).

John Wesley and the Methodists

In searching through church history in regards to small groups, I find no better example than Wesley and the people called Methodists. The 40 Days of Purpose campaign has a strong small group component. In looking at twelve different United Methodist churches in this study, small groups must be recovered and rediscovered not only from a biblical perspective but also from a historical basis for doing small group ministry. Methodists have done small group ministry in the past, should continue to do so now and in the future. Small groups are vital to the spiritual growth, ministry, and outreach of churches.

In the eighteenth century, Wesley sought to take Christian converts and place them in small groups within the Methodist societies for spiritual growth and accountability. Initially, the small groups within the societies were called bands. As the Methodist societies grew, the bands flourished. These bands consisted of five to ten people who were groups of volunteers who met as support groups for spiritual growth and nurture for confession and prayer (Heitzenrater 104). The bands were considered the hearts of the societies. In the societies closest to the Wesleys, bands were developed as the focal point. Like many churches using the small group structure, small groups today, everyone in the bands attended the larger society meetings but not everyone in the larger society attended band meetings (104). Until 1742, the origin of the *united societies* was made of the small bands. The small bands were the core of the societies. In February 1742, Wesley met with the leadership of the Bristol society, one of the societies under his control. They met to develop a plan on paying the debt on the new room built for the society in Bristol (118). During this time, the leadership decided to divide the Bristol

society into small group divisions of twelve, each with an assigned leader. These small groups were called *classes*—from the Latin word *classis* or division (118-19). Two months after the society at Bristol was divided into classes, the same plan was implemented at the Foundery Society at London (119). Societies, thus, became societies of small groups instead of societies with small groups. The classes were larger than the bands and were organized around geographic location while the bands were organized by age, gender, and marital status. Classes contained all who were in the society while bands were made up of volunteers. Classes exercised discipline over the entire society, while bands were for cultivating nurture for those who were mature in their walk with the Lord (119). Therefore, classes reached more people than bands. Community among everyone in the society was created through the classes. The classes were to establish a deeper walk with Christ and were to ignite a deeper passion and hunger for spiritual things. The focal point of the classes was to help people grow: “Indeed, Wesley regarded the teaching, accountability, and nurture of the class as so essential for seekers that he advised against ‘awakening’ a spiritual quest within people without involving people in classes” (Hunter, *Church* 85). Wesley believed that classes were a necessity.

The structure and purpose of Wesley’s small group classes outshined their original intent. By the time Wesley’s London society had over one thousand members, Wesley used the method of classes and class leaders in helping him overcome the difficulty of knowing each person in the societies. The class system extended the reach of his pastoral oversight. Moreover, the class leaders were handpicked by Wesley to extend pastoral oversight and discipline. Wesley met with the leaders on a weekly basis to train them and confide in them. These class leaders, in turn, made weekly pastoral rounds to

check on their group members and bring them into accountability in their walk with God. The leaders soon discovered a problem with many members of the societies. They were not authentic to who they were in Christ; the problems were “domestic disputes, drunkenness, and other sorts of behavior, not indicative to the pursuit of holiness” (Heitzenrater 119). The bands and classes were small groups that pursued discipleship together as a community of Christians in covenant. “Wesley wasn’t persuaded that someone had made a decision for Christ until that person became involved in a small group. Wesley was more interested in discipleship than in a decision” (Comiskey 23).

Theological Review of Small Groups

The reason for small groups, leadership of small groups, and aspects and types of small groups are important theological concerns for 40 Days of Purpose.

The Reason for Small Groups

Because “biblical fellowship is being as committed to each other as we are to Jesus Christ” (Warren, *Purpose Driven Life* 133), small group ministry fulfills that fellowship purpose for people’s lives. Small groups are essential for creating community fellowship for every church because “today’s culture of independent individualism has created many spiritual orphans—‘bunny believers’ who hop around from one church to another without any identity, accountability, or commitment” (133). Moreover, “small-group ministry is not an option if people are to be cared for, nurtured, and equipped for ministry. And if people aren’t prepared, they can’t be about the work of the ministry, which is evangelizing, discipling, and caring for others” (Galloway and Mills 12). Small groups are a necessity for believers to grow and learn to reach other people.

Many challenges face growing churches in helping members learn to relate to each other. C. Andrew Stanley writes from his experience, “[O]ne of the challenges facing a growing church is how to transition people from the large-group environment of the worship service to the small-group environment of a small group” (Young and Stanley 87). As a rule of thumb for implementing small groups in churches, “Whenever a congregation reaches a worship attendance of 120, it becomes increasingly difficult for the people to relate as a family. Therefore, as a church gets larger, the congregation must get smaller through the incorporation of small groups” (McIntosh 158). As a church grows, small groups become even more necessary to maintain a family type fellowship.

Still the challenge of getting people from a large worship service to small discipleship groups is encountered. The small group mentality must be engrained into the people from the beginning of the life of a church for small groups to have greater success. Newer churches experience an easier time implementing small groups than older congregations because of overcoming traditions. Getting the people committed to a new small group program in long-standing existing churches is difficult:

Generally speaking, when churches, (or new worship communities) begin as a movement of small groups, the small group side of community life is much easier to grow than when we seek to graft small groups onto a long established church that has no prior commitment to this area. It is also much harder to move people from mass worship to discipleship than vice versa. (Nixon 214)

Small groups are more accepted at the onset of a worship community than in an established church body.

Thus, establishing small groups in an existing church is not impossible, but it takes a long time and a lot of hard work. Even though the entire history of the Church has shown great success with small life groups, implementing small groups in existing

churches is difficult. Small groups that have common interests or themes and to which people gravitate meet the expectations of “churched” people. Warren understands the small group mentality at his church, Saddleback Community Church:

One of the biggest fears members have about growth is how to maintain that “small church” feeling of fellowship as their church grows. The antidote to this fear is to develop small groups within your church. Affinity groups can provide the personal care and attention every member deserves, no matter how big the church becomes. (*Purpose Driven Church* 325)

As churches grow larger in membership, many concerns arise about how small traditional churches can still have the family-like setting when they grow. Affinity groups satisfy the nurture each believer requires.

North Point Community Church, where Stanley pastors in the Atlanta, Georgia, area, small groups are called “community groups.” These groups help people develop friendships. North Point Community Church hopes that prospective new members find a quality small group and that they will return to that group to become connected (Young and Stanley 35). North Point Community Church emphasizes community groups as an integral and ongoing part of their ministry. Community groups are used to help the church minister effectively and are places where sustained transformation occurs. These groups are ways for people to get to know each other by name. Community groups are where people are ministered to on a personal level. Leadership staff at that church cannot minister to everyone. The focus of community groups takes care of that function (79).

Stanley gives the main reason for small group ministry in his church:

The goal of North Point community group is to provide a predictable environment where people can experience authentic community and spiritual growth. Made up of four to six couples or five to eight individuals, a community group is the place where people are personally encouraged and challenged in their relationship with God and with each

other. And, it's a place [community group] where they can pray for one another and come for one another. (79-80)

The whole point of these small groups is to lift up people, encourage, and challenge them in their daily walk with the Lord and provide a place to grow spiritually.

Another example of the effectiveness of small groups and why churches should have them comes from the world's largest church. Dr. David Yonggi Cho pastors the Yoido Full Gospel Central Church in Seoul, Korea. As of 2001, Yoido has over 730,000 members. The way people grow in discipleship and receive ministry through the more than 25,000 home cell groups (back cover). Cell groups are attributed to the church's numeric growth; therefore, as churches grow larger in worship attendance and membership, they must grow smaller through small groups. Small groups have many functions and goals. They provide services that a pastoral-leadership staff cannot provide alone.

The Leadership, Makeup, and Purposes of Small Groups

The pastors and staffs of large churches cannot meet all the needs of their congregational members, so Carl F. George suggests that small groups be structured to do the pastoral care, where the laypeople do all or the majority of the pastoring. He uses the terms "cells" or "cell groups" or "nurturing groups" to talk about small group ministry. The leaders of such cell groups function as lay pastors to ten or more persons. The lay pastors have the awesome responsibility of spiritual oversight over the small groups. These "shepherds" receive training from the pastor or leadership staff of the church so the lay pastors can do a better job of leading and nurturing the cells (97). Thus, the makeup of a healthy cell group is usually around ten to twelve persons with a lay pastor leader. Also, these cells have spiritual and numeric growth activities including the teaching,

studying, and the application of the Bible to the members' lives. In addition to Bible study, the cell level of ministry saturates itself in the leading and ministry of the Holy Spirit. The persons of the small group edify, exhort, and encourage each other. Healthy cells have a combination of urgent activities, such as spiritual growth and nurture, service, and evangelism (59).

Galloway affirms these activities, goals, or purposes of small groups in stating four purposes that pertain to small groups. Each of these purposes is to be balanced in the small group setting because they are equally important. Galloway used these four purposes in the congregation he founded and pastored in Portland, Oregon—New Hope Community Church (Galloway and Mills 10). The church grew to 6,400 members from 1972 to 1995 under Galloway's leadership. When he left to become the Dean of the Beeson International Center for Biblical Preaching and Church Leadership at Asbury Theological Seminary, the church had over five thousand small group members with five hundred lay pastors shepherding those people (Galloway and Bird back cover). With his experience in developing small groups with lay leadership, he reaffirms these purposes to the entire body of Christ as keys for small group growth. They are

1. Evangelism,
2. Discipleship,
3. Shepherding, and
4. Service (Galloway and Mills 61).

Cultivating the Community in Small Groups

Cultivating community in small groups is done in three specific ways: (1) by developing fellowship through frequency, (2) by establishing friendships, and (3) by loving and accepting each other.

Cultivating community is done by developing fellowship through frequency. A high level of commitment in the area of attendance for small groups must prevail for genuine fellowship. Christians must not be casual in this commitment because building relationships with people takes time. Small group members must be regular attenders to the small groups to build fellowship (Warren, *Purpose Driven Life* 150). Trust is, therefore, established among the members when everybody attends.

Another key for cultivating community in small groups is by creating lasting friendships or relationships. When friendships are established, attendance will be enhanced (i.e., everyone will want to attend every week). Every church and small group must help members develop friendships. Friendships are the key to retaining new members both in the large corporate worship services and the small group gathering. “Relationships are the glue that holds a church together” (Warren, *Purpose Driven Church* 324).

Cultivating community in small groups comes through the love and acceptance of one another. Christian community is a great place to mature in love and acceptance of imperfect people. Believers come together in community to grow in their discipleship in a warm atmosphere. This atmosphere calls Christians to obey Christ’s command to love one another as Christ loved people. The fellowship community teaches Christians about trust, patience, unselfishness, and kindness. When an atmosphere of true love and

acceptance is displayed, Christians also experience the magnificent love of God (Arnold, *Big Book* 88). Love certainly covers a multitude of sins and imperfections. Love is what small group community is about. Small groups provide a safe haven of accepting people no matter what they have done or no matter what they are going through (e.g., tough times, storms of life). Small groups develop a trust where confidentiality is established and kept. Small groups are, thus, places of nurture and growth and of forgiveness and healing.

Believer's Spiritual Gifts Discovered

Individual Christians will benefit from their small group participation in the area of discovering, developing, and using their spiritual gifts. The small group setting provides a unique way for believers to operate in the gifts of the Spirit, especially in churches that are not corporately open to the Holy Spirit or do not operate in the gifts of the Spirit in the weekly worship service of the churches.

As group members heal and grow in their relationship to others and mature in Christ, they will begin to notice their own talents or natural abilities. The people in the small groups have the responsibility of becoming aware of noticing other people's gifts as well as their own (Cloud and Townsend 231). Therefore, a dynamic team of ministry begins to form. A true cell in the body of Christ is functioning. When small group members recognize and use the talents and spiritual gifts of the entire group, they experience healing, too. The small (cell) group operates as a miniature body of Christ. The groups are empowered by the Holy Spirit. Every person not only receives blessings but gives to others by using their gifts and talents; thus, everyone benefits and grows (230).

Small Groups in Ministry and Outreach (Missions)

As mentioned in the previous section, small groups grow when everyone discovers and utilizes his or her abilities and spiritual gifts to God's glory. When abilities and spiritual gifts function, they are part of the ministry of a small group. Ministry is done through the gifts and graces God gives each individual. Ministry or service is an important aspect of a small group. A Christian's or small group's growth is dependent on the actual practical ministry done in the small arena. Growth of small groups is curbed by the lack of ministry done (Arnold, *Small Group Outreach* 31). Ministry done in small group settings is birthed from the actual growth in spiritual disciplines in which the group engages such as prayer, teaching, and listening; thus, true ministry comes out of Christians' mountain-top and valley experiences. The members of small groups, therefore, become wounded healers to each other. The focus must be on everyone not just one person. Ministry not only comes from the receiving but also from the giving.

Another aspect of small group ministry is the training of laypeople to do the work of ministry. Small groups are the training grounds for leadership in the church and the world. Small groups prepare laity in ministry so the entire body of Christ benefits. Jewels come from behind the scenes of small groups to the spotlight of worldwide ministry. Mark T. Osgood says, "Small groups and lay involvement in ministry are intimately connected. Churches all over the world herald the benefits of small groups for preparing lay people for ministry" (44). Lay ministry leaders develop and sharpen their skills from small group participation.

Small groups provide development and training in outreach. One of the main purposes of those community groups is to move beyond the walls of their close-knit

circle and into the world. The hunger for outreach is cultivated through prayer and study. To make a small group more outwardly focused, prayer and study are not the end but the beginning of outreach. According to Jeffrey Arnold, “These groups should then plan and implement an outreach ministry that includes others in the group’s blessing” (*Small Group Outreach* 31). Small group outreach brings outsiders to the group and makes them feel welcome. Small group outreach includes leading those people to Jesus Christ. Small groups can bring people into the church through a side door that worship services cannot.

Both ministry and outreach are two of the purposes or goals of every group gathered in Jesus’ name. Ministry and outreach, both of these, an inward and an outward focus must be included. Every group who meets for ministry must consider missions as a top priority. The small group must be a support group to commission laypeople to go out into the world to reach the lost. The small group’s inward focus on spirituality, discipleship, and ministry must fuel the courage for those members to venture out into a lost and hostile world (Icenogle 239). No small group will ever grow beyond its reach if it remains closed to only its clique. In fact, the group will decline. Once members have been filled up in their spiritual walks, the normal outgrowth is to share Jesus with others.

Specialty Small Groups or Affinity Groups

Small groups do come in different sizes, but they are also organized around different interests or common groups of people who have themes. Some churches develop a variety or network of small groups that focus on different types of issues or events. Many groups are built around different age groups, geographic locations, interests, or purposes (Warren, *Purpose Driven Church* 325). These are called affinity groups. These small groups are formed on the basis of common interests. For example,

some small groups are formed around certain sports such as hiking, fishing, motorcycle riding, hunting, basketball, or football. In addition to these affinity groups, one favorite kind of small group is formulated around a specific mission opportunity. The nurture, worship, and fellowship of the group are used as a springboard into that mission opportunity (Barker et al. 109).

Many different kinds of opportunities exist in small groups as well as different kinds of small groups. The kind of small groups churches have do not matter as long as they have a variety and start and maintain new groups. Starting new groups with new members with common interests is much easier than attaching new members into long-time existing small groups:

[It] really doesn't matter what rationale you use to start new groups—just keep starting them. It is unlikely that many new members will join *existing* [original emphasis] small groups. New members assimilate best into new groups. You can even start new groups right out of your membership class. New members have their “newness” in common. (Warren, *Purpose Driven Church* 325-26)

Basically, churches must continue to start new small groups, so that every believer becomes involved in a small group.

Small Groups Summary

In conclusion, all churches need small groups whether they are already existing churches rooted in tradition or they are new church starts. Much organization and preparation are needed to make a small group program function properly. The benefit of small groups is enormous. Galloway gives five reasons why all churches need these groups. The five reasons serve as a fantastic summary of the biblical and theological review of literature for small groups.

There are five basic reasons why every church needs small groups:

1. They provide multiple points of entry into the church.
2. They provide a very effective form of evangelism.
3. They are the only way to truly care for people.
4. They accelerate the spiritual growth of individuals and the church.
5. They properly shift the work of the church to the people and fulfill Ephesians 4. (Galloway and Mills 10)

Finally, every church needs small groups because they are the only way truly to care for people and launch them into individual ministries.

Outreach, Evangelism, and Missions

The third area of 40 Days' impact investigated in this study is of outreach, which includes evangelism and missions. The literature review also touches on the topics of vision and strategic planning.

Often outreach, evangelism, and missions are used as synonyms interchangeably, as they are here. Evangelism refers to proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ, so people can be saved. Missions can refer to works of love in helping those in need, including work teams and missions trips. It also refers to being sent out to accomplish a task. Evangelism and missions are forms of outreach. Outreach is reaching out in various means, activities, and programs to bring the unchurched and unbelievers into the church. Ministry and missions are connected. Jesus' ministry was included in his mission, so when people are doing missions or going on missions trips, they also do ministry as a part of the mission.

Biblical Review

New Testament Scripture indicates the importance of outreach, evangelism, and missions. Outreach is the main topic. Evangelism and missions are subtopics, although the terms are interchangeable.

In Matthew 4:18-22, Jesus called out his first four disciples on the Sea of Galilee. They were Peter, Andrew, James, and John. These ordinary men were fishermen. They left from their jobs immediately and followed Jesus. The nature of Christ calling them was to make them “fishers of men.” Jesus called them to the mission of proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and to reach out to the sick, hurting, and demon possessed. The call to missions is a prompt response:

As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will make you fishers of men.” At once they left their nets and followed him. Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, and immediately they left the boat and their Father and followed him. (Matt. 4:18-22)

This call prompted his disciples to leave the comfortable environment of their work and family to follow Christ on his ministry and mission.

Jesus certainly prepared those he called to carry on his mission. He taught them and trained them for life and ministry. Jesus’ mission would become the disciples’ mission. Being fishers of men was instilled in them for three to 3½ years. Erwin Raphael McManus comments on the training of the disciples as fishers of men:

If the three years of Jesus’ public ministry were meant to prepare his disciples, then his method of preparation was to send them into the world. The disciples never enjoyed insulation from realities of ministry and the pressures of the world around them. They were trained in the context of real life and were expected—from the very first moment—to begin the process of becoming fishers of men. (213)

Being a fisher of people means to catch others for Christ.

Matthew chapter 9, Jesus called another ordinary person who was actually in the public’s eye. Matthew, the tax collector, was called as Jesus passed by the tax office.

Matthew immediately followed Jesus. The Jews despised tax collectors because of their dealings with Rome. Tax collectors were seen as the chief of sinners. In the passage, Jesus shows the target of his mission: sinners. Jesus was criticized by the Pharisees for eating at the same table with outcasts—tax collectors and sinners. Jesus’ ministry and mission was to heal sinners. He showed the Jewish establishment that he was going to show mercy. His call to all people is repentance. Christ’s mission is to redeem the whole world not just part of it or a few people. Christ has come to heal or to forgive sins:

As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, “Follow Me.” So he arose and followed Him. Now it happened, as Jesus sat at the table in the house, that behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, “Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” When Jesus heard that, He said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. But go and learn what this means ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice.’ For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.” (Matt. 9:9-13)

The previous two Scripture passages show how God uses imperfect sinners to accomplish his will because imperfect people is all in which he has to do his work.

Jesus certainly modeled outreach in his early ministry. He was never confined to one spot, but he was constantly moving from place to place, specifically to teach, preach, and heal. The scope of his outreach included all the towns and villages in his area. He went to the Jewish synagogues to reach his own people. Crowds followed him from place to place, and Jesus had mercy on the crowds. He told his disciples a certainty about the kingdom and then he told them to pray for that specific need in their mission. The Bible says, in Matthew 9:37-38, “Then, he said, to his disciples, ‘The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field’” (NIV). Thus, outreach includes going to different places to which God

calls to do his work to reap a harvest of souls. The Church must accomplish its mission through workers. The prayer life of Christians includes outreach and prayer for God to send workers into the world to reach unbelievers for Christ.

When Jesus sent out his twelve disciples, in Matthew 10, he gave the twelve authority to do the ministry he was doing: healing sickness and exorcising evil spirits (v. 1). When Jesus gave his disciples their mission, he gave them specific instructions on what to do and what not to do. In verses 5-6, Jesus gave them a target group of people. He told them that their mission was to the Jewish people not to Gentiles or Samaritans. Matthew 10:5-6 says, “These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: ‘Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel.’” The mission had a specific message and ministry—the same message and ministry of Jesus. In verses 7-8, the twelve were told to preach the message that the kingdom was near and their ministry was to heal sickness, resurrect the dead, heal leprosy, and cast out demons. They were to give freely as they had themselves received. In addressing the message and ministry for this mission, Jesus was telling his disciples that they were going to minister to the felt needs of the lost Jewish people, so the Church’s outreach must, too, begin with the felt needs of the lost or unchurched. Needs of unbelievers must be included in accomplishing Christ’s mission. Warren affirms this truth:

Whenever Jesus encountered a person he’d begin with *their* [original emphasis] hurts, needs, and interests. When he sent his disciples out he told them to do the same: “Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give” (Matt. 10:8). (*Purpose Driven Church* 197-98)

These needs have to be addressed, and ministry for these needs must be provided in order to bring unbelievers to Christ.

Other instructions Christ gave the twelve shows that their mission would be for a specific (short) period of time. The disciples would not need to worry about funding or extra clothes because they were worthy of their wages. Jesus says in Matthew 10:9-10, “Do not take along any gold or silver or copper in your belts, take no bag for the journey, or extra tunic, or sandals or a staff: for the worker is worth his keep.” As the disciples were ministering to others needs’, their needs would be met, too. Jesus instructed his disciples that they would be visiting people’s homes in Jewish towns and villages (v. 11). The disciples were to go door-to-door proclaiming the good news of the kingdom. Jesus was instituting house-to-house visitation evangelism (v. 12). In advance, Jesus warned his disciples that the mission would be difficult at times because some will accept the message while others would reject the message:

If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it; if it is not, let your peace return to you. If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake the dust off your feet when you leave that home or town.... I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. (Matt. 10:13-4, 16a,)

Door- to-door visitation involves much risk, but the disciples who proclaim the good news and the people receiving their message are both blessed.

In summary, Jesus sent his disciples to a specific group of people, with a specific message and ministry, specific instructions of what not to take, and advice on what to do when people reject them. Jesus targeted the felt needs of the lost as strategy for their mission. Jesus gave the twelve the opportunity for on-the-job training. This particular mission would prepare them for future missions (and ministry) when Jesus would not be

around. This mission of the twelve is a capsule of the larger ministry in which they were preparing. That mission was to go into the whole world.

The commissioning of the seventy is very similar to the sending of the twelve. In Luke 10:1-24, Jesus appointed seventy others and sends them two-by-two ahead of him into every city he was about to enter. These seventy men were to plant the seeds for Jesus before he arrived to minister to people. Jesus gave specific instructions for the seventy to execute. In saying that the harvest of souls is plentiful, he commanded the seventy to pray to God to send laborers into the harvest. Jesus also warned of difficulties: “Go your ways; behold, I send you out as lambs in the midst of wolves” (Luke 10:3, NASB). The mission of the seventy was urgent because the mission was short-term and did not allow for any stops along the way. They had to go immediately to their destinations. The mission did not allow them to converse with anyone on the way. Verse 4, says, “Carry no purse, no bag, no shoes; and greet no one on the way.” One difference worth noting between the sending of the twelve and the seventy is that a two-person team enters a house, and if they were welcomed there, they were not to move from house to house. They were to stay in one specific house. Jesus says, “And stay in that house, eating and drinking what they give you; for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not keep moving from house to house” (Luke 10:7). While the seventy were bringing the message of the kingdom and healing the sick, their needs were met, too. Again, many households will accept the messenger and the message, and many will reject the messenger and the message (vv. 7-8, 10-11). Many keys to the effectiveness of outreach (evangelism and missions) are extracted, including (1) doing missions as a team of people (not alone), (2) praying, (3) going to the specific place Christ names, and (4) planting seeds through sending other

people to prepare a given place with the gospel. After doing these keys to outreach, people are able to receive the gospel. Outreach is a process, not just a one-time event.

After Jesus' resurrection and before his ascension, he called the eleven disciples together to commission them to reach out to the world, which included evangelizing, baptizing, and teaching new converts. Jesus gave them authority to go into all the world with the gospel (not just the nation of Israel):

Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Amen. (Matt. 28:16-20)

The disciples learned and participated in Jesus' earthly ministry, which was training and preparation to go and do missions on a grander scale—to every nation. Jesus gave the eleven the Great Commission from a mountain in Galilee.

The Great Commission is not limited to Jesus' disciples or followers but to all Christians since then, not only clergy but also other church leaders and laity:

This commission was given to *every* [original emphasis] follower of Jesus, not pastors and missionaries alone. This is *your* [original emphasis] commission from Jesus, and it is not optional. These words of Jesus are not the *Great Suggestion* [original emphasis]. If you are part of God's family your mission is mandatory. To ignore it would be disobedience. You may have been unaware that God holds you responsible for the unbelievers around you. (Warren, *Purpose Driven Life* 283)

The mission of the Church is the Great Commission. For any believer to disregard the Great Commission would be sin.

In Acts 1, before Jesus ascended into heaven from the Mount of Olives, he called his followers there to give them another version of the Great Commission. Jesus says in

the Acts 1:8 commission from the Mount of Olives, “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (NKJV). Jesus talks about the empowerment of the Holy Spirit in Acts 1:8. The giving of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost enabled the apostles and other followers of Jesus to proclaim the good news and do signs and wonders. Jesus told his followers that they will be his witnesses at home (Jerusalem and Judea), next door (Samaria), and to all nations (ends of the earth). The mission of the scope of the gospel includes all peoples, whether Jew or Gentile, in the world, as the Holy Spirit helped them. Warren comments on Acts 1:8 as he adds, “His [Jesus’] followers were to reach out to their community (Jerusalem), to their country (Judea), to other cultures (Samaria), and to other nations (everywhere in the world). Note that our commission is simultaneous, not sequential” (Warren, *Purpose Driven Life* 301). Therefore, the mission of the gospel is both home and foreign, not one or the other. The outreach of a church must include doing missions in some way and at the same time: (1) within their city, (2) within their state, (3) within their nation, and (4) around the globe.

Elsewhere in Acts, outreach is specifically about doing what God wants believers to do. Obedience unlocks the door to the miraculous. After Paul received his Macedonian call in Acts 16, he followed the Holy Spirit’s prompting not to go into Asia but established the first church in Europe. After receiving the vision of the man of Macedonia, Paul and Silas realized they were called to preach the gospel in Macedonia. After arriving in Philippi, the major city in Macedonia, they led Lydia, the seller of purple, and her household to Christ. In Acts 16:16-34, Paul and Silas were imprisoned after they cast a demonic spirit of divination or fortune-telling from a slave girl. When the

slave girl's masters saw that they could not make any more money, Paul and Silas were beaten and then taken to prison. The jailer put them in the tightest area of security in the inner prison, having fastened their feet in the stock (v. 17). Paul and Silas were thrown into prison because they were obedient to God. They followed God to be in Philippi, and now they were persecuted because of Christ. Outreach takes Christians places where they experience injustice and suffering, even in being obedient to God. God has a purpose for suffering, even in the prison cell of Paul and Silas. God took a bad situation and made it good for his own glory. Instead of getting depressed, Paul and Silas prayed and sang hymns to God at midnight as a witness to the others in prison. Paul and Silas waited upon the Lord for an opportunity to reach out to others in the name of Jesus. After a terrible earthquake, Paul and Silas were able to lead a frightened Philipian jailer to Christ. The jailer said to them, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30b). After the jailer asked the important question about salvation, Paul and Silas responded that belief in Jesus Christ is necessary to be saved. "So they said, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household'" (Acts 16:31). During the night, the Philipian jailer and his family were saved and were baptized. Opportunities for evangelism outreach come out of the darkest hours of not understanding God and during times of suffering. The key is for Christians to be led by the Holy Spirit to places of outreach where he calls. God uses people who are yielded to do his will. God used Paul and Silas in prison ministry and missions.

In the last chapter of Dr. Luke's inspired account of the early Church (Acts 28), the theme of God using Paul as a result of hardship in his life appears again. Opportunities for outreach come following the storms believers experience. God takes a

bad situation and turns it into a great opportunity, bringing himself the glory. In Acts 27, Paul and other prisoners are sailing to Rome under the authority of a centurion named Julius. Paul is going to make his appeal to Caesar to be set free. As they were traveling, the ship encountered contrary wind and a storm at sea. Paul and others on the boat became shipwrecked on the island of Malta. In Acts 28:7-10, where Paul and the others were shipwrecked, the leading officer of Malta had an estate. His name was Publius. The shipwreck victims were taken to the estate and were given hospitality for three days. God had a purpose for Paul being there. In spite of the shipwreck and a viper fastening to his hand, Paul was getting ready for an opportunity to witness for Christ in a visit to Publius' father. Publius' father was sick and suffering from fever and dysentery. Paul visited Publius' father and God used Paul to deliver Publius' father from sickness. That day, Publius' father met Jesus as healer. Acts 28:8b, says, "Paul went in to see him [Publius' father] and, after prayer, placed his hands on him and healed him" (NIV). After this healing, the scope of Paul's outreach in Malta enlarged because of the miracle. Acts 28:9 reports, "When this had happened, the rest of the sick on the island came and were cured." Good news traveled fast all over the island, and all the sick were healed by God through Paul. When the time arrived for Paul and the others to leave Malta to go to Rome, their needs were met for the trip. God had a purpose for them being there in the wake of a most difficult circumstance, and he took care of their needs while they were there and when they left. The shipwreck survivors were given gifts when they left Malta because of God working through Paul. Acts 28:10 states, "They honored us in many ways and when we were ready to sail, they furnished us with supplies we needed." God uses people and their circumstances to give opportunities for outreach.

Historical Review

Celtic evangelism and Methodism are two great historical examples of outreach evangelism.

Celtic evangelism. Saint Patrick lived in the late AD fourth and early fifth centuries. His main mission in life was to evangelize the Celtic peoples of Ireland. Patrick grew up in England in an aristocratic family. Thus, Patrick had more Roman ties than Celtic ties (Hunter, *Celtic Way* 13). The Celtic peoples, however, were considered “barbarians” by the Roman Empire. The Irish Celts could not read nor write, so they were considered uncivilized (15, 19).

Patrick was a teenager when he had an early experience with the Irish Celts. He was taken as a slave by pirates to Ireland. While enslaved there, Patrick became a Christian because of his experience out in nature. While herding cattle, he sensed the presence and power of God. Patrick identified this presence of God, as the one true God in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The connection he made recognizing the triune God came from his Roman Catholic Christian background. He remembered learning about God in catechism. The change in Patrick was noticed by those who held him captive. Another life-changing experience was Patrick learning the culture and language of the people. Patrick left Ireland after six years of captivity. A dream God gave Patrick one night led to Patrick’s boarding a ship to his freedom. He returned to England and became a parish priest (Hunter, *Celtic Way* 13-15).

When Patrick was forty-eight years old, he received another dream from God. This call to take the gospel to the Celts of Ireland was affirmed by Pope Celestine. Patrick was made a bishop and was commissioned to take Christianity to the Celts

(Hunter, *Celtic Way* 15). Roman Christianity assumed that the Celtic population needed to be civilized before it could be Christianized.

Patrick's mission was such an undertaking that many thought it would fail (Hunter, *Celtic Way* 19). Prior to Patrick's mission and even in the centuries that followed, both the Roman and the Protestant philosophy on missions were twofold: (1) to Christianize and (2) to civilize barbaric peoples. That philosophy assumed that the barbaric population needed to be civilized (made literate; educated) before people could be Christianized.

The advantages St. Patrick had, however, in evangelizing the Irish Celts were plenty, but two are prominent. First, he had been immersed in his late teens and early twenties in the Celtic Irish language and culture when he was a slave. By the time Patrick arrived again in Ireland, all the people spoke the same language, which Patrick had learned in his captivity in Ireland. Also, the culture was relatively the same. It had not changed much in the previous twenty-five plus years since Patrick was in Ireland, and Patrick understood the people and was able to engage them in conversation (Hunter, *Celtic Way* 19-21). A second advantage for Patrick is that he did not go alone as bishop to Ireland. He had an evangelism team who went with him. The team strategy worked very well in Ireland. In AD 432, Patrick arrived in Ireland with at least a dozen priests, seminarians, and others to establish Christianity. A few women were included in the group (15, 21).

The emergence of the Celtic model of evangelism is derived from Patrick's mission and ministry to the Irish people. In order for the church in America to be effective and successful today in evangelizing the lost, it must take a long look at the

Celtic way of evangelism. Primarily, evangelism must return to a team approach instead of having confrontational one-to-one evangelism. The Celtic team approach to Christianity had many positives. Celtic Christians built relationships with the people. They made friendships and engaged in conversation. They lived and taught among a community of people. Friendships were developed before establishing a church (Hunter, *Celtic Way* 47). The team was effective because of the unity and their goals.

Another reason that Celtic evangelism was so effective is that the premise was promoted “Christianity is more caught than taught!” (Hunter, *Celtic Way* 54). To understand this idea, a comparison must be made to the Roman model for missions outreach. The Roman model for evangelizing reaches people who are literate and educated (i.e., civilized). The Roman model is very logical to evangelical American Christians because they are institutionalized in it. It is comfortable to American evangelicals. The three points of the Roman model of evangelism are (1) presenting the gospel message, (2) inviting non-Christians to have a conversion experience by making a decision to trust Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, (3) welcoming these new Christians into the fellowship of the church or congregation (53).

In contrast, the Celtic model establishes the camaraderie of people in building relationships in community. In essence, they are invited or brought into the community of faith (fellowship). The Celtic model engages non-Christians in this context by showing them Christian activities and example such as worship, prayer, and ministry. Finally, after a period of time, the non-Christians are invited to make a decision for Jesus Christ (belief, invitation to commitment; Hunter, *Celtic Way* 53).

The Celtic strategy works more effectively than the Roman model in today's world because non-Christians need to see authentic modeled Christianity in order to believe. This approach to evangelism gives people a safe environment to explore Christianity.

Methodism. The church growth movement recognizes that those who often share their faith are also involved in ministries. Historically, Methodism, since the time of Wesley, has had a wonderful connection between ministry and evangelism. Christians who ministered also evangelized. Wesley knew that effective evangelism also came through people who were experiencing God's blessings in and through their ministries (Hunter, *Church* 122).

Theological Review

Outreach is an important theological concern in the book and the 40 Days campaign. Evangelism, missions, and strategic planning are important topics that increase understanding of outreach.

Outreach overview. When unbelievers accept Christ, they become children of God. Once people become Christians, God uses Christians to reach others for Christ. God saves people and sends them out into the world to reach others (Warren, *Purpose Driven Life* 282). Edwin B. Young affirms the meaning of outreach by saying that "reaching out" means "evangelism" (Young and Stanley 9). The best thing Christians can do is tell others about the eternal life they have received (Warren, *Purpose Driven Life* 283). The mission of the Church, of course, has eternal significance. Nothing else believers do will matter as much in comparison as helping the unbelieving world come to relationship with Jesus (284). God's plan to get people to heaven is through Christians sharing the gospel

and the sharing of the gospel is the most critical task of the Church's outreach. If non-Christians do not accept Christ, they will never be seen for eternity in heaven. Christians will not have accomplished the task given them if any unchurched people do not go to heaven. Believers have the privilege of sharing their faith and taking as many people to heaven with them as possible. Wayne Cordeiro's statement puts an exclamation point on this topic:

When we get to heaven, we will see many wonderful things, but let me tell you of one thing we will never see again. We will never see another non-Christian. We will never have another opportunity for the rest of eternity to share the Good News with someone who desperately needs the grace of God. The joy of heaven is when people come to a saving faith in Christ! These are the victories! Now, what in the world would we talk about for all of eternity if when we arrive, we've not been "about our Father's business?" We must accomplish what God sent us onto this scratch to accomplish! (24)

God's purpose for Christians is to do the work of winning others to Jesus. A sense of urgency must be felt in pursuing those without Christ. The lost person's eternal destiny hangs in the balance.

The lost truly matter to God. Christians must make time and sacrifice to see their loved ones, friends, neighbors, and coworkers saved and having an ongoing relationship with Christ. Outreach in churches must target the lost and draw people to church who have never been to church.

Lost people matter to God. Do they matter to you? Do they matter in your church? Do they matter enough to make enough to make this concept in your congregation's primary core value?

Do you want to draw people to your church who haven't yet been reached for Christ? This passion is at the heart of every church that is effective in reaching unchurched people. (Galloway and Bird 21)

Effective churches, therefore, have a passion for reaching lost people. Nothing else is more important.

Reaching the lost and the unchurched must be the central core value, the main mission, why the universal Church and the local church exist. Galloway searched the Holy Scriptures to investigate this ongoing core value, purpose, or theme of reaching and winning the lost to Jesus. He emphasizes no less than ten observations from the Bible in reference to “Lost People Matter to God.” Listing these points here is appropriate because they go with Galloway’s thoughts in the previous citation:

The more I read the Bible, the more I see this value at the core of Scripture—running from Genesis to Revelation.

1. The mission of Jesus was to live and die on a cross so that sinners could be put in right relationship with God—“while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8).
2. The central message of the Cross teaches that lost people matter to God. Jesus said He came “to seek and to save what was lost” (Luke 19:10).
3. The most important decision of eternity underscores this value: “For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life?” (Mark 8:36, NRSV).
4. The central mission of the church, found in the Great Commission and the Great Commandment, involves reaching out to lost people whom God loves.
5. The most central teaching of the church, reflected in John 3:16—perhaps the most quoted verse in the entire New Testament—involves reaching lost people.
6. Taken a whole, the entire Bible is the history of God’s salvation of lost people.
7. Perhaps the three greatest parables ever taught, presented in Luke 15, all underscore the same idea. According to verses 1-2, it was the religious crowd, the Pharisees, the keepers of the traditions, who were most disturbed at Jesus because He reached out to sinners. Jesus seized the opportunity to teach three parables, in which the key word is *lost* [original emphasis]: lost sheep, lost coin, lost son. In the third parable, which also goes by the name *prodigal son* [original emphasis], something takes place that never happened in the Jewish family: the father went out seeking, looking, searching for the lost son.
8. This core value is one that can be directly applied to every culture, every generation, and every country.
9. All ministry that has high impact in changing lives is relational. Few core values are more relational than a compelling sense that lost people matter to God.

10. This core value seems to be the heartbeat of God and the heartbeat of churches that are making a difference in impacting people. It's built into the soul of thousands of churches of every shape and size. (Galloway and Bird 22)

This core value is the heartbeat of God and the heartbeat of churches that are making a difference in impacting people and is built into the soul of thousands of churches of every shape and size. It needs to be built into every person's soul as well (22).

Outreach or biblical mission consists of both social ministry and evangelism (Wagner 101). In order to reach the lost world, churches must focus on social ministry and evangelism:

Mission encompasses the broadest concept of sharing God's love in word and deed. It's more than simply supplying food to the hungry. It's more than simply proclaiming the human need to repent and believe. Outreach includes evangelism *and* [original emphasis] social action, local concern *and* [original emphasis] worldwide concern, efforts within our culture *and* [original emphasis] efforts cross-culturally, help that is spiritual *and* [original emphasis] help that is material. (Barker et al. 111-12)

Thus, true outreach must not only be about leading the lost to repentance but also about meeting people's needs. Outreach is done on the local, national, and international levels.

Evangelism outreach. Evangelism is sharing the good news about Jesus Christ so people can make a first-time commitment to Jesus Christ. Identify this first-time commitment by different terms: born again, conversion, justification by grace through faith, salvation. Reaching out in evangelism is very critical so the lost can receive Christ, grow spiritually, and go to heaven. Young, pastor of Fellowship Church in Texas, says the reason that he is "in the ministry is because there is nothing, absolutely nothing on earth, like seeing someone come to Christ" (Young and Stanley 10). Young states that his church is driven by evangelism because of an urgency to reach and save the lost in his city. He advises churches to be organized for reaching out to people. Therefore, churches

should target their communication to people who have never been to church before in their lives (Young and Stanley 9-10). For evangelism to be effective, churches must be adamant about putting themselves in their visitors' places. People must feel welcomed and must connect to the life of churches if they are expected to come back. If churches want to grow with seekers, senior pastors must be visible in their communities to the point that they are spending much more time with unchurched people than they do with believers (Young and Stanley 11-12). Pastoral leadership staffs at churches must embody the purpose of evangelism in order for their congregations to catch the fever. The passion begins with the pastors. If the work of evangelism is missing from the pastor's life as well as the church's life, they are not fulfilling Christ's commission:

If we as pastors and churches aren't sensitive to reaching out to, praying for, and welcoming in the lost, then we are missing something vital in our ministry. The important thing is that your ministry is designed with the unchurched in mind. Christ came to seek and to save those who are lost; and as representatives of Christ on the earth, we must extend that same hand to a lost and dying world. (14)

Pastors and churches must have in their ministry a heart for reaching the lost.

Churches must connect to the world by engaging in the culture around them.

Churches must continually think and rethink how they reach unchurched people. Young gives some specific examples on how to reach unchurched people. Opportunities include playing sports at a sports club or playing games such as golf. Beginning conversations with business people such as the grocery store clerk, auto mechanic, and the dry cleaning person lead to opportunities of inviting the unchurched to church (Young and Stanley 13).

Another megachurch in the United States that takes evangelism seriously is the North Point Community Church outside Atlanta, Georgia. Stanley serves as the pastor. A

high percentage of this church's members partner with the pastoral staff in "personal evangelism." The personal evangelism program is called "invest and invite." Stanley states that "more than 98 percent of the adults we baptize came to NPCC at the invitation of a friend" (Young and Stanley 1).

Personal evangelism can be frightening. Usually fear of rejection or fear of people is a common obstacle to evangelism. The reason many Christians fear doing evangelism is that they could not present the gospel to family and friends using a tract. Many would go to Christian evangelism events that taught how to use tracts. Many feel guilty that something is missing from their Christian walk because they could not evangelize with tracts. Those who were introduced to this method and were not successful in reaching the lost are generally perceived by others, as well as themselves, as having a lack of concern for the lost. The personal evangelism method at North Point Community Church tears down the obstacles of fear of doing evangelism. Instead of training members in evangelistic outreach events, they ask them to build purposeful relationships with unbelievers. They are advised to invest themselves in others' lives at work and other places with the goal of inviting them to a Sunday morning worship service where the gospel is presented. The building of relationships with unbelievers takes the burden of direct witnessing off the average Christian (Young and Stanley 1-2). Effective evangelism is based on influencing others through relationships. People go to church because of friendships. H. Eddie Fox and George E. Morris affirm this premise:

Research clearly indicates that more than seventy-five percent of the persons active in church today got their start as Christians and church members through the influence of friends, relatives, neighbors, or colleagues at work. Survey after survey and study after study report that when new members are asked why they chose their church, they respond by pointing to the influence of persons in their social network; i.e., persons

within their friendship, kinship, neighborhood, or collegueship network. This is irrevocable proof that effective outreach is built on relationships. (91)

Influencing those in the social network is the key to bringing people into the church for the first time and then leading them to the Lord.

The “invest and invite” approach to evangelism is very effective at North Point Community Church. Far more personal evangelism occurs in this approach because church members feel freer to invite their coworkers or neighbors to church. This method assumes that members are going to bring those unbelievers to church with whom they have been building the friendships (Young and Stanley 3). After the church members’ friends experience a worship service at North Point, the responsibility of evangelism is then placed back on the church members’ shoulders. The responsibility shift occurs at the conclusion of the service (4). The church members have the responsibility of discussing what happened during the worship service over lunch after church. The “invest and invite” strategy works, and Stanley endorses it to all churches:

Every church needs an evangelism strategy that the members understand and embrace. Our invest-and-invite strategy is easy to communicate and easy to apply. More importantly, it reflects one of the first instances of evangelism in the New Testament. When Andrew discovered Jesus’ true identity, the Bible says he went and found his brother Peter, and “he brought him to Jesus” (John 1:42). The church is the body of Christ. Bringing the unchurched in among the body is the next best thing to bringing them to the person of Jesus. (5-6)

Because evangelism is a process, this effective personal evangelism method is properly called “partnership” evangelism (4).

In addition to the aforementioned strategies of evangelism, two others are pertinent to this study. First, the giving of one’s testimony leads people to Jesus Christ. One’s testimony is the “story of how Christ has made a difference in your life” and is part

of one's life message (Warren, *Purpose Driven Life* 290). Second, evangelism is effective when Christians project a positive last witness in the public's eyes. Christians need to spend time with each other outside the walls of the church or officially sponsored church events (Schwarz 36). In doing so, that fellowship gives Christians an opportunity to show unbelievers authentic Christlike lifestyle and gives those Christians an opportunity to evangelize or witness as a team.

Missions outreach. The English word for "mission" is derived from the Latin word for "sending" (Warren, *Purpose Driven Life* 281). A vital part of the Christian life is being sent in the world as an ambassador for Christ. Christian missions are a continuation of Jesus' mission while he was here on earth. Because Christians make up the body of Christ, missions continue what Jesus did in his physical body. The church, the spiritual body of Jesus, is given the awesome task of introducing people to Jesus (281-82).

The fifth eternal purpose for believers as spelled out in 40 Days is, "You were made for a mission" (Warren, *Purpose Driven Life* 279). The missions assignment is for Christians to join God in his work in the world. Warren distinguishes the difference of "ministry" and "missions" in *The Purpose Driven Life*. He says, "God wants you to have a ministry in the Body of Christ and a mission in the world. Your ministry is your service to *believers* [original emphasis], and your mission is your service to *unbelievers* [original emphasis]" (281).

Warren makes the distinction that *ministry* is for believers inside the church. *Mission* is to reach non-Christians in the world. Every Christian has an important

contribution to make in this world. “As members of Christ’s body, *we* [original emphasis] are his hands, his feet, his eyes, and his heart” (*Purpose Driven Life* 135).

Other ministers and authors point out missions is not just one program among many in the church, but the church by its nature is *missional*. When churches grasp this truth, it transforms the lives of those congregations. Missions is not something tacked on to what Christians do in the local church. Missions is not done only overseas, but missions begin in towns, cities, and communities. Every Christian is not only a minister of the gospel but is also a missionary:

Mission, as we have seen, is not an occasional activity of the people of God of special interest for “mission groups.” The church does not *have* [original emphasis] a mission: it *is* [original emphasis] mission. Under both covenants mission is the intended occupations and preoccupations of the whole people of God, not merely a few chosen representative or designated missionaries. Put simply the ordinary Christian is a missionary. (Stevens 208)

Darrell L. Guder et al. echo this notion:

But it has taken us decades to realize that mission is not just a program of the church. It defines the church as God’s sent people. Either we are defined by mission, or we reduce the scope of the gospel and the mandate of the church. Thus our challenge today is to move from church with mission to missional church. (6)

Churches should be missional, not just have a missions program.

Being a missional church means going beyond the walls of the congregation both locally and globally. The purpose of missions is to reach non-Christians and/or unchurched people in caring ways. Ripato writes, “Mission invites individuals to move beyond the walls of the church through an investment of time, energy, and resources in the lives of unchurched or pre-Christian people” (122).

In order for a local church to reach its community, the church's membership has to be mobilized to being ministers as well as missionaries. A desire to win the lost is the heart for missions:

A concentration on mission should formulate an expanded understanding of reaching out within the community. A desire for the Lord to add to the church those who are being saved generates effective mission. The urgency of mission focuses on moving individuals from being "members" to being "ministers." (Ripato 37)

A bold initiative (strong desire) must be in existence to reach the unchurched in order to fulfill the gospel's mandate.

In order for churches to be healthy and balanced, they must not neglect doing missions. Warren says in *The Purpose Driven Church* that healthy churches are balanced churches, which are organized on the five eternal purposes (128, 49). Ultimately, "a church's health is measured by its *sending* [original emphasis] capacity, not its *seating* [original emphasis] capacity" (32). Christians are reminded that whenever they go, they are on a mission for Christ. Fulfilling the mission God has bestowed upon the church has a cost. The cost is that Christians must abandon their own agendas and get on board God's agenda (286). This agenda is not only reaching the communities surrounding local churches but also going into the larger world. When many people think of world missions, they usually think of helping those who are in need, whether with food, clothing, or shelter. Work teams that repair or build houses or churches often come to mind. Christians can become world-class in many ways. The shift must come from local missions thinking to global missions thinking (300).

Two specific ways to think in terms of global missions is (1) to pray for foreign countries and (2) to plan and go on a short-term foreign missions project (Warren, *Purpose Driven Life* 300-01).

Outreach strategic planning. Churches must offer unchurched as well as church people something they cannot get elsewhere in order for numeric growth of people to occur in congregations (Warren *Purpose Driven Church* 48). Churches, therefore, must reach the culture instead of being totally countercultural:

Through three diverse pastoral assignments and my doctoral studies, I failed to find any significant data that would offer hope to either the future of the mainline churches or their ability to effectively connect with the unchurched. Like two highways veering off from a junction, the church I knew was going one way and the dominant cultures another, never again to cross paths. The only exceptions that I saw to the general pattern of decline in Christian communities fell into three categories: they were marked by (1) a hyperactive, over-functioning pastor, (2) right-wing theology and politics, and/or (3) a neighborhood setting where new houses were going in by the hundreds all around the church. (Nixon 120)

The numerical decline in churches is due to their inability to reach the unchurched on their terms.

Churches can reach their cultures when they first plan effective outreach around meeting the felt needs of the targeted unchurched. “The key to church growth is for the local congregation to focus its evangelistic efforts on questions and needs of non-Christians” (Schwarz 35). Ministering to the needs of the unchurched is pivotal in the mandate of the church because “Jesus always ministered to people’s needs and hurts” (Warren, *Purpose Driven Church* 198). Outreach to the surrounding culture must include building relationships with unchurched family, friends, coworkers, and neighbors.

Schwarz says that the key for evangelism outreach to work is for Christians to start with already existing relationships as a springboard to sharing Christ with others (35).

Establishing and building these friendships with people will last forever. Each believer is responsible for reaching non-Christians. A particular unique individual will only be able to reach certain unchurched people in the world because of his or her personality and

location, thus, each believer has a golden opportunity to make a difference in a lost person's life. "If just one person will be in heaven because of you, your life will have made a difference for eternity" (Warren, *Purpose Driven Life* 285).

The main reason guests or newcomers return to a church is that they received a warm welcome, had a positive experience, and had their needs met. Churches that are effective in reaching their communities think about their guests first (those who have not been to church before) and not their church members (Nixon 83-84).

The urgency of reaching the unchurched is expressed in how well churches understand the makeup, likes, and dislikes of people. Getting to know who the people are is a key strategy in trying to reach them and bring them in to a warm, loving environment:

Obviously, if we exist to create a hospitable zone where community people can experience the unconditional love of God, we had better take seriously who lives in the community. Who are its people? How do they live their lives? What radio stations do they listen to? How do they like to dress during their well-earned downtime? What are their common struggles and fears? How much attention or anonymity do they want or need? (Nixon 84)

Churches that are caring will bring and keep outsiders within their fellowships.

Moreover, if churches are really serious about outreach, then four other things are obvious. First, churches (as well as individual Christians) must budget and spend money on outreach and outreach events. Money is what helps run the church. Warren is emphatic about the use of money in this way; "[M]oney spent on evangelism is never an expense, it's always an investment" (*Purpose Driven Church* 201). Tithing and giving in this area is a must, so new ministries and programs can be started to minister to seeking unchurched people.

Second, if churches are serious about outreach to their communities, they should think about planting daughter churches or starting new campuses of the church in a different location of the cities in which they reside. Donald A. McGavran says, “To be a true church we must become a reproductive church” (45).

Third, a clear-cut outreach vision by the pastor and church leadership must be implemented. “Vision is a picture of the future that produces passion” (Hybels 32). When “vision for the future” is discussed in churches, it is the “comprehensive sense of where you are, where you’re going, and how you’re going to get there” (Barna 80). Thus, vision takes God’s plan of the future and makes it a present-day reality. Vision sets the course of action for pastoral leadership and churches to reach their destinations. Vision is vital to outreach planning in churches because it serves as a destination on the map to fulfillment of that vision or dream. It stirs people to catch God’s dreams. John C. Maxwell says, “A truly valuable vision must have God in it” (153). If God does not give the vision, and if he is not in the process, then that vision will not be fulfilled. Vision is the very heart of the leadership of a church because vision comes from the Pastor to the leadership. Vision creates momentum because it is the fuel on which the leaders run. Vision sparks a fire in the people of a congregation. Vision is the call to follow God’s will consistently (Hybels 31). Bill Hybels uses Proverbs 29:18 to help define vision by describing what happens when the church has no vision:

Proverbs 29:18 says, “Where there is no vision, the people are unrestrained.” They can’t focus, can’t reach their goal, can’t follow their dream. An older translation says, “Without vision, the people perish.” I’ve seen it with my own eyes—without vision, people lose the vitality that makes them feel alive. (31)

Vision, therefore, brings focus to the target population to be reached by the church. The vision shows that the church cannot be all things to all people.

Fourth, churches become serious (more effective) in outreach when a strategic plan is developed and implemented. After a true vision and/or vision statement has been properly communicated and accepted by the leadership and congregation as “shared vision,” the leadership’s responsibility is to develop the strategic plan to fulfill the vision or dream. According to Harris W. Lee, “all leadership is goal setting” (140). A church’s strategic plan includes objectives and goals. These objectives and goals come out of the vision (or mission) statement. This statement should already be broken down into goals (Malphurs 162). The vision or mission statement summarizes steps to be taken for the goals of the vision to be achieved (162). These goals and objectives must be expanded into specific steps by developing a broader, detailed strategy to achieve them. Each goal must have some strategies for implementation. The strategic plan for implementing the goals of the vision or mission statement must ask an important question: “How and where am I going to commit my resources?” (Migliore 107). The answer is the “target.”

“Targeted visions provide the long-range objective, give actions a track on which to run, and show outsiders how to understand our leadership behaviors” (Dale 16). In summary, strategic planning is the result of a shared vision (and vision statement) by the pastor, leadership, and congregation. The vision must include focus, the felt needs of the unchurched, and the target group. The strategic plan is developed out of the vision statement and is implemented by the leadership of the church. The strategic plan answers the issues of what is going to be done, how much it is going to cost, and how long it will take. A strategic plan is a map to fulfilling the vision of the pastor.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Summary of the Problem

After the 40 Days of Purpose Spiritual Growth Campaign at Samson First United Methodist Church, Samson, Alabama, no long-term lasting impact was seen in the areas of lay pastoral care visitation, small groups, and new outreach. Lay involvement in ministry did not show the growth that was expected by the campaign. This seeming lack of results led to the pursuit of this study.

Purpose

The purpose of this dissertation was to investigate the long-term impact of Warren's 40 Days of Purpose campaign within small and large churches of the Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church in the areas of lay pastoral care visitation, small groups, and outreach (evangelism and missions).

Rationale for Using the Three Impact Variables

In Chapter 1, the rationale was shown for using lay pastoral care visitation, small groups, and outreach as impact variables in this study. The three impact variables are connected to Warren in his writings *The Purpose Driven Life* and *The Purpose Driven Church* and through the 40 Days of Purpose campaign. In Chapter 2, the biblical, theological, and historical sources also affirm the importance in studying the impact variables.

Research Questions

The purpose statement of this study separates into two components: (1) the state of the church before and after 40 Days of Purpose in the areas of lay pastoral care visitation,

small groups, and outreach (evangelism and missions), and (2) the size of the churches and the long-term impact in these areas are of importance.

Research Question 1

What was the level of congregational participation in the three impact areas of lay pastoral care visitation, small groups, and outreach (evangelism and missions) in small and large churches before and after their participation in 40 Days of Purpose?

This study reported the number of lay pastoral care teams before and after 40 Days in the small and large churches. Small and large churches reported the number of participants in lay pastoral care visitation teams for before and after 40 Days. Small and large churches reported the number of small groups, number of participants, and the combined average attendance for the groups for before and after 40 Days. Small and large churches reported the number of outreach, evangelism, and missions teams for before and after 40 Days. The study reported the participation of people in outreach in regards to percentage categories for before and after 40 Days in both small and large churches.

Research Question 2

What were the differences in impact within small and large churches following 40 Days of Purpose?

Small and large church categories were compared in each of the areas mentioned: pastoral visitation, small groups, and outreach (evangelism and missions). Small and large churches reported the change in number of lay pastoral care teams and participants from before to after 40 Days. Small and large churches reported whether they started new lay pastoral care teams as a result of the 40 Days program.

Small and large churches reported the change in the number of small groups, small group participants, and combined average attendance for small groups from before to after 40 Days. In addition, small and large churches reported whether they started new small groups as a result of 40 Days.

Small and large churches stated the change in the number of outreach teams as well as the change in the percentage categories of outreach participants from before to after 40 Days. Small and large churches reported the number of professions of faith as a result of 40 Days of Purpose. The change is shown in regards to the number of “yes” responses in the outreach characteristics questions (see Appendix A) from before to after 40 Days in small and large churches. Moreover, small and large churches reported the number of new outreach teams as a result of 40 Days of Purpose.

Finally, the overall impact is shown for the new teams and groups started in each of the three impact areas (variables) as a result of 40 Days of Purpose. The relationship is shown between the three areas (impact variables) and the size of the churches.

Participants

The participants consisted of pastors, former pastors, a former associate pastor, key staff members, and key laity within twelve United Methodist churches in the Alabama-West Florida Conference who completed the 40 Days of Purpose Spiritual Growth Campaign one year before the study was conducted (by 1 November 2006). The cover letter for the 40 Days of Purpose questionnaires and telephone interviews included directions to the pastors for completing the survey questionnaire. For the survey questionnaires, the goal for the pastors was to form lay leadership teams, if feasible, consisting of ten to twelve persons within the churches to complete the questionnaires

(see Appendix C). For some churches, the teams of ten to twelve persons did not become a reality. This study was not based on a random sample of churches or participants. The churches chose to be included in the study. The self-selected participants included six small churches of two hundred or less in average Sunday worship attendance and six larger churches of more than two hundred in average Sunday worship attendance. A total of 737 churches are in the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church. Seventy-two of these are larger churches and 665 of these are smaller churches (*Journal of the Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference S-1-75*).

Instrumentation

The first part of the instrumentation that tested the impact of the 40 Days campaign in the twelve churches was a questionnaire with selected response (quantitative) and open-ended (qualitative) questions (Wiersma 11, 170). The twelve churches' pastors and lay leadership committees collaborated and sent completed questionnaires. The researcher-designed questionnaire measured the impact of 40 Days of Purpose in the areas of lay pastoral care visitation, small groups, and outreach (evangelism and missions). The selected or forced-choice questionnaire items included (1) making a "yes" or "no" response or (2) writing a numeric answer in the appropriate blanks. The open-ended questionnaire items required one-word or short-sentence answers written in the appropriate blanks. This study required such instrumentation to enhance both consistency of response and to give a broader perspective (color the data) of each ministry and outreach area. Information was revealed in the open-ended question responses that would not be shown with just selected or forced-choice responses (see Appendix A; Wiersma 170).

The second part of the instrumentation was the follow-up telephone interviews. I conducted telephone conversations with the pastors, associate pastors, staff, or lay representatives of the twelve churches who participated in the survey questionnaire. The telephone conversations lasted forty-five minutes. The pastors or the representatives prepared for the conversations beforehand by having the four open-ended questions sent ahead of time. The phone conversations were audio taped and preserved. Handwritten notes were made during the telephone interviews. The notes were compiled. The follow-up telephone interviews accomplished what the survey questionnaire could not do alone. The questionnaire contained questions pertaining only to the three impact variables of lay pastoral care visitation, small groups, and outreach. The telephone interviews broadened the perspective about the entire 40 Days campaigns in the churches. Though lay ministries, small groups, and missions were mentioned in the telephone conversations, the interviews gave depth and color to the qualitative data collected. The goal of the telephone interviews was to give a backdrop to 40 Days. The telephone questions covered information before, during, and after 40 Days. Interviewees discussed the planning process for 40 Days as well as the details of the events during 40 Days. Participants gave testimonies on the impact of 40 Days in the churches during the interviews. The project would be incomplete without the telephone interviews because I learned much more about the successes as well as the hindrances of 40 Days of Purpose in the congregations. The telephone interviews brought credibility to the findings of this study.

Validity

In order to give face validity to the questionnaire instrument and subsequent telephone interview, the Rev. Dr. Bill E. Woodson, former pastor of the Bonaire United Methodist Church, agreed to be tested. Woodson completed a collaborative trial

questionnaire. He also went through a test telephone interview to obtain the responses from the four question follow-up interview sheet. Bonaire United Methodist Church is in the South Georgia Conference and has 260 in average Sunday worship attendance. Bonaire United Methodist Church conducted its 40 Days of Purpose campaign from 3 October to 14 November 2005. The validity of instrumentation for the questionnaire began on 15 October 2007 with a questionnaire mailed to Dr. Woodson. Dr. Woodson returned the completed questionnaire two weeks later in the self-addressed stamped envelope provided for him in his packet. On 29 October 2007 the validity of instrumentation for the telephone interviews took place at 10:00 a.m. The interview lasted forty-five minutes. Dr. Woodson received the four follow-up telephone interview questions in the same packet as the collaborative questionnaire. The telephone interview with Dr. Woodson took place before the project started (questionnaires and telephone interviews) with the Alabama-West Florida Conference churches and their pastors.

The test of face validity assured the effectiveness of the questionnaire and that it was easily understood. The results were subject to Dr. Woodson and the lay committee participants answering candidly. The conducting of the telephone interview determined that the follow-up questions could be answered in forty-five minutes. The trial telephone interview determined that the audio tape recorder was working properly and that it recorded the conversation properly.

Data Collection

Bishop Larry M. Goodpaster, the resident bishop of the Alabama-West Florida Conference, and the Conference Cabinet (eight district superintendents) gave their approval to the study and encouraged churches in the Alabama-West Florida Conference who completed the 40 Days campaign to participate. A conference-wide e-mail was sent

inviting congregations to participate at the end of September 2007. Pastors or church staff members of the churches responded to the conference-wide e-mail by e-mailing me with their desire to participate in the study. These twelve churches chose to be in the study. The study did not have a random sample of churches. Pastors or staff members of the churches then received an official phone call and e-mail beginning in October 2007 to give them details about their participation in the study. Each pastor gathered a 40 Days lay leadership team, if possible, consisting of ten to twelve persons to collaborate and complete the mailed questionnaires. The questionnaire packet included a letter, church's code letter, a list of definitions, and a questionnaire to be completed by the pastor after meeting with the leadership teams. The pastors collaborated with the leadership teams, where feasible, and obtained responses within two weeks. Pastors and helpers completed one final hardcopy of the questionnaire, which they returned in self-addressed envelopes.

I sent the four follow-up telephone interview questions as well as a note reminding the pastors or representatives of their interview times in their questionnaire packets. The forty-five minute follow-up interviews with the pastors of the twelve churches included the use of the four follow-up questions. These telephone interviews collected a detail of dynamics within each congregation during 40 Days of Purpose. Each telephone follow-up conversation was audio taped with prior verbal permission. A speaker phone and a tape recorder aided the preservation of the telephone conversations on audiotapes. The audiotapes are a record of collecting data from the four follow-up questions. I also took handwritten notes during the phone conversations to help with recording and analyzing the data. The data from the audiotapes and handwritten notes were encoded for analysis following the forty-five minute telephone interviews. Sending

the four follow-up questions ahead of time to the pastors helped make the telephone interviews as concise and precise as possible. The telephone interviews cut down on a paper trail and helped propel the data analysis in a quick and timely manner. The telephone interview eliminated the need of retrieving written answers.

The best way to gather data for the second part of the project was to conduct telephone interviewing. Because the telephone interview is being used more frequently today, it is effective when proper ethics and preparation is done. Telephone interviewing has many advantages over face-to-face interviews. Telephone interviews are very flexible as they cut down the time and costs of traveling to physical meetings. The cost of telephone interviewing is one-half to one-third that of face-to-face interviewing. The interviewees can be sampled from a larger geographical region due to the elimination of travel time. An interviewer could likely make six interviews over the telephone in one day versus taking many days to visit the actual physical location; therefore, the collection and processing of data is done more quickly (Gillham 85; Wiersma 189). Telephone interviewing does have a better response than just mailing out questionnaires. Often, questionnaires that have open questions that require long handwritten answers result in a low response (Stewart and Cash 155).

Although telephone interviewing tries to obtain the essence of face-to-face interviewing, telephone interviews are more difficult to keep going time wise than face-to-face interviews. (Gillham 85-86). The key to having a successful telephone interview is to make it as friendly as possible through making prior arrangements with the interviewees as well as being prepared. Proper telephone interviewing protocol is to interview those who have given their permission to be interviewed through prior contact

(86). The most effective approach to lighten the burden of the interviewer and interviewees—the one item that can make for a smoother and quicker interview—is sending a questionnaire. A list of the questions to be asked sent ahead of time to the interviewees is helpful. The preparation is an asset. The person being interviewed has done some prior preparation for the interview and has something written down on paper in front of him or her during the interview (Gillham 86; Wiersma 189).

Variables

The variables considered in this study were the impact of the 40 Days of Purpose Spiritual Growth Campaign in the areas of lay pastoral care visitation, small groups, and outreach (evangelism and missions). Other impact variables included the size of the churches as well as the commitment level of individual Christians. Each Christian is at a different level in his or her walk with Christ.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used for this study. Descriptive statistics “includes the collection, presentation, and description of data” (Johnson 4). The descriptive data was organized into tables for this study. Nominal data was collected and analyzed. “Nominal” means “of, being, or relating to a designated or theoretical size that may vary from the actual: APPROXIMATE.” Percentage changes showed if any progress occurred from pre- to post-40 Days. The formula for percentage changes is $[(\# \text{ After}) - (\# \text{ Before}) / (\# \text{ Before})] \times 100\%$ (Avant).

Because the analysis of data included both qualitative and quantitative data, different procedures for analysis obtained the results. Qualitative data analysis requires both information organization and data reduction. Qualitative data gives descriptive

information, which is organized through using categories (Wiersma 202-03). This organizing of data is called “coding.” “*Coding* [original emphasis] is a process of organizing data and obtaining data reduction. In essence, it is the process by which qualitative researchers ‘see what they have in the data’” (203). The qualitative analysis (coding) displayed the descriptive data in Section 5: General Comments and Sharing on 40 Days in the questionnaire (see Appendix A). As shown in Tables 4.17 and 4.18 (pp. 114-15), the highlights of the churches’ responses from Section 5 of the questionnaire were encoded and displayed beside each church letter under the main heading.

The qualitative analysis for the telephone interviews first consisted of an audio transcription. The transcriber completed an almost word-for-word transcription of all twelve interviews. After transcription, the transcriber encoded the analysis into categories that described the key words of the four telephone interview questions onto legal-sized sheets of paper. The paper was turned sideways (landscape view) with the churches’ code letters written on the far left-hand side of the paper in a column. The legal pages were then developed into charts with three key words, phrases, or headings at the top that described the questions. Key words and phrases were written underneath the categories and beside the churches’ code letters to describe the influence of 40 Days of Purpose in regards to the questions (Tables 4.19 to 4.34, pp. 116-29; Appendix B).

The analysis of the quantitative data was next. Quantitative or numerical data “result from a process that quantifies—that is, counts (of how many) or measurements” (Johnson 11). The two statistical analyses used were the Chi-Square and Fisher’s Exact Test. The Chi-Square distribution is used “when random samples are drawn from a normal population of a known variance σ^2 , the $(n-1)s^2/\sigma^2$ possesses a probability” (346).

“The test statistic that will be used in making a decision about the null hypothesis is chi-square, χ^2 (χ is the Greek lowercase letter chi). The calculated value of chi-square will be obtained by using the formula $\chi^2 = (n-1)s^2/\sigma^2$ where s^2 is the sample variance, n is the sample size, and σ^2 is the value specified in the null hypothesis” (346). In order to use the chi-square distribution, an awareness of the following properties is important:

1. χ^2 is nonnegative in value, it is zero or positively valued.
2. χ^2 is not symmetrical, it is skewed to the right.
3. There are many χ^2 distributions. As with the t distribution, there is a different χ^2 distribution for each degree of freedom value. (346)

For the chi-square statistic, “the number of degrees of freedom df is equal to $n-1$ ” (346).

Also, “ $\chi^2 (df, \alpha)$ is the symbol used to identify the critical value of chi-square with df degrees of freedom and with α being the area under the curve to the right of a particular value” (346-47). The mean value of the chi-square distribution is df , when $df > 2$ (348).

“The mean is located to the right of the mode (the value where the curve reaches its highest point). By locating the value of df on your sketch of the χ^2 distribution, you will establish an approximate scale so that the values can be located in their respective positions” (348).

Thus, the Chi-Square is used when “data are categorized and the results shown by way of counts” (Johnson 422). When a number of cells occurs into which a number of observations (n) have been sorted, then the use of a contingency table is needed to sort the arrangement of data in two-way classifications. The data are then placed into cells and the number of data in each cell is reported. All frequencies or reported data in the cells are considered appropriate when each cell has value of “5” or greater in it.

Contingency tables involve two variables with the question of the data indicating if the two variables are independent or dependent (422-23, 431).

In determining if observed frequencies agree or disagree with expected frequencies, the calculated value of the Chi-Square statistic is $\chi^2 = \sum \text{all cells } [(O-E)^2/E]$. “O” is the observed frequency and “E” is the expected frequency. The calculated Chi-Square statistic is noted as “ χ^2* .” The degrees of freedom is noted by $df=(r-1) \cdot (c-1)$, where “r” is the number of rows in the contingency table and “c” is the number of columns in the contingency table. The critical value of χ^2 is $\chi^2(df, \alpha)$, where “ α ” is the level of significance (Johnson 422-23, 432). When $\chi^2* < \chi^2(df, \alpha)$, then the observers (statisticians) fail to reject the null hypothesis (H_0). When $\chi^2* > \chi^2(df, \alpha)$, the calculated value falls into the critical region of χ^2 . When this happens, then the observer rejects the null hypothesis (H_0) and accepts the alternate hypothesis (H_a). The null hypothesis (H_0) suggests independence of the variables (no association between the two variables). The alternate hypothesis (H_a) suggests the variables are associated (not independent of each other), which infers dependence of the variables (422-34). For this study, the significance level, α , is 0.05.

When the frequencies or data reported in the cells of a contingency table are not “5” or more, then the Fisher’s Exact Test is used. The Fisher’s Exact Test uses 2 x 2 contingency tables for the examination of significance between two variables (“Fisher’s Exact Test”). Fisher’s Exact is a nonparametric analogue for Chi-Square. It does not make the distribution assumptions that are made for Chi-Square. It is based on the binomial distribution (McCall).

Fisher's Exact Test is a significance test used in the analysis of data when sample sizes are small. The p-value is calculated where the margins of the 2 x 2 contingency tables are fixed. The need for Fisher's arises when data in two categories are divided into two separate ways. The degrees of freedom for Fisher's is always 1 (df=1). The four cells in the contingency table are represented by the letters a, b, c, d. The totals across the rows and columns are called marginal totals and are represented by: a+b and c+d (rows) and a+c and b+d (columns). The number "n" represents the grand total. For calculating the p-value, the following formula is used: $p = \frac{(a+b)! (c+d)! (a+c)! (b+d)!}{[n! a! b! c! d!]}$ where the symbol "!" indicates the factorial operation. If the calculated p-value is greater than the level of significance, then the observer fails to reject the null hypothesis (H_0) (independence of variables). If the p-value is less than the level of significance (0.05), then the observer rejects the null hypothesis (H_0) and accepts the alternate hypothesis (H_a). Fisher's tests the probability of obtaining any such set of values by the hypergeometric distribution, thus, the sum of all probabilities for possible contingency tables for the given data determines the p-value ("Fisher's Exact Test").

Only one Chi-Square contingency table was completed for this study. For the majority of the contingency tables, a two-tailed Fisher's Exact Test was used. One contingency table utilized a one-tailed Fisher's Exact Test. "When a difference is expected between 'yes' and 'no' responses for small and large churches, the two-tailed test was used. When more 'yes' responses in small churches (or more 'yes' responses in large churches) are expected for certain questions, a one-tailed Fisher's test was used." (McCall).

Ethics

I maintained confidentiality of the participants in the study. As displayed in the cover letter for 40 Days of Purpose questionnaire and telephone interview (see Appendix C), the churches are not named in the dissertation. A separate sheet of paper located in the questionnaire packets provided the churches' code "letters" (see Appendix D). Small churches and large churches used code letters "A-F" and "K-P" respectively for identification. Participants wrote the code letters on the questionnaires, and pastors utilized the code letters at the beginning of the telephone interview (see Appendix C).

Delimitations and Generalizability

This study is delimited to include United Methodist churches in the Alabama-West Florida Conference. The findings may be applicable to other annual conferences in United Methodism. The delimitation of the pastor and the leadership committee's memory of events prior to and following 40 Days and its impact will be a factor in this study. This study compared six large and six small churches. These churches came from rural, urban, and suburban areas within the boundaries of the conference. This study did not investigate the town's population or demographics in determining the effectiveness of this study. Some pastors may have moved to another congregation since conducting 40 Days. The study did not consider ethnic or gender characteristics. In this study the assumption was that many people in the churches are already involved in worship, fellowship, and discipleship or inward spiritual focus. The normal outgrowth of this focus would be to discover one's ministry, execute that ministry, and participate in outreach, evangelism, and missions. This study focused on being doers of the word in ministry and evangelism. Results of the study are summarized and displayed in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Two research questions have guided this study: (1) What was the level of congregational participation in the three impact areas of lay pastoral care visitation, small groups, and outreach (evangelism and missions) in small and large churches before and after their participation in 40 Days of Purpose? (2) What were the differences in impact within small and large churches following 40 Days of Purpose?

Participants

The participants in this study come from twelve churches in the Alabama-West Florida Conference who had completed the 40 Days of Purpose Spiritual Growth Campaign. The sample included six large churches, two hundred or more in average Sunday worship attendance, and six small churches, less than two hundred in average Sunday worship attendance. Originally, I intended to get a larger sample namely twenty churches, but after making a substantial effort, I found that it was not possible to get the twenty churches (see Chapter 5). The pastors and lay leadership committees helped in completing the questionnaire instrument. The telephone interviews were done with the pastors or significant members of the church staffs who coordinated 40 Days of Purpose for their churches. The small churches are labeled A-F. The large churches are labeled K-P. Demographic information for each type of church is provided in Tables 4.1 and 4.2.

Table 4.1 Demographics for Small Churches

Church	Average Sunday Morning Worship Attendance	Membership	Professions of Faith Since 40 Days	Baptisms Since 40 Days	Setting (Area) of Congregation	Growth Status of City
A	155	326	4	3	Rural	Stable
B	13	17	0	0	Rural	Declining
C	125	361	10	2	Rural	Growing
D	136	300	19	20	Rural	Stable
E	86	180	9	12	Rural	Declining
F	156	209	26	21	Suburban	Growing

The number of professions of faith for small churches cumulative since 40 Days Campaign was sixty-eight; the average was twelve. The number of baptisms cumulative since 40 Days was fifty-eight; the average was twelve. The average worship attendance among the small churches was 112 while the combined average attendance for all six churches was 671. The small churches have a total of 1,393 members combined, and an average of 233 members per church. Five of the six small churches are located in rural areas.

Table 4.2. Demographics for Large Churches

Church	Average Sunday Morning Worship Attendance	Membership	Professions of Faith Since 40 Days	Baptisms Since 40 Days	Setting (Area) of Congregation	Growth Status of City
K	500	1000	*	*	Urban	Growing
L	280	910	*	*	Rural	Growing
M	2200	4450	750	165	Suburban	Growing
N	521	800	35	135	Suburban	Stable
O	500	1000	*	*	Urban	Growing
P	4600	8600	1250	*	Suburban	Growing

* No value reported

The number of professions of faith is 2,035 cumulative for the six large churches since the completion of the campaign. The average Sunday morning worship attendance is 1,434 for the large churches. The combined average attendance (cumulative) for the six churches is 8,601. The number of baptisms since 40 Days is three hundred cumulative for all six churches. The average membership size for the six large churches is 2,794. The cumulative membership total for the large churches is 16,760. Five of the six large churches are located in growing areas.

Lay Pastoral Care Visitation Participation and Impact

This section, which answers part of Research Questions 1 and 2, has its findings based on the survey questionnaire (see Appendix A).

The number of lay pastoral care visitation teams in small churches and large churches before and after 40 Days is shown in Table 4.3. The cumulative total across all six churches in each category is presented. Percentage changes were calculated for both small and large churches.

Table 4.3. Lay Pastoral Care Visitation Teams before and after 40 Days

Church	Before	After
Small	13	18
Large	33	41

Small churches show an increase of five new teams begun after 40 Days. Large churches show an increase of eight new teams begun after 40 Days.

The percentage change for the small churches for lay pastoral care teams from before to after 40 Days is +38.46 percent. The percentage change for the large churches for lay pastoral care teams from before to after 40 Days is +26.24 percent.

The small churches had a larger percentage change than large churches from before to after even though large churches have three more teams begun than in small churches. The large churches had more lay pastoral care teams in place before 40 Days than the small churches; therefore, small churches had the greater need.

The number of participants involved in lay pastoral care visitation before and after 40 Days for both small and large churches is shown in Table 4.4. Percentage changes were calculated for small and large churches.

Table 4.4. Lay Pastoral Care Visitation Participants before and after 40 Days

Church	Before	After
Small	101	113
Large	120	157

Small churches showed an increase of twelve new participants in lay pastoral care visitation. Large churches showed an increase of thirty-seven new participants in lay pastoral care visitation. The percentage change for small churches from before to after 40 Days was +11.88 percent. The percentage change for large churches from before to after 40 Days was +30.83 percent. The large churches have a greater percentage change from before to after 40 Days. The large churches received a greater impact in the number of participants in the lay pastoral care area as a result of implementing 40 Days of Purpose.

Three of the six small churches report having lay pastoral care visitation groups in place before 40 Days while five of the six large churches had lay pastoral teams before 40 Days. The impact after 40 Days shows that four small churches reported that lay pastoral care visitation teams were begun as a response to 40 Days (in addition to before). Two large churches reported that lay pastoral teams were begun as a result (in addition to before). The Fisher's Exact Test was applied to the data as shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5. Lay Pastoral Teams Begun in Response to 40 Days (Number of Churches)

Church	Yes (begun)	No (not begun)	Totals
Small	4	2	6
Large	2	4	6
Totals	6	6	12

A two-tailed Fisher's Exact Test was used, and the result was $p=0.57$. At the 0.05 significance level ($\alpha=0.05$), I fail to reject the null hypothesis (H_0). The evidence does not allow me to reject the idea of independence between church size and the "yes" and "no"

response variables. I am unable to conclude that the church size makes a difference for this variable.

Small Group Participation and Impact

This section answers part of Research Questions 1 and 2. The findings of this section are based on the survey questionnaire (see Appendix A).

In evaluating small group ministry after 40 Days, three subcategories must be investigated. The first category is the number of groups. Table 4.6 shows the cumulative number of groups before and after 40 Days for both small and large church categories. The number is cumulative across all six churches in each category (small and large church categories).

Table 4.6. Number of Small Groups

Church	Before	After
Small	19	38
Large	32	140

The small churches showed an increase of nineteen small groups. The large churches showed an increase of 108 small groups. The percentage change for small churches from before to after 40 Days is +100.00 percent. The percentage change for the large churches from before to after 40 Days is +337.50 percent. The evidence showed the increase of small groups had greater impact in the large churches.

The second subcategory targeted for evaluation in the small groups impact variable is the total number of participants within these small groups. Table 4.7 shows the total number of small group participants before and after 40 Days for small and large

churches with the cumulative number across all six churches in each category (small and large church categories).

Table 4.7. Total Number of Small Group Participants

Church	Before	After
Small	140	395
Large	450	1580

The small churches showed an increase of 255 small group participants. The large churches showed an increase of 1,130 small group participants. The percentage change for the small churches from before to after 40 Days is +182.14 percent. The percentage change for the large churches is +251.11 percent. The evidence showed that the increase in the number of participants in small groups had greater impact in the larger churches.

The third subcategory of evaluation for small groups is the total combined average attendance for small groups for both small and large churches. Table 4.8 shows before and after 40 Days combined average attendance with the cumulative across all six churches in each category (small and large church categories).

Table 4.8. Small Groups Combined Average Attendance

Church	Before	After
Small	88	300
Large	375	1375

Small churches showed an increase of 212 combined average attendance while the large churches showed an increase of one thousand combined average attendance. The percentage change for the small churches from before to after 40 Days is +240.91 percent. The percentage change for the large churches is +266.67 percent. Hence, the large churches received the greater impact in combined average attendance.

Five of six small churches report a small group ministry was in place before 40 Days while four of six large churches had a small group in place before the campaign. For the impact variable of small groups for 40 Days study, an after impact was shown for both small and large churches beginning new small groups as a result of the campaign. Four of six small churches report additional small groups started as a result of 40 Days while four of six large churches report additional small groups started as a result of 40 Days. Table 4.9 shows the number of churches who did and did not start small groups as a result of 40 Days being implemented.

Table 4.9. Small Groups as a Result of 40 Days (Number of Churches)

Church	Yes (begun)	No (not begun)	Totals
Small	4	2	6
Large	4	2	6
Totals	8	4	12

A two-tailed Fisher's Exact Test was run and showed $p=1.00$. ($P>0.05$). Thus, I fail to reject the null hypothesis (H_0). No association between the two variables exists. I am unable to conclude that the size of the church makes a difference for this variable.

The evidence does not all allow me to reject the idea of independence between the size of the church and the “yes” and “no” responses.

Outreach (Evangelism and Missions) Participation and Impact

This section answers parts of Research Questions 1 and 2. The results of this section are based on the responses of the survey questionnaire (see Appendix A). First, in evaluating the impact of outreach, evangelism, and missions, it is necessary first to look at new programs or teams started as a result (after) 40 Days between small and large churches, see Table 4.10. Table 4.10 shows the cumulative of the six churches in each category (small and large church categories).

Table 4.10. Outreach Teams Before and After 40 Days in Small and Large Churches

Church	Before	After
Small	7	15
Large	17	24

Small churches show an increase of eight outreach teams. The percentage change from before to after the 40 Days is +114.29 percent for small churches. Large churches report an increase of seven outreach teams. The percentage change from before to after 40 Days for large churches is +41.18 percent.

The evidence shows that small churches received greater impact for 40 Days in regards to starting new outreach, evangelism, and missions teams; however, large churches reported more outreach teams before 40 Days. The large churches were already at a higher level of participation before 40 Days, but they did have significant impact.

The smaller churches had a greater need in this area.

Second, an evaluation of the impact of 40 Days on the percentage of participants involved in outreach, evangelism, and missions is important to this study. Before 40 Days, all six small churches reported congregational participation in the first category of 0 to 25 percent for outreach. After the 40 Days all six churches reported the same level of congregational participation; thus, no change occurred in percentage in the categories (see Table 4.11).

Table 4.11. Small Churches' Outreach Participation

Church	Percentage Participation before 40 Days	Percentage Participation after 40 Days
A	0-25	0-25
B	0-25	0-25
C	0-25	0-25
D	0-25	0-25
E	0-25	0-25
F	0-25	0-25

In the large churches only five of the six churches reported. Three churches said that their level of congregation participation in outreach was 0 to 25 percent. Two churches reported their percentage level at 26 to 50 percent. After 40 Days, two of the large churches received impact and moved up to the next percentage level category. One of the large churches moved from the 0 to 25 percent category to the 26 to 50 percent category. The other large church moved from the 26 to 50 percent category to the 51 to 75 percent congregational level of participation (see Table 4.12).

Table 4.12. Large Churches' Outreach Participation

Church	Percentage Participation Before 40 Days	Percentage Participation After 40 Days
K	0-25	0-25
L	0-25	0-25
M	*	*
N	0-25	26-50
O	26-50	26-50
P	26-50	51-75

*No value reported

Based on Tables 4.11 and 4.12, the large churches received greater impact in the category of percentage of congregational participation in outreach, evangelism, and missions from before to after 40 Days.

In the after 40 Days Outreach section for small churches and large churches two questions were asked regarding professions of faith (see Appendix A). Fourteen total professions of faith were reported in the small churches as a direct result of 40 Days of Purpose. The large churches reported a total of four professions of faith. The professions of faiths are divided into two categories: lost churched people and lost unchurched people. A two-tailed Fisher's Exact Test is conducted for the number of professions of faith as a result of 40 Days. Table 4.13 shows the impact of this reporting with the cumulative number for all six churches in each category (small and large church categories).

Table 4.13. Professions of Faith as a Result of 40 Days

Church	Lost Churched	Lost Unchurched	Totals
Small	7	7	14
Large	2	2	4
Totals	9	9	18

The calculated p-value is $p=1.00$. The significance level is $\alpha=0.05$. $P > 0.05$, so I failed to reject the null hypothesis (H_0) that the church size makes a difference for this variable. The evidence does not allow me to reject the basis of independence between church size and the responses for professions of faith.

A Fisher's Exact Test was conducted for the impact for after 40 days in outreach for each (not cumulative total) of the twenty-nine questions for the characteristics or kinds of outreach in small and large churches (see Appendix A). A two-tailed test was conducted because of the question, "Is there a difference in 'yes' answers and 'no' answers between large and small churches?" No prior reason exists to suspect a difference in one direction (i.e., more "yes" answers in small churches or more "yes" answers in large churches). The significance level is $\alpha=0.05$ with $df=1$ (degrees of freedom).

For each post-40 Days yes/no question in outreach, the p-value is greater than the alpha of 0.05. The range of the p-values for each question was 0.18 to 1.00; therefore, for each question the decision is to fail to reject the null hypothesis (H_0) because $p > 0.05$. I am unable to conclude that the church size makes a difference for this variable. The conclusion at the 0.05 level of significance is that the evidence does not allow me to

reject the idea of independence between the size of churches and the response of “yes” and “no” answers.

For the “yes” and “no” forced choice responses in regards to the twenty-nine before and after outreach questions for both small and large churches, answers were tallied for the after responses only (see Appendix A). The questions focused on the goals, characteristics, and concentrations of the outreaches in the churches. The focal point is in the change of the “yes” responses before and after 40 Days (see Table 4.14). Table 4.14 shows the cumulative for the six churches in each category (small and large church categories).

Table 4.14. Outreach “Yes” Responses

Church	Before	After
Small	77	97
Large	105	111

The small churches show an increase of twenty. The large churches show an increase of six. The percentage change for small churches is +25.97 percent from before to after 40 Days. The percentage change for large churches is +5.71 percent from before to after 40 Days. The evidence suggested that based on a percentage change that small churches had greater impact from 40 Days in the various characteristics or areas of outreach. However, the large churches were already at a higher level in regards to outreach before 40 Days than small churches; thus, 40 Days did impact smaller churches more than large churches based on this evidence.

In observing the after-40 Days impact, both small and large churches reported that new outreach, evangelism, and missions program teams were begun as a result. A Fisher's Exact Test was applied to this impact as noted in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15. New Outreach, Evangelism, and Missions Teams/Programs (Number of Churches)

Church	Yes (begun)	No (not begun)	Totals
Small	5	1	6
Large	3	3	6
Totals	8	4	12

Before 40 Days four of six small churches had outreach programs or teams in place while all six large churches reported having them. Five small churches began new outreaches as a result of 40 Days while three large churches added new programs. Table 4.15 includes both Yes (begun) and No (not begun) categories. The numbers are churches responding to Question number 1 in both the before and after 40 Days Outreach section of the survey questionnaire (see Appendix A). When a two-tailed Fisher's Exact Test was run, the p-value equaled 0.55. The significance level was $\alpha=0.05$. $P>0.05$, thus, I failed to reject the null hypothesis (H_0). I am unable to conclude that church size makes a difference for this variable. At the 0.05 level of significance, the evidence does not allow me to reject the idea of independence between the size of churches and the "yes" and "no" response variables for new outreaches begun as a result of 40 Days of Purpose.

Overall Impact

This section answers part of Research Question 2. This section is based on survey questionnaire responses (see Appendix A). In discovering whether or not the three impact variables for this study (lay pastoral care visitation; small groups; and outreach, evangelism, and missions) are independent or dependent of the church size (small or large), only one Chi-Square statistic (χ^2) can be computed from the entire study. The Chi-Square computed statistic comes in the area of new teams and groups that were started as a result of 40 Days. Each cell has a number greater than or equal to five (in order to calculate Chi-Square). The numbers in the cells represent an impact of new teams and groups started from 40 Days. Table 4.16 displays this data. The table shows the cumulative for all six churches in each category of small and large churches.

Table 4.16. New Teams and Groups as a Result of 40 Days

Church	Lay Pastoral Care Visitation	Small Groups	Outreach	Totals
Small	5	19	8	32
Large	8	108	7	123
Totals	13	127	15	155

The test statistic of χ^2 is noted as $\chi^{2*}=14.81$. The degrees of freedom calculated from the contingency table is $df=(r-1) \cdot (c-1)$. The “r” is the number of rows in the table, and the “c” is the number of columns ($r=2$ and $c=3$). Thus $df=(2-1) \cdot (3-1)=(1) \cdot (2)=2$. With $df=2$ (degrees of freedom) and $\alpha=0.05$ (significance level), the critical value of χ^2 is $\chi^2(2, 0.05)=6.00$. The test statistic again was $\chi^{2*}=14.81$. The test statistic, χ^{2*} , 14.81 falls in the critical region of χ^2 ; and thus, I reject the null hypothesis (H_0) and accept the alternative

hypothesis (H_a). The preference of new teams/groups being started for lay pastoral care visitation, small groups, and outreach is not independent of the size of the church (small or large). In fact, the three impact variables are dependent on church size. The variables are associated. At the 0.05 significance level, the evidence suggests the dependence of the variables on church size. In this case, the evidence is tilted toward the large churches.

Survey Questionnaire General Comments Section

A page was provided at the end of the survey for general comments (see Appendix A). The comments on this page in the questionnaire color the data and give a better understanding of 40 Days. The responses from the small churches pastors are provided in Table 4.17. The responses from the large churches are provided in Table 4.18.

Table 4.17. Small Church General Comments Regarding 40 Days of Purpose

Church	General Comments and sharing on survey
A	40 Days—a very positive experience, lack of long-term change wasn't a problem with the program, but with us not following through and utilizing the momentum
B	Dying congregation, done to have renewal and plant seeds for outreach, initial resistance in this traditional older congregation—positive—3 people invited to church and now attend (already born again and attended another church)
C	None
D	Most positive thing was the "positive" power it brought to our church, unified us, brought us together, sense of unity still felt
E	Great unity and closeness, clarity of focus going beyond the walls of the church, still same few did majority of work, and new outreach focus— bold initiative— Door to door evangelism, blue print/perspective view expansion of church
F	None

Four of the six small churches responded with general comments. These four churches gave positive comments. Two of the churches reported the unity that 40 Days brought among the members of the congregation. One person commented about resistance to 40 Days and one person reported the same few still doing the majority of the work in the church.

Table 4.18. Large Church General Comments Regarding 40 Days of Purpose

Church	General Comments and sharing on survey
K	None
L	An excellent study program, should have intentional follow-up to help people use information
M	None
N	God certainly made himself known through the campaign. I (Christian Ed. Director) prayed about this program at Lake Junaluska and how to bring it back to our church. We had 357 in attendance. The Lord gave me the number 500. I stepped out in faith and ordered the 500 books. The church has grown and now has over 1000 in worship. We are building a children's wing and sanctuary.
O	40 Days was very successful and people have asked to do it again. We will offer The Purpose Driven Church beginning in January 2008.
P	None

Three of the six large churches answered this section on the questionnaire. All three of those churches had positive experiences. One church wanted follow-up by the clergy. Church “N” received the greatest impact of the six large churches.

Telephone Interview Responses

I conducted the telephone interviews with the twelve church pastors regarding their churches experience with 40 Days. The interviewees gave responses to their church’s reasons for participation in the campaign, whether the people in the churches

showed resistance to the campaign, if enthusiasm continued beyond the dates of the campaign, the dynamics of the campaign, and if they would recommend the program.

The pastors of the small churches responded regarding participation and resistance to the program in Table 4.19.

Table 4.19. Small Church Reason for Participation and Resistance Responses

Church	Reason for Participation?	Any Resistance?
A	Topic/issues of book extremely Relevant	Little bit—somewhat traditional Church
B	Grow spiritually, less traditional look at things	1 or 2 people did not want to pay costs
C	Refocus church/individuals	Yes—older people, choir, and choir director
D	Spark and give direction for the church	Minimum 2% skeptical
E	Revival, renewal—reach beyond church walls	Yes—older group and key Leaders
F	Centered main reason for the church, start individual level, call, and purpose	Not to idea but to time frame

The pastors of all six small churches reported some kind of resistance from the congregation to participating in 40 Days.

The pastors of the small churches provided vital information about how long the enthusiasm or momentum lasted after 40 Days. The responses are provided in Table 4.20.

Table 4.20. Small Church Enthusiasm or Momentum and Comments

Church	Enthusiasm lasted?	Comments
A	1-2 months	People treated as one-time event, tradition—reverted back, no thought to do otherwise
B	2-3 months	Looked at as just another program, go back to the way things were
C	6-9 months	Desire to return to tradition, not sure what works indefinitely in small group format
D	Continues	Former pastor planted seed, now thriving congregation
E	4-6 months	Tradition engrained and rooted
F	Continues	Never thought this way before

Four of the small churches' pastors say that the enthusiasm from 40 Days lasted nine months or less in their churches while two small church pastors said that the enthusiasm has continued. Three of the six churches reverted back to the old ways after 40 Days because of tradition or a desire to have things as they have always been in those churches.

The small church pastors responded to the theological roots questions. The responses are provided in Table 4.21.

Table 4.21. Small Churches' Recommendations for 40 Days and Comments

Church	Recommend Program?	Comments
A	Yes	Very practical relevant tool—not incredible lasting impact
B	Yes	Not lasting impact, may be different depending on size of church
C	Yes	Practical—addresses issues where people are
D	Yes	Positive effect, emphasis should have follow-up
E	Yes	None
F	Definitely	Add positives to life of any church

All six small church pastors recommended the campaign to other churches.

The small church pastors were asked if they thought 40 Days of Purpose had lasting theological roots. Their responses are provided in Table 4.22.

Table 4.22. Small Church Theological Roots Responses

Church	Theological Roots?	Comments
A	It can!	Event vs. Life Change/looked at as another Program
B	Yes	Planted seeds may not see fruit, may come Later
C	Not sure	Depends on response of the people; fire goes out if you don't keep adding wood
D	Yes	This pastor planted; next pastor watered and saw harvest
E	Yes	Some things accepted easier because of tradition or lack of
F	Definitely	5 purposes have to be balanced, help evangelize better

Four of the small church pastors say that 40 Days had lasting theological roots while one said it can have theological roots. One pastor said that he was not sure if it did.

The pastors of the small churches were asked which of the five purposes in the 40 Days seemed to have the greatest impact in their congregations. Their responses are provided in Table 4.23.

Table 4.23. Small Churches' Purpose with Greatest Impact

Church	Purpose with Greatest Impact	Comments
A	Fellowship	None
B	Fellowship	None
C	Discipleship	Active personal time with Jesus
D	Evangelism	Turned inward-focused church outward
E	Fellowship	Inward focus
F	Ministry	2nd was worship—Evangelism, discipleship grew out of program

Three of the pastors of the small churches responded that their congregation received the greatest impact from the fellowship purpose of the campaign.

The large church pastors were asked the reason their churches participated in the 40 Days of Purpose campaign and if any resistance to the campaign was encountered.

The large church pastor responses are provided in Table 4.24.

Table 4.24. Large Churches' Reason for Participation and Resistance Responses

Church	Reason for Participation?	Any Resistance?
K	Effects in other churches— “catalyst” renewal and spiritual growth	1 or 2 older Sunday school classes
L	Trying to start Wednesday Bible study	Received very well
M	Staff went to Saddleback Conference	No—Staff led, people get on board
N	Pastor gone to Saddleback, had done <i>Purpose Driven Church</i>	No— Open to change, knew had to change to grow
O	Foster unity	Traditional church— lots of questions
P	People went to Saddleback, fit well into programming	None

Two of the large church pastors said some form of resistance to having 40 Days of Purpose was encountered in their congregations.

The large church pastors offered critical information regarding how long the enthusiasm or momentum continued after 40 Days. The large church pastors responses are provided in Table 4.25.

Table 4.25. Large Church Enthusiasm or Momentum and Comments

Church	Enthusiasm lasted?	Comments
K	1 to 1 1/2 years	Some small groups formed and continued, work better in small-group based church
L	1 month	No follow-up, church not ready, viewed as another program
M	9 to 12 months	Some ways still going
N	Continues	Some small groups continue
O	6 to 8 months	2 of 10 small groups continue today
P	Continues	Done yearly, structure helps facilitate long-term commitment

Two of the large church pastors report that the enthusiasm and momentum is still going from 40 Days. One church reported that it lasted only one month because no follow-up was performed. Overall, the large churches have had a greater impact in enthusiasm (momentum) than the small churches.

The large church pastors were asked if they would recommend the 40 Days of Purpose campaign to other churches. The large church responses are provided in Table 4.26.

Table 4.26. Large Church Recommendations and Comments

Church	Recommend Program?	Comments
K	Yes	Not sure as much momentum now that book is older
L	Yes	Not format we did though (did not follow format)
M	Yes	Disclaimer on theological issues; agreed with 95%
N	Yes	Worship service grew
O	Yes—Absolutely	Book is for everybody
P	Yes—Highly Recommend	None

All six large church pastors report that they would recommend the campaign to other churches.

The pastors of large churches responded to the theological roots question. Their responses are provided in Table 4.27.

Table 4.27. Large Church Responses to Theological Roots

Church	Theological Roots?	Comments
K	Yes	For many--has much to do with own personal follow-up
L	Yes	Brought to light subjects; people renewed and awakened
M	Absolutely	Introduced people to practical Christian theology
N	None	None
O	Yes	Helpful to any church no matter the size
P	Yes	Gets people talking about things never talked about

Five of the large church pastors said that the 40 Days of Purpose campaign had theological roots. The question did not come up during the interview with the pastor of Church N.

Large church pastors specified which of the five purposes had the greatest impact on their congregations. Their responses are provided in Table 4.28.

Table 4.28. Large Church Purpose with Greatest Impact

Church	Purpose with Greatest Impact	Comments
K	Discipleship	“It’s not about me!” People still use phrase
L	Discipleship	None
M	Fellowship	True <i>koinonia</i>
N	Discipleship	None
O	Ministry	None
P	Discipleship/Evangelism	None

Four of the large church pastors reported that the discipleship purpose made the greatest impact on their churches.

The small church pastors were asked the dynamics of the 40 Days of Purpose within their congregations, and whether they followed the 40 Days of Purpose template. The small church pastors’ responses are provided in Table 4.29.

Table 4.29. Small Churches’ Following of 40 Days Template

Church	Planning	Reading of Book	Memory Verse	Theme-Based Sermons	Small Groups
A	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
B	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
C	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
D	Yes	Yes	Sm. Grp.	Yes	Yes
E	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
F	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

The pastors of all six small churches reported that all six churches followed the 40 Days template in four of five categories: planning, reading of book, theme-based sermons, and small groups. Two churches of the six did not say the weekly Scripture memory verse in any setting (worship or small group). Four of the six churches followed the template.

The small church pastors responded about whether their churches held the special events recommended in the template of 40 Days. The responses are provided in Table 4.30.

Table 4.30. Small Churches' Following of Template for Events

Church	Kick/Off Event	Ministry/Missions Fair	Follow-Up	Celebration Sunday
A	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
B	Yes	No	N/A	Yes
C	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
D	Yes	No	N/A	Yes
E	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
F	Yes	No	N/A	Yes

Only two of the six small churches followed the events template. The only campaign event in which all six small churches participated was the final Sunday of the campaign—Celebration Sunday. Only one small church (Church E) followed the entire template (including the events) for the church's campaign (see Tables 4.29 and 4.30).

The large church pastors provided information on the dynamics of 40 Days in their churches and whether they followed the 40 Days template. The responses of the large church pastors are given in Table 4.31.

Table 4.31. Large Churches' Following of 40 Days Template

Church	Planning	Reading of Book	Memory Verse	Theme - Based Sermons	Small Groups
K	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
L	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
M	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
O	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
P	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

Only two of the six large churches followed the Table 4.25 template. All six large churches participated in two of these categories—reading the book and having small groups.

The large church pastors specified if their churches followed the 40 Days template regarding special events during the campaign. Responses are provided in Table 4.32.

Table 4.32. Large Churches' Following of Template for Events

Church	Kick/Off Event	Ministry/Missions Fair	Follow-Up	Celebration Sunday
K	Yes	Yes	Yearly	Yes
L	No	No	*	No
M	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
O	Yes	No	No	Yes
P	Yes	Yes	Yearly	Yes

*No value reported

Three of the six large churches followed the entire template of special events; however, none of the four categories had all six large churches participating. Only church M followed the entire campaign template (including events) as shown in both Tables 4.31 and Table 4.32.

Both small and large church pastors responded to the overall impact of the program on their congregations. Their responses are provided in Tables 4.33 and 4.34.

Table 4.33. Small Church Overall Positives

Church	Overall Positive from 40 Days
A	Bible study continually grown, Sunday school attendance continued to grow
B	New family invited to church
C	Ministry up a little, missions up some
D	Turned inward focused church outward, Bus ministry, and hospital visitation
E	Missions up
F	Many missions came out of this time period and people plugged into existing ministries

Five of the six small churches registered an impact in the area of outreach, evangelism, and missions. One pastor of a large church gave a positive comment about small groups in one church (Bible study and Sunday school). One large church pastor gave a positive in that hospital visitation came out of 40 Days in one church (lay pastoral care visitation).

Table 4.34. Large Church Overall Positives

Church	Overall Positive from 40 Days
K	Experience of unity, many other ministries inspired
L	People renewed and awakened lingering effects
M	Taught us how to focus people in one area
N	38 new members, 100 baptized, people started ministries and missions
O	More servanthood, people participating in ministries
P	Creates momentum/ focus, people forge together, 85% volunteer in ministry

Four large church pastors gave a positive voice to their churches in the purpose area of ministry. One large church pastor reports a positive in the areas of missions.

Telephone Interview Analysis

One interesting item for analysis from the telephone interview is based on the following questions: Was there any resistance in the congregation having/participating in 40 Days? What were the hindrances to having 40 Days in your church (see Appendix B). The result was not surprising. All six small church pastors responded that resistance was encountered while only two large church pastors reported resistance (see Table 4.35).

Table 4.35. Telephone Interview Resistance to Implementing 40 Days

Church	Yes	No	Totals
Small	6	0	6
Large	2	4	6
Totals	8	4	12

A one-tailed Fisher's Exact Test was run because we would expect more "yes" responses in the small churches than the large. The expectation is based on prior pastoral and classroom experience. More problems usually occur in small churches than in large churches due to the tradition in small churches and the large churches being more staff (or lay) led. To the average unchurched reader, one would not expect any differences in the "yes" responses. The two-tailed p was 0.06, which is greater than $\alpha=0.05$. One would fail to reject the null hypothesis for this case. However, a one-tailed Fisher's Exact Test shows something quite different. The p-value for the 0.05 significance level is 0.03; thus, $p<0.05$. For this calculation, one would reject the null hypothesis (H_0) and accept the alternate hypothesis (H_a). Hence, enough evidence exists at the 0.05 significance level to show that the "yes" responses are not independent of the size of the church, so, the number of churches reporting hindrances is dependent on the size of the church. The small churches reported more hindrances. The alternate hypothesis showed the variables are associated.

Summary of Significant Findings

1. All churches noted positive changes in some way that participated in the 40 Days campaign.
2. Small and large churches developed new lay pastoral care teams as a result of the 40 Days campaign.
3. Small and large churches developed new small groups as a result of the 40 Days campaign.
4. Three small churches (50.00 percent) reported that the purpose that had the greatest impact in their congregations was *fellowship*. Four of the large churches (66.67

percent) reported the purpose that had the greatest impact in their congregations was *discipleship*.

5. Small and large churches developed new outreach programs as a result of the 40 Days campaign.

6. Small and large churches had professions of faith as a direct result of 40 Days.

7. Small and large church “yes” responses increased on the survey, in outreach (evangelism and missions) after the 40 Days campaign.

8. The overall impact of the three variables, lay pastoral care visitation, small groups, and outreach (evangelism and missions), correspond to (are dependent on) the size of the church. In this study, the impact variables are slanted toward the large churches.

9. Resistance/hindrane to having the 40 Days campaign was dependent on the size of the church.

10. All churches recommended the 40 Days campaign.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research study was to examine the impact of 40 Days of Purpose in six small and six large congregations. What prompted the research in the first place was lack of long-term lasting impact from Samson First United Methodist Church's 40 Days campaign. Momentum after completing the program was short lived. The activities of the church reverted to the way things had always been done within a few months due to the traditional mind-set of the congregation.

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss major findings and their implications, evaluate and interpret data, discuss limitations of the study, discuss unexpected observations, and make recommendations for the application of the findings.

Major Findings

The results of this study show that positive changes were noted in some way in all the churches that participated in the 40 Days campaign. The telephone interviews confirm this notion. Different results occurred in the different churches, but some positive results occurred in every church. Small and large churches developed new lay pastoral care teams, new small groups, new outreach programs, and had professions of faith as a direct result of 40 Days. Three small churches (50.00 percent) reported that the purpose that had the greatest impact in their congregations was *fellowship*. Four of the large churches (66.67 percent) reported the purpose that had the greatest impact in their congregations was *discipleship*. Small and large church "yes" responses increased on the survey in outreach (evangelism and missions) seen in the twenty-nine characteristic questions after 40 Days (see Appendix A). The overall impact of the three variables—lay

pastoral care visitation, small groups, and outreach (evangelism and missions)—correspond to (are dependent on) the size of the church. In this study, the impact variables are slanted toward the large churches. Resistance or hindrance to having the 40 Days campaign was dependent on the size of the church. All churches would recommend the 40 Days program.

Positives

All churches (100 percent) reported benefiting from the program in some way or area (not necessarily in every area or impact variable). Some churches benefited greater than others churches. Parks and Stafford reported something comparable. They stated from their research that all churches in both large and small church categories benefited from the 40 Days program.

This sentiment was also expressed in the telephone interviews held for this study. In Ripato's dissertation, he reported that when positive personal change takes place that positive corporate change occurs (128). Personal transformation must take place in order for churches to have transforming growth. The 40 Days of Purpose campaign met some need in the life of each church. Many seeds were planted due to the campaign being enacted and fruit did come from seeds that were planted prior to 40 Days. Hearts were ready to receive the word given to them during the campaign, thus producing fruit (Luke 8:15). I personally see the positives on two levels: new seeds being planted and the watering of seeds that may have been previously planted months or years prior to 40 Days (1 Cor. 3:6). God ultimately produces the fruit or the harvest.

Lay Pastoral Care Visitation Teams

Lay pastoral care teams were developed in small and large churches as a result of 40 Days. Lay pastoral care teams in small and large churches had a positive change from before to after 40 Days. The small churches had a +38.46 percent change; the large churches had a +24.24 percent change. The lay pastoral care participants had a positive change as well. The small churches had a +11.88 percent; the large churches had a +30.83 percent. The large churches had some teams in place before the 40 Days. The small churches had a greater need in this area and thus a larger percentage change (for teams). Five of the large churches had teams in place before 40 Days. Three of the small churches had teams in place before 40 Days. We were unable to conclude that church size makes a difference for this variable in the Fisher's Exact Test. Both small and large churches implemented a need their members wanted.

Jesus demonstrated lay pastoral ministry to his followers which should be modeled to people who are sick and hurting (Matt. 4:23-25; Matt. 8:14-17). In James another example of pastoral visitation is given as the church leadership worked together as a team, anointing the sick with oil and praying for the sick (Jas. 5:14-16). Thomas C. Oden is emphatic that pastoral care should not only be the pastor's responsibility but should be shared among the laity. He states that lay pastoral care ministry is a vital and should include all baptized Christians (190). Pastors should lighten their load by delegating this function to the laity and empowering them to do their work of ministry (Galloway and Bird 79-80).

From my personal experience in serving as a pastor of many small churches (even serving two two-point charges), having lay pastoral care teams implemented would be

beneficial in effective church ministry. In contrast, the main barrier to implementation and success rests with the pastor planting the seed through teaching, preaching, and modeling this ministry from the beginning of his or her ministry with a congregation. Even when lay pastoral care teams are implemented; the older, traditional mind-set of the congregation is not open to this change. This pastor is expected to be the chaplain of these churches. Seeds being planted in these situations often fall on the path or the rock, and they do not take root even though a need is present.

Small Groups

Small groups were developed in small and large churches as a result of 40 Days. Small groups had a positive change from before to after 40 Days. Small churches had a +100.00 percent change. Large churches had a +337.50 percent change. The number of participants in small churches had a +182.14 percent change. The number of participants in large churches had a +251.11 percent change. Combined average attendance in small churches had a +240.91 percent change. Combined average attendance in large churches had a +266.67 percent change. Large churches had a greater positive change. More people are available in large churches to join small groups, hence more small groups. The church size does not make a difference in the starting of small groups. Both small and large churches have this need.

Similarly, small groups are found early in the Bible. They were a part of Israel's daily life (Gen. 49; Exod. 18:13-17). They are also found in the New Testament. Jesus understood the value of small groups enhancing community. He created fellowship with his twelve disciples (Matt. 26:20; Mark 9:2). In the early Church (Acts 2), small groups provided a groundwork or base for fellowship and helped provide for those in need

(Halley 727). Icenogle states that this small group environment produced discipleship and fruit in Christian communities (324). In the 1700s Wesley used small groups within the Methodist societies to aide in spiritual growth and accountability (Heitzenrater 104). Small groups are necessary for each local church because they (1) give multiple points for church entry, (2) are used for evangelism outreach, (3) are the way to shepherd the people, (4) enable the spiritual growth of Christians, and (5) shift the church's work from the clergy to the laity (Galloway and Mills 10).

Fellowship and Discipleship Purposes

The Bible, Halley, Icenogle, Heitzenrater, and Galloway and Mills confirm an important finding in regards to fellowship and discipleship based on Tables 4.23 and 4.28 (pp. 120 and 125, respectively). These tables consider the entire campaign in the churches. Three small church pastors (50.00 percent) reported via the telephone interviews that their churches had the greatest impact in the fellowship purpose during 40 Days. One small church pastor said that discipleship had the greatest impact. Four large churches' pastors (66.67 percent) reported that their churches had the greatest impact in the purpose of discipleship. One large church pastor said that fellowship had the greatest impact in his church. These discoveries are remarkable because both the purposes of fellowship and discipleship are two important aspects of small group ministry. More small groups in small and large churches were begun as a result of 40 Days than teams or programs for lay pastoral care ministry or outreach.

In reality pastors and staffs of churches today cannot meet all of their church members' needs. Small groups provide fellowship and a place for growth in spiritual disciplines (discipleship). From my experience with the 40 Days of Purpose in Samson,

new small groups were formed to meet not only a spiritual need but to give more people an opportunity to be a part of the fellowship of the church. More people were involved in the small groups versus participation in the Sunday night and Wednesday night Bible studies in Samson. During Samson's 40 Days campaign, I remember people in a small group expressed their reasons for participating in the campaign—fellowship and growing spiritually (discipleship).

Small churches often pride themselves on their fellowship. I know of this pride from my experience as a small church pastor. Fellowship is one reason small churches remain small in number. Small groups in large churches help create community fellowship. This study registers the impact in the purpose of discipleship for the large churches. The focal point of discipleship is accountability and growth. Growing up in a large attendance and membership church in a large city, I realized the value of small group ministry in Sunday school and other children's and youth groups. These groups helped me and others grow spiritually in discipleship as we memorized and applied Scripture to our lives. My home church's strength was discipleship training classes held at the church on Sunday nights for all ages. Discipleship is a large church strength.

Outreach Teams/Programs

Outreach teams or programs were developed in small and large churches as a result of 40 Days. Outreach program teams had a positive change from before to after 40 Days. Small churches had a +114.29 percent gain. Large churches had a +41.18 percent change. Large churches already had more programs in existence and the small churches had a much greater need for them. Regarding participation, all six small churches remained in the same category of a 0 to 25 percent level of participation. Two of the large

churches moved up one category from 0 to 25 percent to 26 to 50 percent and from 26 to 50 percent to 51 to 75 percent.

Percentage wise large churches had greater impact in the outreach level of participation while the small churches had a greater gain in teams or programs. Both small and large churches had a need in the area of evangelism. The 40 Days campaign calls people from their complacency into the work of outreach, evangelism, and missions. Christians are Christ's ambassadors to the world. Christians must continue planting and watering seeds in others' lives. Growth is an affirmation: When Christians do their part, God always does his part. Preparing others for the work of Christ was Jesus' model. In Matthew 4:18-22 ordinary men were called by Jesus to be his disciples. He taught, trained, and prepared them for life and ministry. Jesus modeled the scope of his outreach when he moved from place to place. The scope of outreach was to go to surrounding areas. By the disciples' participation in Jesus' ministry, they were preparing for a larger mission—to every nation.

I believe outreach (evangelism and missions) is an important purpose that churches often leave off from their vision to growth. They are good at the other purposes such as worship, fellowship, discipleship, and ministry. Outreach must be intentional not only to lead people to Christ but also for church growth.

Professions of Faith

Small and large churches had professions of faith as a direct result of 40 Days even though some small and large churches did not report any professions. Small churches cumulatively reported fourteen professions of faith. Large churches cumulatively reported four professions of faith. The numbers reported from the churches

for this study on the survey questionnaire show that the small churches reported more conversions to Christ than the large churches as a direct result of 40 Days. I would have expected the following: (1) more people to come to Christ during or as a result of 40 Days in both small and large churches, and (2) more of the conversions in the large churches. This unexpected result may be due to one of four things: (1) Evangelism was only talked about and not practiced (on a larger scale) during 40 Days, (2) the gospel may not have been presented in clear detail to lost churched people or unchurched people, (3) no intentional groundwork was laid by the leadership staff in this area for 40 Days in the churches, or (4) the large churches failed to answer the question adequately. Though numerous conversions may have occurred since 40 Days of Purpose (see Tables 4.1 and 4.2, pp. 100-01 respectively), this question answers the statement “as a result of” 40 Days. Some of those conversions may have been a watering of seeds that were planted in people’s lives during 40 Days. The conversions may mean that the new level of outreach teams and participation from the campaign may have developed and finally taken root in the churches.

The review of literature emphasizes that effective churches have a passion for reaching lost people. Outreach is why the church exists. The church’s mission must engage in the culture surrounding that church. Unchurched people must become their target (Young and Stanley 13). The evangelization of the lost is the goal. Jesus forewarned his disciples that some would accept the gospel message and some would reject it. One of the main responsibilities of the pastor is to equip believers for this task. Often the fear of man and fear of rejection paralyze Christians from doing their responsibility. All Christians must understand the importance of their contribution to the

body of Christ (Oden 156). The mission of the Church has eternal implications. Leading the world to Jesus is the most important focus believers have (Warren, *Purpose Driven Life* 283). Two major historical movements in outreach evangelism with implications were Celtic evangelism and Methodism. These movements add to the discussion of leading people to Christ. Celtic evangelism demonstrates the importance that more people come to Christ if Christians live as good examples before unbelievers within community. The idea of small groups established fellowship of people in community (Hunter, *Celtic Way* 53-54). Methodism's history shows the connection between believers' ministry and evangelism. Christians who were involved in some type of ministry also lead people to Christ. Effective evangelism is produced when Christians are fruitful ministers to the body of Christ (*Church* 122).

Outreach Survey

On the outreach survey, the "yes" responses to the twenty-nine outreach (evangelism and missions) characteristics questions increased for both small and large from before to after 40 Days (see Appendix A). Both small and large churches became more outwardly motivated in their focuses, goals, and characteristics. The small churches had a +25.97 percent increase while the large churches had a +5.71 percent change from before to after 40 Days in the number of "yes" responses. The small churches both had a greater need in these characteristics and concentrations as well as a greater percentage change.

Overall Impact of Variables

The overall impact of the three variables—lay pastoral care visitation, small groups, and outreach—are dependent on the size of the church in regards to the number

of new teams, programs, or groups started as a result of the 40 Days of Purpose (see Table 4.16, p. 113). The results are tilted toward the large churches because of the number of new small groups started. Larger churches have a larger pool of people from which to draw for participation. I would have expected the three impact variables to favor the large churches because with more people comes the opportunity for new ministries to be developed. Large churches have the greater need for small groups because they have the greater number of people. The small churches began more outreaches than large churches. The large churches began more lay pastoral care teams.

Many large churches emphasize small or community groups. The emphasis is shown in the impact of the number of small groups started as a result of 40 Days in large churches (see Table 4.16, p. 113). These community (small) groups are used to help the churches minister more effectively because the pastors and staffs of large churches cannot individually shepherd each person when hundreds or thousands people are in a church. As the church grows larger in number, it grows smaller on the personal level with these groups. When people are ministered to on a personal level through groups, a transformation happens at an individual level (Young and Stanley 79). One specific example is the world's largest church, Yoido Full Gospel Church, in Seoul, Korea, pastored by Dr. Cho. Some 25,000 home groups minister to the 750,000 church members (back cover). Thus, the more people, the more small groups you will likely have in the churches.

Resistance to 40 Days

Resistance or hindrance to having or participating in the 40 Days campaign was dependent on the size of the church. All small churches (100 percent) reported resistance,

while only two (33.33 percent) of the large churches reported resistance to the 40 Days campaign. According to the telephone interviews, the small churches tended to be more traditional and long-standing. During the telephone interviews, a few pastors of the large churches mentioned that their churches were staff led. People would just get on board with the new ideas the staff proposed including 40 Days.

The literature review confirms and addresses this situation. Traditionalism tends to resist anything that might lead to church growth, and 40 Days offers such potential opportunity. The problem of traditionalism plagues declining churches (Schwarz 28-29). At a traditional Baptist church in Iuka, Mississippi, more than forty church members left after the implementation of the 40 Days of Purpose, causing a church split. Those who left did not like Warren's marketing strategy or the idea of writing missions statements (Sataline).

The telephone interviews evidenced something important in regards to resistance after 40 Days. Two-thirds (66.67 percent) of the small churches, traditional and long established, mentioned that one of the reasons enthusiasm or momentum was short lived was because the people wanted to return to tradition and go back to the way things were before 40 Days of Purpose. Only two small churches and two large churches state that the momentum still continues (see Tables 4.20 and 4.25, pp. 117 and 122, respectively). Traditional churches were having trouble keeping small groups going beyond 40 Days. Paul Nixon confirms this notion in stating that small groups have greater success when started at the beginning of the life of the church and that older congregations have difficulty overcoming traditions (214).

From my experience when I was pastor of the Samson First United Methodist Church, resistance was encountered not from the traditionalists but from on-fire born-again Christians to having 40 Days of Purpose implemented in the church. Many of them had already participated in another study with a former pastor on *The Purpose Driven Church* by Warren. They did not see the need to do the 40 Days campaign. However, over time the older traditional people were asking their Sunday school teachers, “Why are we doing this?” Toward the end, they wanted to know if we were going back to the traditional Sunday night and Wednesday night format. Tradition does hinder the possible growth that could come from 40 Days. In many ways, I expected tradition to be a hindrance in the small churches. This expectation was confirmed in Table 4.35 (p.129).

Recommendations of 40 Days of Purpose

All of the pastors of the churches surveyed (100 percent) would recommend the 40 Days campaign to other churches. The recommendation includes at its centerpiece the reading of *The Purpose Driven Life*. In a Barna Group survey, *The Purpose Driven Life* was the number one book read in the last three years and recommended as the most helpful among 21 percent of senior pastors. The *Purpose Driven Church* was the second most helpful book read with 15 percent of the pastors. “The rest of invaluable books [on the list] was a broad selection of more than 200 titles” (Barna Group). Seven additional books on the list were chosen by 2 percent of pastors. In addition, *The Purpose Driven Life* book had been on the *New York Times* best seller list for 174 consecutive weeks by May 2006. More than thirty thousand churches, corporations, and sport teams within the United States have participated in the 40 Days campaign (“Purpose Driven Life” *Wikipedia*). Scott Nichols, pastor of the Crossroads Community Church in Lombard,

Illinois, stated that his church's growth was directly related to his church's involvement in 40 Days. The program expanded the vision of the church (Parks and Stafford).

As a pastor, I highly recommend the 40 Days campaign to all churches to revive the members and to help them grow spiritually and in number. Focusing on the outreach of the church is key to future growth. The 40 Days of Purpose brings some positive changes in the life of a church.

Implications of the Findings

Both small and large churches benefited in some way from the campaign. Based on the evidence shown in the numbers, percentage changes, the results from the impact variables, and the telephone interviews, the larger churches received the greater impact from 40 Days. The small churches did receive significant impact in the three variables because generally a greater need was in those churches; however, more resistance before and after 40 Days was found in the smaller churches. The variable that received the greatest impact was small groups for both small and large churches.

Target audiences who would benefit the most from the findings are any annual conferences of the United Methodist Church that have had churches participate in the campaign or that have churches planning on implementing the campaign. First, I recommend that each church doing the campaign would plan ahead to have a good follow-up to the program, especially those who signed up for different ministries and outreaches during the Ministry and Missions Fair. I recommend some type of training event for those who signed up for these ministries and missions. In small churches where the resources are limited, I recommend members to go to district and/or annual conference training events. Small churches could use the resources out of the Cokesbury

catalog. The pastors of the small churches could give people job descriptions for the offices and ministry areas they hold. I strongly encourage churches to have a yearly ministry and missions commitment time or Sunday where the laity sign up to do their work of ministry for the following year. With this commitment time, spotlight the available leadership opportunities and on-the-job training provided for the laity. I also recommend that the leadership team for 40 Days begins preparations for the momentum to continue beyond 40 Days before the campaign even starts. Planning the next steps to the continuance of the small group ministry is crucial by providing materials and training for small group leaders. Pastors and their staffs should continue to preach, teach, and model these purposes before their congregations. I recommend pastors take their staffs and lay leaders to a Saddleback conference or similar event to instill vision on the purposes and create excitement within the leaders. For small churches where resources are limited, I recommend they host fund-raisers to send people to the conferences. They can contact their district offices to ask for help in finding funds and training events.

Contribution to Research Methodology

The researcher-designed survey questionnaire was created so that any church in any denomination could use it (not just United Methodists) and any researcher could use it in a project. The survey contained forced-choice responses as well as open-ended responses to questions. Some questions required marking a blank while others suggested a numerical or written response. The survey questionnaire also contained a general comments section. The survey included before and after sections in the same survey for the three impact areas. The before and after 40 Days sections were back-to-back for each of the areas: lay pastoral care visitation, small groups, and outreach. The organization of

the survey helped the respondents think about each impact variable (before and after) before going to the next one (see Appendix A). The survey questionnaire was a collaborative effort between pastors and their designated committees.

The telephone questionnaire (see Appendix B) was designed so any researcher and/or pastor in the United Methodist Church could use it. If one sub-question on Question 4 in regards to Wesleyan doctrinal problems is altered, then other researchers and/or pastors in other denominations can use it for interviews. The telephone questionnaire and subsequent telephone interviews were done to give this study credibility and a broader perspective to the backdrop of 40 Days in the churches. Much more was learned about 40 Days from the interviews versus only having the survey questionnaire instrument. Forty-five minute telephone interviews were done for each church. The pastors of the churches had a copy of the four interview questions sent to them ahead of time to prepare for the interviews. Each telephone interview was audio taped and preserved. Pastors gave their permission to be taped.

Limitations of the Study

This study could have been strengthened by having more churches in the conference willing to be involved in the study that had completed the program. Participation in the study would have been enhanced if I had a broader range connection base with other pastors in the conference. One conference e-mail and one district e-mail were sent to the pastors and churches to participate in the study. I made personal phone calls as well as sent e-mails inviting and encouraging churches and pastors to participate. Many pastors responded to the original conference e-mails but did not respond to my follow-up calls or e-mails. After talking to some pastors, they said that they would call

back and never did. I included all the churches that agreed to participate in this study. Willingness of churches and pastors were a factor in participation.

The churches that participated in this study chose to be in this study and had an overall positive or good experience with 40 Days. Churches that had a negative experience with 40 Days probably would not participate in such a study, especially if they had a choice. The participants for this study were not based on a random sample.

The twelve churches for the study were within the boundaries of the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church. This study, therefore, has geographic and denominational limitations. Results of the study could be different across geographic and denominational boundaries.

The survey questionnaire had a design flaw in it, which was discovered at the time of interpreting the data. Outreach before 40 Days question number 4, and outreach after 40 Days question number 5 (see Appendix A) would be more accurate if the respondents would write an actual numerical value of congregational participation in outreach teams or programs before and after 40 Days. For this study, the respondents marked a blank next to a percentage of congregational participation for before and after 40 Days. I was not able to calculate percentage changes or register an impact of participants as a result of 40 Days. As a result, a Chi-Square table was not made for the impact of new participants (small and large churches) among all the impact variables of lay pastoral care visitation, small groups, and outreach, as I was able to do for the various teams (see Table 4.16, p. 113). A number of participants could not be calculated due to the flaw in the design. Moreover, I would have worded a few of the questions in the questionnaire a little differently and would have discarded a few questions. I would have

simplified the survey questionnaire (see Appendix A). The eleven page questionnaire is too lengthy and can become tiresome for the reader. A shorter survey would diminish the fatigue factor.

A few of the respondents commented on the survey in regard to the wording of some questions. Respondents encountered difficulty in answering some “yes” or “no” questions. A Likert-type scale applied to the questions involving “yes” or “no” answers would bring depth to the study and avoid making blanket statements with the questions.

After reflecting over the questionnaire, I would now have the respondents write numerical responses instead of filling in a blank next to a category.

Unexpected Observations

More small churches began new lay pastoral care visitation teams and outreach (evangelism and missions) teams as a response to 40 Days. I was expecting the larger churches to begin more of these teams because they are larger in number. A much greater need was seen in the small churches, while the large churches had more teams or groups (at a higher level) in these areas already in existence.

Recommendations for Further Study

Further studies recommended would include performing similar 40 Days studies in other conferences of the United Methodist Church. Similar studies in other denominations would be beneficial to the larger body of knowledge. A comparison of churches in two different denominations would be helpful in discovering if some of the hindrances or impact is denominational and not inherent to the campaign itself. Another study worth pursuing is a comparison of local churches that have done two different kinds of spiritual growth campaigns to discover which campaign worked better within the

churches (e.g., 40 Days of Purpose and Alpha Course or 40 Days of Purpose and 40 Days of Community). Another study using three different impact variables or purposes (other than lay pastoral care visitation, small groups, and outreach) would be interesting and broaden the perspective of the understanding of 40 Days. Another study that could arise from this dissertation is a study on the impact of different kinds of lay pastoral care teams, small groups, and outreaches.

Finally, an interesting study would be to discover if churches that used the complete 40 Days template (including events) had greater results or impact than those that only used a partial template. I recommend that pastors and churches implementing the campaign follow all instructions in the 40 Days of Purpose starter kit and implement all events and activities in the template. In this study, only one small church E and one large church M followed the entire template of 40 Days including events. Only 16.17 percent of the churches in each category followed the complete template. Many of the small churches thought they were too small to carry on all the major events of the campaign.

The two churches that followed the template completely seemed to receive a significant positive impact in the life of their churches. The finding brings up the following questions: If the template is followed precisely, will the churches have even a greater positive impact? What would be the barriers to implementing the entire template? I believe churches would have a greater impact from 40 Days of Purpose if they would follow the entire template and the instructions in the manual.

Summary

Generally, for church growth to last, people must have the desire to do God's purposes and be willing to work and be committed to the growth of the church. The success of the program can depend on how people view the 40 Days campaign.

Warren's *Purpose Driven Life* book has received many good reviews. It shows dependence on God for every moment and gives attention to the authority of Scripture (Alexander). It provides simple guidelines for Christian living (Johnston). The *Purpose Driven Life* is based on biblical principles and provides a starting point for many Christians to consider their purposes and goals in life.

The pastors of the churches were asked during the telephone interview if they thought 40 Days had theological roots. Five of the six large church pastors answered with a resounding "Yes." Four of the six small church pastors also responded positively. One small church pastor said that it could have theological roots. It depends upon the church and people and how they respond to the program. The other small church pastors said that theological roots are not based on the implementation of the program only but also on the response of the people.

Personally, I see the program as being an influential factor in the life and growth of churches. The responses of the churches as a whole as well as the response of the individuals are important; however, pastors and churches must be patient with God bringing the results. Christians must be faithful to plant and water these seeds (Luke 8:5-15; 1 Cor. 3:5-8). Christians must also realize that God's timing is best. Some programs or campaigns that did not and would not work in churches years ago would work today because of the present makeup of churches. Overall 40 Days was a success in churches

and was used as a springboard to other ministries and growth within the local churches. Instant success from the 40 Days program occurred in churches, but the momentum from that success must be harnessed with proper planning of future church events to maintain continuity.

Postscript

In reflecting over this study and comparing it to Samson First UMC, I realize that some events or items in the 40 Days starter kit may be difficult to implement in certain churches, especially smaller ones that do not have the people or resources to conduct such events. The 40 Days of Purpose campaign was prepackaged. It did not take into consideration the context and culture of all churches. Many churches did not use the entire template.

From my reading, I remember that numerous churches in many denominations have implemented the campaign and have displayed growth. Though 40 Days seems to work in different denominations, for Methodists and others, *The Purpose Driven Life* book lacks a Wesleyan perspective. Of course, Warren is Southern Baptist. The book is heavy in Calvinism, especially in the doctrine of predestination. The predestination point was brought up during some of the telephone interviews. A few of the pastors and leaders of the churches handled the Calvinism issue by making mention of it as they stated what Methodists believe. Some small groups addressed this issue quickly and moved on with the 40 Days study.

Some of the new ministries or missions did not develop at Samson First UMC because people were not ready to move forward in those areas. A former pastor had done a study on *The Purpose Driven Church* about eight years before I arrived in Samson. His

successor and I reaped seeds planted by that pastor. Some people were excited about doing 40 Days. The follow-through with members actually doing ministry was disappointing. Some were comfortable with the way church was; they did not want to change.

As a pastor, I become frustrated when churches do not want to change. The churches I have served are capsules of the year 1957. For the current churches I serve, two or three years may pass before they could implement 40 Days. In taking churches to the next level and breaking some of their traditions, pastors must use a gradual approach to grow traditional churches. The teaching and preaching ministry of pastors is very important in laying the groundwork for change. Another key is uniting all the churches' committees with the pastor's vision. Building relationships are a must for success. Proposing a five or ten-year plan for churches casts vision for health and growth. The 40 Days campaign gives churches an opportunity for growth as well as plans for the future.

After completing this study, I feel better about 40 Days and its effects in churches. Positives were noted in every church, both small and large. The key to remember is God makes everything beautiful in his timing. God brings the growth. Some pastors become discouraged when they do not see the growth. Often successors (future pastors) reap the benefits of pastors who struggled to initiate change and plant vital seeds. The previous statement shows the unfairness of life. I wish I could have seen and experienced the growth from all the seeds planted in my previous appointments. I often remind myself that the one who plants and the one who waters are the same. God receives the glory because he brings the growth (1 Cor. 3: 5-9).

APPENDIX A

40 Days of Purpose Spiritual Growth Campaign Questionnaire

40 Days of Purpose Spiritual Growth Campaign Questionnaire

Instructions: This survey questionnaire evaluates the impact of 40 Days of Purpose on your local congregation. This questionnaire contains questions regarding what the participation level in your church both prior to 40 Days and the impact after 40 Days following the campaign. Questions will encompass 4 areas: (1) demographics, (2) lay pastoral care visitation, (2) small groups, and (3) outreach (evangelism, and missions). Answers will be numerical answers, short written answers, or marking blanks next to answers. Pastors are to meet with a leadership team to complete a final combined questionnaire. Please fill in the following code letter assigned to this church for the questionnaire telephone interview. This is located on a separate sheet of paper in the pastors' information packet. Please send one final collaborative hardcopy in the self-addressed stamped envelope.

CODE LETTER: _____

DATES OF CHURCH'S 40 DAYS
CAMPAIGN:

SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHICS

CHURCH AVERAGE SUNDAY
MORNING WORSHIP

ATTENDANCE: _____

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP: _____

TENURE OF THE CURRENT
PASTOR: _____
(MONTHS OR YEARS)

NUMBER OF PROFESSIONS OF
FAITH SINCE 40 DAYS
CAMPAIGN: _____

NUMBER OF BAPTISMS SINCE 40
DAYS CAMPAIGN: _____

DESCRIBE THE SETTING (AREA)
OF YOUR CONGREGATION
(PLEASE CHECK ONE):

_____ RURAL
_____ SUBURBAN
_____ URBAN

GROWTH STATUS OF CITY
(PLEASE CHECK ONE):

_____ GROWING
_____ DECLINING
_____ STABLE

**SECTION 2: LAY PASTORAL
CARE VISITATION**

**Lay Pastoral Care Visitation
(BEFORE 40 Days)**

1. Were there any lay pastoral care visitation teams in place before 40 Days of Purpose? Please check one: _____ Yes
_____ No

(If **NO**, go on to **Lay Pastoral Care Visitation —After 40 Days** section)

2. How many teams were there?

3. How many people participated in these teams (Total)?

4. What kinds of teams did you have? (Please check all that apply)
- _____ Hospital visitation
_____ Nursing home visitation
_____ Shut-in visitation
_____ House-to-house visitation for sick and/or hurting members
_____ Other
5. What services did these teams provide? (Please check all that apply)
- _____ Conversation
_____ Counseling
_____ Food
_____ Prayer
_____ Laying on of hands
_____ Anointing with oil
_____ Worship (music, Scripture reading, devotional, etc.)
_____ Telephone calls
_____ Other ministry

6. Did the pastor delegate all or most of the church's pastoral care to those teams?
_____ Yes _____ No
7. If YES, what was the pastor's reason? _____

8. Was there any leadership training given to or provided for these teams?
_____ Yes _____ No



Lay Pastoral Care Visitation
(AFTER 40 Days)

1. Were there any lay pastoral care visitation teams begun as a response to 40 Days of Purpose? Please check one:
 Yes
 No
(If NO, go on to **Small Groups—Before 40 Days section)**
2. How many teams?

3. How many people participate in these teams (Total)?

4. What kinds of teams are there? (Please check all that apply)
 Hospital visitation
 Nursing home visitation
 Shut-in visitation
 House-to-house visitation for sick and/or hurting members
 Other
5. What services did these teams provide? (Please check all that apply)
 Conversation
 Counseling
 Food
 Prayer
 Laying on of hands
 Anointing with oil
 Worship (music, scripture reading, devotions, etc.)
 Telephone calls
 Other ministry
6. Were these teams begun to help take the burden off the pastor?
 Yes No
7. Was any leadership training given to or provided for these teams? Yes No
8. Were any new lay pastoral care visitation teams started after 40 Days in addition to existing ones? Yes No
9. How many new teams?

10. How many new participants?

SECTION 3: SMALL GROUPS**Small Groups
(BEFORE 40 Days)**

1. Did your church have a small group ministry in place before 40 Days?
 _____ Yes _____ No

(If **NO**, then go to **Small Groups—During and After 40 Days** section)

2. How many groups existed?

3. What was the total number of participants (signed up) for all groups? _____
4. What was the average attendance for all groups combined?

5. How long had the small group ministry been in place?

6. What kinds of small groups? (Please check all that apply)
 _____ Home cell groups
 _____ Cell groups that met at the church building
 _____ Bible study groups
 _____ Affinity or specialty groups (such as sports groups, mission groups, etc.)
 _____ Other
7. What were the activities, focuses, or goals of these groups? (Please check all that apply—or what best describes the small group.)
 _____ Prayer
 _____ Spiritual growth, Bible study, discipleship
 _____ Support, encouragement, transformation
 _____ Accountability/pursuit of holiness
 _____ Confidentiality

- _____ Outstanding attendance and commitment
 _____ Fellowship
 _____ Eating together
 _____ Discovery of talents and spiritual gifts
 _____ Development of and operation of talents and spiritual gifts
 _____ People equipped for ministry
 _____ Developing friendships
 _____ Trips taken as a group
 _____ Giving
 _____ Worship
 _____ Meeting people's needs
 _____ Pastoring/shepherding done by small group leader
 _____ Missions/outreach/evangelism
 _____ Testimonies shared
 _____ Unchurched connect to the congregation
 _____ People have conversion experience to Christ
 _____ People experience forgiveness, healing, and acceptance
8. Was there leadership training provided for small group leaders?
 _____ Yes _____ No
9. The small group leaders are mentored by the pastors or leadership staff (Please Check One):
 _____ Weekly
 _____ Monthly
 _____ Yearly
 _____ Other
 _____ Not at all
10. Did hindrances exist in starting a small group ministry in your church?
 _____ Yes _____ No
11. What was the major hindrance?

Small Groups
(DURING and AFTER 40 Days)

1. Was a small group program begun in your church for or because (or as a result) of the 40 Days campaign?
 Yes No
 (If **NO**, then go on to **Outreach—Before 40 Days** section)
2. How many small groups? _____
3. What was the total number of participants (signed up) for all groups? _____
4. What was the average attendance coming out of 40 Days? _____
5. Did any of the small groups continue beyond 40 Days?
 Yes No
6. How many? _____
7. How many people? _____
8. Average attendance? _____
9. How long did any of those groups continue beyond 40 Days?

10. Did the church's small group ministry expand with new groups following 40 Days?
 Yes No
11. How many new groups? _____
12. What was the major hindrance of starting a small group ministry for or because of 40 Days?

13. What kinds of small groups were started for or because of 40 Days? (Please check all that apply)
 Home cell groups

- _____ Cell groups at the church building
- _____ Bible study groups
- _____ Affinity or specialty groups (such as sports groups or mission groups)
- _____ Other
14. What were the activities, focuses, or goals of these groups? What best describes these small groups? (Please check all that apply)
- _____ Prayer
- _____ Spiritual growth, Bible study, discipleship
- _____ Support, encouragement, transformation
- _____ Accountability/ pursuit of holiness
- _____ Confidentiality
- _____ Outstanding attendance and commitment
- _____ Fellowship
- _____ Eating together
- _____ Discovery of talents and spiritual gifts
- _____ Development of and operation of talents and spiritual gifts
- _____ People equipped for ministry
- _____ Developing friendships
- _____ Trips taken as a group
- _____ Giving
- _____ Worship
- _____ Meeting people's needs
- _____ Pastoring/Shepherding done by small group leader
- _____ Missions/outreach/ evangelism
- _____ Testimonies shared
- _____ Unchurched connect to the congregation
- _____ People have conversion experience to Christ
- _____ People experience forgiveness, healing, and acceptance

15. Was leadership training provided
for small group leaders following
40 Days?

_____ Yes _____ No

16. The small group leaders are
mentored by the pastors or
leadership staff

_____ Weekly

_____ Monthly

_____ Yearly

_____ Other

_____ Not at all

SECTION 4: OUTREACH
(EVANGELISM AND
MISSIONS)

Outreach
(Evangelism and Missions)
(BEFORE 40 Days)

1. Did outreach (evangelism and/or missions) programs or teams exist?
_____ Yes _____ No
 2. How many programs and teams?

 3. What were the top three outreach, evangelism, and/or missions teams or programs?

 4. What percentage of your congregation participated in outreach, evangelism, and missions?
_____ 0%-25%
_____ 26%-50%
_____ 51%-75%
_____ 76%-100%
- Please Mark Yes or No for Questions 5-33.**
5. Felt needs of unchurched community are being addressed by congregation.
_____ Yes _____ No
 6. Felt needs of unchurched are being met by congregation.
_____ Yes _____ No
 7. Building relationships with non-Christian family, friends, coworkers, and neighbors are being done by our members.
_____ Yes _____ No
 8. All Christians in our church take responsibility for reaching non-Christians.
_____ Yes _____ No
 9. Guests or newcomers return to our church.
_____ Yes _____ No
 10. Guests or newcomers receive a warm welcome and a positive first experience at our church.
_____ Yes _____ No
 11. Our church thinks about our unchurched guests needs over our members' needs. _____ Yes
_____ No
 12. Our church prays for the lost and unchurched.
_____ Yes _____ No
 13. Our church prays for the Lord to send workers into the harvest.
_____ Yes _____ No
 14. Our church provides training in evangelizing the lost.
_____ Yes _____ No
 15. Our church has outreach teams that go door-to-door to evangelize and/or invite people to church.
_____ Yes _____ No
 16. Members make friendships with non-Christians with the sole purpose of inviting them to church.
_____ Yes _____ No
 17. Our church's approach to evangelism is more team oriented than one-to-one confrontational.
_____ Yes _____ No
 18. Members who share their faith in Jesus Christ are also those who are involved in ministry.
_____ Yes _____ No
 19. Reaching the lost or unchurched is our number one core value because lost people matter to God.
_____ Yes _____ No
 20. Our church budgets and tithes/gives money for outreach, evangelism, and missions.
_____ Yes _____ No

21. Our church reaches out into our community through day care programs, after school programs, and/or sports events, etc.
 Yes No
22. Our church has planted daughter churches or started new church campuses at different locations.
 Yes No
23. Members enjoy giving their testimonies anywhere.
 Yes No
24. A common obstacle to people in our church doing evangelism is the fear of people or fear of rejection.
 Yes No
25. Our church does local missions to help the needy through items and money. Yes No
26. Our church does state and national missions through money and sending work teams.
 Yes No
27. Our church practices the Great Commission by going on foreign missions trips.
 Yes No
28. Our pastors and leadership staff model outreach evangelism by being visible in the community and spending time with unbelievers.
 Yes No
29. Our church experiences “conversion” growth very often.
 Yes No
30. The pastoral and leadership staff of our church cast outreach vision on a regular basis.
 Yes No
31. Our church has a clear vision or mission statement that specifies the felt needs of the unchurched community.
 Yes No
32. The pastor and leadership staff of our church have written and communicated a detailed strategic outreach plan for the future growth of the church.
 Yes No
33. The strategic outreach plan goes beyond the reach of what one or a few people can do!
 Yes No

**Outreach
(Evangelism and Missions)
(DURING and AFTER 40 Days)**

1. Were any new outreach, evangelism, and missions program teams started as a result of 40 Days ministry and missions fair? Yes No
2. How many new teams?

3. Name three new outreach, evangelism, and missions programs or teams.

4. What are the three top outreach, evangelism, and mission teams or programs now?

5. What percentage of your congregation now participates in outreach, evangelism, and missions

_____	0%-25%
_____	26-50%
_____	51-75%
_____	76-100%
6. How many lost people in the congregation came to Christ as a result of 40 Days? _____
7. How many lost unchurched people came to Christ as a result of 40 Days? _____
8. How many people were baptized as a result of 40 Days?

**Please Mark Yes or No
for Questions 9-37.**

9. Felt needs of unchurched community are being addressed by congregation.
 Yes No
10. Felt needs of unchurched are being met by congregation.
 Yes No
11. Building relationships with non-Christian family, friends, coworkers, and neighbors are being done by our members.
 Yes No
12. All Christians in our church take responsibility for reaching non-Christians.
 Yes No
13. Guests or newcomers return to our church.
 Yes No
14. Guests or newcomers receive a warm welcome and a positive first experience at our church.
 Yes No
15. Our church thinks about our unchurched guests needs over our members' needs.
 Yes No
16. Our church prays for the lost and unchurched.
 Yes No
17. Our church prays for the Lord to send workers into the harvest.
 Yes No
18. Our church provides training in evangelizing the lost.
 Yes No
19. Our church has outreach teams that go door-to-door to evangelize and/or invite people to church.
 Yes No

20. Members make friendships with non-Christians with the sole purpose of inviting them to church.
 Yes No
21. Our church's approach to evangelism is more team oriented than one-to-one confrontational.
 Yes No
22. Members who share their faith in Jesus Christ are also those who are involved in ministry.
 Yes No
23. Reaching the lost or unchurched is our number one core value, because lost people matter to God.
 Yes No
24. Our church budgets and tithes/gives money for outreach, evangelism, and missions.
 Yes No
25. Our church reaches out into our community through day care programs, after school programs, sports events, etc.
 Yes No
26. Our church has planted daughter churches or started new church campuses at different locations.
 Yes No
27. Members enjoy giving their testimonies anywhere.
 Yes No
28. A common obstacle to people in our church doing evangelism is the fear of people or fear of rejection.
 Yes No
29. Our church does local missions to help the needy through items and money.
 Yes No
30. Our church does state and national missions through money and sending work teams.
 Yes No
31. Our church practices the Great Commission by going on foreign missions team trips.
 Yes No
32. Our pastors and leadership staff model outreach evangelism by being visible in our community and spending time with unbelievers.
 Yes No
33. Our church experiences conversion growth very often.
 Yes No
34. The pastoral and leadership staff of our church cast outreach vision on a regular basis.
 Yes No
35. Our church has a clear vision or mission statement that specifies the felt needs of the unchurched community.
 Yes No
36. The pastor and leadership staff of our church have written and communicated a detailed strategic outreach plan for the future growth of the church.
 Yes No
37. The strategic outreach plan goes beyond the reach of what one or a few people can do!
 Yes No

APPENDIX B

Follow-up Telephone Interview

FOLLOW-UP TELEPHONE INTERVIEW CONVERSATION WITH PASTOR 40 DAYS OF PURPOSE SPIRITUAL GROWTH CAMPAIGN 4 INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Reason(s) why your church participated in the 40 Days of Purpose Spiritual Growth Campaign (background to 40 Days of Purpose)? Was there any resistance in the congregation having/participating in 40 Days? What were the hindrances to having 40 Days in your church?
2. Did the enthusiasm of the 40 Days of Purpose continue beyond the dates of the campaign or did it fizzle out? How long did the momentum continue after 40 Days? When did it fizzle out, if it did? Why?
3. Discuss the details (the dynamics) of 40 Days of Purpose within your congregation. Discuss the preparation and planning of 40 Days within your congregation. Did your congregation follow the 40 Days of Purpose template? Please be specific in describing these events and the outcome. For example: what people did in participation; what they liked and disliked, etc.

40 Days of Purpose Template:

- Reading of The Purpose Driven Life book
- Weekly Scripture memory verse
- Small Groups
- Theme-Based Sermons
- Kickoff event
- Ministry and Missions Fair (with follow-up)
- Celebration Sunday

4. Would you and your congregation recommend the 40 Days of Purpose campaign to other churches? Why or Why Not? Does 40 Days of Purpose have lasting theological roots? Why or Why Not? Did any doctrinal problems arise that are in conflict with Wesleyan theology? Which of the 5 purposes of Worship, Fellowship, Discipleship, Ministry, and Evangelism did your congregation “gravitate” to? Which “purpose” received the greatest impact as a result of 40 Days? Is there anything else you would like to add (a positive review or a negative critique)?

APPENDIX C

Cover Letter for 40 Days of Purpose Spiritual Growth Campaign Questionnaire and Subsequent Telephone Interview

November 1, 2007

To: United Methodist Church Pastors in the Alabama-West Florida Conference

Dear Friends in Ministry,

Thank you for agreeing to fill out the enclosed survey questionnaires with laity in your church as well as agreeing to the subsequent telephone interview. As you know, I am working on my dissertation project for a Doctor of Ministry from Asbury Theological Seminary. The work of the dissertation focuses on the impact of the 40 Days of Purpose Spiritual Growth Campaign in twelve churches in the Alabama-West Florida Conference. This study focuses on churches who have participated in 40 Days prior to November 1, 2006. Six small churches (less than two hundred in average attendance in worship services) and six large churches (two hundred or more in average attendance in worship services) will be tested on the impact of 40 Days in their congregations. Comparisons will be made between the small and large churches. Questions will be asked about how your church was before 40 Days of Purpose as well as after 40 Days.

Here is how you (pastors) can help:

1. Please form a lay leadership team of ten to twelve persons, if possible, including yourself to complete the survey questionnaire in your packets. Please follow the instructions on the questionnaire.
2. Schedule a meeting to discuss the questionnaire within the next two weeks.
3. Take the blank questionnaire form in your packet and fillout one combined questionnaire formulated from the lay leadership meeting. The final questionnaire answers are agreed upon from the leadership team meeting.
4. There is a code "letter" located on a separate sheet in the packet for you to put in the appropriate blank on the first page of the final questionnaire.

5. Please return the final questionnaire in the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided for you in the packet.
6. The second part of data collection is the telephone interview. The telephone interview will last approximately forty-five minutes long. You have already agreed to the time and date for this interview. A reminder of the telephone interview is found on a separate sheet of paper in your questionnaire packet. A telephone interview questionnaire is provided for you in your packet in order for you to prepare for the conversation.
7. The telephone interview will be taped in order to preserve the data collection. I will ask your permission at the beginning of the telephone interview to tape the conversation. The tapes will be confidential for data collection purposes only!
8. The code “letter” assigned to your church will be asked for at the beginning of the telephone interview.

NOTE: The church’s name will not be mentioned in the dissertation. You will find the code “letter” for both the survey questionnaire and the telephone interview (same for both) on a separate sheet of paper in your packet. Example: A letter “A-F” will be given to each of the ten small churches (less than two hundred in average worship attendance). A letter “K-P” will be given to each of the large churches (two hundred or more in average worship attendance).

Again, thank you for your and your church’s willingness to fill out a collaborative questionnaire. Thank you for your willingness to participate in the subsequent telephone interview.

If you have questions, please refer to Warren’s books: (1) *The Purpose Driven Life* and (2) *The Purpose Driven Church* or please give me a call or e-mail me.

Blessings!

Nathan Elliott

Phone: 334-775-3400

E-mail address: JNathanElliott@aol.com

APPENDIX D

Sample of Church's Code Letter for Questionnaire/Interview

in Questionnaire Packet

**Your Church's Code Letter for
Questionnaire Survey and
Telephone Interview:**

X

APPENDIX E

Sample of Telephone Interview Reminder in Questionnaire Packet

Reminder of Telephone Interview

With Nathan Elliott

In Regards to 40 Days of Purpose

DATE: _____

TIME: _____

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